



OUTWARD BOUND USA

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion at Outward Bound USA

2024 Action Plan

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**OUTWARD
BOUND USA**

Our Vision for Impact & Organizational Goals

VISION FOR IMPACT

Outward Bound USA aims to support, amplify, and grow the capacity of our regional schools, where students are prepared with 21st-century skills to be ready for work, life, and civic leadership in an evolving world. Our work is guided by an unwavering commitment to our students, equity, adventure, and safety.

Between 2023 and 2030, OBUSA supports this work through targeted initiatives designed to:

- create new and expanded capacity in regional schools by positioning OB as an educational partner to parents, schools, and corporations;
- accelerate access to the outdoors for underrepresented communities;
- provide a leading-edge research and development engine that will continuously improve program outcomes; and
- cultivate a workplace that attracts, develops, and retains the best outdoor educators and administrative professionals in the United States.

ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS (OVERVIEW)

Pathway One: Become a Learning Organization

- 1.1 Create system-wide alignment
- 1.2 Create shared system for program quality
- 1.3 Advance Outward Bound & The Field Through Research & Thought Leadership
- 1.4 Continue our growth through change

Pathway Two: Become a Symbiotic System

- 2.1 Identify key elements of high-performing symbiotic systems
- 2.2 Create connected OB community
- 2.3 Incentivize processes & procedures that enhance & reward collaboration
- 2.4 Build alignment & unity across OB in the USA

Pathway Three: Become a Talent Magnet

- 3.1 Set national HR & compensation standards
- 3.2 Nationally delivered professional development
- 3.3 Maximize employee engagement

Pathway Four: Become Future-Proof

- 4.1 Support healthy schools
- 4.2 Develop multiyear financial strategy
- 4.3 Brand elevation & stewardship
- 4.4 Build generative communities

Pathway Five: Build Strategic Partnerships

- 5.1 Develop national partnership product
- 5.2 Develop & resource national partnership acquisition & management plan
- 5.3 Become compelling storytellers

Core Functions

The Core Functions outlined below represent the cross-departmental impact of our Action Plan:

Learning & Evaluation

- Student experience life cycle
- Curriculum
- Building relationships with Indigenous Communities
- Program Partnerships
- Program Design
- Training & Evaluations

Brand & Marketing

- Content aligned with DEI values
- School website audits and alignment
- OBUSA Annual Report
- Audit current PR matrix
- Internal communications

Learning & Evaluation

- Develop national standards for facilities to ensure ADA and ABA compliance
- Embed Universal Design principles
- Ensure diversity of identities and stories are represented at each physical location
- Building Relationships with Indigenous Communities

Vendors

- Develop vendor alignment assessment for current vendors
- Audit current vendor list against assessment
- Develop Standard Operating Procedures for new vendors

Environmental Impact

- Carbon footprint measurement and offsets
- Land management partnerships
- Staff transportation incentives (bike, walk, bus, etc.) connected to benefits

People & Culture

- Career Pathways
- Benefits
- Compensation
- Recruiting
- Retention
- Onboarding
- Learning and development
- Awards/Recognition
- Culture

Advancement/Development

- Fundraising materials

Risk & Safety

- Medical Screening
- Safety Culture
- Incident Response
- Staff Qualifications
- Risk tolerance alignment
- Reporting and Investigations



Pathway One: Become a Learning Organization



How will Outward Bound USA become a Learning Organization?

With equal parts skill building and culture work, Outward Bound will become a learning organization that is skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge and modifying its behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights. Outward Bound USA will use this pathway to change how we work, continuously improve program curriculum, understand the impact of our equity efforts, and nurture expansive thinking and innovative ideas to solve future demands.

1.1 Create system-wide alignment (programs)

- Support Theory of Change messaging and socialization to clarify the role of DEI in the student experience
- Identity messaging manual includes guidance on communicating our commitment to DEI and where it fits in our Theory of Change and organizational development work
- Support hiring of Learning & Evaluation positions

1.2 Create shared system for program quality

- Participate in Program Quality Improvement working group; establish consistent demographic categories to attach to relevant outcomes and other measurements
- Define core DEI instructor competencies
- Incorporate DEI review as part of curriculum development process
- Include equity considerations (or equivalent) into curriculum/program model template
- Support system participation in Listen 4 Good process
- Bring DEI lens to definition/delineation of Open Enrollment program outcomes
- Bring DEI lens to development of core group program offerings continuum and program definition
- Support creation of best practices for program mix

1.3 Advance Outward Bound & The Field Through Research & Thought Leadership

- Create informative campaigns to engage our communities (ie: Mental Health Awareness Month)
- Create plan for research on Outward Bound's efforts to purposefully include students/alumni from disinvested identity groups
- Identify and implement a system for consistent reporting of student demographics from Regional Schools

1.4 Continue our growth through change

- Unify system's definitions of DEI
- Socialize OB USA's DEI Action Plan and begin process of school's creation of similar plans
- Create and share a communal DEI intranet across our system (Goal: 20% of system full time staff engagement)

Pathway Two: Become a Symbiotic System

How will Outward Bound USA become a Symbiotic System?



