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Beyond the Buzzwords: A Framework of Inclusive Excellence for Leader Hiring and Training at The Experiment in International Living

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Beyond the Buzzwords: A Framework of Inclusive Excellence for Leader Hiring and Training at The Experiment in International Living

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A capstone paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a
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Student Name: Chelsea Johnson

Date: May 6, 2019

Dedication

This paper is dedicated to Katie Hodgson, PIM 76.2 in spirit

*"Live and love fiercely and joyfully, feel loss and injustice deeply,
then live and love fiercely and joyfully even more"*

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And to JJ, for giving me the gift of SIT

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Abstract

"Beyond the Buzzwords" is a framework of inclusive excellence that holistically examines practices in group leader hiring and training at The Experiment in International Living (The Experiment) through a lens of equity, diversity, and inclusion, focusing primarily on racial identity and whiteness. The purpose of the framework and its plan for implementation is to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of group leaders and advance their collective ability to capitalize on their student groups' diversity for a deeper and richer learning experience abroad. Drawing upon principles of experiential learning, transformative learning, and social justice education theories, Beyond the Buzzwords comprises recommendations for The Experiment to implement throughout the entire process of group leaders' experience with the organization. Striving for inclusive excellence, the framework centers on three core areas of focus: access (diversity of the leader cohort), awareness (critical identity self-reflection), and action (equitable and inclusive practices).

The Experiment provides access to summer programs abroad for high school students from all over the United States, including communities traditionally underrepresented in international education. As members of the diverse Generation Z, Experiment students experience myriad manifestations of social identity, amplified by the context of their host countries. Their adult group leaders, who historically are majority white female, are the stewards of their educational experience, responsible for mitigating identity-related incidents while supporting all students' learning and growth. Developed with input from previous group leaders and Experiment staff members, and founded upon theories of student identity development, white fragility, and the nuance of identity abroad, Beyond the Buzzwords intends to encompass a holistic view of equity and inclusion as it pertains to leaders both at The Experiment and in the field of international education.

Key Terms

- *Affinity groups*: groups formed across shared identities to "explore the meaning of one's identity with others who are engaged in a similar process" (Tatum, 2017, p. 155)

- *Ethnicity*: "a social construct that divides people into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as shared sense of group membership, values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history and ancestral geographical base" (Adams, Bell, & Griffin, 1997 as cited by Racial Equity Tools, 2019)

- *Inclusion*: "Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power" (OpenSource Leadership Strategies as cited by Racial Equity Tools, 2019)

- *Inclusive excellence*: an approach that "shifts diversity efforts from a simple focus on numbers and individual efforts to a comprehensive examination of the entire...system and the ways in which it recognizes, enhances, and facilitates the contributions of all community members" (Milem, Chang, & Antonio, 2005, as cited in Sweeney, 2013)

- *Microaggressions*: "daily, constant, often subtle, and seemingly innocuous, covert and overt negative messages and actions directed toward people from marginalized groups" (Sue, 2010, as cited in Bell, 2016, p. 7)

- *Oppression*: interlocking forces that create and sustain injustice, manifested through "-isms" such as racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, ageism, anti-Semitism, etc. (Bell, 2016)

- *People of color*: an umbrella term used in this paper to refer to groups that have been historically targeted by racism in the United States. The term reflects much nuance among groups' various racial and ethnic identities (Black, African American, Asian and Asian American, Latinx, Native or Indigenous, and more) and to be grouped together can be seen as problematic (Tatum, 2017)

- *Race*: a social construction "created to concentrate power with white people and legitimize dominance over non-white people" (OpenSource Leadership Strategies as cited by Racial Equity Tools, 2019)

- *Racial competence*: the ability to understand, navigate, and discuss issues of identity, power, and privilege as they relate to race and racism (The Management Center, 2019)

- ***Racial Equity***: the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares, including the elimination of policies, practices, attitudes and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them (Racial Equity Tools, 2019)

- ***Racial and ethnic identity***: "an individual's awareness and experience of being a member of a racial and ethnic group; the racial and ethnic categories that an individual chooses to describe him or herself based on such factors as biological heritage, physical appearance, cultural affiliation, early socialization, and personal experience" (Adams, Bell, & Griffin, 1997 as cited by Racial Equity Tools, 2019)

- ***Social identities***: an individual's association with social groups, including race, class, sexuality, gender, religion, nationality, age, and ability

- ***Social location***: the convergence of one's social identities and the various ways they interact and contribute to that person's societal advantages or disadvantages

- ***Whiteness***: a term to summarize the cultures and norms associated with white people, including aspects related to the meaning and resultant material advantage of being defined as white in society, which rests on the premise that whites are the norm or standard for humans, and people of color are a deviation from that norm. (DiAngelo, 2018)

- ***White fragility***: a powerful means of white racial control and protection of white advantage that manifests in defensive responses to racial stress by white people, including emotions of anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors like argumentation, silence, and withdrawal from a situation (DiAngelo, 2018)

- ***White privilege***: "a sociological concept referring to advantages that are that are taken for granted by whites and that cannot be similarly enjoyed by people of color in the same context (government, community, workplace, schools, etc.)" (McIntosh, 2012, as cited in DiAngelo, 2018)

- ***White supremacy***: "a historically based, institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression of continents, nations and peoples of color by white peoples and nations of the European continent; for the purpose of maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power and privilege." (Martinas, 1995, as cited by Racial Equity Tools, 2019)

Introduction

The Experiment in International Living (The Experiment) is the oldest provider of summer abroad experiences for high school students, with programming in 26 countries around the world. Each program's curriculum is designed around a theme, such as Arts and Social Change, Language and Cultural Discovery, Peace, Politics and Human Rights, and Sustainability and the Environment (The Experiment, 2018c). Core tenets of the value promoted to students, or "Experimenters," include experiential learning, living with homestay families, and participating in immersive cross-cultural experiences.

Each Experiment group, composed of 12 to 16 students aged 15 through 18 years old, is accompanied by two adult group leaders, also referred to hereafter as "leaders." The group leaders are educators that have experience working with youth and traveling and living abroad, skills in the language of the host country, and content expertise in their program's theme. Leaders are responsible for guiding students throughout the program activities and travel logistics, managing relationships with The Experiment's long-standing in-country partners, supporting the group's health and safety, and facilitating learning on an individual and group level (The Experiment, 2018d).

The Experiment full-time staff comprises the Admissions team, Programs team, and Operations team, who work together throughout the year to recruit students, manage partner relationships, and evaluate, plan for, and implement each cycle's programming abroad. However, The Experiment staff do not travel with students, so it is truly the responsibility of the group leaders to collaborate with in-country partners to facilitate the students' experience on the ground, managing expectations of participants and The Experiment team.

Apart from some custom programs that are delivered outside the typical program cycle, The Experiment runs all of its summer programming concurrently for three to six weeks, starting

the first of July. There are typically around 35 to 40 groups of students in the field at one time,

meaning 70 to 80 leaders are seasonally hired and employed with The Experiment every year,

with an average of 20% "return leaders," who have led at least one group abroad with The

Experiment in the past. Given the large scale of hiring and training for short-term, seasonal

employees, the leader hiring team consists of two full-time positions on The Experiment's

operations team dedicated to implementing the "leader life cycle," internal jargon for the process

of working with the leaders from the time they become aware of the position to the completion

of their post-program responsibilities.

Starting in September, the leader hiring team develops and implements the leader

recruitment strategy, comprised primarily of online job postings and social media campaigns

through The Experiment's website and online platforms. There is limited opportunity for in-

person recruitment given limitations in budget and capacity. Once the online application goes

live in October, through its close in January, applicants submit a thorough application for the

position with essay questions, details about their background and experiences, their résumé, and

two professional and personal references. From January to February, the leader hiring team

reviews applications and selected candidates are invited to complete a "1-way video interview,"

a series of pre-recorded interview questions to which applicants record their video answers. After

reviewing their videos, the leader hiring team invites selected candidates to participate in a live

video interview. Selected candidates are hired to lead a specific Experiment program and placed

with a co-leader. Leaders complete the onboarding process through virtual communication with

The Experiment operations team, attend a live, online pre-departure orientation to prepare for

training, and attend a week-long Staff Training at the end of June, which all leaders are required

to attend. Leaders then travel abroad with their groups for three to six weeks, communicating

with The Experiment on-call team and completing evaluations along the way. Once leaders return home, they complete a series of post-program responsibilities, including evaluations and feedback about the program and their experience. A summary of this "leader life cycle" is detailed in Appendix A, and will be referenced throughout this paper.

A pioneer in the field of secondary level international exchange programs, The Experiment prides itself on the ability to provide access for many high school students that would not otherwise be able to travel. Students from underrepresented populations participate through scholarships provided by donors and through partnerships with sixty organizations that serve them. In 2017, The Experiment awarded two million dollars in scholarship funding to 73% percent of participants (The Experiment, 2018a). The groups of students that travel abroad are diverse in terms of students' social identities, including race, class, sexuality, gender, religion, and ability. According to The Experiment (2018b), the program has "the broadest socioeconomic, racial, ethnic, and geographic diversity of any high school study abroad program in the world." Additionally, there are several programs that differ from the traditional enrollment process and participant makeup. The Experiment's Leadership Institute is a highly competitive, fully funded program for students with demonstrated interest in intercultural leadership, global issues, and civic engagement (The Experiment, 2018e). The Fellowship Initiative (TFI) is a custom program delivered in partnership with JP Morgan Chase that affords two hundred young men of color the opportunity to travel abroad with The Experiment.

