



OREGON HOUSING & COMMUNITY SERVICES

# MULTIFAMILY

## Energy Program

### DEI Coalition Framework

April 2024

Prepared by Unrooz Solutions, Encolor, and TRC for Oregon Housing & Community Services



This document outlines the steps and process that the Oregon Housing & Community Services (OHCS) Multifamily Energy Program (OR-MEP) team followed to create a DEI Coalition in 2021. It includes best practices, lessons learned, and approaches to design and facilitate a coalition based on the OR-MEP team's experience. The learnings can be adapted and applied to any coalition.

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## Acronyms

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The following acronyms will be used throughout this document:

- ◆ **OHCS:** Oregon Housing and Community Services
- ◆ **OR-MEP:** Oregon Multifamily Energy Program
- ◆ **DEI:** Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- ◆ **BIPOC:** Black, Indigenous, and People of Color
- ◆ **CBO:** Community-Based Organization

## Glossary

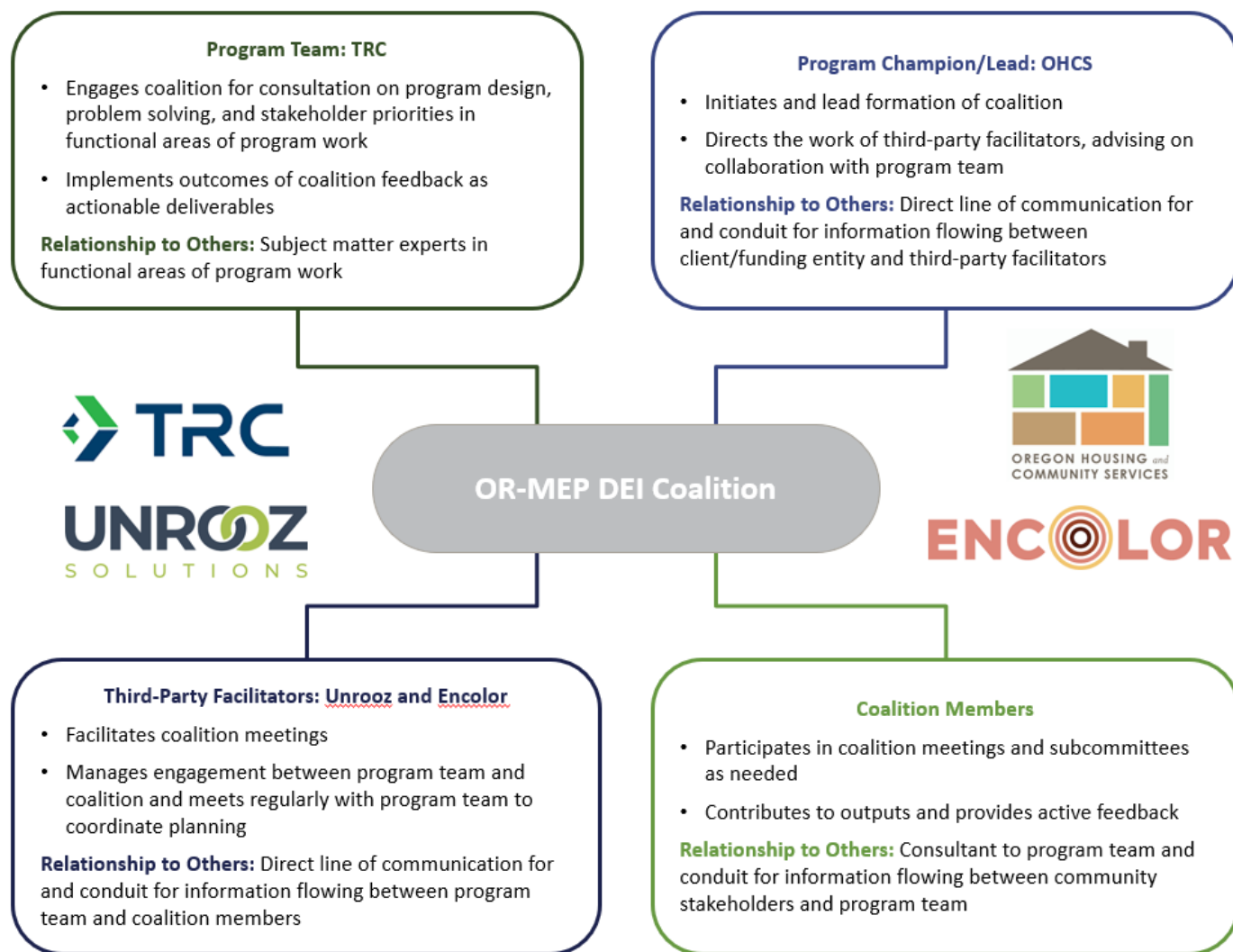
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The following definitions are agreed upon by members of the OR-MEP DEI Coalition and are intended to evolve within the landscape of Coalition work.

- ◆ **OR-MEP DEI Coalition:** The Coalition is a group of stakeholders who analyze, recommend, and influence changes to make OR-MEP more accessible to all customers, particularly those who have historically been harmed, redlined, and/or carried the burden of environmental injustice and climate change. The Coalition supports OR-MEP's DEI plan creation and shares insight that helps the team better understand barriers to participation. The Coalition also recommends modifications to the program and policies to better serve customers of color, those who have been historically harmed, those with a primary language other than English, those living in rural communities, and those navigating low incomes.
- ◆ **Stakeholders:** For the purposes of the Coalition, the term "stakeholders" encompasses energy efficiency professionals, representatives of CBOs, people engaged in workforce development, affordable housing staff, affordable housing residents, people who live and work in rural communities, people with expertise in financing, members of Indigenous Tribes in Oregon, and people with expertise in public or community health.
- ◆ **Diversity:** A commitment to diversity is demonstrated by acknowledging both tangible and intangible differences between community members and considering their varied needs and priorities in policy design and service delivery.
- ◆ **Inclusion:** An inclusive environment is one where all community members feel safe to participate and are appreciated for their contributions, regardless of how they are different from or similar to other people.
- ◆ **Equity:** To practice equity is to honor "Diversity" and practice "Inclusion" by offering adequate tools and resources that meet everyone's needs and preferences, allowing them to thrive.
- ◆ **Priority Communities:** Priority communities are those where residents are most impacted by negative economic, mobility, community and health and safety outcomes.

## Coalition Roles and Responsibilities

Figure 1 illustrates the primary roles and responsibilities associated with the OR-MEP DEI Coalition.



**Figure 1. Roles and Responsibilities for OR-MEP DEI Coalition**

## Section 1: Introduction

OR-MEP is committed to equitably serving the people of Oregon and disrupting systems that maintain inequality within the energy industry and beyond. On June 3, 2020, OHCS made a commitment to anti-racism work in this [Special Director's Message](#), excerpted below.

"[In] order to disrupt entrenched systems that perpetuate racial inequality, we at OHCS must do the work of 'getting our own house in order.' Transformative systems change requires truth telling and accountability ... As we move forward, we will continue listening to Black, Indigenous and other people of color and joining together to support fierce struggles for equity and justice ... OHCS affirms our support for Black, Brown and Indigenous people in OHCS and in the diverse communities we serve."

*Margaret Solle Salazar, Executive Director*

As an initial step, OR-MEP initiated development of an overarching DEI plan. The team quickly realized that the DEI plan and resulting actions should be developed in collaboration with affordable housing stakeholders throughout Oregon—including residents, staff, and industry professionals—to have the greatest impact and be representative of community needs. To this end, in 2022 the program paused work on the internally developed DEI plan and instead established the OR-MEP DEI Coalition. The DEI Coalition's purpose is to recommend and influence changes to the OR-MEP program to make it more accessible to all, especially customers with the greatest need who have not yet benefited from the program. **Appendix A** provides a more detailed history and description of purpose.

The following DEI Coalition Framework outlines the processes used to form and facilitate the OR-MEP DEI Coalition as well as lessons learned to-date. We share our firsthand experiences alongside a set of best practices that can be used as a foundation by those interested in establishing a similar coalition, adaptable for specific organizational or program needs.

OR-MEP intends the framework to serve as a dynamic document that will be updated regularly as we learn more from one another and experience the Coalition's impact. The team embraces a central philosophy: *We're on this journey together, and sharing our progress is part of our commitment to transparency and trusting the process.*

### Why a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee?

Integrating DEI into a program fosters equitable outcomes and ensures consideration of diverse perspectives. Forming a *DEI coalition* within a program ensures that DEI principles are actively embedded in the program's culture and reflected by its activities. Key benefits of integrating a DEI coalition into program implementation include:

- ◆ **Increased innovation and creativity:** A well-formed coalition brings together people with diverse backgrounds, perspectives, lived experiences from varied geographical locations,

cultures, and ethnicities. The breadth of knowledge within the coalition leads to holistic and effective solutions.

- ◆ **Enhanced decision-making through counteracting of bias:** [Unconscious bias](#) is an inherent part of human decision-making; we must all be aware of our own individual implicit and explicit biases. A coalition of diverse perspectives challenges assumptions and results in informed, well-rounded approaches that reduce the likelihood of biased outcomes. Coalition members can hold each other accountable to avoid bias and consider their impact within the committee and society.
- ◆ **Greater stakeholder buy-in:** Coalitions demonstrate to program participants and other external stakeholders that decisions and recommended changes are made with input from a diverse group of members. When stakeholders see themselves and their needs reflected by the coalition, they are likely to trust the process has been designed with equity in mind.
- ◆ **Creation of trust in the market:** Coalitions are often formed in a way that ensures a representative sample of stakeholders can shape program solutions and ensure equitable approaches are taken within a specific line of work. While every decision might not align with the choices a stakeholder may have made on their own, consensus decision-making demonstrates the program's interest in sharing power and establishes a sense of trust.
- ◆ **Address systemic inequity:** Coalitions build a sense of confidence that the program or organization welcomes all perspectives as well as an understanding of how the work helps target larger systems of power or inequity even if the program is unable to have direct, immediate impact. The cycle of building trust plays a crucial role in ensuring cooperation between local governing bodies and community members, all of whom must trust that the program provides equal access to resources, services, and opportunities while reducing disparities.

## Section 2: Best Practices for Building Coalitions

### 2.1 Goal-Setting

Coalition-building should start with the end goal in mind. Programs or organizations typically decide to convene a coalition to address a problem or goal that will benefit from the inclusion of diverse perspectives. Prior to recruiting coalition members, the group should begin by developing a clear shared understanding of what the coalition hopes to accomplish. For instance, the OR-MEP DEI Coalition established a priority goal of improving program accessibility for communities where households are likely to spend a higher-than-average percentage of their income on energy bills.

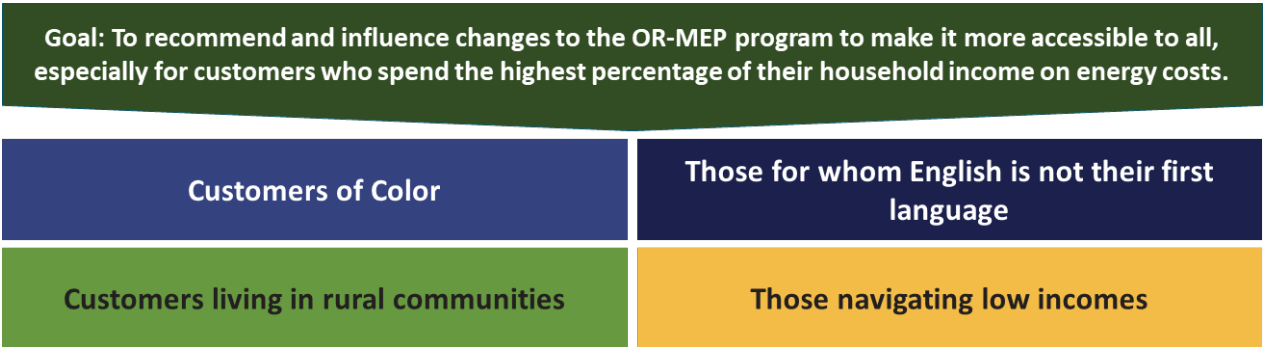


Figure 2. DEI Coalition Vision

After determining these primary goals, organizations can begin to identify what sort of lived and learned experience and diverse perspectives the coalition will benefit from. The OR-MEP team realized it could not achieve its goals if the coalition it convened did not reflect those the program seeks to serve. Coalition members were therefore recruited with a focus on representing diverse backgrounds and experiences, including affordable housing property managers, owners, and finance specialists; residents and community members; CBO representatives; community or public health workers; workforce development specialists; and energy industry professionals. This targeted approach to recruitment and inclusive membership ultimately proved paramount to the coalition’s success.



Figure 3. DEI Coalition Membership Structure



In convening the DEI Coalition, OR-MEP also sought to authentically represent Oregon’s geographically, racially, culturally, and experientially diverse stakeholders in affordable housing to ensure that program actions are culturally competent, and their impacts achieve the goals set forth by OCHS’s Anti-Racism statement. While the first round of recruitment did not result in all the desired representation, a more targeted approach in the second round of recruitment allowed us to fill all seats successfully. You can find further details in Section 2.4.5 below.



