

# Inclusive Excellence Plan

*Est. June 2024*

## I. Introduction

The William & Mary Washington Center is dedicated to fostering an inclusive and equitable environment that aligns with the university's overarching Inclusive Excellence framework. Inclusive Excellence at William & Mary is a comprehensive model that integrates diversity and inclusion into the very fabric of the institution. By incorporating these principles into every aspect of organizational functioning—recruiting, hiring, training, and administrative practices—the university ensures that diversity and inclusion are central to achieving excellence.

Our Center's mission—to integrate excellent academics and experiential learning to produce high-impact opportunities for all—resonates deeply with the Inclusive Excellence framework. We strive to facilitate meaningful connections and create a place of belonging for the entire William & Mary community.

To develop our Inclusive Excellence Plan, the Washington Center team engaged in a year-long, reflective process. This journey included guided personal and team reflections, extensive reading and research, and consultations with Dr. Chon Glover, Chief Diversity Officer. Through brainstorming sessions, collaborative efforts, and iterative drafting and revisions, the team crafted a plan that embodies our commitment to cultivating a diverse community, creating equitable opportunities, and supporting inclusive practices. This plan not only aligns with the university's goals but also enhances our mission by ensuring that inclusivity and excellence are interwoven into our core operations.

### **W&M Washington Center Land Acknowledgement**

The William & Mary Washington Center acknowledges the Indigenous peoples who are the original inhabitants of the lands on which we are located today – lands of the Anacostans or Nacotchtank peoples, the neighboring Piscataway peoples and the nearby Patowomeck, Rappahannock and Monacan Indian Tribes. We gratefully acknowledge these many Native Peoples on whose ancestral homelands we gather, as well as the diverse and vibrant Native communities who make their home here today – and pay our respect to their tribal members past and present.

The practice of Land Acknowledgement represents a commitment to a culture of inclusion that begins with recognizing the Indigenous peoples of our region.

More information about land acknowledgment and why it is important can be found at the [W&M American Indian Resource Center](#).

### **Statement on Slavery and Its Legacies**

The Center also acknowledges that William & Mary enslaved people, exploited them and their labor, and perpetuated the legacies of racial discrimination. The University profoundly regrets these activities, apologizes for them, expresses its deep appreciation for the contributions made by the African and African American members of its community to the vitality of William & Mary then, now, and for all time coming, and commits to continuing our efforts to remedy the lingering effects of past injustices.

### **University Diversity Statement**

William & Mary is a community that shares values of belonging, curiosity, excellence, flourishing, integrity, respect and service. We support the right to free expression of a range of ideas and work to create an educational environment that draws on diverse backgrounds and perspectives to foster mutual respect, collaboration, critical thinking, and meaningful relationships. We affirm the vital role of the university in recognizing and fostering inclusive environments, equitable opportunities, and belonging related to social identities and positions that have been excluded or marginalized in our community, including differences such as ability, class, country of origin, gender identity and expression, language, race and ethnicity, religion, sexuality, and other cultural or political affiliations.

For William & Mary to fulfill its educational mission and become a place that is itself diverse, equitable and inclusive, we must acknowledge the uncomfortable truths of our history and consider the ways in which historical patterns of exploitation and exclusion may continue to shape our university.

We take seriously our obligation to speak up when we see bias, whether it be in our classrooms, workspaces or the university community at large. We embrace our shared responsibility to create change where we fall short of our goals. William & Mary strives to be a place where people of all backgrounds are able to learn and grow, and where each individual takes responsibility for upholding the dignity of all members of the community.