The diversity of students represented in Experiment groups creates an opportunity for deep learning about backgrounds, cultures, values and political views different from one's own. With that learning also comes the potential for problematic situations to arise: a student making racist comments or using derogatory names toward a student of color, participants misgendering

a transgender or gender non-conforming student and using incorrect pronouns to address them, or a group of wealthier students making fun of another participant because they do not have spending money for souvenirs. These identity-related incidents could both harm an individual and create a divide within a group; their adult group leaders are responsible for addressing situations in a way that is respectful and supportive of all group members.

Furthermore, certain social identities may become more salient for students in the new environment of their host country, either positively or negatively. Depending on the individual and their country of travel, a student of color may experience microaggressions, or feel more connected to their heritage. A student member of the LGBTQ+ community may feel enough freedom to openly express their gender or sexual identity on program, or struggle with the need to conceal it in a country that is not accepting. Ideally, the adult group leaders will have the knowledge and skills to help students understand why they are having a certain experience related to identity, while also ensuring that group dynamics do not perpetuate or replicate oppressive situations or experiences while on a program in a cross-cultural context.

The various social identities that constitute dimensions of diversity among social groups are vast, including race and ethnic heritage, class, age, gender and gender identity, sexuality, ability, religion, and nationality. Theoretical and practical analyses of these social identities, and the historical, societal, and institutional power, privilege and oppression that manifest across each of them, are colossal. Coupled with their intersections in various international contexts, an earnest inquiry constitutes an in-depth investigation that is beyond the scope of this capstone paper. Therefore, the theoretical foundations and needs assessment that follow will focus explicitly on racial identity and racial equity.

Given the ability of The Experiment to provide equitable access to a high school summer abroad program, there are many students of color that travel abroad with The Experiment, closely representing the demographics of their generation. According to U.S. census data, Generation Z, born between the mid-1990s and late 2000s is the most diverse generation ever, expected to increase over time and become majority "nonwhite"[1] in less than ten years (Levin, 2019). Data from the Pew Research Center indicates one in four Gen-Zers is Hispanic, six percent are Asian, and 14 percent are African-American (Levin, 2019).

However, the demographics of both Experiment staff and group leaders reflect those of the larger field of international education, with majority white[2] women. This disconnect has several implications. The culture of whiteness in U.S. society and education system, including experiential education (Rose & Paisley, 2012) instills many learned behaviors and uses of language that are oppressive and harmful to people of color. Without engaging in critical self-reflection around the ways that power, privilege, and oppression manifest in one's own life, practice, and pedagogy, the potential for microaggressions run high, reducing the level of trust and rapport between students and educators that do not share similar identities or lived experiences.

The group leaders work in the critical middle ground between the staff and the participants of the program, and therefore share the responsibility of implementing the program's mission and vision, including the organization's values of equity and inclusion. Furthermore, the members of The Experiment staff should be equipped to support leaders with critical incidents that arise in-country, both within the group and in the host culture, and guide the leaders through

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[1] The term "nonwhite" is problematic and suggests inferiority; it is used in quotations to cite the author directly.

[2] The term "white" is consistently lowercase throughout this paper, as the term is used interchangeably to describe racial identity, culture, or as part of a larger concept such as "whiteness" or "white fragility." Exceptions to this consistency are displayed within quotes and have remained upper or lower case depending on the original author's use.

handling these situations in ways that are culturally sensitive, collaborative with the in-country partner, and supportive of all Experiment students. The following plan, "Beyond the Buzzwords," provides a grounding upon which The Experiment can begin to examine its practices of leader hiring and training in the interest of continuing to develop its experiential pedagogy to evolve into one that is truly critical, anti-racist and liberatory for students, leaders, and staff alike.

Theoretical Foundations

In order to understand how racism and whiteness manifest in society, institutions, and individual work, especially as it pertains to The Experiment leader life cycle, it is necessary to consult various sources to establish a broad theoretical foundation. The following section reviews literature on youth identity development, social identities abroad, whiteness as it relates to leader training, and aversive racism.

Youth Identity Development

One aspect of The Experiment group leader's role is to help students understand why they're having a certain experience, especially as it pertains to their social identity(ies). A basic understanding of youth identity development is key for the leaders to analyze, and appropriately respond to, any given situation or experience that may arise on program. Similarly, a foundational understanding of social identity development for adults supports Experiment staff members' ability to incorporate critical self-reflection into leader training.

Jackson and Hardiman's (1997) model of social identity development presents a generic theory that describes attributes common to the process of developing one's social identity across members of both oppressed and dominant groups. The stages of this model progress through

naive/no social consciousness, passive and/or active acceptance, passive and/or active resistance, redefinition and internalization (Hardiman, 1997).
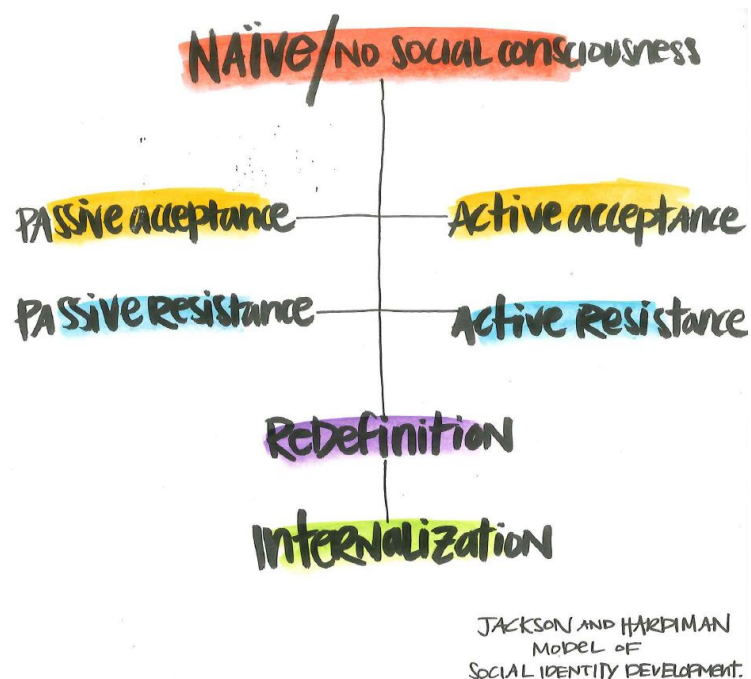
The model addresses what these stages look like for both advantaged and disadvantaged identities within society and, although a helpful skeletal model for social identity development, lacks nuance from the intersection of age or life stage as well as context, particularly in terms of place.

Torres and McGowan (2017) reference James Marcia's theory of adolescent development in terms of the identity reconstruction process that can take place as adults experience changes in their lives, but Tatum (2017) frames Marcia's identity statuses in a way that allows for an understanding of how it plays out for adolescents with different racial identities. The four statuses include diffusion (no commitment or exploration of a given identity), foreclosure (commitment without exploration, often pre-determined by one's parents), moratorium (active exploration of identity without commitment), and achievement (thorough exploration leads to a strong commitment to one's identity) (Marcia, 1966 as referenced by Tatum, 2017).

Teenagers on Experiment programs are going through a uniquely transformative period of their lives during which they are learning more about themselves and who they want to be in the world. Furthermore, members Generation Z also possess "untraditional views about identity" (Levin, 2019). Marcia's model implies that the active exploration required before committing to a certain identity signifies that a youth is more likely to focus on one salient identity (for example, racial or gender identity) at a time. However, as Tatum (2017) confirms, "all adolescents look at themselves in new ways, but not all adolescents think about themselves in racial terms" (p. 132). Perhaps these young people have not been exposed to issues of race, or the guiding adults in their life, including their educators, have not presented an opportunity to critically analyze and challenge the truths that are presented to them about the world.

This differing understanding of identity is especially highlighted between youth of different racial groups. Simply put, Tatum (2017) asserts that Black adolescents consider themselves Black because that is how society views them. "Given the impact of dominant and subordinate status, it is not surprising that researchers have found that adolescents of color are more likely to be actively engaged in an exploration of their racial or ethnic identity than are White adolescents" (Tatum, 2017, p. 132). It is through this analysis that Tatum (2017) answers the common question and the very title of her comprehensive book: *Why are all the Black kids sitting together in the cafeteria?*

> Not only are Black adolescents encountering racism and reflecting on their identity, but their White peers, even when they are not the perpetrators (and sometimes they are), are unprepared to respond in supportive ways. The Black students turn to each other for the much-needed support they are not likely to find anywhere else. (Tatum, 2017, p. 142)

The analogy of the segregated cafeteria could potentially be reproduced in a group of Experimenters that is racially divided and sharing space for the first time. Because it is common

for group leaders to call in to the Vermont office asking for tips on how to respond to a group that is naturally segregating itself according to race, training them to seek an understanding of *why* it is happening will be critical to their ability to address the situation.

Identity Abroad

To understand identity development as it manifests on a month-long cultural exchange program, there are several models and frameworks that recognize the importance of context, and its "significant role in how...individuals make meaning of themselves, their experiences, and how they choose to navigate their social spaces" (Jones, 2009, 2019; Jones, Kim & Skendall, 2012 as cited in Hernandez, 2017, p. 208). As Brown (1997) so eloquently states, "being a woman is not extractable from the context in which one is a woman" (Brown, 1997 as cited in Bell, Goodman, Varghese, 2016, p. 399). The same context-based nuance holds true for all Experimenters and leaders, be they Black, Asian, Latinx, Native, white, male, female, trans, or any other visible salient social identity.

Critical theories "take the importance of context a step further to examine context itself" (Jones & Abes, 2013 as cited in Hernandez, 2017, p. 214). That is to say, we must be able to recognize, and challenge, the historical and societal forces at play when we consider how an individual will be perceived, and therefore perceive themselves. Specifically, critical race theory (CRT), provides a sound model from which to draw upon in analyzing one's identity and its significance in any given context.