## Best Practice

Anyone convening a coalition should consider the motto “For, By, With: for the people, by the people, with the people.” Being intentional about which individuals should be a [member of the coalition](#) and ensuring representation across a variety of areas directly contributes to coalition success. Segments of coalition participants might include:

- ◆ Stakeholders who are most affected by the issue, including current or potential program participants, people who lack access to basic amenities tied to coalition priorities, and people who live in priority communities;
- ◆ Stakeholders who are employed with carrying out community functions related to program activities or those who might be affected by coalition decisions, such as landlords or program staff;
- ◆ Trusted community leaders who can influence large numbers of people, such as clergy, business, or civic leaders;
- ◆ Stakeholders who work in the industry for which the coalition is focused on delivering programs; and
- ◆ Policy-makers who support the coalition’s work to drive equitable change.

The coalition should be reflective of the broader impacted community. A diversity-focused coalition in which all members live in the same geographic community will not represent the lived experiences of people in a town two hours away, even if they face similar barriers. Considerations for identity groups, including but not limited to race, age, gender, religion, socioeconomic status, ability, and geography can all help inform recruitment of an inclusive group of coalition members. Establishing a goal for representation upfront can pave the way for other important considerations, such as who will facilitate the coalition, how coalition work will be structured, and how members will be recruited.

## 2.2 Determining Meeting Logistics



## Best Practice

The process of deciding whether coalition meetings should be held virtually or in person should consider a wide range of factors, including members’ geographic location and schedules, ability to compensate participants for time spent in transit, and logistical challenges like parking or childcare.

Many pros and cons exist for each option, and either approach has the potential to isolate some prospective participants. Organizations should consider in advance what barriers participants might encounter to meeting in the chosen location and/or format and put protections in place to support participants facing these barriers, such as providing the technology participants will need to engage virtually or hosting coalition meetings only at times agreed-upon by all members. Recruitment goals should influence this decision, as specific stakeholder segments will be better suited to one format or the other.



## OR-MEP Experience

The OR-MEP DEI Coalition decided to meet virtually for two primary reasons:

1. **We want to include members from geographically diverse parts of the state.** Being virtual means people who live outside of Portland Metro can participate.
2. **We can allocate resources for travel to a central location.** The OR-MEP DEI Coalition hosts an annual in-person meeting for members to connect and get to know each other. We align that gathering with the Housing Oregon conference to increase participation and avoid overburdening our coalition. Whenever possible, convening where members might already be supports deeper engagement.

Despite these affordances, we recognize that some participants would prefer to meet in person. We constantly assess any roadblocks to information-sharing, access to technology, collaboration, and participation posed by virtual meetings as they arise. We also plan for at least one in-person meeting during the year, as these meetings enable a freer flow of discussion that allows coalition members to interact and get to know each other better. Historically we have planned in-person meetings adjacent to the Housing Oregon Conference, which many program team and coalition members attend.

## 2.3 Third-Party Facilitation



### Best Practice

Though many coalitions are facilitated by the sponsoring program, involvement of a [third-party facilitator](#) ensures that coalition meetings and discussions are as productive as possible. Third-party facilitators provide:

- ◆ An objective outside perspective to help maintain neutrality and fairness in the discussions, thus reducing the risk of internal biases or connections that affect the fairness of the system
- ◆ Training and experience navigating challenging conversations around the subject matter and/or DEI and justice to manage conflicts and group dynamics within the coalition
- ◆ Approaches to ensure that all voices are heard, part of the concerted effort to create an inclusive environment
- ◆ Safe spaces for open, honest dialogue and discourse to foster trust among coalition members
- ◆ Time and resources needed to manage the coalition effectively.

A third-party facilitator serves as an expert on the *process*, not the *content*. They help the subject matter experts arrive at consensus while navigating disparate perspectives, competing priorities, and other concerns. This structure works best when a facilitator is determined before coalition recruitment begins, providing the facilitator with sufficient time to become familiar with the organization's history, culture, and expectations, as well as the program they will support. Organizations should provide an adequate budget and timeline to set the coalition up for success during this early but important stage.



## Best Practice

Ensuring that the team of facilitators has [at least two trained personnel](#) who can interchangeably take on the responsibility of leading the discussions is another best practice, particularly for large groups and virtual gatherings. Virtual meetings require facilitators to simultaneously manage technology, pay attention to the in-session chat, and absorb people's responses and reactions. Large groups create similarly competing priorities. Two facilitators can support one another in managing logistics and the discussion simultaneously. They also ensure that the program team and coalition members feel supported and that the facilitator's availability does not limit progress.



## OR-MEP Experience

In the case of the OR-MEP DEI Coalition, the program team brought on Encolor and Unrooz Solutions, hereinafter referred to as the facilitation team, to serve as co-facilitators. As experts in facilitation, DEI, justice, and managing coalitions, these two entities function as a liaison between the program team and the coalition. They also help move coalition work forward while ensuring accountability from the program on action needed to support coalition goals. The facilitation team manages all communications with the coalition and provides as unbiased a perspective as possible to ensure that the coalition's ideas are communicated back to the program team and reflected in the work. The facilitation team also supported the development of recruitment materials and participated in the interview process during coalition formation.

## 2.4 Recruitment

The OR-MEP team finalized selection of the first round of members seven months after announcing the decision to form a coalition, as illustrated in the timeline below.



**Figure 4. DEI Coalition Development Timeline**

## 2.4.1 Recruitment Approach



### Best Practice

After determining desired coalition representation – who you want “at the table” – recruitment should be tailored to best engage this target audience. Communicating across multiple platforms in [plain language](#) ensures that any given audience can understand material the first time they read it. Plain language communication emphasizes commonly known terminology versus industry jargon, short words and sentences, and bulleted lists. Its perspective centers on the reader, through strategies like the use of “you” in the written document. Distributing materials in a variety of print and digital formats in a variety of places helps cast the widest net so that prospective coalition members can easily learn about the benefits of participation from recruitment materials.



### OR-MEP Experience

To support OR-MEP’s priority of equitable recruitment, the recruitment process featured materials designed to be accessible for all potential candidates and sought to equally value candidates’ lived experience and professional background. Our promotional strategy used both formal and informal tactics, including:

- ◆ Outreach to relevant CBOs to promote the application process to their communities
- ◆ Outreach to OR-MEP properties to encourage applications from residents and staff
- ◆ Collateral materials at relevant events such as Housing Oregon conference or community engagement events (see Figure 5)
- ◆ Word-of-mouth from program team and coalition participants.

**Residents – Get paid for your input**  
Join the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Coalition

We want to hear what matters to you as a resident in affordable housing.

The Oregon Multifamily Energy Program (OR-MEP) helps buildings like yours use less energy and reduce utility costs. Our DEI Coalition is helping the program to serve people who can benefit the most, and we need your help! As a Coalition member, you can expect:

- Paid position (\$300 per hour)
- An inclusive, honest, and respectful working environment
- 3-5 hours of work per month
- Monthly online Coalition meetings via Zoom\*

**Apply Now!**

- To learn more and apply online, visit [oregonmultifamilyenergy.com/dei](http://oregonmultifamilyenergy.com/dei) and click on “How to Get Involved.”
- To apply by mail, call (503) 505-6787 or email [OHCSMultifamilyEnergy@TRCcompanies.com](mailto:OHCSMultifamilyEnergy@TRCcompanies.com) to request a paper application.
- This position will be open until filled.

\*If needed, OR-MEP will provide high-speed internet access and/or a tablet for Coalition members to take part in Zoom meetings.

503 505 6787  
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www.oregonmultifamilyenergy.com

**OregonMultifamilyEnergy.com/dei**

Now accepting applications: Join the OR-MEP Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Coalition

Get paid to help shape the future of affordable housing in Oregon by joining the OR-MEP DEI Coalition. The goal of the DEI Coalition is to ensure that the program is accessible to all and that the program is serving the most vulnerable populations in our community.

We are currently seeking Coalition members to serve in the following roles:

- Resident Training Program Manager or Coach
- Resident Training Program Specialist
- Resident Training Program Coordinator
- Resident Training Program Assistant
- Resident Training Program Support
- Resident Training Program Support

Applications are due January 19, 2023 at 11:59 PM PST

**Learn More**

**Informational Webinar**  
January 16, 2023, 10:00 – 12:00 PM PST

The Informational Webinar will provide an overview of the OR-MEP DEI Coalition, including the roles and responsibilities of Coalition members, and answer questions about the program.

**Q&A Session**  
January 17 – 21, 2023

The Q&A Session will provide an opportunity for residents and staff to ask questions about the program and the Coalition.

**Frequently Asked Questions**  
Frequently asked questions about the OR-MEP DEI Coalition are available on the website.

**Download the Call for Applications**

**Watch the recording of this webinar**

**Check out the FAQs (available after January 19)**

**Quick link to apply**

**Sign up for a Q&A session (Taking place January 17-21)**

**Send questions via email**  
[OHCSMultifamilyEnergy@TRCcompanies.com](mailto:OHCSMultifamilyEnergy@TRCcompanies.com)

**Figure 5. DEI Coalition Recruitment Flyer and Call for Application Promotion on Website**

We also provided the following opportunities for prospective applicants to learn more during recruitment:

- ◆ [Overview webinar](#) hosted live and uploaded as a recording
- ◆ Multiple online Q&A sessions during and after business hours
- ◆ Responses to questions via email throughout application period
- ◆ Online list of frequently asked questions (FAQ), updated whenever additional questions were asked, to give all candidates equal access to information.



## Best Practice

Offering both compensation and technical support to participants can significantly enhance recruitment outcomes, particularly within priority populations. Compensating members demonstrates that their expertise is acknowledged and valued, thus reinforcing their commitment. Additionally, providing technical support minimizes participation barriers, fostering accessibility, inclusivity, and equity. These measures not only demonstrate the organization's dedication to DEI but also signify an investment in resources and support for coalition members.



## OR-MEP Experience

OR-MEP's recruitment approach made it clear and transparent that coalition members would receive compensation commensurate with a competitive consulting rate in the energy industry. We also confirmed that we would provide technological support for any member who needed one or more of the following: high-speed internet, internet-enabled device, webcam, or headset.

### 2.4.2 Recruitment Materials

The OR-MEP DEI Coalition practiced plain language in all recruitment materials; the call for applications, which includes key information about how to apply, background information about the OR-MEP; and the online application form. Sample recruitment materials are included in [Appendix B](#).

In addition to practicing plain language across all documents and providing regular email updates about the application process, the simplified [online application form](#) included 13 questions, four of which collected contact info, that centered on candidate experience and demographics rather than writing or language skills. We intentionally deprioritized written responses by including just three questions that asked for a written response, only one of which was required. An excerpt from the application form can be seen in Figure 6.

7. Which of the following describes you? Select all that apply. \*

- ☐ Affordable housing resident (current or former)
- ☐ Leader or member of a community-based organization that serves Black, Indigenous, or People of Color, individuals for whom English is not their first language, those living in rural communities, and/or those navigating low incomes
- ☐ Affordable housing property owner or staff
- ☐ Community or Public Health Worker
- ☐ Affordable housing finance professional
- ☐ Workforce development specialist
- ☐ Energy industry professional
- ☐ Other

8. OR-MEP was developed by people who are predominantly white and live in urban areas. The program needs to also be shaped by people with other perspectives.

Which of the following describes you? Select all that apply. \*

- ☐ Black, Indigenous, and/or Person of Color (BIPOC)
- ☐ Member of an Oregon Tribe
- ☐ Live or work in a rural area
- ☐ None of the above

**Figure 6. Selected Questions from DEI Coalition Application Form**

OR-MEP organized candidate meet-and-greets to facilitate interaction between the program team and potential members, providing candidates with a standardized set of questions at least one day before the event to help them prepare. These meet-and-greets fostered two-way conversations: the program team could assess the candidates, while the candidates could also evaluate the DEI Coalition membership position.

### 2.4.3 Candidate Evaluation



#### Best Practice

When evaluating coalition applicants, organizations scoring rubric should be designed in a way that reduces or prevents the influence of implicit bias. The scoring rubric is a tool to evaluate candidates consistently and objectively based on predefined criteria set by the program team. Criteria may include factors that are important to the program such as diverse lived experiences that bring a better understanding of program impacts in the community. The selection committee should be comprised of individuals who are committed to fairness, inclusivity, and effectiveness in the selection process.



#### OR-MEP Experience

The OR-MEP selection committee consisted of one OHCS staff member and two program implementation team members. The team chose to assign minimum and maximum point values to each meet-and-greet question. Descriptions of what each point value meant, and examples of potential answers helped guide reviewers to:

- ◆ Maintain focus on the purpose and intent of each question
- ◆ Evaluate responses consistently between candidates
- ◆ Evaluate candidate responses consistently with other reviewers

Scoring did not consider any responses to the “optional” questions, nor a candidate’s need for technology accommodations. OR-MEP weighted scoring criteria to prioritize candidates who contributed lived experience within target populations. [Appendix B](#) includes a more detailed breakdown of scoring criteria.

