



2025 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan Science Museum of Virginia

Goal#1: Build and Sustain a Diverse Workforce

Recruit and retain a diverse workforce by increasing access to diverse populations for recruiting.

Objective 1

Continue to strengthen hiring practices to increase access to diverse applicant pools while fostering the retention and advancement of a diverse workforce.

- Develop partnerships with diverse professional organizations, colleges and universities, workforce development agencies and community-based organizations to increase access to qualified candidates.
- Track applicant, hiring, promotion, and retention data to identify trends, measure progress, and inform continuous improvement efforts.
- Review diversity recruitment and retention goals annually and adjust strategies based on workforce data, employee feedback and the agency's need.

Goal#2: Foster an Inclusive Workplace Culture

Cultivate and sustain a workplace where all employees feel respected, valued, supported, and empowered to contribute their perspectives and experiences.

Objective 1

Continue to promote and improve communications related to diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion.

- Continued to conducted monthly DEAI meetings open to all employees to participate in, learn, contribute and/or support the Science Museum's current DEAI initiatives.
- Continued to reviewed Science Museum policies and communicated updates to employees (or when they occur) via email and shared the revised policies on the intranet.
- Ensure all Science Museum stakeholders (staff, board, trustees, volunteers) are up to date on Science Museum initiatives, policies, and changes and provide opportunities for cross-team input into said initiatives.
- Continued outreach efforts to promote and increase volunteer participation amongst all departments.

- Identified ways to engage volunteers at the Science Museum to ensure they reflect the culture and diverse population we are and serve.
- Continued to promote the anonymous Safe Space Feedback form as a resource to share ideas, suggestions or comments and are responded by the DEAI group (and/or in conjunction with senior leadership) via the agency's internal webpage.

Goal#3: Community Engagement

Create and sustain partnerships within the community that welcome and embrace diversity.

Objective 1

Improve outcomes and experiences for community partners, ensuring that the work is equitable, is based on and developed for mutual benefit.

- Science Within Reach is the Science Museum's signature accessibility initiative.
- Continue participating in programs that train staff on DEAI principles and strengthen connections with diverse communities to build awareness, cultural understanding, and inclusive practices across all museum programs and interactions.



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Results/Response: Expanded targeted outreach at job fairs from 2 to 6, began reviewing existing inclusive hiring practices (e.g., standardized interview guides and bias-aware screening) and implemented regular exit interviews for wage staff to better understand retention drivers and sustain improvements. This population experiences high turnover.

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Results/Response: Completed an internal group restructure to combine the internal culture team and DEAI team into one to reinforce inclusion as a core tenant of agency culture. Engaged senior leadership to champion the importance of volunteer participation by all departments, resulting in close to 100% participation in a large-scale agency event. Continued to grow the Volunteer team by adding a part-time position to increase and diversify the agency volunteer base and bolster engagement to ensure volunteers reflect agency culture. Other efforts remain effective and aligned with the objectives outlined above.

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Results/Response: Completed annual agency VisitAble training, reaching staff participation levels to achieve an Advocate Certificate from VisitAble. Continued embedding DEAI trainings into the onboarding process as well as an annual refresher with the idea of expanding these offerings to the other locations (e.g., Danville and Northern Virginia).

The Science Museum continued its commitment to the Science Within Reach initiative to increase access to all members of the community. In addition to offering tools and resources for guests with intellectual or developmental disabilities, blind or low vision, deafness or hearing impairments, limited mobility or language access, the agency grew programs under the Science Within Reach umbrella. Highlights from FY25 include:

- The Science Museum welcomed more than 19,165 guests under the Museums for All program, a program that offers reduced admission for individuals receiving government

assistance. The Science Museum also has almost 1,300 Museums for All member households who visits 19,721 times in FY25.

- The Science Museum welcomed over 11,000 Title 1 school children on grant-supported field trips.
- The Science Museum continued its Library Pass Program which allows community residents to check out a pass at their local library for free admission to the Science Museum for up to two adults and four youth in the same household. The program is currently offered at all branches of the Richmond Public Library, Petersburg Library, Powhatan County Library and Williamsburg Regional Libraries systems, as well as through the Pamunkey Indian Reservation. In FY25, 1,129 guests took advantage of this pass program.
- The Community Visit Initiative, where community groups where finances may be a barrier receive free Science Museum access, continued. Groups that have benefited from this program include SOAR365, Nexus Community Services, the Center for Families in Transition and the Faison Center. In FY25, 3,797 guests visited as part of this initiative.
- The Science Museum continued to offer the free, quarterly Minds of All Kinds events which are designed for guests with disabilities to enjoy the Science Museum in a less crowded environment. Featuring popular programming with reduced sound and light levels as well as activities with partners like Autism Society of Central Virginia, VA Voice and the Virginia Department of Blind and Low Vision, the program has welcomed more than 4,095 guests since FY17.
- In FY25, the Science Museum expanded its senior programming to include Senior Making in *The Forge*, and increased the number of programs from four to nine. Over 200 seniors participated in these free programs.