According to Solórzano (1998), Solórzano & Delgado Bernal (2001), and Solórzano, Villalpando, & Oseguera (2005), the five core elements of CRT for any analysis are 1) the centrality of race, ethnicity and racism, 2) the challenge to ideologies of objectivity, meritocracy, color-blindness, race neutrality, and equal opportunity, 3) a commitment to social justice, 4) the

centrality of experiential knowledge, and 5) an interdisciplinary perspective, requiring the

analysis of racism within historical context (Solórzano & Delgado Bernal, 2001 as cited in

Hernandez, 2017, p. 207). Just as historical forces will greatly impact a student of color's lived

experience with racism in the United States, understanding social forces in the host country, such

as cultural norms, laws and values, will provide an appropriate frame for addressing a critical

identity-related incident. Complemented by tools for social justice education, accounting for the

elements of CRT in leader training will allow leaders to respond to any given situation while

acknowledging the student's lived experience in a socially just way that does not further

perpetuate their oppressive encounter.

Furthermore, one social identity should not be examined in a silo. The environment in

which an individual finds themselves will determine which identities are most present at that

time and provide for the intersection of those identities to emerge simultaneously depending on

that environment. Wick and Trujillo (2018) provide Abes, Jones & McEwen's (2007)

"Reconceptualized Model of Multiple Dimensions of Identity" as the framework most useful for

international educators to understand how education abroad informs the most relevant

dimensions of identity. The relationship between one's most prominent social identities in a

given context and the influencers within it (peers, family, cultural norms, stereotypes, socio-

political conditions, privileges, physical location) is determined by how their meaning is

constructed, or filtered, by the individual (Abes, Jones & McEwen, 2007 as cited in Wick &

Trujillo, 2018).

> For example, a student who is a self-described Mexican-American atheist with
> limited Spanish-language skills who is living with a Catholic host family in a
> small town in Mexico may be more aware of their "Americanness," language
> skills, and religious beliefs than they would be at their home institution or in
> their own home. (Wick & Trujillo, 2018, p. 4)

Though it seems obvious, Abes, Jones & McEwen's (2007) model drives home the idea that what happens to identity abroad will be so very different for each individual, depending on their self-perceptions of multiple identity dimensions, the contextual influences and the complexity through which they must pass to become meaningful for that person. The Model of Multiple Dimensions of Identity also serves as a rationale for why identity should be a part of the conversation before, during, and after one's experience abroad. Through "teaching students to refine their knowledge of their identities and providing them with tools and practice for interpreting contextual influences, they can become more self-aware and better prepared to develop their cognitive skill for navigating intrapersonal and interpersonal complexities" (Wick & Trujillo, 2018, p. 4) as they relate to identity.

Jean Phinney's (1993) model of adolescent ethnic identity development serves as a supplementary theory that explains the commonality for students, especially students of color, to experience their identity differently while abroad. The three unique phases, which overlap in ways with Marcia's (1966) statuses, include unexamined ethnic identity, ethnic identity search, and achieved ethnic identity (Phinney, 1993, as referenced by Tatum, 2017). Tatum (2017) draws comparisons with other models to highlight the shared idea of the formative effect of *lived experience*, driving home the notion that "race-related encounters often lead to the exploration, examination, and eventual internalization of a positive, self-defined sense of one's own racial or ethnic identity" (Tatum, 2017, p. 236). However,

> while active exploration of what it means to be Black is an almost universal experience for African American adolescents due to the encounters with racism they commonly have, the same is not true for White youth. For White people living in largely White environments, it is possible to live one's entire life without giving focused attention to what it means to be White...but if one's social context changes, in college for instance, there may be new experiences that trigger active exploration of this dimension of identity. (Tatum, 2017, p. 189)

If the Experiment group and/or its host country is the ecology that serves as the changed social context where white students become aware of their whiteness, it is likely that their group members and leaders will be involved with supporting their processing of that exploration. If not for this reason alone, it is important that group leaders have also done their own individual processing, contributing to their ability to support their students.

Leader Training and Whiteness

As Bell, Goodman and Varghese (2016) note in *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*, it is possible that leaders at earlier stages of their process "may find it especially challenging to manage feelings such as anger, guilt, or frustration, or may be more likely to feel triggered by student comments or behaviors, and lack the patience or compassion to work with participants empathically and effectively" (Bell, Goodman, Varghese, 2016, p. 400). However, "as instructors gain greater awareness and progress through their own social identity development around different issues, they can be more conscious and purposeful in dealing with students who are at various stages in their learning" (Bell, Goodman, Varghese, 2016, p. 401). This point serves as the grounding for the argument that leader training at The Experiment must continuously create the opportunity for self-exploration and processing around leaders' social identities in a way that also advances their ability to put their students first and support them in expanding their own awareness and development.

Just as it is more likely for students of color than for white students to have had experiences that required them to actively explore their racial identity, the same is true for leaders. The demographic of Experiment group leaders resembles the larger field of international education, comprised of 79% women and 71% white folks (Lopez-McGee, 2018). Surely, many of these white leaders have actively explored their white identities prior to their employment

with The Experiment, especially through the context of traveling abroad as a white U.S. American. Yet anecdotal evidence shows that some leaders have not yet had the chance to experience the effects of structural racism, see themselves as white, or analyze what it means for them to be white educators working with students of color.

This particular social identity development (or lack thereof) in white leaders is evidenced by examples of what DiAngelo (2018) has coined as *white fragility*, the inability of white people to discuss race and racism due to a lack of understanding of racial socialization that produces strong emotional reactions, such as defensiveness, to any suggestion that they are complicit in racism. These adverse reactions place attention on them and require more emotional labor from people of color, perpetuating the cycle of racism and oppression (DiAngelo, 2018). DiAngelo's work provides a solid stepping stone for white folks to become conscious of complicity in a white supremacist society. It is a collective responsibility for white folks to work together to understand what it means to be white, both in society and in the context of leading youth abroad. Helms' (1990, 1994) influential work in white racial identity theory supports "that a healthy white racial identity involves overcoming the influence of racism, embracing the sociopolitical nature of whiteness, and identifying as a racial being while understanding the value of racial diversity" (Torres & McGowan, 2017, p. 192). The first step in the journey towards embracing a truly antiracist pedagogy is to re-frame one's understanding of, and relationship with, racism.

Aversive racism and dysconscious racism

DiAngelo asserts that the first step to addressing white fragility is to re-frame our definition and understanding of racism entirely. By dismantling what she frequently refers to as the "good/bad binary," the key to antiracist pedagogy is developing the foundational understanding of socialization and how it informs our lives, as well as our understanding of

racism. Both DiAngelo and Tatum utilize David Wellman's simple definition of racism: "a system of advantage based on race" (Wellman, 1977 as cited in Tatum, 2017, p. 87 and DiAngelo, 2018, p. 24). Misaligned with a common perception of racism as defined by blatant acts of hate by white nationalists and "bad" people, this definition begs white progressives, defined by DiAngelo (2018) as "any person who thinks he or she is not racist, or is less racist...or already 'gets it'" (p. 5) to acknowledge the historical determinants of an inequitable system that we were born into, and without actively challenging, are complicit in.

According to DiAngelo, progressive whites are those most likely to display white fragility due to our vehement moral stance against prejudice and discrimination, developed in reaction to a definition of racism rooted in the good/bad binary. We are therefore most guilty of participating in "aversive racism," another term explained by both DiAngelo and Tatum, defined as "an attitudinal adaptation resulting from an assimilation of an egalitarian value system with prejudice and with racial beliefs" (Gaertner and Dovidio, 2004 as cited in Tatum, 2017, p. 220). Simply put, aversive racism exists below the conscious beliefs of racial equality and manifests in disavowment of personal involvement with racism, allowing white people to commit racism while maintaining their positive self-image (Diangelo, 2018).

Similarly, King's "dysconscious racism" tacitly accepts dominant white norms and privileges, described as a "distorted way of thinking about race" that lacks "critical ethical judgment regarding racial...stratification in the existing social order," displayed by their students who "generally maintain that they personally deplore racial prejudice and discrimination" (King, 1991, p. 135). King explains that their explanations of racism take for granted the system of racial privilege that favors whites and do not take issue with the way in which white people have come to earn immense power in our society. For the white progressive community, developing

an understanding of the specific ways in which racism manifests contrary to what we are taught to believe about ourselves, is an initial stepping stone in the process of recognizing it within ourselves and how we may perpetuate it, especially in our powerful role as educators.

Needs Assessment

Despite The Experiment's stated commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and intentional attempts to address these issues, there are areas that could be improved upon in an effort to weave them into operations and programming more holistically. The following needs assessment takes into account The Experiment's current strengths and areas for improvement, specifically in regards to leader hiring and training. The suggestions and conclusions developed as part of this needs assessment are derived from background information, personal observations and various literature sources, and supported by surveys conducted specifically for this paper, the methods of which are discussed below. After presenting the methodology of the needs assessment, its conclusions fall into five main sections: inclusive excellence, racial equity, identity abroad, risk management, and leader training.

Methodology

In an effort to support the rationale for a framework of inclusive excellence, two surveys were conducted in January 2019. The "Experiment Staff Survey on Equity and Inclusion" was sent to 26 people (all staff of The Experiment in International Living). The survey had 11 "respondents" (those who opened the survey and clicked through the consent question), and responses were completed by a total of four staff members. The "Experiment Group Leader Survey on Equity and Inclusion" was sent to 145 people (group leaders from 2017 and 2018). The survey had 32 "respondents," and responses were completed by a total of 16 past leaders.

Qualitative responses are woven throughout the following needs assessment to support anecdotal evidence and background information.