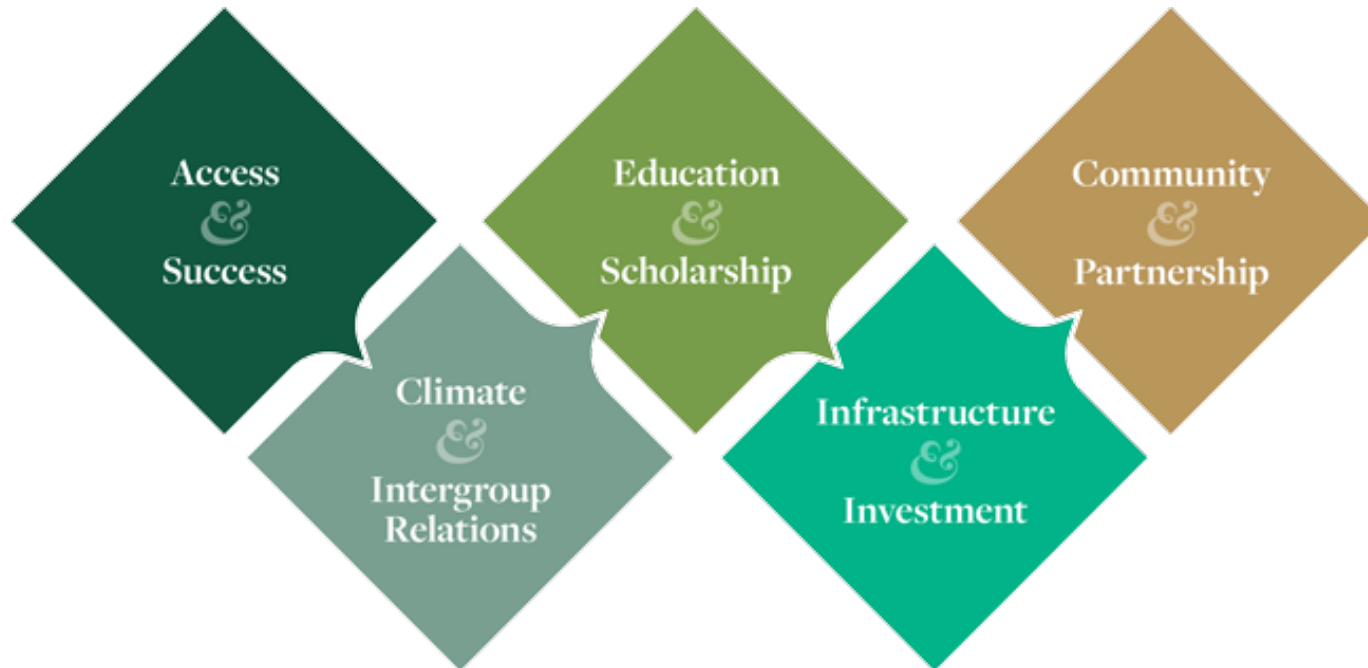
*- Approved by the W&M Board of Visitors, February 2022*

### **University Non-Discrimination Statement**

William & Mary policy prohibits discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, religion, creed, national origin, color, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, physical or mental disability (or perceived disability), citizenship status, age, marital status, family responsibilities, Veteran or military status (including disabled veteran,

recently separated veteran, active duty wartime or campaign badge veteran, and Armed Forces Service Medal veteran), and predisposing genetic characteristics.

### University Inclusive Excellence Framework



## II. Self-Assessment

The following SWOT analysis highlights the top strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats identified by the William & Mary Washington Center. This assessment provides a comprehensive overview of our current position and informs our strategy for continuous improvement in promoting diversity, inclusive practices, and equitable programming.

### Center Strengths

- **Individualized Approach to Student Relationships:** Our Center excels in providing personalized attention to each student, fostering strong, meaningful connections.
- **Intentional Focus on Social Uplift and Individual Success:** We are committed to thoughtfully considering the background and goals of both our students and staff to best support their professional development and growth.
- **Authenticity in the Workplace:** With a culture of belonging, we bring our authentic selves to the office, which signals to students and faculty that they can do the same, creating a welcoming and inclusive environment.

- **Scholarships and Individual Support:** Our scholarships and personalized approach enable us to reach students who might not otherwise have access to professional opportunities, or who lacked the ability to start and grow their professional support systems at William & Mary without our guidance.

#### Center Weaknesses

- **Distance from Main Campus:** The physical distance from the main campus can limit direct interactions with students.
- **High Cost of Living in D.C.:** The expense of living in Washington, D.C. can be a barrier for some students.
- **Lack of Control Over Internship Payment Structures:** We do not have control over the payment structures of internships, which can impact students' financial planning and accessibility.

#### Center Opportunities

- **Potential Partnerships with Local Universities:** We have the opportunity to form partnerships with local universities, such as Howard University and other potential institutions, to broaden our reach and impact.
- **Targeted Advertising:** With most of the student body having a baseline understanding of Study in D.C., we can now tailor our advertising to meet the specific needs of diverse student groups.
- **Openness to New Programs and Initiatives:** We are open to exploring new programs, initiatives, and operational methods that better serve students from various backgrounds.
- **Attraction for International Students:** International students increasingly cite the Center as a significant factor in their decision to choose William & Mary, highlighting our growing influence and appeal.

#### Center Threats

- **Risk of Inconsistency:** As a small team accomplishing a significant amount of work, we risk being inconsistent with our diversity and access action items.
- **Staff Turnover:** High staff turnover can disrupt our initiatives and continuity, impacting the quality and consistency of our programs.

