



Insights and recommendations from the 2021 Raising Our Game Webinar Series

Executive Summary

The 2021 Raising Our Game webinar series provided an opportunity for the Outdoor Sector to explore a range of themes around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in the outdoors.

The aim of this report is to share the findings from Phase 1 of the project and offer some actions individuals and organisations can begin to take as a result of what has been learned from this. The report also includes many ideas and initiatives that could be included in Phase 2 of the project.

Over 10 webinars running between January and September 2021, our vision was:

“To stimulate conversation and collaboration on EDI, inspiring action on broadening participation and strategic leadership, particularly within the Outdoor Learning community.”

The webinar series saw 1348 live attendees across the first 9 events and over 1,200 YouTube views of the recordings (by 22 September 21).

Despite the topic being a ‘conversation’ within the sector for 40+ years there was an appetite to make change happen with 46% of attendees wishing to “help shape the system and change EDI in the outdoors”.

The webinar series provided opportunities to gather information about where the sector is at on a wide range of themes. These have been presented in a 'Webinar Series Report'. The complimentary 'Outdoor Learning for Everyone Report' presents a wide range of academic and other sources that have examined the issues and explored solutions to EDI matters in outdoor learning and recreation. Together these reports present evidence-based insights and recommendations that can motivate and resource people to take action.

6 Key Findings

1. The outdoor learning field has much to do to be more equitable and inclusive of diverse groups.
2. Delivering this work requires an equal and diverse partnership of communities to challenge bias, privilege, and discrimination.
3. There is a need, a demand, for individuals, organisations and senior leadership to take responsibility and action in making the outdoors a diverse and inclusive place.
4. Perceptions and understanding were identified as the biggest ‘barrier’ to INclusivity in the OUTdoors (often from a “white” perspective).
5. There are clear indicators and evidence of how individual volunteers, professionals, organisations and national bodies can make a difference.
6. The field should continue to share its intentions to raise our game and celebrate widely our successes in doing this.

Raising Our Game

Drawn from examples of actions for change identified in research or webinar series, the project team recommend the following six key principles:

1. **Everyone can make a difference**
Many aspects of EDI are played out through language and in the everyday interactions we have as part of daily life. Whoever you are and whatever your role in the outdoors you can make a positive difference with self-awareness, education and inclusive action.
2. **Leadership and organisational commitment**
Understand your current position and identify the potential opportunities within your context. Create clear short- and long-term goals detailing the benefits of achieving the vision.
3. **Understanding and working with communities**
There is no one size fits all model for EDI – understanding the context you are working in is crucial to understanding how to effect change, and how to forge new partnerships.



4. **Responsive services and customer care**
Seek out and include diverse voices impacted by discrimination. Encourage the sharing of information, experiences, and research in order to provide inclusive programmes and services.
5. **Diverse and engaged workforce**
Make EDI conversations normal. Seek to understand and incorporate multiple diverse perspectives in all areas and at all levels of an organisation. Do this collaboratively so that everyone 'owns' the knowledge.
6. **Journey of continual improvement**
Continue to develop and implement new ideas, share new developments, experiences, learning, and ideas with the outdoor community. Together we can all be part of a movement for change.

Actions for Change

A **framework for change** is offered by introducing a structure for self-assessment of inclusion at one of five levels. The first level, Invisible, implies that the principles of inclusion are non-existent within the community. The highest level to strive for is a Culture of Inclusion, which describes a community that is completely welcoming and inclusive.

We offer this broad framework as a way you can reflect on your current position and identify areas for actioning change.

We do not recognize that there is a problem.	We know there is a problem, we are taking tentative steps, but we are not sure how to proceed.	We have acknowledged the importance of diversity and are taking formal steps to promote inclusion.	We are committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination through systematic change.	Inclusion is normal and part of our culture.
Invisible	Awareness	Intentional Inclusion	Strategic Inclusion	Culture of Inclusion

(Alberta Urban Municipalities Association, 2017)

Alongside **six key principles**, to guide thinking, **examples of actions/ approaches** are presented under each of the five levels of inclusion. They are not exhaustive and those committed to change are encouraged to refer to the Outdoor Learning for Everyone Report and the Webinar Series Report when choosing actions to positively impact greater equality, diversity and inclusion.

Next Stages

The field should continue to **celebrate successes** and promote all the groups, projects and initiatives that are making a difference. **Commitments to action** tailored to an organisation, its workforce and the individuals and communities it serves are also encouraged.



Future ideas and initiatives to be explored for INclusivity in the OUTdoors Phase 2 are grouped into two broad themes: EDI implementation; and sector development. **Funding and collaborative partnerships** to assist with the outlined projects and other initiatives is essential to action the next steps.

Project Partners

The webinar series was imagined and delivered by a project team sharing a common interest and drive for a more inclusive, equal and diverse environment for those accessing the outdoors or working in Outdoor Learning.

The project was a collaboration between the Institute for Outdoor Learning (IOL), the Association of Heads of Outdoor Education Centres (AHOEC), MOSAIC Outdoors, The Outward Bound Trust and the University of Cumbria.

The 2021 Raising Our Game Report

Download at <https://www.outdoor-learning.org/Good-Practice/Good-Practice/Equality-Diversity-and-Inclusion>



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