



Honoring different cultures in Seattle has become a driving principle of program and event design for Friends of Waterfront Seattle. Photo by: Adam Lu, Friends of Waterfront Seattle

HIGH LINE NETWORK CASE STUDY

Committing to Equity Inside and Out

Organization: Friends of Waterfront Seattle

Park: [Waterfront Seattle](#)

Location: Seattle, WA

Infrastructure type: Waterfront

Theme: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Project phase: Open

Successful equity-based work depends on serious inner reflection—and Friends of Waterfront Seattle has taken a deep look into the mirror.

As the manager of a future 20-acre green space along Seattle’s downtown shoreline, Friends’ honest self-assessment has led to changes in hiring and accountability to staff. Instead of conventional cover letters, they invite job applicants to share what Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) means to them. Staff can join a Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)

caucus or a white caucus. There's a biweekly DEI book club and monthly all-staff DEI training, where they discuss everything from self-care to preventing burnout.

The effort to diversify the staff hasn't gone unnoticed. According to Friends, community partners—including elder indigenous tribal leaders—said they noticed the shift in representation. The organization has also added land acknowledgment and public equity statements to their website and across all their public-facing communications. The latter is: "Friends of Waterfront Seattle (Friends) recognizes and acknowledges historic and existing systemic racism embedded in our city. Friends is committed to becoming an anti-racist organization by prioritizing racial equity inside the organization and the public spaces we operate. Our goal is to continually cultivate inclusive spaces where all people—specifically Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) as well as underserved communities—are invited and welcome to enjoy Waterfront Park."

Related Resources:

[CFT Case Study: Committing to Equity, Inside and Out](#)

WHO WE ARE

Presented by the High Line, the High Line Network is a group of infrastructure reuse projects—and the people who help them come to life. As cities become denser and land for traditional parks becomes more scarce, residents are finding creative ways to bring greenspace to their neighborhoods. Projects in the High Line Network transform underutilized infrastructure into new urban landscapes. Redefining what a park can be, these hybrid spaces are also public squares, open-air museums, botanical gardens, social service organizations, walkways, transit corridors, and more. For more information about the High Line Network, please visit network.thehighline.org