Inclusive Excellence

At The Experiment, student groups benefit from diversity in all forms, a fruit of the organization's model to partner with sponsoring organizations and individual or corporate donors that provide financial aid for many students typically underrepresented in education abroad. When assessing diversity and inclusion efforts, it is assumed by staff that The Experiment is a leader in the field, given the socioeconomic, racial and ethnic, and geographic diversity of Experimenters that is less common in other programs. It is often touted that The Experiment provides more scholarships than other high school study abroad programs. However, focusing the assessment primarily on the diversity of its students is problematic in two main ways.

First, there is less attention on the students' experience and the identity-related incidents that can arise on program. The attempt to diversify a student group means that inclusion is an afterthought. This imbalance is common in the field, as international educators "tend to focus on the *numbers* [emphasis added] of diverse student participants rather than a thorough examination of the entire study abroad process and students' experiences" (Sweeney, 2013, pp. 2-3). The Experiment does not ignore equity and inclusion: there is an entire program dedicated to thematically exploring an international LGBTQ+ community, the website openly encourages transgender participants to enroll (The Experiment, 2018), and there is an emphasis on supporting neurodiverse and differently abled students. However, despite these value statements, some team members agree that "sometimes what we claim to value does not align with our actions" (Survey, 2019). Therefore, it would serve to develop a framework of inclusive excellence that cohesively integrates efforts of equity and inclusion throughout the

organization's operations and programming to realize benefits of valuing the diversity of all stakeholders. There are many frameworks and tools for addressing multicultural organizational development; as a next step, it would be worthwhile for the organization to look holistically at its efforts in equity, diversity and inclusion.

Second, there is less attention placed on the diversity of the student's adult group leaders. Group leaders are majority white, mirroring the field of international education, which is largely accessible to, and developed by, white, middle to upper class, generally privileged folk. Diversity Abroad conducted a survey of over 500 international educators in which 71% identified as white and 61.8% reported having a master's degree (Lopez-McGee, 2018). Given that white students represent 77.8% of the study abroad population (Sweeney, 2013), it makes sense that majority white people become qualified for the group leader position by studying abroad as an impetus to further international experiences, including living abroad. Not only do a majority of Experiment students not see themselves represented in their leaders, but a multicultural group of students led abroad by two white leaders instills a power dynamic that could potentially be harmful to students, especially if those white leaders are unaware of that power.

Unfortunately, the need to consider social exclusion and associated risks that may arise on program results from the dominant culture, which is reproduced within programs of experiential education. Systematic oppression is the norm through which dominant groups assume power; the very notion of exploring unknown territory both outdoors and abroad is steeped in colonialism and white supremacy, tracing back to European explorers' exploitation of Native peoples and land. As Rose and Paisley point out in their relevant analysis, "experiential education practitioners are unlikely to be intentionally incorporating oppression into the design

of programs, but White privilege is at work even when no minoritized populations are participating" (Rose & Paisley, 2012, p. 146).

Even if white leaders have examined their white privilege and aware of the systemic inequalities that contribute to an accentuated power dynamic between leader and student, the case should be made that increasing the multicultural nature of the leader pool is beneficial to support students of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. As Diversity Abroad confirms, hiring "staff from different backgrounds can help increase the likelihood that students have at least one group leader that they feel they can go to with issues" (Lopez et al., 2016). Additionally, "having a [leader] of color can still serve as a powerful role model...for students of color - particularly if these students have never gone abroad before" (Lopez et al., 2016).

A survey respondent agreed that "as the diversity of the leaders increases, the space will feel more inclusive for students" (Surveys, 2019). Since the group leaders are largely responsible for delivering the programmatic experience designed for the students, implementing a framework of inclusive excellence that looks holistically at diversity, equity and inclusion within leader hiring and training will both 1) create a more inclusive experience for students and 2) ensure more diversity within the pool of leaders themselves.

Racial Equity

> "We are not a set of fragmented aspects of ourselves that are simply added together, but an amalgam at the convergence of our various social identities. We see the world through our own unique lens and the world interacts with us based on the particular dynamic created by the convergence of our gender, race, socio-economic class, and also our phenotype, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, spirituality, language, and myriad other aspects of our identities." (Willis, 2015, p. 209)

Willis' reflection on social location beautifully encapsulates the vast depth of the question of our social identities, how they affect our worldview, and therefore, the ways we interact with our

environment and one another. It is ever important to recognize the intersectionality of these identities and how their layers weave together to inform one's experience. However, to consider how each of these salient identities affects each individual on program within each of the 26 countries in which The Experiment operates, among the other factors that are at play, is a long process that requires a cohesive dedication of energy and engagement, ideally from all staff members. Therefore, as mentioned in the introduction, Beyond the Buzzwords will focus primarily on racial identity and racial equity.

Not only is the inquiry of identity abroad, discussed below, too large to incorporate an honest exploration of the various dimensions of identity, but honing in on racial identity is important in serving the students, leaders, and greater organization. As mentioned, group leaders are historically majority white, as is The Experiment staff and, traveling higher up the ladder of power, the board members of World Learning. At no one's fault but the historical influences of white supremacy, the actions, values and norms set within society are automatically replicated among our systems and organizations. To address this at an organizational level requires additional inquiry, but to dive into discussions of race and racism as they show up in our interactions with one another, hiring practices, training spaces, and pedagogical processes is to acknowledge with honesty the ways we have been socialized and attempt to overcome them.

Specifically, at The Experiment, there are conversations about diversity and inclusion, but they do not include direct mention of whiteness and how it manifests at an organizational and interpersonal level. Observations in training spaces and feedback on workshop evaluations confirm that white leaders are visibly uncomfortable with the topics of institutional racism and white privilege. According to DiAngelo's (2018) research on white fragility, this is common:

> "If and when an educational program does directly address racism and the privileging of whites, common white responses include anger, withdrawal, emotional

incapacitation, guilt, argumentation, and cognitive dissonance (all of which reinforce the pressure on facilitators to avoid directly addressing racism). So-called progressive whites may not respond with anger but still insulate themselves via claims that they are beyond the need for engaging with the content because they "already had a class on this" or "already know this." All these responses constitute white fragility - the result of the reduced psychosocial stamina that racial insulation inculcates." (DiAngelo, 2018, p. 101)

Anecdotally, when asked in interviews about issues of diversity and inclusion as they have or may come up on program, white leaders tend to stray away from race and turn to gender instead. This trend likely arises due to a higher level of comfort in viewing and speaking of oneself as existing in a lower social power dynamic, with the ability to share an understanding of an oppressed experience. Also, it is more common for white leaders than for leaders of color to be exploring these issues for the first time. As a survey respondent mentioned, "the diversity and inclusion training sessions were more for the white leaders" (Survey, 2019). The fact that white leaders may not have previously examined their white identities makes sense, given that "the ubiquitous socializing power of white supremacy cannot be avoided" (DiAngelo, 2018, p. 129). Additionally, as a white person, it easy to stray away from conversations about race and divert to gender or other types of diversity. "Reflecting on our racial frames is particularly challenging for many white people, because we are taught that to have a racial viewpoint is to be biased. Unfortunately, this belief protects our biases, because denying that we have them ensures that we won't examine or change them" (DiAngelo, 2018, p. 11). Therefore, leader hiring and training at The Experiment should be examined from a lens of whiteness and racial justice. Honed on racial identity, Beyond the Buzzwords will provide a stepping stone for applying practices to the many other dimensions of diversity, such that the process is more widely applicable and representative of a diverse pool of leaders.

Identity Abroad

Social identity and student development theories support the notion that high school students will be keenly aware of their identities, especially racial and/or ethnic identities, during the period of adolescence and especially when encountering new situations and contexts abroad. Students of color particularly may encounter painful discriminatory experiences when traveling to a new country, both in interactions with their peer group members and with members from the host culture (Lopez et al., 2016). Diversity Abroad provides examples of experiences that some students of color may have when they travel, including being identified first as an American, not being identified as an American, having comments made about their appearance, experiencing fetishization and objectification, having concerns over safety, experiencing language discrimination, and experiencing discrimination from peers (Lopez et al., 2016).

These are certainly incidents that can, will and have taken place on an Experiment program. In a survey conducted on equity and inclusion, group leaders from 2017 and 2018 reported specific examples of identity-related situations that arose for students in their host countries, and in some cases, how they were or were not equipped to handle the situation. Many leaders reported incidents related to dimensions of identity such as class, gender, mental health and ability; for the purpose of this inquiry, the incidents below describe only situations related to race and ethnicity.