Question	Topic	Max Points	Percent of Total / Weight
1-6	Contact info	Not scored	
7	Council role options	1	12.5%
8	BIPOC, Rural	6	75%
9	Program / energy burden knowledge	1	12.5%
10	History of advocacy	Not scored	
11	“Why”	Not scored	
12	Tech accommodation	Not scored	
13	Other info	Not scored	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Figure 7. Sample Candidate Scoring Criteria**

#### 2.4.4 2021 OR-MEP Recruitment Outcomes

Supported by a selection committee and a carefully developed scoring process, OR-MEP achieved the following outcomes through the first round of the coalition recruitment:

- ◆ Seventeen total applications received
- ◆ Sixteen candidate meet-and-greets held (one candidate did not respond to invitations)
- ◆ Nine out of a targeted twelve DEI Coalition members selected
- ◆ Four alternate coalition members identified

While the first round of recruitment did not achieve identified demographic goals for applicants, we were more successful in the second round due to more targeted outreach, a larger network and better digital presence. For example, the dedicated [OR-MEP DEI Coalition Page](#) directly called out priority recruitment needs in rural and Tribal communities, providing prospective applicants with a better understanding of the community they would be joining through coalition participation. The current OR-MEP DEI Coalition includes members representing:

- ◆ Affordable housing Manager/owner/developer
- ◆ Affordable housing Resident
- ◆ Energy Efficiency professional
- ◆ Public health worker
- ◆ Community Based Organization leader/member

Coalition members also include:

- ◆ Members of an Oregon Tribe
- ◆ Black, Indigenous, and/or person of Color
- ◆ Community members who live or work in rural area



Building a coalition involves numerous aspects, and recruitment is just one of them. To refine recruitment materials effectively, it's crucial to consider various factors related to how the coalition will operate. This includes determining how the coalition will be managed, outlining the contents of a membership contract and agreement terms, and establishing supportive structures for coalition members. Each of these elements plays a vital role in ensuring the coalition's success and effectiveness in pursuing its goals.

## 2.5 Lessons Learned from Building a Coalition

OR-MEP's experience with coalition recruitment allowed us to identify two primary lessons-learned, which informed refinement to our process.

1. OR-MEP created coalition positions for candidates that represented specific lived experiences, but filling all positions – particularly affordable housing residents and rural and Indigenous community members – proved challenging during the first round of recruitment. Applying insight from this experience in Year 2 resulted in a more targeted outreach approach specifically focused on the positions that had not been previously filled. By concentrating recruitment on those three candidate segments (affordable housing resident, rural resident, member of an Oregon Tribe), the team could make more meaningful touchpoints with recruitment partners. We also identified significant overlap between those segments, resulting in multiple applications from candidates with lived experience in more than one focus area – ultimately resulting in a strong candidate pool which led to strong recruitment outcomes.
2. When reaching out to potential candidates, we sent interview questions immediately after our initial meet-and-greet session, and again a day before the actual interview. However, we discovered that despite our efforts, some candidates' email filters blocked the attachments, causing them to miss the questions until the interview itself. Although we attempted to adapt the interview process accordingly, we believe that incorporating the questions directly into the email body or sending a text follow-up to the candidates prior to the interview could provide them with a fairer opportunity to prepare.



## Section 3: Best Practices for Onboarding Coalition Members

After selecting members, onboarding them to the program and coalition swiftly, answering their questions, and addressing their unique needs ensures that they can begin actively participating. This section offers best practices for onboarding members, backed by OR-MEP's direct experience, and strategies that align the onboarding process with shared goals.

### 3.1 Contracting Process and Agreement



#### Best Practice

When contracting with coalition members, organizations must determine the most efficient process based on each specific program structure and administrative systems, with a focus on making the process as simple as possible. Coalition members cite overly complicated administrative processes with long wait times and difficult-to-understand steps as a primary reason they choose not to participate. In the case of OR-MEP's DEI Coalition, the program team led the contracting process so as not to place an administrative burden on the coalition members.

Contracts should include enough information to ensure participants understand their responsibilities but not so much that the documents become overwhelming or hard to comprehend. At a minimum, a contract or agreement for a coalition should provide all details a member would need to know regarding how, when, and where they must participate, including resources they will need, anticipated time commitment, and what compensation they can expect. Contractual requirements and term agreements should be determined by the program team, balancing program needs with the needs of participants. Contracts should ensure that coalition members are paid fairly for their expertise and contribution to the program, with a simple and clear invoicing process in place.

In agreement with OHCS, the OR-MEP implementation team contracted directly with coalition members using a three-page membership agreement that includes the following components:

- ◆ Term length
- ◆ Membership expectations
- ◆ Coalition charter contribution expectations
- ◆ Equipment and technology requirements
- ◆ Time commitment
- ◆ Invoicing and payment Processes

The membership agreement also includes standard contract language for conflicts of interest and protection of confidential information. Figure 8 features a representative section of the agreement. The full Membership Agreement can be found in [Appendix C](#).



*Figure 8. Excerpt from Coalition Membership Agreement*

## 3.2 Member Introductory Meetings



### Best Practice

Offering each new coalition member a 1:1 meeting with the facilitation team before they attend their first full meeting creates an opportunity to ask questions in a neutral and supportive setting and allows the facilitator to get to know the member. First and foremost, these meetings seek to create trusting relationships and establish clear and open communication between coalition members and the facilitation team, help coalition members know they can reach out to the facilitators with feedback or any comments.

Through these introductory calls, coalition members confirm that they understand their role, impact, and purpose. The meetings also help build self-efficacy and position each member to have the greatest impact by applying their own behavior and motivation to coalition participation. Coalition members can use these calls to identify individual concerns, share information they'd like the facilitator to know, and ensure their needs are met during the group processes. The meetings offer facilitators a chance to better understand each member's background, assess how members will interact in a group, identify potential challenges or conflicts, and align on the goals and objectives that bring the coalition together.

Initial conversations should help define the benefit of coalition participation and give members time to understand the role they'll play in the coalition. Beginning to address "what's in it for them" is also a vital outcome: a coalition should be [mutually beneficial](#), meaning it supports the program's goals and serves the involved parties, either through benefit to their community, their work, and/or their broader mission.



## OR-MEP Experience

For the OR-MEP DEI Coalition, facilitators met virtually with every individual for 30 minutes, using the following informal agenda:

- ◆ Introductions
- ◆ Prompt: What makes you excited to be part of the Coalition?
- ◆ Prompt: What support might you need to participate?
- ◆ Discussion of open communication with the facilitators
- ◆ Re-iterate the value each member brings to the coalition

Additional questions for future recruitment cycles included:

- ◆ What are other important aspects of the member's life (other jobs, family, etc.)?
- ◆ What does self-care look like for that member now in the near future?

### 3.3 Establish a Strong Structure of Support



## Best Practice

When convening a coalition—especially one that emphasizes lived experiences of priority populations—you are bringing together diverse individuals with varying levels of technological savviness, experience with coalitions, and available resources. Organizations should identify the coalition's support structure during onboarding and should follow up with coalition members throughout the process to ensure they receive adequate support.



## OR-MEP Experience

For example, the "Equipment and Technology" section of the OR-MEP Membership Agreement includes an offer to support coalition members in acquiring equipment or tools they might need to actively participate. We reiterated this question on the application form (see screenshot in Figure 9) and when coalition members signed the membership agreement, thus establishing this support consistently and ensuring potential applicants did not view access to technology as a barrier for participation.

12. If you are selected for the DEI Coalition you will need the following items to join the online meetings.

Do you need help obtaining any of these items? Check all that apply. \*

- ☐ High-speed internet (at least 25 mbps)
- ☐ Internet-enabled device / computer or tablet
- ☐ Webcam / video camera for your computer
- ☐ Headset / headphones with microphone
- ☐ I might, but I'm not sure right now.
- ☐ Other

**Figure 9. Application Form Screenshot**

The repeated reminder of available support improves trust and helps members know they can rely on the program and facilitation team to support them.

In other cases, the structure of support could include texting individual coalition members who do not respond well to emails, participating in additional conversations with coalition members to work through something that is important to them, and responding to other ad-hoc needs that arise. Laying a strong foundation of trust ensures that coalition members access any support they need on a continuous basis, ultimately allowing them to participate successfully.

### 3.4 Establish Clear Roles and Responsibilities



#### Best Practice

Establishing clear roles and responsibilities that the coalition and program team share is another best practice for onboarding members. To know where and how to seek support, and know which individuals are responsible for which tasks, can provide a sense of comfort for members and promote open communication.



#### OR-MEP Experience

Table 1 at the beginning of this document describes the key roles and responsibilities associated with the OR-MEP DEI Coalition, including the program team (TRC), program champion/lead (OHCS), third-party facilitators and coalition members. Clearly documenting and sharing this breakdown of responsibilities provides clarity for all individuals supporting coalition work and positions them to contribute in a desirable and meaningful way.

### 3.5 Training and Education



#### Best Practice

An effective onboarding process should include training that equips members with a thorough understanding of the program the coalition supports, including goals and historical context. Providing comprehensive materials, such as program documentation, past work samples, and existing data can help members become familiar with the intricacies of the program as well as what it does and doesn't seek to accomplish. Training can take a variety of forms: in-person or virtual, deep dives with program experts, and access to previously documented recordings or reading material. In all cases, organizations should remember that because everyone absorbs and processes information differently, content should be shared in multiple formats.



#### OR-MEP Experience

For the OR-MEP onboarding, the program team shared the following information with the Coalition members via an online presentation:

- ◆ OHCS overview and structure
- ◆ Information about OR-MEP implementers (TRC) and subconsultants
- ◆ OR-MEP funding source and service territories, and historic investments
- ◆ Past program highlights
- ◆ OR-MEP DEI Vision and objectives
- ◆ OR-MEP program overview, including program goals, eligibility requirements, program pathways, participation process, open enrollment, and program implementation areas such as marketing, and program design.

The recording of this presentation and the content was stored on the shared drive for Coalition members to access at any time.

### 3.6 Lessons Learned from Onboarding

Not every member will come to the coalition with the same level of technological ability or interest, and they will all require different levels of communication and formats. To maintain deep engagement, the facilitator team needs to be flexible and adjust to meet members' needs.

For the OR-MEP DEI Coalition, facilitators have learned which specific channels are most effective for reminding members of certain tasks, meetings, or opportunities to provide input. We honor that by texting or calling certain members rather than sending emails and sharing resources in their preferred format. We have also learned when to communicate via email and when to wait to discuss that topic during group meetings. OR-MEP offers “refresher” technical support sessions and continually creates new resources for using technology; the team has also increased the number of 1:1 and small group interactions to build camaraderie and strengthen the coalition.

## Section 4: Best Practices for Co-Creating Coalition Structure

Aligning individuals to support collaborative program work that they also view as beneficial requires a concerted planning effort. Coalition members need to see themselves working together toward a shared goal, with a structure in place that defines how they will collaborate to achieve that goal. This section outlines best practices for co-creating coalition structures with members.

### 4.1 Community Agreements



#### Best Practice

Community agreements ground participants in the reasons behind the coalition's existence and remind participants to avoid going into "conflict mode." [Community agreements](#), which document a set of agreed-upon approaches and behaviors that community members commit to during their time together, serve as a powerful tool when convening a large group of people.

If time allows during the formation of the coalition, co-creating the agreements with members can be a valuable approach. To expedite the process, the facilitators can put forward suggested agreements for the coalition to react to, modify, and finalize.



#### OR-MEP Experience

The OR-MEP DEI Coalition adopted the following community agreements:



**Respect and honor silence and confidentiality:** You don't have to share but what is shared should remain confidential within the group.



**Be present:** Engage in active listening and be aware of your thoughts and feelings in the moment. What do you need to stay present and engaged? Limit technology and distractions to only that which furthers your learning.



**Take care of your personal needs:** If you need a break while the session is going on - honor that.



**Speak your truth and let others speak theirs:** Different perspectives are welcome and encouraged. Speak from your own lived experience and not from experience that you do not personally have. Your normal may not be my normal.



**No one knows everything; together we know a lot:** Shared learning is a practice in humility, because we have something to learn from everyone in the room.



**No fixing, no saving:** We're here to do our own work and to be in community with one another. Listen deeply and allow others to experience their discomfort, which may further their own learning. If you find yourself wanting to "fix" a situation or alleviate someone's (or your own) discomfort, take a moment to reflect on what's coming up for you.



**Honor time agreements:** Respects the commitments we have made to one another.



**Be curious:** Approach problems and challenges from a place of curiosity and creative thinking rather than a point of frustration or judgment. This includes staying open to feedback and inquiry that others may offer you.



**We are all human, not perfect:** As much as we'd like to be, we are human and therefore imperfect. We can't always be articulate. Often people feel hesitant to participate for fear of "messaging up" or stumbling over their words. We encourage everyone to participate, even if you can't get it right all the time.