### III. Key strategies

The W&M Washington Center is committed to fostering an inclusive environment that reflects the university's Inclusive Excellence Plan. Our key strategies include ensuring access and success for diverse student populations, enhancing campus climate, and building strong community partnerships. By providing guaranteed funding for internships, increasing the visibility of the Center among underrepresented groups, and creating pathways to full-time employment, we aim to support a diverse and dynamic community. Additionally, we are dedicated to enriching our physical space, hosting a diverse range of events, and engaging with new faculty and alumni to enhance the educational experience.

**Key Strategies:**

- Establish guaranteed funding for students in unpaid/underpaid internships.
- Broaden visibility among underrepresented student populations.
- Create pathways to full-time employment through employer partnerships.
- Enhance inclusivity of physical space and events.
- Increase quality and diversity of student-alumni connections.
- Improve hiring practices and event systems for inclusivity.
- Increase community partnerships and engagement with service organizations.

**IV. 2024-2026 SMART Goals**

Access & Success		Achieve and maintain a more diverse and inclusive undergraduate, graduate/professional student body, faculty, and staff.			
SMART Goals/Objectives	Actions	Outcomes (Data/Metric)	Timeframe(s)	Responsible Office/Position	Funding/Resource Allocation
Establish guaranteed funding for all D.C. students in unpaid/underpaid internships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify the funding gap using student data and budgeting.</li> <li>• Create marketing materials highlighting our Center needs and goals.</li> <li>• Secure dedicated donors as part of the 25th-anniversary fundraising effort.</li> </ul>	New materials created with a communications plan for execution.	By December 2026	Roxane (working with Whitney Lee and John Meck)	Small Start-up funds needed
Broaden Center visibility among underrepresented student populations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create and distribute targeted marketing for underrepresented student populations, including POSSE, PLUS, FGLI, international students, students with disabilities, and English Language Learners.</li> </ul>	New materials created with a communications plan for execution.	By June 2026	Gabe (working with Tyler and UMark)	None

Use employer/community partners to create pathways to full-time work for students from underrepresented backgrounds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop marketing materials and an outreach plan for community partners.</li> <li>• Create an internship framework to help partners offer meaningful internship experiences for students, possibly including a grad school fair.</li> </ul>	Creation of at least 3 community internships that might lead to full-time employment.	By June 2026	Tyler and Sarah to create framework, Gabe on marketing	None
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<b>Campus Climate</b>		<b>Create and sustain an organizational environment that acknowledges and celebrates diversity and employs inclusive practices throughout its daily operations.</b>			
SMART Goals/Objectives	Actions	Outcomes (Data/Metric)	Timeframe(s)	Responsible Office/Position	Funding/Resource Allocation
Increase a sense of belonging by updating the physical space to be more inclusive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update the physical space with inclusive photos, statements, mailings, graphics, and décor.</li> <li>• Host a student art contest and display local/community art, including land acknowledgements.</li> </ul>	Increased intentionality with which the physical space in the Center elicits a sense of belonging.	By Spring 2025	Caty/Roxane	One-time small budget
Increase the number of events highlighting celebrating diverse identities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host events with all affinity alumni groups at the Center.</li> <li>• Host underrepresented group celebrations at least once a year.</li> </ul>	Events that highlight and connect us to affinity alumni groups to build those relationships.	By June 2025	Events team (in partnership with Advancement)	None
Foster a team culture focused on inclusive practices and learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct regular trainings.</li> </ul>	Annual internal assessment.	Ongoing	Roxane	None
Increase personal approach with students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop personalized engagement strategies based on the strategic plan.</li> </ul>	Enhanced student satisfaction and engagement.	By Fall 2024	Programs Teams	None

