

# Extension DEI Assessment - Charting Our Progress


## Introduction

The Extension DEI Assessment is designed to understand Penn State Extension's (Extension) practices, policies, and culture around diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). All Extension employees are invited to participate in this assessment which includes a survey and focus groups. We hope that the survey responses will be reflective of **all** ages, gender identities, races and ethnicities, sexualities, abilities, and nationalities. The perspectives and experiences of all Extension employees are important, as everyone plays a role in creating an inclusive environment. Employee participation will provide important information about our current situation that will **inform an action plan to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion for the entire Extension community.**

The survey, focus groups, data analysis, and report development are being conducted by an outside consulting firm, [Strategic Diversity Initiatives \(SDI\)](#). Participation is entirely voluntary and individual responses are anonymous. Responses will be aggregated and summarized into themes. Findings will be shared so that no comments can be traced back to an individual. The results of the survey will help our organization take action to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion organizationally. Everyone is invited to prioritize areas of action for our response. Below is a chart of steps and timelines for this work.

## Progress chart

This chart is designed to share the process in real time. We encourage you to check it regularly to get updated on the progress of this effort.

Date	Activity/Step	Progress/Comments	Completion
11/7 - 1/11	<b>Establish Design Team Process</b> Determine group management model, future meeting format, need for informal meetings or additional debriefings, and the role of leaders	Design team members include Terri Rentzel, Mandel Smith, Malu Tejada, Robin Perry-Smith, Jaime Garcia-Prudencio, Elsa Sánchez, Cristy Schmidt, Adrian Barragan, Dora Boyd Simons, Adrian Barragan, Patreese Ingram, and Eriks Dunens	
1/6/23 - 3/6	<b>Assessment Planning and Design</b> Identification of key subpopulations, project management plan (e.g., logistics, timeline, resources, accessibility, performance indicators), marketing and communications (maximizing participant buy-in, drive participation, strategize for minimizing assessment fatigue)		
3/2	<b>Marketing and Communications Campaign Launch</b>		
3/6	<b>Soft Launch: Review of DEI assessment survey (preliminary and final draft)</b>		
3/2 - 3/13	<b>Marketing and Communications Campaigning</b>		
Date	Activity/Step	Progress/Comments	Completion

<b>3/13</b>	<b>Hard Launch</b>		
<b>3/13 - 3/27</b>	<b>Survey data collection + Focus Group data collection</b>		
<b>3/27 - 4/24</b>	<b>SDI Data Analysis</b>		
<b>4/24 (week of)</b>	<b>Presentation of initial survey findings and meaning-making</b>		
<b>5/1 - 5/31</b>	<b>Town Hall discussion of findings report</b>		
<b>6/1 - 9/30</b>	<b>Paused for Trust Edge Engagement Survey</b>		
<b>10</b>	<b>Town Hall discussion of findings report</b>		
<b>10</b>	<b>Event to develop action plan from findings report</b>		

## Frequently Asked Questions

- How is the DEI Assessment different from the Trust Edge Engagement Survey?
  - The Trust Edge Employee Engagement survey seeks to establish a better understanding of employee morale, satisfaction, and engagement. The DEI Assessment specifically examines our practices, policies, and culture to provide a baseline understanding of where we are organizationally on key diversity, equity, and inclusion measures.

Additionally, Extension employees will have the opportunity to co-develop a plan and implementation of action steps necessary to move the organization forward, in response to the results of the DEI Assessment.

- Why is there a break of four months between discussion of the findings report and the development of the action plan?
  - In short, so we don't have two survey efforts operating at the same time. Our DEI Design Team made the decision to pause our process to honor the existing timeline and commitments for the Employee Engagement Survey, which dates to 2019. The DEI Assessment process will resume in October to reshare findings and engage everyone interested in co-developing an action plan around the recommendations.
- We are asked to participate in so many surveys. What makes this one different?
  - Associate Director Katherine Cason, Strategy and Compliance Specialist Eriks Dunens, and Assistant Dean of Multicultural Affairs for the College of Agricultural Sciences Patreese Ingram initiated this DEI Assessment with the support - and funding - of Extension Director Brent Hales. The three believe it essential to invite Extension employees to share stewardship in the development and implementation of the effort. The opportunity for involvement expands further as all Extension employees have a chance to offer their experiences and insights through a survey and focus groups. Every employee is additionally invited to participate in discussing the results and developing an action plan to guide our organizational focus and response. Through this process, we create ownership and accountability for everyone - including leadership - to take the necessary steps to improve our organization.

Still have questions about the Extension DEI Assessment? Reach out to Strategy and Compliance Specialist Eriks Dunens at [eld5417@psu.edu](mailto:eld5417@psu.edu).