**Expect and accept non-closure:** We want to solve problems and resolve conflict, but this is lifelong work. Many racial justice conversations focus on awareness raising and the development of our own racial justice competence, not necessarily the transformation of others. Sometimes you may have to revisit conversations to reconcile differences; in other cases things will go left unsaid and unfinished, and other times they may be resolved in an agreed upon format for conflict resolution. Note: this is a favorite agreement for many coalition members.

The OR-MEP DEI Coalition reads all community agreements at the start of every meeting as a reminder and to ground participants. While OR-MEP has not had the need to establish a coalition policy that addresses what happens if someone were to violate the community agreements, many coalitions find it important to have one in place. Some coalitions issue a one-time warning and removal from the meeting, others maintain a zero-tolerance policy, and others require a discussion between the person who has violated the community agreement and the facilitators before determining next steps. Depending on the sensitivity of your coalition's subject matter, size of the coalition, and additional conditions, it may benefit from a plan to address violations.

## 4.2 Coalition Charter



### Best Practice

After establishing community agreements, organizations can move on to developing a [coalition charter](#) that outlines a shared understanding of the coalition's mission, activities, roles, and responsibilities. As with community agreements, co-creation with coalition members is often ideal. To help move the process along, facilitators may provide a starting point for members to build on.

Charters should include the following sections:

- ◆ Purpose
- ◆ Goal
- ◆ Strategic intent
- ◆ Participation
- ◆ Structure
- ◆ Procedural policies



## OR-MEP Experience

The OR-MEP DEI Coalition charter serves as a foundational document that articulates the coalition's commitment to address historical inequities and outlines specific objectives for promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion. By delineating roles, responsibilities, and expectations, the charter ensures transparency and accountability among coalition members, fostering a unified understanding of the mission and strategies to achieve equitable outcomes. It provides a reference point for decision-making processes, conflict resolution, and the evaluation of progress, promoting cohesion and effective collaboration within the coalition as it works towards transformative change in the targeted programs or initiatives. Figure 10 shows core components of the adopted charter.

**The participation section** clarifies roles and responsibilities of the coalition members, the facilitation team, and the program team.

The **structural piece of the charter** captures how the team is structured and how they work together, including any clarity of sub-committee formation and roles.

**Procedural policies** cover meeting attendance, onboarding of new members, decision-making processes, conflict resolution, and voting procedures.

**Figure 10. OR-MEP DEI Coalition Charter Components**

Overall, the charter provides a detailed framework for fostering DEI in the coalition's efforts to enhance the program, with a focus on collaboration, representation, and accountability. Though OR-MEP's DEI Coalition initially wrote the charter within two months of forming, we revisited the document in January 2022 following contract renewal. Continually assessing whether a charter still fits the purpose and scope of the coalition on a regular basis or as new members join helps the group stay aligned on common goals and the commitments you've made together. The DEI Coalition has recently started reviewing these goals at the start of every meeting to ground us in our purpose.

See [Appendix D](#) for a copy of the OR-MEP DEI Coalition charter.



## 4.3 Program Strategic Intent, Goals, and Objectives



### Best Practice

Developing the charter paves the way for co-creation of a strategic intent document that identifies the desired future state the coalition envisions. This document should be guided by the coalition’s purpose and whether it exists to address a core issue or to support a specific program, and benefits participants by providing clarity and reminding them of the goals of their work. Strategic intent documents should be aligned with both short-term positive impact and longer-term sustained structural change.

If the coalition exists to support a program, members must work collaboratively with the program team to make sure the coalition’s desired future state is in line with program goals and structure. At the same time, longer-term thinking should not be limited by existing program policies and rules. The program lead/champion should make sure these cross-team conversations are navigated with openness and genuine willingness to welcome the diversity of thought and innovation brought forward by the coalition, with flexibility for coalition members to engage in conversations that the group feels are important and relevant to the mission, charter, and ground rules.

After identifying desired outcomes, the program team can work to identify barriers that stand in the way of achieving those outcomes. The process of identifying barriers will naturally lead to discussions about short- and long-term strategies for overcoming those barriers. Program strategies can then be broken down into actionable activities, timelines, and metrics to track success. A variety of tactics can help achieve consensus around desired outcomes between the coalition and program team, including rank-choice voting, traditional voting, or prioritization based on the required level of time and resources in relationship to the value that outcome has to the program. No one method is better than the others, as long as the method for arriving at consensus is understood and accepted by all members. Shared metrics can help individual coalition members understand what stake they have in each vote and how much they will be impacted by a decision based on their identities and lived experiences.

Identifying a shared understanding of outcomes, goals, and strategies helps the coalition and the program team to continuously ground their decisions and actions in the purpose, vision, and chosen direction of the program. Coalitions and program teams can refer to the strategic intent document to ensure all work aligns with strategic goals and monitor progress towards those goals.



### OR-MEP Experience

The OR-MEP DEI Coalition embraces conversations around ambitious topics, with facilitators encouraging members to take “big picture” ideas and turn them into actions that can be achieved within the scope of the program. We are currently collecting feedback from coalition members about how well the coalition achieves its goals and will continue to update our guidance for coalitions as we know more. A section of the OR-MEP DEI Coalition’s strategic intent documents can be seen in Figure 11.



**Figure 11. OR-MEP DEI Coalition Strategic Intent Document Excerpt**

## 4.4 Collaborative Online Space



### Best Practice

Coalition members should have access to an online collaborative space where program educational resources and other guiding documents and content as well as working documents are stored so the content they need access to is easily accessible. Collaborating with coalition members to determine what should be included in this space and how it should be organized, as well as providing training on how to access and use the materials, are two best practices. Using a mobile-friendly platform allows members to be added to the shared space when they join the coalition and then removed when their term is over or if they decide to leave.



## OR-MEP Experience

The OR-MEP DEI Coalition chose to use Google Drive for this function because all members could access the site and navigate the space comfortably. However, we since have received feedback from some of our coalition members about challenges associated with using Google Drive. We are continuing to evaluate how we can better organize materials and resources so that members can easily navigate the space, with the recognition that what works in one coalition may not work in another and what works at one point in time may not always work. We will offer an optional Google Drive training for all coalition members, including each new group of coalition members, which will be available for existing members who would like to better understand the site's functionalities or refresh their memory.

### 4.5 Lessons Learned from Co-Creating Coalition Structure

OR-MEP's first two years of coalition operations have helped us identify the following lessons-learned:

1. The OR-MEP DEI Coalition has been working together well, with members showing respect towards each other. However, the introduction of new members has changed team dynamics. and highlighted the importance of establishing policies for adhering to community agreements and addressing consequences for not doing so. The coalition plans to address this soon.
2. During the initial recruitment phase, all coalition members had the chance to familiarize themselves with the program, leading to a deeper understanding over time. New members received an orientation and access to program information after joining. However, due to their shorter exposure to the program, their level of familiarity is naturally lower than that of longer-term members. The facilitation team realizes that a one-time orientation may not be sufficient and that new members may benefit from additional time for questions and further understanding of the program.

## Section 5: Coalition Operations

Once the coalition is active, managing ongoing meetings, deliverables, and the feedback loop between the program team and the coalition requires intentional planning. This section outlines best practices and examples for managing a coalition's regular operations. Because the OR-MEP DEI Coalition's first year allowed time for understanding the program, establishing the charter, and defining strategic intent, goals, and objectives, coalition members who join in Year Two face the challenge of absorbing new processes and materials without the opportunity to co-create the documents. We are committed to orienting all coalition materials as living documents and revisiting them regularly, understanding that we will learn and adapt our operations as our coalition grows.

### 5.1 Meeting Cadence



#### Best Practice

The program's needs and allocated budget typically determine meeting cadence, which may vary over time. For example, members may meet more frequently during coalition formation to gain an understanding of the program needs before settling into a less frequent cadence. "Emergency" sessions may also be required to address some needs of the program. To optimize attendance, meetings should be scheduled well in advance so the participants are aware of them and can plan accordingly.



#### OR-MEP Experience

The OR-MEP Coalition typically meets once a month for two hours, with meeting dates for the full year set in advance. Occasionally, we have moved a session or added an extra session to meet program needs; meetings may also be canceled or shortened based on current activity.

### 5.2 Meeting Agendas and Notes



#### Best Practice

Two primary factors influence meeting agendas:

1. Needs of the program and topics on which the program team seeks coalition expertise
2. Longer-range topics the coalition wants to discuss and brainstorm about.

Each meeting's agenda should be circulated in advance and coalition members should be given an opportunity to suggest items for the agenda. Creating an annual plan that identifies what topics will be discussed during each session can allow the coalition to be more proactive than reactive. While some sessions may need to change as the year unfolds, this approach can help meet coalition goals and manage other priorities that emerge. The OR-MEP DEI Coalition focused its first full-year of operations on a program redesign, which was largely reactive. In the second year, the coalition now uses a co-created annual agenda.

For virtual sessions, at the beginning of the session, facilitators should ask for consent to record the coalition meeting for note-taking purposes. Meeting notes are then generated and stored on the shared site for coalition and program team access. For in-person meetings or sessions that are not recorded, a notetaker who is not one of the facilitators should be appointed. While they will likely be unable to capture everything said during the meeting, sharing notes with the program team and coalition helps participants stay accountable for what was discussed.

### 5.3 Meeting Locations



#### Best Practice

When a coalition represents a broad geographical region, some members may face limitations in traveling on a regular basis to meet in person. In these cases, virtual meetings can help accommodate attendance to bring in the needed diverse geographical perspective. If the team chooses virtual meetings, planning some in-person meetings is recommended in order to support team formation and relationship-building between coalition members. When determining where to meet as a collective, locations and times should be selected only after assessing each coalition member's ability to travel and actively participate at a given time and in a given place.

### 5.4 Assessing Effectiveness



#### Best Practice

Coalition facilitators should have regular check-ins with coalition members to solicit feedback on how the coalition operates, how they perceive the overall effectiveness of the coalition, and any recommended improvements. Feedback can be collected via a survey or through less formal in-person conversations. Surveys afford the benefit of anonymity, while in-person check-ins allow you to dig deeper into the feedback that members provide and work through solutions together. To effectively gauge feedback, facilitators should ask open-ended questions that are designed to get at “how” and “why.” This practice, often called motivational interviewing, seeks to encourage interviewees to dive deeper into the topic. Asking yes or no questions or asking them to select an answer on a scale of 1-5 only tells half of the story. No matter how you collect feedback, share back with the coalition what you have heard and discuss how that feedback will be used to adjust or influence future coalition actions. Organizations should also collect informal feedback regularly by checking in during coalition meetings and ensuring members feel comfortable approaching facilitators to provide additional feedback.



#### OR-MEP Experience

While the OR-MEP DEI Coalition has had multiple individual check-ins based on discussions that emerged in the coalition, we are in the process of aggregating responses from a recent survey sent to members between Year 1 and Year 2 – the first time we have used this tool. The responses we receive

on this survey will be used to populate our annual calendar and define topics for workshops as well as recommended program actions.

## 5.5 Member Retention



### Best Practice

Members are more likely to stay involved with the coalition if they are engaged with the work, feel a sense of belonging, feel productive and effective, and can see continuity between the work and a clear work plan. Many strategies already outlined in this document, including term limits for members, the formation of subcommittees, and sharing feedback can help increase member retention. Poor retention in coalitions often results from members feeling as though the coalition work is stalled or that their contributions are not being acted upon. It can also be a result of tensions amongst members and one another or members and the larger program. For that reason, it's important to [assess the health of your coalition](#) on a regular basis. Formal and informal assessments allow organizations to re-engage members whose participation dwindles rather than reacting only after members have chosen to leave.

An increase in compensation, such as budgeting for a \$10-25 hourly increase for returning members, can also improve retention.

## 5.6 Off-Boarding Members

Should a member choose to leave the coalition before the end of their term or decide not to renew at the end of their term, an off-boarding protocol that includes the following elements should be in place:

- ◆ An exit interview with facilitators to understand the member's experience and solicit feedback that can be communicated back to the program team and used to enhance operations
- ◆ A process for removing access to any shared coalition working space
- ◆ Updates to meeting invites and email lists to remove their contact information
- ◆ Updates to the program website and other public-facing content with membership information.

## 5.7 Lessons Learned from Coalition Operations

Coalition members typically feel the importance of program continuity more deeply than the contracted program implementation team does. Any gaps in operations can result in participation drop-off or disinvestment from the goals of the coalition. Though coalition members and facilitators do not typically have control of contracting and other administrative processes, staying aware of contract timing and seeking frequent updates from the responsible parties can help maintain smooth operations.

OR-MEP experienced firsthand the impact of a funding pause during a three-month gap in coalition activities due to the contract renewal process, with significant turnover of DEI Coalition members during this time. After funding was reinstated, we attempted to re-engage coalition members but encountered difficulties. Many had changed jobs during the hiatus, resulting in outdated email addresses on file. As a result, we were unable to inform them about the coalition's re-formation or conduct exit interviews. To address this issue, we now collect personal contact information to ensure ongoing communication, regardless of career changes.