<b>Education &amp; Scholarship</b>		<b>Engage students, faculty, staff, alumni, and the community in learning domestic contexts and international perspectives regarding diversity, social justice, and inclusivity</b>			
SMART Goals/Objectives	Actions	Outcomes (Data/Metric)	Timeframe(s)	Responsible Office/Position	Funding/Resource Allocation
Recruit and retain diverse faculty to teach in Study in D.C. programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update faculty recruitment materials and distribution channels.</li> <li>Conduct info sessions.</li> </ul>	New faculty from diverse units represented in each recruitment cycle.	By fall 2024 and each fall thereafter	Erin	None
Recruit and retain diverse faculty to teach in Study in D.C. programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Target individualized relationship-building with new faculty through 1-on-1 and small group meetings.</li> </ul>	Regularly scheduled meetings with new faculty and underrepresented units.	Throughout the year for the next 2 years	Erin & Roxane	None
Meet an increasing amount of student scholarship need each year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Track planned growth trajectory and benchmarks.</li> </ul>	Annual financial updates on demonstrated need and need met.	Immediately and increasing each year over next 5 year	Roxane & Erin	TBD, Scholarship fund
Increase the number and quality of student-alumni connections.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and improve mentor and speed networking systems.</li> </ul>	Report and action steps by summer 2024.	By summer 2024	Erin and programs team	120796 if needed
Ensure all Study in D.C. faculty are trained in Center inclusive practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help faculty incorporate University and Center inclusive practices into their syllabi.</li> <li>Design and conduct training sessions before each program begins.</li> </ul>	Training sessions designed and held before each program begins.	By December 2024 for first training	Erin and Roxane	None

Ensure all Study in D.C. faculty are trained in Center inclusive practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help faculty acquire diverse speaker and site visit lineups.</li> </ul>	Meetings held 2 months before and again 3 weeks before each program to review.	By fall 2024	Programs team	None
Ensure all Study in D.C. faculty are trained in Center inclusive practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survey all students in all classes with topics centering on diversity and inclusion, including faculty evaluations.</li> </ul>	100% of surveys received and reviewed with debrief meetings and action plans.	By fall 2024	Erin and programs team	None
Revisit all Center marketing materials to be more accessible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start including closed captioning.</li> <li>Create multi-lingual materials.</li> <li>Increase the distribution of stories celebrating student diversity.</li> </ul>	Visible closed captioning, new multi-lingual materials, and increased diverse student stories.	By Fall 2024	Gabe	Plan needed, STLI support and staff
Enhance student programming.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expose students to local organizations and other colleges/institutions through volunteering and other engagements.</li> </ul>	Increased student participation in activities like volunteering at DCCK.	By Fall 2024	Programs team	None

<b>Organizational Culture &amp; Accountability</b> <i>Infrastructure &amp; Investment</i>		<b>Create and sustain an institutional infrastructure that effectively supports progress in achieving goals focused on diversity and inclusion in the university's strategic plan.</b>			
SMART Goals/Objectives	Actions	Outcomes (Data/Metric)	Timeframe(s)	Responsible Office/Position	Funding/Resource Allocation
Increase local SWaM catering and food sourcing by 15%.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create a list of local SWaM Certified food vendors.</li> <li>Track catering and food orders through documentation.</li> <li>Develop a local database of SWaM vendors.</li> </ul>	Compare year-over-year catering and food sourcing.	By Spring 2025	Operations and Events Manager, Events Team, Program Managers	None



Enhance board recruitment efforts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement strategies to recruit diverse board members.</li> </ul>	Increased diversity in board membership.	By Spring 2025	Roxane and Erin	None
Improve hiring practices.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and update hiring processes to promote diversity and foster inclusion.</li> </ul>	Increased diversity in staff hires.	By Spring 2025	Erin	None
Enhance event systems to consider accessibility needs, language, religious observations, and identity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop guidelines and training for inclusive event planning.</li> </ul>	More inclusive and accessible events.	By Spring 2025	Events Team	None

<b>Innovation, Community &amp; Reconciliation</b> <i>Community &amp; Partnership</i>		<b>Grow institutional philanthropy and community partnerships to improve outcomes in local/regional communities.</b>			
SMART Goals/Objectives	Actions	Outcomes (Data/Metric)	Timeframe(s)	Responsible Office/Position	Funding/Resource Allocation
Provide educational and professional guidance to underrepresented communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create 2-3 events at the Washington Center offering specific guidance to the greater D.C. community.</li> <li>Post open office hours for the public for virtual one-on-one guidance sessions monthly.</li> </ul>	Track attendance and completed projects such as FAFSA applications and resumes reviewed.	By Spring 2025	Events Team	None
Increase community partnerships by 15%.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Solicit partnerships with community organizations and companies for events, projects, and programs.</li> </ul>	Track the number of collaborative projects with locally owned and non-locally owned community entities.	By Spring 2026	Operations and Events Manager	None

Increase engagement with community service organizations through student internships and community service projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase internship opportunities with MVT CID and other organizations by 20%.</li> <li>• Engage in 1-3 community service opportunities annually with students, staff, and faculty.</li> </ul>	Track fulfilled internship opportunities and community engagement metrics from MVT CID.	By Spring 2026	Program Managers, Operations and Events Manager	None
Develop a new SoE program with DCPS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with DCPS to design and implement the program.</li> </ul>	Successful launch and student participation in the new program.	By Spring 2026	Erin and Roxane	None

## V. Implementation Plan

Fostering Inclusive Excellence at the W&M Washington Center (2024-2026):

The W&M Washington Center is dedicated to cultivating an environment of inclusive excellence, championing equitable opportunities, collaboration, and a sense of belonging. Our implementation plan outlines specific action items across five priority areas to be pursued directly by our team through 2026.