- "When a student of color felt like their identity was being challenged (hair touching, calling out, etc.) I communicated that I may not understand what they are going through and let myself be more of a sounding board to work through things." (Survey, 2019)
- "The students tended to form friend groups along racial lines." (Survey, 2019)

- "We also encountered people from the host culture wanting to take photographs with blonde students and refusing to take photos with students of color. We were able to talk through these situations with the students and identify why that had happened. Students were able to see that it was fascination rather than prejudice that caused the situation, but also about to able to express how it made them feel." (Survey, 2019)

- "A black student reported feeling emotionally unsafe in her homestay, because her host mother said that 'Black Pete' (who in Dutch culture accompanies Saint Nicholas, but is generally visualized as a person with exaggerated 'African features', or as a white person in black face) wasn't racist, but a neutral cultural figure. The student stopped speaking to her host mother completely, and when she moved out the host mother was very cold. While I felt equipped to support the student emotionally, and helped her to move to a different host family, I still wonder what our responsibility is to instill in students a deeper sense of empathy (perspective taking) and commitment to dialogue. I feel that the decision to move the student was the right one, but I also felt an opportunity was missed to foster communication and some semblance of mutual understanding between the student and host mother. Even if the situation still were to result in moving the student, I wonder if a moderated conversation could have left both parties feeling differently. I don't want any marginalized person to carry the burden of having to constantly teach others, especially not a young person, and (not but) I want to help students lean into difficult conversations, develop a sense of reciprocity with homestay families, and improve conflict management skills. Conversations in our current political climate are increasingly divisive, and I think it's important to not immediately write others off, but to dig deeper." (Survey, 2019)

- "Racist comments made not by the host family sibling but by another host family's daughter directed towards a participant." (Survey, 2019)

- "A white male student was quite abrasive to an Asian-American female in our group. He made rude remarks that were both racist and sexist. This happened at the beginning of the trip; leaders weren't aware of it until later in the trip when she refused to work with him in a group." (Survey, 2019)

- "I felt less equipped to discuss the racial biases we encountered in our host culture. The dynamic of the refugee situation in our host country and consequential employment of refugees in domestic worker roles within our homestays lead to some unexpected situations with host families. It wasn't on my radar before departure that this could even come up... I was so focused on identity dynamics within our group." (Survey, 2019)

As noted through anecdotal research and direct examples from Experiment programs abroad, there are many dynamics at play which factor into a student of color's experience when they travel abroad. It is important to keep in mind, as Sweeney (2013) reminds us, that not "all students of color experience discrimination while abroad; experiences will vary considerably from student to student and from country to country" (Sweeney, 2013, p. 7). Additionally, "the ways in which students of color perceive the climate in their host countries is likely to be influenced by their lived experiences with racism in the U.S." (Sweeney, 2013, p. 7). Interestingly, some students of color that have traveled abroad reported that "dealing with the attitudes of their White compatriots was often more challenging than dealing with the host country nationals" (Jackson, 2006 as cited in Sweeney, 2013, p. 7). For these reasons, it is important for all group leaders to be aware of racism in the U.S. to understand not only what

their students of color may experience abroad in relation to their experiences at home, but also the frame that white students bring to the group dynamic.

Additionally, given the international and multicultural nature of The Experiment's very mission and its work, it is imperative to not only bring a U.S. lens to the conversation. This leader's survey response is important to acknowledge: "we talk about Diversity and Inclusion in a specifically US-American way, and do not talk about how identity, diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice are understood in other cultural contexts" (Survey, 2019). The role of the group leader has the potential to serve as a powerful steward of dialogue and understanding, providing cultural translation where necessary, to hold space for a nuanced, cross-cultural analysis of power dynamics as they manifest on a sojourn abroad with young people.

Risk Management

The intersections of risk management with social exclusion serve as further rationale for developing leader training through an equitable lens. On education abroad programs, there are many potential situations which may cause physical or emotional harm to participants. Students (and leaders) of color might receive unwanted attention in the host country due to their hair or the color of their skin, and "can also report feeling uncomfortable and unsafe. These concerns can range from discomfort to fears of being physically assaulted, which can have a significant impact on a student's perceived personal security and successful adaptation to the host culture." (Lopez et al., 2016). Additionally, "understanding such discriminatory experiences is important because current psychological literature has noted how racial discrimination, which manifests in daily hassles and everyday experiences to physical assault, can take a toll on one's physical and mental health" (Sue, 2007 as cited in Lopez et al., 2016).

Further research by Willis (2015) supports the commonality for students of color to "experience racial microaggressions and isolation from peers and/or the host culture" while abroad. The recipients of these microaggressions "often experience racial battle fatigue in the form of psychological, physiological, emotional and behavioral stress responses" (Smith, Hung & Franklin, 2011 as cited in Willis, 2015). The participants of their study, mostly Black women, mentioned having the support of other Black women as "very important to their ability to cope with these stressors away from home" (Willis, 2015), which endorses the argument for hiring for diversity. Leaders of color have a higher capacity to support students of color simply from the higher probability of the ability to connect over a shared experience in the international context.

As experiential educators, diversity, equity and inclusion practices are essential for mitigating risk through understanding our own identities and those of our participants. Lindeman et al. (2014) agree that "properly trained staff are an essential part of an effective risk management strategy" (Lindeman et al., 2014, p. 485). Lebold et al. (2014) address issues of diversity and inclusion, recognizing that "greater self-knowledge and education in the areas of white privilege, oppression, domestic non-dominant ethnic cultures, and other forms of diversity will enhance the ability of international educators to work…with students" (Lebold et al., 2014, p. 213). It is essential to train staff around risk management practices and discuss issues of diversity and inclusion, cultural sensitivity and cultural competency as a core part of staff training.

Leader Training

There are several existing efforts around equity and inclusion in the realm of leader hiring and training at The Experiment. Interview questions include a race-related scenario around group dynamics that candidates are asked to address from the leader role. For the past several years,

there has been a session during the in-person leader training devoted exclusively to issues of diversity and inclusion during training, and the upcoming year's training is expected to incorporate related conversations throughout all sessions. There is a section in the leader handbook that addresses considerations for diversity, equity and inclusion while on program, including identity-based questions for co-leaders to discuss during their program preparation. These practices are solid foundations upon which to develop more holistic interventions throughout the process. The following section outline goals and challenges for leader training.

The Experiment's leader training should encourage leaders to analyze their social identities and consider how they affect their relationships with students, how to support their students as their identities impact their group experience abroad, and how to create space for all students to move together toward social justice and equity. As the organization strives to hire more leaders of color and leaders with other identities that are traditionally oppressed in U.S. society, it is equally important for Experiment staff to model inclusion for leaders throughout their employment with the organization.

In a perfect world, Experiment group leaders will arrive to training with these theoretical and historical understandings in addition to self-reflection on their own racial and ethnic identities, combining to provide a foundation upon which they can build toolkits for addressing microaggressions, interracial group dynamics and racial discrimination that can take place both within the group or within the context of the host culture. However, it is unreasonable to expect that all leaders will have the same level of racial competence. Delving into the world of power, social inequity, social identities, oppression and -isms, anti-racist practices and self-reflection is a lifelong journey, and group leaders demonstrate varying levels of attention to, and awareness of, equity and inclusion. Furthermore, it is likely that many leaders hold personal values of

equity and inclusion, but simply have not had exposure to academic study or theoretical frameworks that provide them with language to comfortably discuss these topics.

In the survey conducted of Experiment leaders from the past two years, responses to questions of self-reflection and critical identity work garnered vastly different responses ranging from "before the Experiment, I had never done any workshop on identity" to "as a person of color, my whole life has equipped me to handle identity-related situations" (Surveys, 2019). Some leaders became defensive at the most recent training in response to the way in which some material was presented. One leader shared "I felt as a white person that it was kind of directed at me that no matter anything else about myself, I could not relate, and felt targeted" (Survey, 2019). Another recommended to "make sure that there isn't just a target painted on the back of white people during diversity trainings" (Survey, 2019). Although some might see certain white leaders' defensiveness as displays of white fragility, it is valuable feedback. If they are shut down during a workshop, their learning and growth will be inhibited.

Thus, the challenge is designing a training that addresses these varying levels in an effort to "meet the leaders where they are," just as we ask leaders to meet students where they are coming from in terms of their own learning and development. As a staff member reported in the survey, "no matter what we do it won't work for some people" and "it's almost impossible to meet each person 'where they are at'"(Survey, 2019). How can The Experiment level the playing field so that each leader finds value in the training offered by the organization with the goal of supporting their students and an openness in finding nuance within the vast realm of what can come up in terms of "identity-related incidents"?

Ultimately, staff and leaders' capacities to support and include all leaders and students will rely on a demonstrated commitment to address and combat all forms of oppression.

Therefore, an effort should be made not only to incorporate conversations around diversity, equity and inclusion but also to develop curriculum for training and programming with tenets of social justice education at its core.

Goals and Objectives

The purpose of Beyond the Buzzwords is to develop a holistic strategy of inclusive excellence for leader hiring and training that increases the racial and ethnic diversity of group leaders and advances their ability to capitalize on their groups' diversity for a deeper and richer learning experience abroad. The following goals and objectives are developed for the program (Beyond the Buzzwords) and participants (Experiment group leaders).

Program Goal and Objectives

Address leader hiring and training at The Experiment with a holistic lens of inclusive excellence for international program delivery that aligns with organizational values of equity and inclusion.

- Develop and implement the "leader life cycle" with a lens of equity, diversity and inclusion from start to finish.

- Increase racial and ethnic diversity of the leader cohort

- Front-load opportunities for leaders to reflect on their social identities as practitioners of global youth education

- Provide tangible tools and skills for leaders to advance their ability to support, educate and learn from a diverse group of students

Participant Goals and Objectives

Leaders will practice racial competence and be able to confidently engage in productive and healthy conversations about issues of equity, diversity and inclusion.

- Leaders, especially white leaders, have been exposed to issues of societal inequalities and concepts such as power, privilege and oppression, and race and racism within the context of U.S. Americans traveling abroad.

- Leaders, especially white leaders, have previously engaged in critical self reflection around their own social identities and the positionality that informs their practice as youth educators.

- Leaders are open to learning about and addressing the nuanced ways power, privilege, and oppression might manifest within their own and/or students' experience on program.

Leaders will be equipped with tools to address identity-related incidents in the various international contexts of their Experiment programs in a way that does not cause harm and furthers learning of all group members.

- Leaders can name and address microaggressions.

- Leaders have a basic understanding of social identity development, including racial and ethnic identity development in adolescents.

- Leaders embrace conversations on topics of race and racism as they arise within the group and in the host country.

These goals and objectives inform the design of the Beyond the Buzzwords framework, described below.

Program Description

Given the program's aforementioned goal of weaving practices of equity and inclusion holistically throughout leader hiring and training processes, its implementation will take place at every stage in the existing "leader life cycle," the phases throughout which leaders are involved with The Experiment and are trained to deliver a summer experience for students. As detailed in

the introduction and supplemented in Appendix A, the stages include recruitment, hiring, onboarding, training, program delivery, and post-program responsibilities.