## Section 6: The Question of Sub-Committees

Over the course of the coalition's time together, it may make sense for smaller subsets of the group to meet and support targeted work on the program. These small group meetings can be an ongoing or short-term effort that results in the formation of a sub-committee focused on specific areas of support, such as assistance with grant applications and input on marketing plans. In these cases, the program team may put out a request for support to coalition members with a clear scope for the sub-committee that includes the sub-committee objective and the area of the work, the expected duration of the work needed, and hourly commitment needed from each member. Based on this, the coalition members can determine if they have the capability and capacity to support the work.

Subcommittees can be an important tool to maintain engagement in the coalition, particularly in between meetings. However, given the time commitments for participation in regular committee meetings and subcommittee work, they can also result in lower levels of coalition participation. Organizations should monitor how subcommittees work in the landscape of their specific coalition and pivot appropriately. Some coalitions benefit from highly structured subcommittees with clear leads and tasks, and others succeed with totally unstructured subcommittees to create spaces of connection within the coalition.



### OR-MEP Experience

The OR-MEP DEI Coalition began forming subcommittees after nearly two seasons. The coalition members needed that time to get to know the program and one another, as well as establish priorities and support the overall program development. The coalition members were able to provide deeper guidance in subcommittees because they knew enough to do so. Because the program team was also still navigating how to work with the coalition, building that relationship became a top priority.

We began in an unstructured fashion. Our facilitation team elected not to participate in subcommittee meetings, allowing them to serve as members-only spaces. As the program team became more involved with coalition members through the subcommittees, we experienced learning curves around collaboration with different personalities, work styles, and the balance between lived and learned expertise. OR-MEP subsequently identified opportunities for both program team leads and coalition members to receive facilitation training and learn more approaches to interact with one another.

Based on the feedback from coalition members and the program team, we identified coalition members to serve as subcommittee leads and ensure that the content of the subcommittee meetings was accountable to the larger coalition. Through this process, we learned that several coalition members wanted opportunities to develop leadership and facilitation skills, encouraging us to consider new ways to support development within the subcommittees. This is a new area of growth and learning for the OR-MEP team including the facilitators, the program team, and the coalition members. We are committed to supporting each other in providing an opportunity for skillset development and deeper learning for all.

## Section 7: Conclusion

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Creating and managing a coalition—particularly one that deals with issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice—is a journey. We accept that we are on this journey to learn and improve and we will continue to grow and adapt with what we know.

This guide includes best practices and examples based on our experience. OR-MEP’s DEI Coalition is in a constant state of evolution, and the program team, facilitation team, and coalition members are all committed to sharing what we continue to learn as we work toward our equitable affordable housing goals.

Many reasons may inspire an organization to start a coalition, but common across them all is an interest in bringing together people with a variety of perspectives to collaborate toward diverse solutions. For coalitions to succeed they need to be rooted in perceived need and mutual trust, and they should bring all stakeholders to the table—those impacted by the work, community leaders, policy members, and the community at large. That means that all coalitions must work to find common ground and build stronger networks. The coalitions most likely to thrive are built on a foundation of open communication, inclusivity, achievable and realistic goals, and diverse perspectives.

The OR-MEP DEI Coalition unites individuals who live, work, learn, and play across the state and who care deeply about Oregonians having safe, secure, comfortable, affordable homes. Because of their passion and expertise, the program can drive meaningful change that would not be possible without each coalition member’s unique values and perspectives. The coalition’s impact extends beyond the program to members’ day-to-day lives: the natural relationships developed through coalition participation create a community of aligned individuals who can have lasting impact on the world around us.

## About the Authors

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This report was developed collaboratively for OHCS by the following firms, each of which is involved in DEI Coalition operations:



**Unrooz Solutions** is a certified “Woman-Owned Business Enterprise” (WBE) providing services in JEDI-focused strategy development, program management, participatory program design, and facilitation, backed by a commitment to advancing environmental and social justice. Through collaboration and inclusion they ensure all voices, especially the voices of frontline communities, are heard and considered. Learn more at [unrooz.com](https://unrooz.com).



**Encolor** provides diagnostic, analysis, planning, and implementation support to individuals and organizations as they navigate through their cultural journey. Through the entire journey, Encolor brings a lens of inclusiveness which results in a more diverse, equitable, and just



organization impacting the products and services they provide. Learn more at [www.encolorconsulting.com](http://www.encolorconsulting.com).



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## Appendix A: History and Purpose (TRC/OHCS)

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- ◆ In 1999, [Senate Bill 1149](#) directed Oregon's two largest utilities, Portland General Electric (PGE) and Pacific Power (PAC), to collect a "public purpose charge" from their customers - thereby establishing a public purpose fund that is used to incentivize installation of energy efficiency measures at properties within PGE and PAC service territories. All PGE and PAC customers pay into the public purpose fund and are eligible to claim incentives for applicable measures. However, all customers do not benefit equitably due to systemic barriers related to information access, property ownership, capital resources, and availability of technical services.
- ◆ Public purpose charges help fund conservation in schools, renewable energy projects in Oregon, and low-income weatherization and housing programs, including the Oregon Multifamily Energy Program, which OHCS is directed through the statute to administer. In 2021, the Oregon Legislature passed [House Bill 3141](#), which made numerous changes to the statutes for the Public Purpose Charge (previously under [ORS 757.612](#)). These changes include extending the Public Purpose Charge collection and programs associated through January 01, 2036, moving energy conservation funding out of the Public Purpose Charge to energy efficiency through utility rates, reducing the collection of 3% to 1.5% and adjusting the funding allocated to the remaining categories:
  - 0.30% of 1.5% to School Districts
  - 0.51% of 1.5% to Renewable Energy
  - 0.55% of 1.5% to Low-Income Weatherization
  - **0.14% of 1.5% to Low-Income Housing**

This 0.14% of 1.5% currently funds the OHCS-administered OR-MEP.
- ◆ OR-MEP, which is administered by OHCS and implemented by TRC, promotes and facilitates energy-efficient construction in affordable multifamily housing through design assistance, cash incentives, coordination with other regional programs, and educational opportunities. OR-MEP funding is available for new and existing affordable multifamily housing properties. The purpose of OR-MEP funding is to reduce energy use and heating costs for low-income Oregonians through energy efficiency improvements.
- ◆ As a state agency OHCS has access to the funding and has discretionary powers to prioritize which housing developments receive state funding and energy efficiency incentives from the agency.

## Appendix B: Recruitment Materials

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The following recruitment materials are included in Appendix B:

- ◆ Call for Applications
- ◆ Recruitment Messaging Templates
- ◆ Meet & Greet Discussion Guide
- ◆ Scoring Rubric and Application Questions

## Call for Applications

The materials developed for the OR-MEP DEI Coalition's Call for Applications begin on the following page.



### Call for Applications

## OR-MEP Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Coalition

The Oregon Multifamily Energy Program (OR-MEP) is seeking applicants to be part of its very first Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Coalition.

**Applications accepted on a rolling basis until all positions are filled.**

#### Quick links to key information:

- ◆ [Informational webinar](#)
- ◆ [FAQ responses](#)
- ◆ [How to Apply](#)

Please direct all questions and communication about this opportunity to:

Email: [OHCSMultifamilyEnergy@TRCcompanies.com](mailto:OHCSMultifamilyEnergy@TRCcompanies.com)

Phone: (503) 505-6787

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## Background

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### Program Overview

Oregon Multifamily Energy Program (OR-MEP), which is administered by Oregon Housing & Community Services (OHCS) and implemented by TRC, promotes and facilitates energy-efficient construction in affordable multifamily housing through design assistance, cash incentives, coordination with other regional programs, and educational opportunities. OR-MEP funding is available for new and existing affordable multifamily housing properties. The purpose of OR-MEP funding is to reduce energy use and heating costs for low-income Oregonians through energy efficiency improvements.

### Coalition Vision

OR-MEP is committed to equitably serving the people of Oregon and disrupting systems that maintain inequality, within the energy industry and beyond. We stand with the diverse communities we serve and their rights to be respected, safely housed, and to secure environmental justice.

Right now, there are limitations that keep many Oregonians from participating in this program. For example, OR-MEP is an electric-only program and is only available to customers of Portland General Electric and Pacific Power, excluding natural gas savings opportunities or service to customers of other electric utilities statewide. Built-in obstacles like these need to be identified and addressed to impactfully reduce the energy burden in our state.

We are looking for a diverse group of people of all backgrounds to serve on the OR-MEP DEI Coalition. This group will recommend and influence changes to the OR-MEP program to make it more accessible to all, especially customers with the greatest need who have not benefitted from OR-MEP. The Coalition will help OR-MEP create a DEI plan, understand barriers to participation and how we can modify policies to better serve customers of color, those customers for whom English is not their first language, those living in rural communities, and those navigating low incomes.

### DEI Coalition Objectives

- ◆ Modify and develop OR-MEP policies and practices to eliminate systemic racism from program design and implementation
- ◆ Help the program team equitably engage with all applicable communities and customers, prioritizing those who spend the highest percentage of their household income on energy costs

## Coalition Overview

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OR-MEP DEI Coalition members will be expected to actively participate in meetings, provide support to relevant action items, and serve on subcommittees as needed. Coalition members will be responsible for ensuring that all Coalition recommendations are made in the best interest of OR-MEP stakeholders based on the information and resources available.

### Member Responsibilities and Expectations

- ◆ **Own a Shared Mission:** Develop and commit to a mission-driven agreement.
- ◆ **Participate:** Actively attend and engage in Coalition meetings and serve on sub-committees.
- ◆ **Report:** Regularly communicate observations and recommendations to the designated OR-MEP point of contact.
- ◆ **Review:** Assess the purpose, intent, value, and outcomes of OR-MEP policies, procedures, and program at least once every two years.
- ◆ **Recommend:** Propose actions to address inequities in OHCS policies, procedures, and programs.

### Coalition Meetings

- ◆ **Frequency:** Monthly for first six months, then every other month
- ◆ **Duration:** Two hours
- ◆ **Subcommittee meetings:** Frequency and duration to be determined as needed

### Commitment of Service & Compensation

Coalition members will commit to a minimum one-year term with the option to extend their tenure annually for up to three consecutive years of service. Past members may apply to rejoin the Coalition for additional terms of service after a rest break of one or more years. OR-MEP and Coalition members will equally have the option to end the working relationship if expectations are not met.

Coalition members will be paid \$100/hour for their contributions. We believe your time is valuable and so is your expertise. Some members may spend more time than others on this work, but all should expect to participate each month for at least 3-5 hours and up to 10 hours.

### Proposed Coalition Member Roles

- ◆ **Affordable Housing Property Manager or Owner:** 2-3 positions
  - Examples: *property manager, developer, or resident relations specialist*
- ◆ **Resident/Community Member:** 2-3 positions
  - Examples: *current or past residents of affordable housing properties, current or past residents of farmworker housing, individuals who qualify to live in affordable housing*
- ◆ **Community-Based Organization Representative:** 2-4 positions
  - Examples: *volunteers or paid staff of service-oriented non-profit organization that serves Black, Indigenous, or People of Color, individuals for whom English is not their first language, those living in rural communities, and/or those navigating low incomes*



- ◆ **Community or Public Health Worker:** 1-2 positions
  - Examples: *nurses, doctors, administrators, or other healthcare workers who focus on the physical and mental wellbeing of the people in a specific geographic region, individuals who protect the safety and improve the health of communities through education*
- ◆ **Affordable Housing Finance Specialist:** 1-2 positions
  - Examples: *mortgage brokers, accountants, or tax professionals who specialize in financing for affordable housing*
- ◆ **Workforce Development Specialist:** 1-2 positions
  - Examples: *individuals who recruit employees, provide job training and work readiness activities, or support job placement for individuals experiencing low incomes and unemployment*
- ◆ **Energy Industry Professional:** 1-2 positions
  - Examples: *individuals who work for utilities, consultancies, or non-profit organizations within the energy industry*

## Who You Are

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We are looking for a diverse group of people of all backgrounds who will recommend and influence changes to the OR-MEP program.

### Coalition Member Characteristics

- ◆ **Representative Advocate:** Represents the composition of OR-MEP's stakeholders statewide (including customers who receive electrical service from utilities other than Pacific Power and Portland General Electric); trustworthy to reflect and support the diverse values and beliefs of Oregonians when making important decisions and recommendations.
- ◆ **Inclusive:** Builds a culture of trust and respect based on inclusion of different perspectives, identities, and lived experience. Welcomes and celebrates differences, shares power and responsibility.
- ◆ **Equity-Focused:** Supports equitable, fair, honest, and ethical practices. Creates space for shared decision-making and influence of all stakeholders. Aware of how systemic inequities have affected our society and those OR-MEP serves.

