

Environmental Justice Workgroup

Presenter Guide



About this guide

The purpose of this document is to outline a process for County of San Diego and other governmental organizations to effectively engage with the Environmental Justice Workgroup (Workgroup) membership. It serves as a guide for staff requesting advisement with Workgroup members for climate policies, projects, programs, initiatives, and other services.

The presenter guidance is informed by members of the Workgroup and aligned partners from community-based organizations focused on environmental and social justice efforts. It centers genuine relationships, strengthens community influence on decision-making that directly affects their lives, and creates opportunities for government accountability and participation in [procedural equity](#). The document includes these components:

- Goals for the partnership between the Workgroup and governmental organizations
- Initiating a request to seek advisement from the Workgroup
- Practices that work best for coordination and engagement
- Shared language glossary
- Workgroup member roster

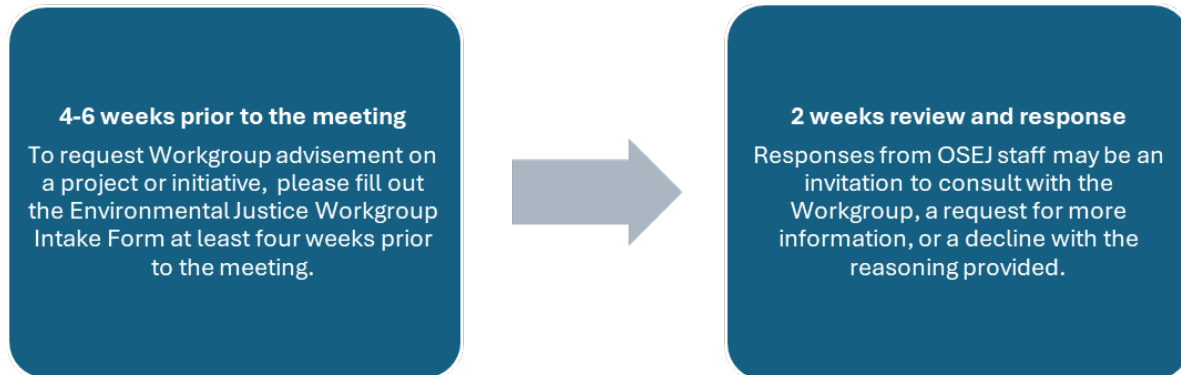
Please contact the County of San Diego’s Office of Sustainability & Environmental Justice (OSEJ) - Community Engagement & Outreach Manager, [Bethany Facendini](#), for additional questions.

Goals for the meetings/partnerships

Goal 1:	Advance equitable climate priorities and solutions across the region by informing County and other local governmental organizations’ policy, program, partnership priorities, and resource gaps (i.e. climate action plans, decarbonization frameworks, funding decisions, community projects, General Plan Environmental Justice Elements, etc.)
Goal 2:	Center community perspectives and environmental justice principles in government projects and policies to influence tangible outcomes reflecting the community’s stated needs
Goal 3:	Standardize expectations for presentation accessibility and ease of engagement (i.e. staff are equity informed, prepared with language-inclusive materials, consistent with communications, etc.)
Goal 4:	Foster trust by maintaining transparency and accountability reflecting anti-racist practices, sharing power, and disrupting conventional practices that perpetuate inequitable systems
Goal 5:	Create a culture of belonging that values lived and learned experiences, diverse perspectives, and relational ways of being in an environment that people feel safe to express themselves

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Requests to consult with the Workgroup



The [intake form](#) can be found here for County employees, and on the Environmental Justice Workgroup webpage for jurisdictions outside of the County.

If invited to present on your project or initiative

Please provide the following **materials at a minimum of ten days in advance of the meeting** date:

- **A one-page overview** written in [plain language](#) aiming for a 5th-8th grade reading level. This is a best practice for improving readability and translation into multiple languages. Free [online tools](#) are available to help edit written content to reach the desired grade level.
- **A brief PowerPoint presentation** to allow for more interactive engagement with the group. For guidance, consider addressing introductions to the project and staff, climate equity considerations including alignment to Climate Action Plans and the Regional Decarbonization Framework, desired engagement, how the Workgroup will receive follow-up information, and contact information. Limit one-directional presentations to 10 minutes or less.
- **Translated materials** as needed into one or more of the [County's nine threshold languages](#). The presenters are responsible for providing translated materials if needed; OSEJ staff will provide interpretation during the meetings.

Sending these materials ahead of time will enable the Workgroup members to prepare and process the materials to enhance accessibility.

Reciprocity

To support and honor the value of community participation, Workgroup members are compensated with a stipend for their lived experience, expertise, and sharing information with their networks. This not only upholds community engagement best practices to help overcome barriers for public participation, but also acknowledges potential emotional labor considering historical traumas when grappling with social justice topics.