The suggestions made in the Beyond the Buzzwords (BtB) curriculum will interface with each phase of the leader life cycle, incorporating a lens of equity, diversity and inclusion from start to finish. The BtB framework consists of three main components: diversity of leader cohort, critical identity self-reflection, and equitable and inclusive practices. Each of these axes of the framework includes specific objectives, rationale(s) for each, and action items for suggested implementation throughout the stages of leader hiring and training at The Experiment.

The existing structure of the process for leader hiring and training is a skeleton of connecting bones supported by a muscular pedagogy of experiential learning, youth empowerment and genuine cross-cultural interaction. Beyond the Buzzwords is the lifeblood that will flow throughout the body to function altogether in a shared vision of equity and inclusion.

Curriculum

The following section outlines the theoretical foundations and framework design for the curriculum of Beyond the Buzzwords.

Theoretical Foundations

The heart of the curriculum for Beyond the Buzzwords is a framework of inclusive excellence for leader hiring and training. Although the curriculum expands beyond leader training itself, there are certain considerations that should be taken into account for the training of the leaders, both in-person and throughout onboarding materials and activities. In a sense, even the interview questions constitute leader training because they begin to prepare candidates for situations that may arise on program, and indicate for candidates what the organization values in its leaders. Given that the participants of the program are adult group leaders, the pedagogy

must be appropriate for adult learners. The following paragraphs explore the theoretical bases upon which the curriculum is grounded: experiential learning, transformative learning, and social justice education.

Experiential learning.

Given its relationship with World Learning and SIT, The Experiment's model, curriculum and pedagogy is already steeped in experiential learning. Many group leaders are experiential educators and Staff Training offers concurrent sessions to delve deeper into using the experiential learning cycle to support and connect students' learning on program. When considering a training of trainers for Experiment leaders, it serves to revisit and incorporate experiential learning theory, especially given the demonstrated need for critical identity work.

Experiential learning should inform the pedagogical process of leader training through the principle of its very nature: "the first step in creating an experiential learning space is to make a space for learners that enables deep learning by allowing them to fully engage in all four modes of the experiential learning cycle - experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting" (Kolb, 2015, p. 295). The premise of a successful leader training for equity and inclusion is that leaders should engage in critical identity work before being equipped with tangible tools for supporting students' experiences of identity abroad. This is a process that requires time as well as building upon one's experience. For example, if a white leader has lived the majority of their life in dominant (white) spaces with white cultural norms, working with students of differing backgrounds and racial identities may be a new experience for them that will provide the grounds for a basis of self-reflection, thinking, and putting learning into practice. There are certain areas of knowledge that will benefit leaders in anti-racist educational practices, such as a re-definition of racism and historical understanding of white supremacy. However, giving

leaders the space to reflect on their life experiences with the frame of that knowledge will further deepen their understanding of why it is meaningful to incorporate it. "When a concrete experience is enriched by reflection, given meaning by thinking, and transformed by action, the new experience created becomes richer, broader, and deeper. Further iterations of the cycle continue the exploration and transfer to experiences in other contexts" (Kolb, 2015, p. 301). The contexts referred to in the experiential learning spiral could be the Staff Training workshop, their Experiment program, and the educational spaces or interactions in their daily lives. Additionally, a tangible practice that will be incorporated into the training design is facilitated role-plays, or scenarios, to give leaders a closer experience of responding to issues as they arise.

Concepts associated with experiential learning theory such as lifelong learning, developing a learning identity, and centering humility are relevant to critical self-reflection as it applies to whiteness and racism. Kolb's strategies for developing a learning identity also apply to the quest for a healthy sense of racial or ethnic identity: trusting the learning process, redefining one's relationship to failure, letting go of strong emotional responses in order to learn from failure, embracing the risk of losing, and monitoring the messages one sends to their self (Kolb, 2015). These are the flavors of intention that frame the curriculum for leader training.

Transformative Learning.

Beyond experiential learning, transformative learning is the "essence of adult education," with the adult learner's goal of developing their "own values, meanings and purposes rather than to uncritically act on those of others" (Mezirow, 1997, p. 11). In terms of un-learning our racial socialization, the lens of transformative learning provides a process of "transforming frames of reference through critical reflection of assumptions, validating contested beliefs through discourse, taking action on one's reflective insight, and critically assessing it" (Mezirow, 1997,

p. 11). New information is merely a resource; the learner makes meaning through incorporating it into their frame of reference, the structure of assumptions through which one understands their experiences (Mezirow, 1997). Examining those assumptions, including unconscious bias, is the foundation for transforming one's learning to understand other points of view and lived experiences. Mezirow suggests several methods to encourage critical reflection and experience in order to examine the belief systems that shape our thinking, including critical incidents, concept mapping, consciousness raising, life histories, and participation in social action (Mezirow, 1997). These are tools that could be used in leader training as activities to stimulate transformative learning about adult leaders' own points of view and biases, in an effort to become more critically reflective and aware in their own liberatory pedagogical practices.

Social Justice Education.

Given the topic of equity and inclusion, it is vital to incorporate a social justice approach into both the process and content of the curriculum for leader training. This focus on the *process* is a central component of social justice education (SJE) pedagogy, which aims to enact socially just learning environments for all participants, in hopes that equitable relations and structures can be achieved in society (Adams, 2016). Social justice education is experiential in nature and embodies Paolo Freire's praxis (the interweaving of theory, reflection, and action). According to Adams (2016), "SJE needs a pedagogy that:

- Acknowledges the challenges and opportunities participants face when confronted with new knowledge and perspectives, and that supports them in a learning process that is personally and intellectually challenging,

- Acknowledges the emotional as well as cognitive aspects of learning, and that encourages and models processes for dialogue, critical inquiry, and complex thinking, [and]

- Creates learning communities where members share and learn from each other's experiences, reflect on their own and other's experiences to make sense of larger structural systems of advantage and disadvantage, and create new meanings for themselves" (Adams, 2016, pp. 28-29).

The experiential approach of SJE pedagogy will inform the curriculum development for this framework in an effort to dismantle approaches in traditional education settings that ignore systems of advantage and historical legacies, by modeling practices of SJE at Staff Training and sharing SJE practices with leaders who are educating students (see Appendix C for examples). As Adams and Zuñiga (2016) distinguish, SJE goes beyond a "diversity" approach to place emphasis on "unequal social structures, supremacist ideologies, and oppressive politics and practices" that perpetuate the privilege of dominant social groups at the expense of marginalized groups (Adams and Zuñiga, 2016, p. 97). Not only is a social justice education approach appropriate for leader training, but the approaches demonstrated and learning communities created in workshops at Staff Training could have the potential to bleed into the leaders' approach with their groups of students.

Framework Design

The complete Beyond the Buzzwords framework is found in Appendix B. As mentioned, the framework consists of three core components: diversity of leader cohort (access), critical identity self-reflection (awareness), and equitable and inclusive practices (action). Below are the objectives for each axis of the framework.

Access: Diversity of Leader Cohort.

- Incorporate language in leader recruitment materials that demonstrates values of equity and inclusion

- Promote position on online sources of recruitment that are more likely to attract applicants from more diverse backgrounds, including more applicants of color, social justice educators, and men-identified applicants

- Include multiple interview questions throughout the process that incorporate topics related to issues of equity, diversity and inclusion, including identity-based scenarios

- Leader hiring team evaluates, addresses and combats personal unconscious biases and homogeneity

- Leader hiring team considers leader race and ethnicity when making co-leader placements

- Leverage pipeline of alumni of Experiment programs to improve recruitment strategy

  Awareness: Critical Identity Self-Reflection.

- Provide opportunities for leaders to reflect on their social identities, including backgrounds, socialization, racial and/or ethnic identity development, and dominant and/or non-dominant social identities

- Provide leaders resources to learn more about the historical and social forces of racism in U.S. American society and consider how those show up in their own lives

- Encourage leaders to consider race, racism and other identity-related issues in their host country (both through personal experience and/or research) and consider how that might affect their and their students' experience

- Encourage co-leader teams to discuss their social identities, including racial and/or ethnic identities, and how they influence their working relationship, including power dynamics, experience working with students, and personal processes (communication and facilitation styles, etc.)

- Encourage leaders to process their experiences across shared identities

   Action: Equitable and Inclusive Practices.

- Provide tangible tools and "how-to"s in leader training resources and materials, including tools for supporting students in identity-related incidents abroad.

- Develop resources and training workshops with accessible language and scale that are appropriately scaffolded.

- Empower Experiment staff to model equitable practices, creating an inclusive environment for leaders.

- Incorporate experiential activities to analyze power, privilege and oppression into training.

- Weave topics of diversity, equity and inclusion throughout the entire structure and design of the in-person leader training.

- Incorporate theoretical groundings and nuanced perspectives of equity, diversity and inclusion into training topics.

   Specific rationales and action items are designated for each of these objectives in Appendix B, outlining tangible ways that The Experiment can incorporate efforts of equity, diversity and inclusion at each stage of its processes for leaders. The recommendations are organized in this way in an attempt to outline general areas of focus for inclusive excellence. The three axes are interconnected and should not be siloed; some objectives could be included in more than one place. The Introduction and Needs Assessment have outlined certain practices that The Experiment is already implementing; these are included in the design in addition to new ideas so that the framework may be used as a starting point for assessing practices holistically.