### Required Criteria

- ◆ Represent one or more of the following roles:
  - Affordable housing resident, current or former
  - Leader or member of community-based organization(s) that serves BIPOC, individuals for whom English is not their first language, those living in rural communities, and/or those navigating low incomes
  - Affordable housing property owner or staff
  - Community health professional
  - Affordable housing finance professional
  - Workforce development specialist
  - Energy industry professional
- ◆ Support antiracist, fair, and inclusive policies and practices
- ◆ Willing to speak up and actively contribute to discussions and decisions
- ◆ Respectfully listen to and engage with others who have opinions different than your own
- ◆ Eligible to work in the United States

### Preferred Qualifications

- ◆ Familiarity with:
  - State or federal housing programs
  - Residential energy burden in Oregon
  - OR-MEP or other energy efficiency programs
- ◆ OR-MEP was developed by people who are predominantly white and live in urban areas. The program needs to also be shaped by people with other perspectives. Therefore, preference will be given to applicants who identify as one or more of the following:
  - Black, Indigenous, or Person of Color (BIPOC)
  - Live or work in a rural area

## Coalition Meeting Logistics

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### Equipment & Technology

The Coalition will meet remotely via a video conferencing platform such as Zoom, Teams, or GoToMeeting. All meetings will be held online and Coalition members will need the following items to participate. If you do not have one or more of these items, OR-MEP can help. There is a question on the application where you can indicate which item(s) you need.

- ◆ High-speed internet (25 mbps or faster)
- ◆ Internet-enabled device, such as a computer or tablet
- ◆ Webcam or video camera embedded in or connected to the computer or tablet
- ◆ Headset or earbuds/headphones with a microphone – if calling from a noisy or shared space

### Language

All Coalition meetings will be hosted in English for now. OR-MEP regrets that we are currently unable to offer support for Coalition members who do not speak fluent English. We are working to provide this accommodation in the future.

## Application & Selection Process

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### Application

**Interested applicants must submit a completed online application.**

Apply at: <https://forms.office.com/r/w9CaJ4qba1>

### Questions & Clarifications

Questions about this opportunity are welcome at any time. Please submit questions via the email address or phone number listed on the first page of this document, or view the informational webinar:

- ◆ **Informational Webinar**

- View the recording: <https://youtu.be/JSiT1wsyrCs>

- ◆ **Frequently Asked Questions**

- Answers to frequently asked questions (FAQ) are available at <https://oregonmultifamilyenergy.com/dei>. The FAQ will be updated as new questions are asked.

### Selection

#### Application Review

Applications will be reviewed and sorted by the OR-MEP selection committee based on the criteria listed in the [Who You Are](#) section above. The selection committee will prioritize candidates who are Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC) and those who live or work in rural areas.

#### Shortlisted Applicants

Applicants who pass the initial round of the application review process will be invited to an informal meeting where applicants and the selection committee can get to know each other. Shortlisted applicants will receive the selection committee's questions in advance.

#### Informal Meetings

The selection committee will work with shortlisted candidates to identify a meeting date and time that work well for each candidate's schedule.

#### Announcement of Coalition Members

After all interviews have been completed and selections made, OR-MEP will announce the names of selected members to all applicants.

## Recruitment Messaging Templates

### Email Template: General

*The Oregon Housing and Community Services [Multifamily Energy Program](#) (OR-MEP) is establishing a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Coalition to advance racial justice and disrupt entrenched systems that perpetuate inequality, within the energy industry and beyond. The program is now recruiting individuals who represent stakeholder groups that are influenced by OR-MEP policies and offerings to serve in paid positions on the Coalition – including anyone who has ever lived in affordable housing, property managers, and energy professionals, among others. Anyone who is interested is encouraged to apply!*

*The Coalition will be empowered to recommend and influence changes to the program with a focus on supporting customers of color, those customers for whom English is not their first language, those living in rural communities, and those navigating low incomes.*

*Interested applicants must complete a [short application](#) by January 28, 2022, to be considered. Visit <https://www.oregonmultifamilyenergy.com/dei> to learn more.*

### Email Template: CBOs

*I am reaching out on behalf of the Oregon Housing and Community Services [Multifamily Energy Program](#) (OR-MEP) to alert you about an exciting opportunity for your organization to shape the future of OR-MEP and promote equitable access to energy upgrades across Oregon.*

*OR-MEP is establishing a [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion \(DEI\) Coalition](#) to disrupt systems that maintain inequality, within the energy industry and beyond. The program is now recruiting individuals who represent stakeholder groups that are influenced by OR-MEP policies and offerings to serve in paid positions on the Coalition. Anyone interested is encouraged to apply!*

*The Coalition will be empowered to modify the program with a focus on supporting customers of color, those customers for whom English is not their first language, those living in rural communities, and those navigating low incomes.*

*If this opportunity might be of interest to anyone connected to your organization, please share this [Call for Applications](#). In case it's helpful, you can download and customize an email template [here](#).*

*Interested applicants must submit a completed application by January 28, 2022 to be considered. OR-MEP will also host an informational webinar on January 14. Anyone interested can [register here](#) – with no obligation to apply for the Coalition.*

*Please send any questions you have to [OHCSMultifamilyEnergy@trccompanies.com](mailto:OHCSMultifamilyEnergy@trccompanies.com). Thank you!*

### **Extended Messaging from a Coalition Member (general)**

*OHCS Oregon Multifamily Energy Program (OR-MEP) launched a DEI Coalition in May 2022 to improve equity and access to the program. I am a member of the DEI Coalition and am reaching out because we are seeking representatives of the following stakeholder groups to participate.*

- ◆ *Member of an Oregon Tribe*
- ◆ *Rural resident*
- ◆ *Affordable housing resident (current or past)*
- ◆ *Public or community health specialist*
- ◆ *Workforce development specialist*

*Coalition members are paid \$100/hour and the time commitment is estimated to be 3.5-10 hours a month for a minimum 1-year term. The DEI Coalition is empowered to modify the program with a focus on supporting customers of color, those who prefer a language other than English, customers living in rural communities, and those navigating low incomes.*

*Learn more about this opportunity and apply at: <https://oregonmultifamilyenergy.com/dei/>*

*Please share this opportunity with anyone you know who may be interested.*

### **Extended Messaging from a Coalition Member (to affordable housing residents)**

*OHCS Oregon Multifamily Energy Program (OR-MEP) launched a DEI Coalition in May 2022 to improve equity and access to the program. I am a member of the DEI Coalition and am reaching out because we are seeking current or previous residents of affordable housing to join the Coalition.*

*These positions will be paid \$100/hour and the time commitment is estimated to be 3.5-10 hours a month for a minimum 1-year term. The DEI Coalition is empowered to modify the program with a focus on supporting customers of color, those who prefer a language other than English, customers living in rural communities, and those navigating low incomes.*

*Attached is a printable flyer with details about this opportunity. It can be posted in common areas or emailed to residents as a PDF. Interested residents can learn more about this opportunity and apply at: <https://oregonmultifamilyenergy.com/dei/>*

*Please share this opportunity with anyone you know who may be interested.*

## Meet & Greet Discussion Guide



### OR-MEP DEI Coalition – Meet & Greet Discussion Guide

#### General / Intros

1. Why do you want to be a part of the OR-MEP DEI Coalition?
2. **[If applicable]** In your application you indicated that you are familiar with one or more of the following. Please tell us about your experience with that.
  - Housing programs
  - Oregon energy burden
  - OR-MEP or energy efficiency programs
3. **[If applicable]** In your application you indicated that you live or work in a rural area. Please tell us more about the rural region where you live or work.

#### Personal Perspectives on DEI

4. How has your background influenced your interest in this Coalition?
5. How do you think your life experience could help the OR-MEP program advance racial justice and disrupt entrenched systems that perpetuate inequality?
6. What is your goal for diversity, equity, and inclusion? What will it look like if you are successful?
7. Can you tell us about a time when you worked to make your workplace or community a place where everyone—particularly those who identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color (BIPOC)—could thrive? What was that experience like for you?

#### Coalition Participation

8. If you are selected for the DEI Coalition, how will your current/past work experience or involvement with community-based organizations influence your participation?
9. We want this Coalition to be a place where all members can contribute to the discussion. What would make you comfortable sharing your perspectives in a group setting? What would make you uncomfortable?
10. If you are appointed to this Coalition, what will you do to make it an environment of honesty, inclusion, and respect?
11. Tell us about a time when effective listening skills helped you in a problematic situation. Describe the situation, the actions you took, and the outcome.
12. Do you have any concerns about participating in this Coalition? Please tell us about them.
13. How will you ensure the voices of the community are represented in this Coalition?

#### Wrap-up

14. What questions were you hoping we would ask you that we didn't?
15. What questions do you have for us?



[www.oregonmultifamilyenergy.com](http://www.oregonmultifamilyenergy.com)

## Scoring Rubric and Application Questions

The scoring rubric and application questions used to assess potential coalition members' candidacy begins on the following page.



**OR-MEP DEI Advisory Council**  
**Scoring Rubric**

APPLICATION

Question	Topic	Max Points	Percent of Total / Weight
<b>1-6</b>	Contact info	Not scored	
<b>7</b>	Council role options	1	12.5%
<b>8</b>	BIPOC, Rural	6	75%
<b>9</b>	Program / energy burden knowledge	1	12.5%
<b>10</b>	History of advocacy	Not scored	
<b>11</b>	“Why”	Not scored	
<b>12</b>	Tech accommodation	Not scored	
<b>13</b>	Other info	Not scored	
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>

Q1-Q6: *Contact information*

- Not scored

Q7: *Which of the following describes you? Select all that apply.*

- Must fulfill at least one role to be eligible.
- Score 1 for first role identified. Note additional roles beyond one to guide selection team in creating a diverse council. Additional roles identified shall not increase a candidate’s score, rather they shall differentiate the candidate as someone who is able to fulfill any applicable council positions.
- **Max points: 1**

Q8: *Which of the following describes you? Select all that apply.*

- Optional, not required for eligibility.
- Score 3 for each criteria identified. Each criteria identified shall add to the candidate’s score as there is a strong preference to include candidates of these held identities on the council.
- **Max points: 6**

Q9: *Which of the following is familiar to you? Select all that apply.*

- Optional, not required for eligibility.
- Score 1 for first item identified. Note additional items beyond one to guide selection team in creating an informed council. Additional items identified shall not increase a candidate’s score, rather they shall differentiate the candidate as someone who brings a working knowledge of program function.
- **Max points: 1**

Q10: *How have you advocated for antiracist, equitable, and/or inclusive policies and practices?*

- Not scored.

Q11: *Why do you want to be part of the OR-MEP DEI Advisory Council?*

- Not scored.

Q12: Technology accommodations.

- Not scored.

Q13: *Is there anything else you would like the selection committee to know about you?*

- Not scored. Responses provided here may influence the decision to shortlist a candidate in the event of a tie or similar situation provided they meet all other necessary criteria and otherwise have a generally competitive score.

**Max application points possible: 8**

## INTERVIEW

Question	Topic	Max Points	Percent of Total / Weight
1	Why	7	13
2	[if applic] AH Prog / OR-MEP / EE Prog	3	6
3	[if applic] Rural	5	9
4	Background influenced interest	4	7
5	Experience -> advance racial justice	5	9
6	Goal for DEI	7	13
7	Helped BIPOC people thrive	5	9
8	Experience -> influence participation	5	9
9	<i>Not scored</i>	0	0
10	Coalition: honesty, inclusion, respect	4	7
11	Effective listening / prob. Situation	5	9
12	<i>Not scored</i>	0	0
13	Represent community voices	5	9
14	<i>Not scored</i>	0	0
15	<i>Not scored</i>	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>55</b>	<b>100%</b>

## General / Intros

*For all questions, provide a score based on alignment of candidate's response with one of the bulleted descriptions. Points for any one question may not be combined (e.g., do not score Q1 as 3+5=8, choose either 3 or 5) or split (e.g., do not score Q1 "4"). If the candidate is "between" scores, choose the higher of the two. Bonus points (e.g., "+2 points") may be added to the base score if criteria are met (e.g., Q1 could be 3+2=5, or 5+2=7). Points may not exceed the Max allowed for any given question.*

### **Q1: Why do you want to be a part of the OR-MEP DEI Coalition?**

***Intent:** Prioritize candidates who are most passionate and determined to make change, especially those who do not have "a seat" at other "tables."*

- **1:** High-level, oversimplified response that does not include any detail (example: It's the right thing to do); or focused more on their own interests than the greater good (example: seems like a good learning opportunity for me)
- **3:** Clear description that demonstrates an understanding of systemic inequities and injustices.
- **5:** Clear description that demonstrates an understanding of systemic inequities and injustices, which are motivated by personal, lived experiences and/or specific examples.
- **+2 points:** Candidates who state or imply that they do not have access to another group or organization where their voice influences systemic change or where they can address inequity and injustice.
- **Max points: 7**

**Q2: [If applicable] In your application you indicated that you are familiar with one or more of the following. Please tell us about your experience with that.** [Housing programs/Oregon energy burden/OR-MEP or energy efficiency programs]

*Intent: Identify which candidates have a working knowledge of the Coalition subject matter and/or can help cross-train or support other Coalition members as they learn about these topics.*

