

DEI as a key ingredient for sustainable growth

With inewssource, City Bureau and
Oaklandside

Join the conversation with **#ONA21**



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Lorie Hearn
CEO and Editor, *inewssource*



inewssource.org



How it started

- *inewssource* opened doors nearly 12 years ago
- **2020 was a reckoning.** Started with a twitter thread, criticizing the lack of diversity in San Diego newsrooms, including *inewssource*

THE DEI Audit entailed

- Hired a consultant to conduct an inclusion survey
- Analyzed the results

Then came the hard part ...

Processing what was really hard to hear

Your basic assumptions are **WRONG**

- Questions about our commitment to diversity
- We talk more than act
- We value diversity because it matters to donors
- The org is too white and writes for white people

What now?

Time to reflect: Did I have what it would take to lead us through this?

The choice was hard but clear: **Pull up my socks and listen**

Embrace the rocky road ahead ...

DEI Priorities

Hired an **expert** to help us all talk about the issues and chart the way forward. We identified **6 priorities**:

- Inclusion in the Organization
- Diverse, Inclusive and Equitable Journalism Practices
- Diversifying inewsource
- Diversifying Governance and Funding
- Community Engagement
- Organizational Mission

The ongoing journey

Vision:

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is part of everything we do as an organization and who we are: our content, our staff, our board and our supporters.

The ongoing journey, cont:

- Staff wanted to work on all the priorities at the same time
- Time commitment for each person per priority area was between six and 12 hours a month. Some people were on more than one committee
- Action items scheduled in 90-day sprints
- Outside facilitator through Global Equity Collective: So far, more than 150 hours

Here's why I think we are so much better off

- **Open, constant discussions of inclusivity** in news meetings and general discussions
- **Protocols for hiring** to ensure equity. These include hiring committees, inclusive language in job postings, rigorous recruitment
- **Trainings** that continue: implicit bias, allyship, difficult conversations
- **Board** is on board

As a leader, it's up to you

- **Hope for the best; prepare for the worst**
- Keep an **open mind** and keep your defensiveness in check
- Be ready for serious **self-reflection**
- **Listen, listen and listen** more
- **Tough decisions are not always intuitive**

**Are you prepared for the
brutal truth?**

**How will you lead through
change?**



Bettina Chang
Co-Founder and Executive Editorial
Director, City Bureau



Equity as mission

- City Bureau is a civic journalism lab serving communities of color on Chicago's South and West Sides.
- We bring journalists and communities together in a collaborative spirit to produce media that is impactful, equitable and responsive to the public.



Three-step equity framework

- Just Action: Equity means action



ACKNOWLEDGE HISTORY

How has systemic and structural racism shaped historical and current events?



SHIFT POWER

How do we shift power to groups that have been historically marginalized or harmed?



EMBRACE ACCOUNTABILITY

How do we set up systems of accountability that value numbers and narratives?

Three-step equity framework

- Just Action: Equity means action



ACKNOWLEDGE HISTORY

Media has caused harm to our communities. We pledge to change our practices.



SHIFT POWER

What are we good at, and how does that give us power? What do you think we should do with the power we have?



EMBRACE ACCOUNTABILITY

Here is what we will do, and how we'll do it. If we don't follow through, here is how you can tell us.

Reimagining what journalists do



Public Newsroom

a free monthly public workshop for folks who wants to build community and use media to create a stronger democracy.



Documenters

where anybody can sign up to get free trainings and paid assignments to attend and document public governance meetings.



Reporting Fellowship

where emerging reporters and experienced journalists team up to pursue big-picture stories affecting our neighbors on the South and West Sides.

What value do you create for your community?



And is it what they want and need from you?

Jacob Simas

Managing Editor, The Oaklandside





Thank you!

Now it's time for audience Q&A. Put your questions in the chat!

Be sure to visit the ONA21 Midway!