Staffing Plan

The delivery of Beyond the Buzzwords will be implemented by existing Experiment staff members that interface with leaders throughout various stages of the leader life cycle (see Appendix A). The leader hiring team (Leader Hiring Coordinator and Leader Hiring Associate) is involved throughout the entire process, and will be primarily responsible for the majority of suggestions associated with the recruitment, hiring, and post-program stages. Other members of the Operations team such as the Director of Operations, Operations Officer, and seasonal Operations Associate will be involved in leader onboarding and training processes. All of these team members will be joined by the Programs team, Medical Reviewer, members of the Admissions team, and seasonal hires for the delivery of the in-person Staff Training for leaders and staff, and will then constitute the On-Call team that supports leaders in the field during their programs. Therefore, all aforementioned staff members should play a role in implementing Beyond the Buzzwords, through active involvement in the delivery of an inclusive experience for group leaders, as well as modeling equitable and inclusive practices for leaders.

In addition to the involvement of existing staff members to incorporate practices of equity and inclusion into their work, Beyond the Buzzwords suggests hiring an intern to support the leader hiring team with recruiting for diversity of the leader pool.

It is worth mentioning that The Experiment staff is majority white. To practice inclusive excellence in leader hiring and training, among other operations and programming, it is also recommended that the staff team is diversified to include people of color and their voices in delivering an experience for leaders and students with the spirit of equity and inclusion.

Marketing

Many of the components outlined in the Beyond the Buzzwords design require the participation of leaders, including mandatory attendance for all leaders at the weeklong, in-person Staff Training, completing the post-program evaluations, as well as completing the necessary steps of the hiring process. There is one axis of the framework that is not required, but strongly encouraged: critical self-reflection of social identities and how they impact leaders' educational practices abroad. Many of the steps outlined in the objectives of this component are intentionally recommended to take place during the onboarding process, when leaders are preparing for their summer abroad with young people, and therefore have a longer period of time to seek out resources and reflect on their own identities, power, and privilege before arriving at Staff Training. However, as leaders are short-term employees during the summer period, there is a limit to the amount of activities or extra work required of leaders before they arrive to the mandatory training. Therefore, the ideas set forth in the marketing plan for Beyond the Buzzwords will center around getting buy-in from leaders to participate in optional, recommended self-reflection activities prior to the summer.

Considering certain logistical considerations described below, the most effective "marketing" tool for getting buy-in from leaders around critical identity self-reflection will be an email introduction to the resources and activities that are available to them. The email will have language that is clear and accessible, and details the rationale for why it is so strongly encouraged that leaders consider the impact of their social identities on their position as a group leader with the Experiment. A sample email can be found in Appendix E.

Leader Recruitment

Given that the participants of Beyond the Buzzwords are the hired leaders themselves, there is no extra recruitment required for its implementation. The Beyond the Buzzwords recruitment strategy mirrors the group leader recruitment techniques mentioned in the curriculum design of this plan.

Logistical Considerations

Experiment leaders travel to Brattleboro, VT for a weeklong training at the end of June, immediately before departing on their Experiment program abroad. The required, in-person training is a series of conference-style sessions delivered to about 80 Experiment leaders, 40 World Learning Youth Program leaders, and full-time staff of The Experiment and World Learning Youth Programs. The program includes a required 1.5 hour long training session dedicated to diversity, equity and inclusion, as well as two thirty-minute time blocks for affinity groups. About a month and a half prior to Staff Training, leaders are strongly encouraged to attend an hour-long virtual pre-departure orientation to help them prepare for training and their summer employment. Additionally, resources are provided online through a series of "enrichment emails" that range in topic areas with the purpose of keeping leaders engaged, informed and prepared to lead their students abroad.

The logistics detailed above make it difficult to spend much time diving deep into the nuances of diversity, equity and inclusion abroad, especially for those leaders who have not spent much time reflecting on their own social locations and how that informs their work as a group leader. Beyond the Buzzwords has been designed with these logistical considerations and challenges in mind.

Health, Safety and Crisis Management Plan

As mentioned in the risk management section of the needs assessment, discussions and situations involving race and racism, among other forms of oppression, can be emotionally taxing, triggering, and traumatic. Despite Beyond the Buzzwords' attempt to front-load personal reflection and conversations around social identities, power, and privilege, leaders will not all be on the same level in terms of comfort, experience and exposure discussing these topics. It is important to acknowledge that emotions will arise during the in-person training sessions. Everyone has many lived experiences and there is much unknown in terms of the frame, worldview, or current mental and emotional state that each participant is bringing to the training.

As trainers and administrators, The Experiment staff should anticipate and prepare for the need to provide emotional support to leaders during and after training sessions, especially the session dedicated to diversity, equity, and inclusion. There are four facilitators for this session and they should discuss a plan of action for triggered, shut down, or emotional leaders. There should also be an extra staff member to help with logistics and/or emotional support for this training session. During the planning phase, it is important to discuss each facilitator's social location and analyze who is best to address each potential situation. For example, it may be best for a staff member of whiteness to support a white participant, so that a staff member of color does not have to bear the emotional labor of white processing. Similarly, a participant of color may prefer to debrief with a staff member of color who can share an understanding through lived experience. Discussing these potential situations ahead of time will mitigate the emotional harm for participants as well as staff.

Furthermore, the installation of affinity groups throughout the schedule will provide spaces where leaders can debrief and process their experiences on common ground. Co-leaders

are encouraged to discuss their emotions and reactions to the training content, in preparation for working together in the host country with their Experiment group. The training provides a space to practice having difficult conversations with one another so that leaders feel more prepared to have difficult conversations with their students. It is important that the co-leaders teams feel safe having these discussions with one another so they may provide emotional support for each other on the ground. The On-Call team is a support system in place for crisis management while leaders are on program, and should also be trained and prepared to have conversations with leaders around issues of diversity, equity and inclusion not only as they pertain to the Experiment group, but also to support leaders with related emotions and crises as needed.

Budget Notes

Although Beyond the Buzzwords could be preliminarily implemented without any additional cost to The Experiment, there are certain budgetary considerations that would improve its effectiveness. The budget is scaffolded into two levels that can be implemented as time goes on and more funds may be available to The Experiment to expand its focus on equity and inclusion as it pertains to leader hiring and training. The budget is found in Appendix F.

The first level of costs for Beyond the Buzzwords includes an existing budget for paid postings dedicated toward recruiting for diversity of the leader pool. Additionally, The Experiment is a paying member of Diversity Abroad, an important membership that provides resources available to the organization and its staff, as well as access to postings on the career center, a key to expanding the leader recruitment strategy.

The second level of costs, depending on available funds, includes an in-person training and capacity building for Experiment staff to develop a shared understanding and common language around diversity, equity and inclusion, to advance their practices in support of leader

education and training. The cost is estimated for one full-day training for the whole team, including two external trainers and their associated time spent preparing and delivering the training, in addition to travel expenses.

Though not outlined in the current budget for Beyond the Buzzwords, the next level recommended for The Experiment to foster equity and inclusion for its leaders is to increase leader pay. Although there are many benefits to the leader position, including the coverage of travel expenses, the current stipend provided to leaders can be financially prohibitive, thereby reducing the access for qualified leaders to be able to participate and accept the position.

Evaluation Plan

Although the timeline for Beyond the Buzzwords closely follows the Experiment leader life-cycle, its implementation will not be limited to one annual cycle. Additionally, the results-based mentality that objectives and goals should be completed within a timeframe and the definition of success as bigger, better, or more can be seen as values of white supremacy culture that need to be actively challenged if seeking an equitable and just practice (Jones & Okun, 2001). The assumption upon which Beyond the Buzzwords is designed is that individual and collective progress towards equity, including white anti-racist practices, is a lifelong process of learning and growth that cannot be "achieved." However, it is important to gather feedback from all stakeholders as part of this learning and growth as The Experiment continues to revise and refine its practices for equity and inclusion in leader hiring and training. Therefore, the program's evaluation plan will give more weight to process evaluation than outcome evaluation, in order to examine the framework's methods and efforts continuously throughout the process (Kiritz & Floersch, 2014). This evaluation will be ongoing throughout the leader life cycle.

The Experiment already administers various evaluations for leaders to complete: a survey after each day of staff training, weekly programmatic surveys, and two post-program surveys evaluating the program itself as well as leader self-evaluation and co-leader performance evaluation. Additionally, students complete evaluations about the program and their leaders. These existing surveys will be used as critical tools for assessing diversity, equity and inclusion as it relates to the leader role, in addition to efforts and initiatives developed specifically to support this plan. The evaluation plan for Beyond the Buzzwords will be administered just as the framework suggests - holistically. The table in Appendix G demonstrates specific ideas for evaluation of each axes of the framework.

A critical area for evaluating efforts to increase the diversity of the leader pool will be leader retention. Do leaders of color and other underrepresented leaders have a positive, inclusive, welcoming experience with The Experiment? If a leader chooses not to apply in the future, can this be attributed to power dynamics or exclusive practices, attitudes or experiences on program? If so, how will The Experiment know? Including survey questions that ask explicitly about equity and inclusion will give leaders a chance to express feelings about their personal experience and inform data for hiring and retention. For those leaders who culturally may prefer to express feedback verbally, leaders are given a chance to process their experience with an optional debrief call phone call post-program. Listening to leader voices and incorporating their thoughts and ideas into future practices and policies is paramount to establishing equitable practices at The Experiment.

Limitations

As mentioned, the inquiry that informed the design of Beyond the Buzzwords was limited by scale. Addressing all dimensions of diversity and the potential implications of various social

identities as they manifest for different individuals in life, and on program, is important. The need to focus on race and racial identity in this paper is a limitation that should be expanded given the importance of intersectionality as it serves to connect one's lived experiences of both subordination and domination depending on one's social location. Although it is important to address whiteness as it shows up organizationally and interpersonally, there is a need to consider the rest of salient social identities in striving for true inclusive excellence.