- **0:** They do not have a working knowledge of the area(s) they indicated. Speak about it/them in generic terms or guesses that reveal lack of actual experience or knowledge. Or, if they misunderstood the question.
- **1:** High-level, oversimplified response that indicates experience or knowledge, but does not include any detail.
- **2:** Clear description that demonstrates an understanding of this area(s).
- **3:** Clear description that demonstrates an understanding of this area(s), which includes detailed description of one or more lived experience and/or specific examples.
- **Max points: 3**

**Q3: [If applicable] In your application you indicated that you live or work in a rural area. Please tell us more about the rural region where you live or work.**

*Intent: Prioritize candidates who have first-hand experience with rural issues.*

- **0:** They do not live or work in a rural region or misunderstood the question.
- **1:** They live or work in a rural region but are not invested in rural issues/well-connected. -OR- they live or work in a technically rural area that is adjacent to urban or suburban communities that they identify with more than then rural community. (if not clear/sure, score as a “3”)
- **3:** They live or work in a rural region, identify strongly as a “rural Oregonian,” and are knowledgeable about rural issues but haven’t taken action to address them.
- **5:** They live or work in a rural region and are deeply invested in and/or actively advocate for rural issues. They are a “rural champion.”
- **Max points: 5**

## Personal Perspectives on DEI

**Q4: How has your background influenced your interest in this Coalition?**

*Intent: Prioritize candidates whose interest in the Coalition is based on personal experiences (whether in life or work) – rather than second-hand motivators.*

- **0:** High-level, oversimplified response that does not demonstrate a link between their background and participation in the Coalition; focused more on their own interests than the greater good; motivated by current trends rather than lasting values
- **2:** Response demonstrates that their background or experience influenced their interest in the Coalition but lacks details about relevant first-hand lived experience.
- **4:** Response demonstrates that their background or experience influenced their interest in the Coalition AND includes details about relevant first-hand lived experience.
- **Max points: 4**

**Q5: How do you think your life experience could help the OR-MEP program advance racial justice and disrupt entrenched systems that perpetuate inequality?**

*Intent: Prioritize candidates whose life experience will inform/influence changes to OR-MEP that advance racial justice and disrupt systemic inequity.*

- **0:** High-level, oversimplified response that does not illustrate relevant lived experience
- **1:** Response demonstrates experience that will benefit OR-MEP in advancing racial justice but lacks details about relevant first-hand lived experience; “expertise” is based on second-hand understanding.
- **5:** Response demonstrates experience that will benefit OR-MEP in advancing racial justice and includes details about relevant first-hand lived experience
- **Max points: 5**

**Q6: What is your goal for diversity, equity, and inclusion? What will it look like if you are successful?**

*Intent: Prioritize candidates who dream big about DEI and don’t let real barriers discourage them from changing the definition of what is “possible.”*

- **1:** “Safe” and conservative response that limits “what is possible” to existing barriers.
- **3:** Clear description that demonstrates creativity and ambition to make systemic changes but is limited by some existing barriers or perceived “reality.”
- **5:** Clear description that demonstrates creativity and ambition to make systemic changes – unrestrained by the current situation.
- **+2 points:** Response includes description of what success will mean at a personal level for them/their family/community
- **Max points: 7**

**Q7: Can you tell us about a time when you worked to make your workplace or community a place where everyone—particularly those who identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color (BIPOC)—could thrive? What was that experience like for you?**

*Intent: Prioritize candidates who respect, appreciate, and empathize with the lived experience of others - especially the BIPOC community – and who take action to remove barriers that perpetuate inequity.*

- **0:** They cannot recall a relevant experience, or their response doesn’t answer the question
- **3:** Their example answers the question, but does not demonstrate personal intentionality or lacks sufficient detail
- **5:** Their example demonstrates personal intention and effective outcomes
- **Max points: 5**

## Coalition Participation

**Q8: If you are selected for the DEI Coalition, how will your current/past work experience or involvement with community-based organizations influence your participation?**

Intent: Twofold – Key word: “influence.” 1) Identify candidates with potential conflicts of interest or counterproductive “agenda.” 2) Prioritize candidates whose experience and/or network will benefit the Coalition’s work.

- **0:** They have a clear or perceived conflict of interest or counterproductive “agenda” and/or their experience has nothing to offer the Coalition **\*THIS SCORE IS A VOTE TO DISQUALIFY THE CANDIDATE\***
- **1:** Response indicates bias for a specific “solution” or area of focus; or not open to other perspectives; or weak network/community to draw upon.
- **3:** Response demonstrates experience that will benefit Coalition’s work but doesn’t bring new insights that are not already known to the program and/or has a limited network/community to draw upon.
- **5:** Response demonstrates highly aligned experience that will benefit the Coalition’s work with perspective and information OR-MEP currently lacks and/or has a strong network/community to draw upon.
- **Max points: 5**

**Q9: We want this Coalition to be a place where all members can contribute to the discussion. What would make you comfortable sharing your perspectives in a group setting? What would make you uncomfortable?**

- Information only. Not scored.

**Q10: If you are appointed to this Coalition, what will you do to make it an environment of honesty, inclusion, and respect?**

Intent: Prioritize candidates who will contribute to making the Coalition a constructive and productive environment for all involved.

- **0:** Response lacks an understanding of and empathy with the experiences of others who are different than them.
- **2:** Response that demonstrates an understanding of and empathy with the experiences of others who are different than them but does not provide clear details about actions they will take.
- **4:** Response that demonstrates an understanding of and empathy with the experiences of others who are different than them and provides clear details about actions they will take.
- **Max points: 4**

**Q11: Tell us about a time when effective listening skills helped you in a problematic situation. Describe the situation, the actions you took, and the outcome.**

Intent: Prioritize candidates who intentionally seek to understand the perspective of others and who value listening as a communication tool.

- **0:** They cannot recall a relevant experience, or their response doesn’t answer the question
- **3:** Their example answers the question, but does not demonstrate personal intentionality, lessons learned from the experience, or lacks sufficient detail.
- **5:** Their example demonstrates personal intention, lessons learned, and effective outcomes.

- **Max points: 5**

**Q12: Do you have any concerns about participating in this Coalition? Please tell us about them.**

- Information only. Not scored.

**Q13: How will you ensure the voices of the community are represented in this Coalition?**

*Intent: Prioritize candidates who will see their role on the Coalition as that of representatives for the greater OR-MEP community of stakeholders – especially those with the greatest need.*

- **0:** Response focuses on amplifying voices that are already represented in OR-MEP (e.g., energy industry) or does not answer the question
- **1:** High-level, oversimplified response that lacks specific details about how they will (or that they can) represent voices of the community
- **5:** Clear description that includes specific details about how they can and will represent voices of the community
- **Max points: 5**

## Wrap-up

**Q14: What questions were you hoping we would ask you that we didn't?**

- Information only. Not scored.

**Q15: What questions do you have for us?**

- Information only. Not scored.

## **Appendix C: Membership Agreement**

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The coalition membership agreement begins on the following page.





## OR-MEP DEI Coalition Membership Agreement

This Agreement for DEI Coalition Membership ("**Agreement**") is made and effective on MONTH ##, 202# ("Effective Date"), by and between TRC Engineers Inc., a New Jersey Corporation with an office at 811 SW 6<sup>th</sup> Ave, Suite 800, Portland, OR 97204 ("**TRC**") and FIRST LAST ("**Coalition Member**") (singularly, a "**Party**" and collectively, the "**Parties**").

### 1. Background

The State of Oregon, acting by and through its Housing and Community Services Department ("**OHCS**") has contracted with TRC to administer the Oregon Multifamily Energy Program ("**OR-MEP**") through December 31, 2025. As a portion of TRC's services under OR-MEP, TRC is forming a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion ("**DEI**") Coalition ("**Coalition**").

OR-MEP promotes and facilitates energy-efficient construction in affordable multifamily housing through design assistance, cash incentives, coordination with other regional programs, and educational opportunities. OR-MEP funding is available for new and existing affordable multifamily housing properties. The purpose of OR-MEP funding is to reduce energy use and heating costs for low-income Oregonians through energy efficiency improvements.

### 2. Coalition Purpose

OR-MEP is committed to equitably serving the people of Oregon and disrupting systems that maintain inequality, within the energy industry and beyond. OR-MEP stands with the diverse communities served by the program and their rights to be respected, to be safely housed, and to secure environmental justice.

To assist in this commitment, OR-MEP seeks involvement and input from the Coalition. The Coalition will recommend and influence changes to the program to make it more accessible to all, especially customers with the greatest need who have not benefitted from OR-MEP. The Coalition will help OR-MEP create a DEI plan, understand barriers to participation, and make recommendations for how the program can modify policies to better serve customers of color, customers for whom English is not their first language, customers living in rural communities, and customers navigating low incomes.

### 3. DEI Coalition Objectives

- ◆ Modify and develop OR-MEP policies and practices to eliminate systemic racism from program design and implementation
- ◆ Help the program team equitably engage with all applicable communities and customers, prioritizing those who spend the highest percentage of their household income on energy costs

### 4. Term and Termination

This Agreement is effective through MONTH ##, 202#. The Agreement may be extended by TRC upon thirty (30) days' written notice. Either Party may terminate this Agreement upon thirty (30) days' written notice. In the event OHCS replaces TRC with another OR-MEP administrator, this Agreement may be assigned to such new administrator.

### 5. Membership Expectations

Coalition Member shall actively participate in meetings, provide support to relevant action items, and serve on subcommittees as needed. Coalition Member shall make all recommendations based on the best interests of OR-MEP stakeholders in light of the information and resources available. In particular, Coalition Member shall:

- ◆ **Own a Shared Mission:** Develop and commit to a mission-driven agreement.
- ◆ **Participate:** Actively attend and engage in Coalition meetings and serve on sub-committees.

- ◆ **Report:** Regularly communicate observations and recommendations to the designated OR-MEP point of contact.
- ◆ **Review:** Assess the purpose, intent, value, and outcomes of OR-MEP policies, procedures, and program at least once every two years.
- ◆ **Recommend:** Propose actions to address inequities in OHCS policies, procedures, and programs.

## 6. Coalition Charter

During the inaugural meetings of the OR-MEP DEI Coalition, Coalition Member shall contribute to creating an agreed-upon Coalition Charter. Coalition Member is expected to adhere to this Charter in addition to this Agreement. The Coalition Charter is hereby incorporated herein by reference to the extent it defines membership expectations.

## 7. Equipment & Technology

The Coalition will meet remotely via a video conferencing platform such as Zoom, Teams, or GoToMeeting. Each Coalition Member will need the following items to participate:

- ◆ High-speed internet (25 mbps or faster)
- ◆ Internet-enabled device, such as a computer or tablet
- ◆ Webcam or video camera embedded in or connected to the computer or tablet
- ◆ Headset or earbuds/headphones with a microphone – if calling from a noisy or shared space

TRC can provide support in the event Coalition Member needs to acquire any of these items.

## 8. Time Commitment

Coalition Member will commit to a minimum one-year term with the option to extend that term annually for up to three consecutive years of service. Following their term of service, Coalition Members may apply to rejoin the Coalition for additional terms of service after a break of at least one year.

Coalition Member shall participate each month for a minimum of 3 hours and a maximum of 10 hours.

Coalition Member shall adhere to Coalition established agreements related to meeting attendance and absences to be outlined in Coalition Charter.

## 9. Invoicing & Payment

Coalition Member will be compensated \$100 per hour for meeting attendance and related time spent outside of meetings.

At the start of each month, TRC will send Coalition Member a monthly Payment Request form that is reflective of the total hours Coalition Member is expected to contribute for each given month. Coalition Member shall sign and submit the Payment Request Form to TRC via email to [OHCSMultifamilyEnergy@trccompanies.com](mailto:OHCSMultifamilyEnergy@trccompanies.com) by the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month following the month in which time was incurred.

TRC shall make payment to Coalition Member within thirty (30) calendar days after TRC's receipt and approval of the Payment Request Form.

## 10. Conflicts of Interest

Coalition Member represents that there are no Conflicts of Interest that might interfere with their obligations under this Agreement and agrees to immediately notify TRC of any actual or potential Conflicts of Interest that arise during the term of this Agreement.

The term “**Conflicts of Interest**” means, and includes, but is not limited to, situations in which this Agreement conflicts with (i) Coalition Member's obligations under another contract, or (ii) Coalition Member's other business interests.

## 11. Confidential Information

“**Confidential Information**” shall include, but not be limited to, details about this Agreement, all data relating to OR-MEP, TRC's business or the services to be supplied hereunder, data, business operations, customer lists,

pricing, discounts or rebates, which is acquired by Coalition Member through TRC in connection with this Agreement, whether disclosed orally or in written, whether in electronic or other form or media, and whether or not marked, designated, or otherwise identified as "confidential." Confidential Information shall be used by Coalition Member solely for the use of performing this Agreement, may not be disclosed or copied unless TRC agrees in writing, and shall be safeguarded by Coalition Member at least to the extent that Coalition Member safeguards its own confidential data.