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There are other ways to demonstrate reciprocity when presenting to the Workgroup. For example, sharing relevant community resources (i.e. rebate programs); extending invitations to events; fostering meaningful connections; providing detailed steps for implementation; and having a feedback loop with the information learned from engaging with this group.

Considerations for inclusion and belonging

The Workgroup fosters a culture of belonging among the members and subscribes to inclusive meeting practices. Please review the group's adopted "ways of being", consensus building model, and environmental justice principles before your presentation. Additional ways to improve meeting inclusion include these approaches:

- **Make sure all voices are heard by sharing "airtime"** – There needs to be a balance in meetings, especially when there is a mix of government staff and community members present. Be sure not to overload members with information. Instead use high level points and allow for questions. Unequal airtime perpetuates power-over dynamics.
- **Provide space for lived experience** – Make time for members to share their direct experiences and concerns. For staff sustainability topics may be more technically focused on data and analytics, while for community and Workgroup members it is likely personal experience. Interconnections that fall outside of the immediate project scope are valid, worth hearing and exploring, even if they are not immediately actionable.
- **Create opportunities for interaction** – This will enhance collaboration and co-creation of your projects. For example, use virtual engagement tools like the chat box, jam boards, breakout rooms, or polling. For in-person meetings, small group work, pair and share activities, and asking for volunteers to demonstrate a point can be incorporated.
- **Adapt to different learning styles** – Think about how you can cater to different intelligences and learning styles (tactile, auditory, visual, kinesthetic, reading/writing, and more) in your presentation in interactive ways. This will make the experience more enjoyable and accessible for everyone.
- **Correlate information to relevant life experiences** – Provide tangible examples that directly relate to the group's lives.
- **Ensure images are representative reflecting the diversity of the region** – Visuals tell many stories spoken and unspoken. Be conscientious with the images selected for presentations and printed materials.
- **Discuss accountability for the climate priorities** – Share next steps and how the group's input will be used. Follow-up on the expectations set, actions to be taken within specified timelines, and opportunities for further involvement.
- **Ensure language access and sensitivity** – The presentation materials should be translated as group members need it. There will be an interpreter available during the meetings as needed. Use this resource for trauma informed language considerations.

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Select key terms for shared language

Term	Definition or Examples
Anti-Racism	Refers to the work of actively opposing discrimination based on race by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life. (National Association of Counties)
Belonging	Having the right and opportunity to contribute a meaningful voice and participate in the design of social and cultural structures. It is the communal and dynamic process of constantly revisiting and identifying the elements of our common good to produce social cohesion. (Othering & Belonging Institute)
BIPOC	Acronym for Black, Indigenous, People of Color
Culturally Responsive	Ability to understand and consider the different cultural backgrounds of the people you serve.
Decarbonization	Reducing the gases in the atmosphere that trap heat. The goal is to achieve a balance of the carbon cycle in nature, so that the planet stops warming.
Decolonization	TBD
Environmental Justice	The fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. (State of California)
Equity	The fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all, while striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. The principle of equity acknowledges that there are underserved and under-represented populations, and equity means increasing diversity by improving conditions of disadvantaged groups. Equity acknowledges and considers differences, disparities, and disproportionality to ensure a fair process and outcome.
Intersectionality	A theory that recognizes the complexity of identity and experience as constructed by multiple, interlocking systems of power (such as racism, classism, sexism...) for the purpose of understanding and shifting those systems of power. Intersectionality argues that

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	classifications such as gender, race, class, and others cannot be examined in isolation from one another; they interact and intersect in individuals' lives and in society. (Term originally coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw)
Justice	The process of society moving from an unfair, unequal, or inequitable state to one that is fair, equal, or equitable. A transformative practice that relies on the entire community to acknowledge past and current harms to reform societal morals and subsequently the governing laws. Proactive enforcement of policies, practices, and attitudes that produce equitable access, opportunities, treatment, and outcomes for all regardless of the various identities that one holds (National Association of Counties)
LGBTQ+	Acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and additional related terms
Trauma Informed Language	Consideration of how language may impact people differently based on their personal experiences with past or current traumatic events.
Tribal Sovereignty	TBD

Related resources

[San Diego Regional Decarbonization Framework](#)

[San Diego County 2024 Climate Action Plan](#)

Workgroup members

This section contains background information about Workgroup members so presenters can get to know the experiences and interests of the group.

(Note to members: We will include a headshot professional photo in addition to your responses to the questions below. This information will be shared with others, so please respond to the questions that are most comfortable for you.)

- In a few sentences, what is your background that relates to this work (i.e. lived experience, areas of study, professional work or associations)?
- What is your "why" that grounds you in environmental and social justice work (1-3 sentences)?

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- What do you hope to accomplish in the workgroup (1-3 sentences)?
- What communities are you a part of (list a few of the most significant to your personal identity)?
- What is your favorite dish (few words)?
- What are your hobbies (list 1-5)?