

ORGANIZATION:	The National Writing Project
<p>Who are your members? Students, professionals, others? What are their race, gender, and ethnicity?</p> <p>What is your current representation of people of color in governance roles?</p>	<p>The National Writing Project is not a “membership” organization in the way that professional organizations that have members who pay dues. NWP is made up of around 200 local sites who run summer invitational institutes, conduct professional development in their service area, and provide a professional home for teachers of writing.</p> <p>Diversity issues, then, are first and foremost the responsibility of the local sites. Each year, local sites write a Continued Funding Application, where they report on the number of teachers of color who participate in their invitational institutes. Our independent evaluator, Inverness Associates, reports that the teachers in our program serve a slightly higher percentage of students of color (43%) than the national average (38%), and that we serve a higher percentage (20%) of teachers of color in our summer institutes than the national average (13%).</p> <p>Our governance supports the local site work, seeking to develop each site to its fullest capacity, which includes supporting the development of a diverse leadership and the site’s ability to serve teachers in schools where there are diverse students.</p> <p>There are different levels of governance.</p> <p>National Networks and Programs We have four national networks of sites, each with their own leadership. These national networks are the Rural Sites Network, the Urban Sites Network, English Language Learners Network, and the Teacher Inquiry Communities. The National Writing Project also sponsors national programs whose purpose is to strengthen and enrich local site work. There are 15-20 of those programs, each with program leaders and leadership teams. I did a quick review of the diversity of leadership teams and found that 34% of the teacher leaders on those teams are teachers of color.</p> <p>National Program Leaders These are the leaders of the programs above. 25% of the National Program Leaders are teachers of color.</p> <p>Senior Staff This group is responsible for the research and evaluation, communications, governmental relations and public affairs, and national programs and site development, grants and contracts, operations, finance, and information systems. 20% of the senior staff are people of color.</p> <p>Board of Directors There are three people of color on our Board of Directors, including the Chairman. There are eleven total members.</p>
What programs, structures	All of our programs strive for inclusion and diversity; it’s in

<p>and statements do you have to promote inclusion of people of color in the organization?</p> <p>What programs do you have to promote inclusion of people of color in leadership roles?</p>	<p>our mission statement: “The National Writing Project values diversity—our own as well as that of our students, their families and their communities. We recognize that our lives and practices are enriched when those with whom we interact represent diversities of race, gender, class, ethnicity, and language” (http://www.writingproject.org/About/mission.csp). Our national networks focus on critical equity issues in education. The Urban Sites Network, for instance, has spend the last several years addressing the achievement gap through specific strategies for urban teachers and by examining the very language with which we conduct our inquiries into unequal achievement, funding, and support. The Rural Sites Network has focused on issues of rural poverty and Native American education in the last few years.</p> <p>Project Outreach, one of our national programs, focuses specifically on access, relevance, and diversity of leadership. We are currently in our third cohort of local sites. This program provides sites with a three year funding cycle that asks them to conduct a site self-study that focuses on access to writing project activities, the relevance of their programming to their classrooms, and the diversity (or lack of diversity) in their local leadership. Following the site self-study, the participating local sites create an action plan to address the findings of their site self-study. Finally, through this process, sites identify new—and more diverse—leadership for their site. This project has been remarkably successful. To date, 34 of our nearly 200 sites have participated in Project Outreach.</p>
<p>When did these programs and structures that promote inclusion and diversity come into being?</p>	<p>The Urban Sites Network began in 1986 as a result of a small number of sites wanting to put urban equity issues at the center of their work. The central concern was to make sure that NWP sites’ services were relevant to teachers in urban settings. Project Outreach grew from this concern (and shared an initial private funding source) and started 1996.</p>
<p>How do concerns about diversity determine where you meet and why?</p>	<p>Our annual meeting is tied to NCTE. We meet in an adjacent hotel so that NWP teachers can attend both meetings. In addition to our annual meeting, our networks have regular meetings as well, which occur in both urban and rural settings. Additionally, these meetings and institutes range from a single day conference for hundred to weeklong, intensive working sessions for small groups. We seek an array of national programs and meetings that could accommodate the interests of the widest variety of teachers.</p>
<p>How do you hold people accountable for progress toward meeting goals of</p>	<p>Every site writes a Continued Funding Application and completes a Site Profile. Together these documents create a</p>

racial and ethnic diversity?	picture of the diversity at their site. These documents are peer reviewed. Issues of diversity in the summer invitational and in their leadership cohort are issues that are regularly addressed by reviewers.
Why is diversity valued in your organization? Was there an event or a triggering action that brought this to the forefront?	The National Writing Project values inclusiveness and access, but the central reason why diversity is in the center of our mission statement has more to do with excellence. Our institutes must be diverse in order to provide teachers with a rich environment. We conceive of our work as knowledge-building; without a diversity of experience, ideas, and practice, our knowledge base would be impoverished. I often think of a statement by Joyce Justus of the University of California: “There can be no greatness without diversity.”
How effective have your programs and structures been? How do you know? How is this measured?	As an example of our effectiveness, I looked at the final work of the local writing projects that participated in Project Outreach. For example, at the University of Connecticut-Fairfield Writing Project in 2000, all of their teachers came from suburban districts and they reported teaching 100% white students. After Project Outreach, 33% of their teachers came from urban schools and they taught 23% students of color. They accomplished this change by revising the relevance of their institute readings and activities and by putting teachers of color in leadership positions in the institute. All participating sites made similar progress.
Other information:	<p>Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions.</p> <p>(530) 898-6462; tfox@writingproject.org</p>
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