## **12. Changes**

Any amendment to this Agreement must be in writing and signed by an authorized representatives of each party. Coalition Member acknowledges that any work or services outside of the scope of his agreement must be pre-approved in writing by TRC before commencement or Coalition Member will not be entitled to compensation for such services/work.

## **13. Indemnification**

Coalition Member shall defend, indemnify, and hold TRC and OHCS and each of their officers, directors, employees, and agents harmless from and against any and all liability, loss, damage, expense (including reasonable attorneys' fees), or claims, or demands arising out of bodily injury, disease, death, or property damage, but only in proportion to and to the extent such liability, loss, expense, attorneys' fees, or claims for injury or damages are caused by the negligence or intentional misconduct of Coalition Member in the performance of this Agreement.

## **14. Relationship of the Parties**

Coalition Member is deemed at all times to be an independent contractor and shall be responsible for the manner in which it performs the work under this Agreement. Nothing contain herein shall be construed as creating the relationship of employer and employee between the Parties or its officers, employees, or agents.

## **15. Miscellaneous**

Coalition Member is not permitted to subcontract any portion of the services to be provided pursuant to this Agreement. In the event any provision in the Agreement is found to be legally invalid or unenforceable, that provision will be revised to the degree allowed by law to give it the maximum effect allowed by law, or, if revision is not possible, will be severed and the remaining provisions of this Agreement will remain in full force and effect. This Agreement may be executed electronically and/or in any number of counterparts, each of which will be deemed to be an original and all of which will together constitute one and the same instrument. Signatures delivered by facsimile or electronically will be deemed for all purposes to be original counterparts of this Agreement. Either Party's failure to insist upon or enforce any provision of this Agreement will not constitute a waiver thereof, and each Party specifically reserves the right to insist upon or enforce any provision at any time, regardless of any prior course of dealing. This Agreement constitutes the sole and entire agreement between the Parties. All negotiations, proposals, acknowledgments, and agreements made prior to the date of this Agreement, including, without limitation, any disclaimers or limits on liability, are merged herein and superseded by this Agreement. No representations to or other agreements with Coalition Member have been made by TRC except as stated in this Agreement.

## **16. Limitation of Liability**

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this Agreement, each Party waives any and all claims against each other for incidental, consequential, special, multiple, and punitive damages arising out of or relating to this Agreement, regardless of whether such damages were foreseeable and whether or not the culpable Party was advised of the possibility of such damages.

## **17. Notices**

To be valid, any notice required or permitted to be given under this Agreement must be in writing and sent by overnight delivery via USPS or a nationally recognized courier and addressed as set forth in the first paragraph above, with copy via email as follows:

if to TRC:

[OHCSMultifamilyEnergy@trccompanies.com](mailto:OHCSMultifamilyEnergy@trccompanies.com)

if to Coalition Member:

FIRST LAST, [email@email.com](mailto:email@email.com)

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, each Party hereto has caused this Agreement to be executed by its fully-authorized representative as of the Effective Date, and by so executing has agreed to be bound by this Agreement.

TRC Engineers, Inc.

Coalition Member:

By: \_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: FIRST LAST

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: OR-MEP DEI Coalition Member

## **Appendix D: Coalition Charter**

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The current DEI coalition charter begins on the following page.

# OR-MEP DEI Coalition Charter

*We would like to acknowledge the land we call Oregon is the ancestral territory of many tribes and bands and acknowledge that they were forcibly removed from the land and recognize the continuation of harmful colonial legacies.*

*We also acknowledge that much of what we know as Oregon has been built at the expense of the neglect of the resources going to the communities who historically have contributed socially, politically, and economically but have not been served.*

## **Purpose**

The Coalition will analyze, recommend, and influence changes to the Oregon Housing & Community Services' (OHCS) Multifamily Energy Program (OR-MEP) to make it more accessible to all, especially customers who have historically been harmed, redlined, and carried the burden of environmental injustice and climate change. The Coalition will help OR-MEP create a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) plan, understand barriers to participation, and recommend modifications to the program and policies to better serve customers of color, those who have been historically harmed, and those customers for whom English is not their first language, those living in rural communities, and those navigating low incomes.

OHCS and OR-MEP will implement and monitor and measure these changes and report to the Coalition to ensure effectiveness.

## **Strategic Intent**

OR-MEP DEI Coalition is committed to amplifying the needs of the environmental justice communities and recommending the implementation of new operating pathways and solutions that will re-balance the existing inequitable systems to ensure OR-MEP is serving the people of Oregon in an equitable way.

The Coalition will analyze and understand the program, its impacts, and the inequities that exist and recommend changes to OHCS.

The Coalition will continue monitoring the changes made by the program team and OHCS to ensure the desired outcomes are achieved and adjust as needed.

## Goals and Objectives

The OR-MEP DEI Coalition reviews, recommends, modifies and creates OR-MEP policies and practices to deconstruct existing systemic racism from program design and implements changes to help the communities that are on the frontline of climate change impacts, redlining communities, and communities that have historically been harmed by inequities and injustice.

The Coalition will help foster relationships between organizations that represent priority populations and can assist with the sharing of resources, information and funding.

The Coalition will create clear and measurable goals and objectives and work with the program team to re-adjust the program practices and policies if needed to ensure the desired and defined equitable outcomes are met and sustained.

## Equity Statement

*The coalition defines Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion as:*

*Diversity – is to acknowledge the tangible and intangible differences between community members, and consider their varying needs and priorities when policies are designed and services are provided*

*Inclusion – is to create an environment where all community members feel safe to participate and appreciated for their contributions, regardless of how they are different from or similar to other people*

*Equity – is to honor “Diversity” and practice “Inclusion” by offering adequate tools and resources that meet everyone’s needs and preferences, allowing them to thrive*

## Participation

### Section 1. Inclusivity

OR-MEP DEI Coalition is committed to being a coalition that is diverse and inclusive to represent the needs of the communities the program will serve. To do this, the OR-MEP DEI Coalition is comprised of the following representatives:

<b>Roles</b>
CBO Representative
Energy Efficiency Professional
Workforce Development
Affordable Housing Staff
Affordable Housing resident
Finance
Rural

OR-MEP DEI Coalition is accountable to inclusivity, proper representation and collaborative leadership in all decisions regarding recruitment, membership, staffing, programming, policy, outreach and education. The Coalition will recommend other community representation if, at any point, they see gaps incorporating the perspectives of the whole community in Oregon.

## **Section 2. Collaboration**

Participants are expected to:

- Commit to bringing equity into all aspect of their work together
- Share best practices and knowledge
- Mentor partners and providers
- Investigate data and support analyses
- Promote implementation of evidence-based interventions
- Build a culture that supports different temperaments (e.g. Real Colors)

## **Section 3. Participant Responsibilities**

OR-MEP DEI Coalition members will commit to a minimum one-year term with the option to extend that term annually for up to three consecutive years of service. Following their term of service, Coalition Members may apply to rejoin the Coalition for additional terms of service after a break of at least one year.



Coalition Members shall participate each month for a minimum of 3 hours and a maximum of 10 hours.

Coalition Members shall adhere to Coalition established agreements related to meeting attendance and absences to be outlined in Coalition Charter.

**Own a Shared Mission:** Develop and commit to a mission-driven agreement.

**Participate:** Actively attend and engage in Coalition meetings and serve on sub-committees. designated OR-MEP point of contact.

**Review:** Assess the purpose, intent, value, and outcomes of OR-MEP policies, procedures, and programs at least once every two years.

**Recommend:** Propose actions to address inequities in OHCS policies, procedures, and programs.

**Monitor:** Monitor changes by tracking quantified targets to ensure the desired outcomes are met

## **Representation/Visibility**

Coalition Members shall make all recommendations based on the best interests of OR-MEP stakeholders in light of the information and resources available.

# **Structure**

## **Section 1. Facilitation**

Third-party facilitators will be facilitating the Coalition meetings and are the point of contact for all the members outside of meetings.

The facilitators will not have a decision-making vote and they will remain as unbiased entities.

Third-party facilitators are responsible for setting the agenda, distributing notes, setting up working material, and consistent communication.

The facilitators must remain unbiased throughout the conversations.

The facilitators will be navigating disagreements and potential conflicts. Should conflicts remain unresolved or unnoticed by the facilitator, the coalition members are empowered to call out and potentially escalate the issue to bring in outside mediators to address the issue.

## **Section 2. Leadership**

We are committed to community-based leadership and share decision-making that centers the views and experiences of those most affected by the issues.

## **Section 3. Sub-Committee/Work Group Participation**

To Be Determined

## **Section 4. Standing Committees/Work Groups**

Workgroups will be formed as needed with clear scope, and expected time commitments.

# **Meetings**

## **Section 1. Regular Meetings**

The Coalition will meet monthly. Periodically the Coalition may meet more frequently based upon the needs of the program.

# **Procedural Policies**

## **Section 1. Meeting Attendance**

This Coalition's work is grounded in diversity of voices and thoughts. Attendance of individuals is important because we care about everyone's voice and the community perspective they bring to the table. As such, we want to make sure conversations include good representation of the members. For that reason, if a member cannot attend a meeting, we ask that they do their best to inform the meeting facilitators in advance. We will apply the following agreements for our meetings attendance:

- If only less than 50% of coalition members are in attendance, the meeting will be canceled.
- Ongoing attendance issues by a particular member should first be tried to be resolved by the facilitator.
- If the attendance issues continue, the coalition members may be asked to weigh in or may themselves decide to weigh in.

## **Section 2. Onboarding**

Onboarding new Coalition members is an important part of ensuring we have a healthy and inclusive dynamic amongst our members. When a new member joins the Coalition, we need to make sure all the relevant and existing information is available to them. This may include:

1. The Coalition's charter
2. Past work and meeting notes
3. OR-MEP program, application and funding processes, and data
4. Program terminology

We recognize that people have different styles of learning and we want to honor and work with that. In addition to providing the above information, facilitators will set up 1:1 meetings with the new member and seek support from other Coalition members or program team members to help with the onboarding, if needed.

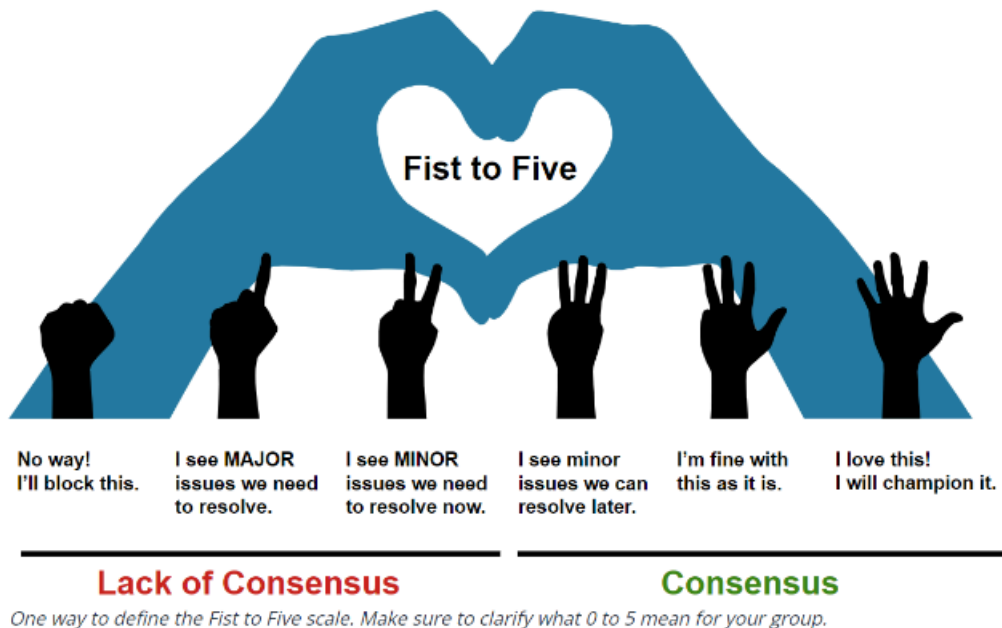
## **Section 3. Decision Making**

In the spirit of the OR-MEP DEI Coalition vision, all Coalition business shall be conducted based on the philosophy of mutual respect. In making decisions, we will first apply consensus building and use the "Fist to Five" process to determine participants' position on the topic. If we get to a deadlock that cannot be resolved, the fallback option is simple majority. If there are decisions to be made 70% of the members should be in attendance.

Fist to Five Process ( Source: <https://www.lucidmeetings.com>):

## What is Fist to Five?

The Fist to Five is a technique for quickly getting feedback or gauging consensus during a meeting. The leader makes a statement, then asks everyone to show their level of agreement with the statement by holding up a number of fingers, from 5 for wild enthusiasm (jazz hands!) down to a clenched fist for vehement opposition.



## Section 4. Conflicts

No one may profit financially from membership in the Coalition by sales or solicitation at meetings or workshops. Participants will disclose any actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest and will solely work on behalf of the community interest.

## Section 5. Voting

Voting on the business of the Coalition may be conducted by those in attendance at the meeting either in person or by teleconference. E-mail voting is permissible.