### 1. Continuous Updates, Outcome Assessments, and Goal Re-evaluations:

- Establish a dedicated task force responsible for regularly reviewing the progress of inclusive excellence initiatives.
- Implement a system for collecting quantitative and qualitative data to assess the impact of our efforts on the community.
- Schedule regular check-ins and forums to gather feedback from students, alumni, and other stakeholders.

### 2. Collaboration and Partnership:

- Strengthen collaboration within the W&M Washington Center and extend partnerships to the city of D.C., fostering relationships with local organizations and initiatives. (Potential organizations TBD.)
- Establish joint programs with other administrative and academic units at the University, creating a network of support for inclusive practices. (Potential partners TBD.)

### 3. Philanthropy and Engagement:

- Expand philanthropic efforts beyond financial contributions to increase our mentorship programs, scholarships, and support networks.
- Host regular events, workshops, forums, and focus groups to facilitate dialogue and community-building.

#### 4. Communication and Education:

- Launch a multimedia campaign to communicate the Center's priorities, values, and progress on inclusive excellence initiatives.
- Organize educational events and training sessions to celebrate diversity, promote equitable opportunities, and model inclusive practices
- Leverage various communication channels, including social media, newsletters, and webinars, to reach a wider audience.

#### 5. Personalized Interactions and Collaborative Initiatives:

- Encourage an environment where diverse perspectives are valued.
- Develop initiatives that celebrate and showcase the contributions of individuals from different backgrounds.

Our commitment to inclusive excellence is embedded in our mission, and we recognize that its successful implementation requires a strategic, actionable plan. Through continuous updates, collaboration, philanthropy, communication, and personalized initiatives, we aim to create a thriving community where every member feels empowered to contribute and will benefit from the richness of our shared experience.

### **VI. Communication Plan**

Upon completion of our Inclusive Excellence (IE) plan, the Washington Center will share our goals and progress on our website, with monthly updates modeled after our strategic plan. We will launch the IE plan by engaging key university stakeholders, including unit and department leaders, students, parents, prospective students, and Washington Center program alumni. This communication strategy will help us share our values and maintain strong connections with campus partners and students. Quarterly or biannually, we will provide updates to our campus and alumni communities.

#### **Key Strategies for Communication by Action Area:**

- **Access and Success:**
  - Collaborate with Whitney Lee and other Advancement leaders to ensure our plan aligns with university fundraising strategies for student internships.
  - Partner with The Office of Career Development & Professional Engagement to co-brand and promote funded internship opportunities.
  - Engage student-centered organizations to authentically share program benefits and support structures.
  - Develop an employer roadshow presentation to highlight the value of hiring and retaining Washington Center interns.

- **Campus Climate:**
  - Work with Advancement to host events for all affinity alumni groups at the Washington Center, showcasing the value of our space.
- **Education & Scholarship:**
  - Communicate consistently with students and faculty about our commitment to inclusive excellence, ensuring IE goals are integrated into the Washington Center experience from marketing through program completion.
- **Organizational Culture & Accountability:**
  - Emphasize our dedication to belonging in the hiring and board recruitment processes, by sharing our vision for a community of belonging and how it aligns with our IE commitments.
- **Innovation, Community & Reconciliation:**
  - Collaborate with local community organizations to host joint events which will promote reconciliation and community building, in turn highlighting our success stories and ongoing projects.
  - Develop and distribute regular newsletters that showcase innovative projects and initiatives within the Washington Center, thereby emphasizing community impact and reconciliation efforts.
  - Create a dedicated section on our website for innovation and reconciliation, featuring blogs, videos, and updates on related initiatives, allowing stakeholders to track progress and contribute ideas.
  - Implement a feedback mechanism through surveys and virtual suggestion boxes to gather input, and, to then adjust strategies based on community needs and innovative solutions.

By incorporating these strategies, stakeholders and community partners can monitor progress through our website and participate in the success of the IE plan. Regular updates and transparent communication will ensure everyone is engaged and informed.