Outward Bound USA will nurture a values-driven, engaged, and connected national community. We will prioritize exceptional governance practices and systems that incentivize collaboration and foster internal and external communications. Most importantly, we'll nurture professional learning communities and professional development that build a supportive and inclusive workplace.

2.1 Identify key elements of high-performing symbiotic systems

- Support understanding of key attributes we are looking for (generative conflict, power & identity, etc.)
- Create culture at OBUSA that centers disinvested communities

2.2 Create a connected OB community

- Support system-wide information sharing projects
- Create monthly DEI updates to OBUSA DEI SharePoint site
- Support Marketing team in digital content review
 - Provide semi-annual website updates
- Create DEI National Council

2.3 Incentivize processes & procedures that enhance & reward collaboration

- Support system-wide information sharing projects across departments
- Develop system-wide standards for student demographic information to be collected

2.4 Build alignment & unity across OB in the USA

- Support creation of best practices for program mix and model and include in charter requirements and connect to charter update process

Pathway Three: Become a Talent Magnet

How will Outward Bound USA become a Talent Magnet?



OBUSA will support an environment in which the best educators, outdoor professionals, and NGO administrators are drawn to Outward Bound as an employer of choice representing the communities we serve.

We will do this by leading the industry in equitable pay, practices, and policies designed to grow a diverse workforce. That workforce will be supported by a competitive compensation package, professional development programs designed to close the gender and racial promotion gaps, and the demystification of the employee career path within the organization.

3.1 Set national HR & compensation standards

- Collaborate with HR Director to create HR standards
- Establish clear and unified employee demographic categories

3.2 Nationally delivered professional development

- Support creation of national professional development opportunities
- Support creation of "Emerging Leaders" and Mentorship programs
- Deliver BIPOC-centered workshop series
- Collaborate with HR Director and Director of Learning & Evaluation on training and development

3.3 Maximize employee engagement

- Support development of plan for network Learning Management System
- Collaborate with HR Director on employee engagement data collection
- Collaborate with HR Director to develop national recruitment and retention strategy
- Launch 4 Network Resource Groups (NRGs)

Pathway Four: Become Future-Proof



How will Outward Bound USA become Future-Proof?

We can't predict the future, but we can prepare for it. We will prepare by proactively managing organizational risk and building a sound multiyear financial plan fortified by engaged donors and alumni. Through best practice sharing, OBUSA will support the growth of Outward Bound regional school revenue in previously unengaged communities.

4.1 Support healthy schools

- Support creation of the Healthy School Assessment
- Launch School DEI Action Planning process

4.2 Develop multiyear financial strategy

- Support pro forma budget utilization to ensure equity in distribution of resources
- Embed DEI into investment and impact campaign(s)
- Audit school expense and reimbursement policies
- Work with CFO to create expenditure philosophy and better tracking system
- Work with CFO and CAO to understand current strengths and opportunities in financial strategy related to DEI

4.3 Brand elevation & stewardship

- Work with brand & marketing consultant
- Collaborate with Brand & Marketing team to create OB USA approach and standards to its marketing that effectively communicate DEI values and work

4.4 Build generative communities

- Support Governance consultant's work
- Support Board assessment and target creation
- Support Advancement team in Alumni program building

Pathway Five: Build Strategic Partnerships



How will Outward Bound USA build Strategic Partnerships?

We will identify and pursue partnerships with youth-serving organizations, philanthropists, and national brands whose values and goals align with those of Outward Bound. We will build a first-rate relationship management system to acquire and steward partners. Outward Bound partnerships will generate narratives that move and inspire. We will become skilled storytellers who share the impact of Outward Bound and its partners.

5.1 Develop national partnership product

- Refine understanding of baseline student demographic data
- Support national partnership product creation
- National Group Program "product" includes DEI considerations and appropriate training for Regional Schools' staff to deliver
- Audit existing partnerships against DEI partnership assessment

5.2 Develop & resource national partnership acquisition & management plan

- Create partner DEI assessment and include policies and procedures for system-wide partnership acquisition
- Support development of new relationships across the Outdoor Recreation Economy

5.3 Become compelling storytellers

- Collaborate with Brand & Marketing team to develop the guidelines and best practices for content capture and creation
- Ensure storytelling is in line with equity values

Glossary & Contact

DIVERSITY

The differences between us based on which we experience advantages or encounter barriers to opportunities.

INCLUSION

Fostering a sense of belonging by centering, valuing and amplifying the voices, perspectives and styles of those who experience more barriers based on their identities.

EQUALITY

Giving everyone the same thing without recognizing advantages and/or barriers they experience.

EQUITY

Allocating resources to ensure everyone has access to the same resources & opportunities. Equity recognizes that advantages and barriers—the ‘isms’—exist. Equity is the approach & equality is the outcome.

JUSTICE

Is about dismantling barriers to resources and opportunities in society so that all individuals & communities can live a full & dignified life. These barriers are essentially the “isms” in society: racism, classism, sexism, etc.

CULTURAL COMPETENCE

Your ability to interact effectively across various dimensions of diversity; to flex with difference.



QUESTIONS?

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For more information about Outward Bound USA's DEI efforts:

www.outwardbound.org/our-difference/equity-statement