The relationship of Experiment staff to group leaders has been mentioned throughout this program design, and at times, it has alluded to the need for staff participation in critical self-reflection and the establishment of common language around diversity, equity and inclusion. Curriculum for trainings developed specifically for the staff have not been developed in this proposal. However, staff training provides an opportunity for all members of The Experiment family to come together and refine their practices for working with Experimenters. Therefore, the hope is that the intent of Beyond the Buzzwords will bleed into conversations had by staff members at The Experiment and inspire them to incorporate issues of equity and inclusion holistically into their work. Although it would serve the organization to assess its culture and hiring practices holistically, it is beyond the scope of this capstone paper to address equity and inclusion on an organizational level.

Given the two main limitations of "Beyond the Buzzwords," the framework design is a work in progress, an incomplete, living document, with more to include as it evolves to encapsulate the missing puzzle pieces that fit together for a complete vision of inclusive excellence.

Conclusions/Implications

The attempt to lay out a roadmap for understanding whiteness and how it informs the group leadership at the Experiment is grounded in humility and an understanding that identity development, especially whiteness, is a complex and lifelong process that will require failure, making mistakes, and a willingness and openness to learn. The suggestions developed for Beyond the Buzzwords through the grounding of theory and analysis of needs assessment will not automatically get participants from Point A to Point B; an anti-racist practice is never something at which one will "arrive." Nor is the intention to imply that some leaders have arrived and some haven't; everyone is at different stages, which is a beautiful thing in itself as The Experiment family learns and grows together. However, if leaders and staff are able to establish a common ground and a starting point together, what they can achieve and thereby provide for their students will be that much richer. As Bell, Goodman and Varghese so beautifully maintain, "when educators model self-awareness about their own identities, processes of identity development, and inevitable gaps in knowledge and consciousness, they are likely to garner more trust and respect from students" (Bell, Goodman and Varghese, 2016, p. 401).

Beyond gaining trust and establishing connection with students, beyond supporting students in their exploration of identity abroad, beyond mitigating emotional risk and navigating group dynamics, this query is a starting point for leader-educators in cultivating an anti-racist pedagogy that challenges their students to critically question. Beyond the buzzwords of diversity, equity, and inclusion, leaders could develop the ability to cultivate respect and openness for all students' opinions and beliefs while simultaneously responding to issues of power and identity as they come up on program, in a way that furthers the positive development and learning of the group as a whole, as they move together towards a conscious vision of equity and social change.

Appendices

Appendix A: Timeline of Experiment Group Leader Life Cycle

1. *Leader recruitment and application* (September through January)
   a. Leader position and job description is posted through various online outlets, including job boards, career centers, and social media platforms
   b. Application opens and applicants submit online application
2. *Application review process and hiring* (January through April)
   a. Leader hiring team reviews applications and one-way pre-recorded video interviews
   b. Leader hiring team conducts live interviews
   c. Leader hiring team makes selections and hires two adult leaders for each Experiment group
3. *Onboarding and preparation for training* (February through May)
   a. Leaders complete onboarding paperwork
   b. Leaders receive information and resources to prepare for their programs via email and an online platform, Canvas
   c. Co-leaders are introduced to each other
   d. Leaders attend an hour-long virtual pre-departure orientation prior to Staff Training
4. *Staff Training* (June)
   a. Leaders travel to Brattleboro, VT for a week-long, in-person training called "Staff Training"
5. *On-Program* (July and August)
   a. Leaders travel abroad with groups of 12-16 high school students from diverse geographic, socioeconomic, racial and ethnic, and religious backgrounds
   b. Leaders complete weekly reports and communicate with The Experiment on-call team to address incidents in the field
   c. Leader hiring team conducts mid-program check-ins with group leader teams
6. *Post-Program* (August and September)
   a. Leaders return home and complete post-program evaluations

Appendix B: Framework Design/Curriculum

access
DIVERSITY OF LEADER COHORT

- Incorporate language in leader recruitment materials that demonstrates values of equity and inclusion
- Promote position on online sources of recruitment that are more likely to attract applicants from more diverse backgrounds, including more applicants of color, social justice educators, and men-identified applicants
- Include multiple interview questions throughout the process that incorporate topics related to issues of equity, diversity and inclusion, including identity-based scenarios
- Leader hiring team evaluates, addresses and combats personal unconscious biases and homogeneity
- Leader hiring team considers leader race and ethnicity when making co-leader placements
- Leverage pipeline of alumni of Experiment programs to improve recruitment strategy

awareness
CRITICAL IDENTITY SELF-REFLECTION

- Provide opportunities for leaders to reflect on their social identities, including backgrounds, socialization, racial and/or ethnic identity development, and dominant and/or non-dominant social identities
- Provide leaders resources to learn more about the historical and social forces of racism in U.S. American society and consider how those show up in their own lives
- Encourage leaders to consider race, racism and other identity-related issues in their host country (both through personal experience and/or research) and consider how that might affect their and their students' experience
- Encourage co-leader teams to discuss their social identities, including racial and/or ethnic identities, and how they influence their working relationship, including power dynamics, experience working with students, and personal processes (communication and facilitation styles, etc.)
- Encourage leaders to process their experiences across shared identities

action
Equitable & inclusive practices

- Provide tangible tools and "how-to"s in leader training resources and materials, including tools for supporting students in identity-related incidents abroad.
- Develop resources and training workshops with accessible language and scale that are appropriately scaffolded.
- Empower Experiment staff to model equitable practices, creating an inclusive environment for leaders.
- Incorporate experiential activities to analyze power, privilege and oppression into training.
- Weave topics of diversity, equity and inclusion throughout the entire structure and design of the in-person leader training.
- Incorporate theoretical groundings and nuanced perspectives of equity, diversity and inclusion into training topics.

Objective	Rationale	Action Items (What and When)	
Incorporate language in leader recruitment materials that demonstrates values of equity and inclusion	Explicit language demonstrates that The Experiment is looking for applicants who are excited to work with diverse populations in student groups and who share the values of equity and inclusion.	Add language to *Website and Job Description*: "Our leaders: ● Demonstrate skills and experience in **cross-cultural sensitivity and communication** ● Bring a **wide variety of backgrounds and social identities** ● **Have experience working with diverse groups of students** ● **Are aware of and committed to addressing bias, systemic inequalities, power, privilege, and oppression**" "Experiment Group Leaders are dynamic, responsible, emotionally mature and **inclusive** adults" "At the end of the program, Leaders help students evaluate their experiences and assist them in considering how they can integrate what they learned about themselves, **their identities**, and the world into their lives." Improve the typical "affirmative action" language to incorporate a welcoming and inclusive tone: "The Experiment values equity and inclusion, and our student population represents diversity of race and ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender identity, sexual orientation, and religion, including students of color, LGBTQ+ students, and Muslim students. We believe these communities should be centered in our work in international education, and applicants with these identities are encouraged to apply for our leader position."	Leader Recruitment and Application
Promote position on online sources of recruitment that are more likely to attract applicants from	The candidate pool of qualified leaders will not become more diverse if folks from a wide range of backgrounds are not aware of	Post job description on sites such as ● Diversity Abroad career center ● Career Centers at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and other Minority-Serving Institutions	Leader Recruitment and Application

various backgrounds, including applicants of color, social justice educators, and men-identified applicants	the position.	(MSIs), especially those that are internationalized and have study abroad opportunities for their students ● Listservs and websites dedicated to educators of color ● Recruitment websites dedicated specifically to hiring for diversity in education ● Connect with partner organizations that work with underrepresented students to promote position to alumni	
Include multiple interview questions throughout the process that incorporate topics related to issues of equity, diversity and inclusion, including identity-based scenarios	Questions and topics of discussion both demonstrate The Experiment's values and allow for the leader hiring team to evaluate racial competence as part of applicant's qualifications. Responses to identity-based questions reveal bias and level of comfort discussing power and privilege. More than one place to discuss these topics demonstrates a holistic commitment to equity and inclusion and allows more opportunities for leader hiring team to decipher whether an uncomfortable applicant is overtly biased or simply inexperienced in discussing race and racism.	Add essay question to *leader application* **How have your social identities influenced your pedagogy?** *Add question to return leader interview* **What identity-related incidents came up on your program and what did you learn about being an inclusive leader?** Add question to *1-way interview* **What does equity and inclusion mean to you?** Add question to *2-way interview* **Why do you think it is important to address issues of equity and inclusion as a leader on our program, and what are some ways you have done this in the past?** *Scenario questions* describe race-related situations as they pertain to group dynamics and student experiences on program. Hypothetical students in **each** scenario are labeled with identity descriptions such as "female student of color," "white male," they pronouns, etc. Interviewer discloses gender pronouns at beginning of interview, leaving space for interviewee to do so as well if they wish.	Leader Recruitment and Application Application Review Process and Hiring
Leader hiring team evaluates, addresses and combats personal unconscious biases and homogeneity	Personal worldviews and frames influence the team's decision-making processes and evaluation of candidates.	Have conversations about dominant and non-dominant social identities, including shared experiences of whiteness Discuss "white supremacy culture" as it shows up in team's values, practices, processes and perceptions of candidate review, including communication styles Participate in implicit bias testing and training. Consider and discuss the role of unconscious bias in thinking and decision-making, both pre-season and as it may show up during certain decision-	Application Review Process and Hiring

		making processes	
		Hire intern to support with leader recruitment and application reviews, preferably an intern of color that can diversify team's perspectives and reduce unconscious bias	
Leader hiring team considers leader race and ethnicity when making co-leader placements	Intersectional leader teams will be better prepared to support a diverse group of students.	Leader hiring team considers leader race and ethnicity when making co-leader placements	Application Review Process and Hiring
Leverage pipeline of alumni of Experiment programs to improve recruitment strategy	Cohorts of Experiment alumni come from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and are most intimately familiar with context of the leader position.	Develop mentoring program for alumni of Experiment programs that are eager to give back to the program and The Experiment family, supporting skills and experiences that will develop competitive qualifications for the group leader position.	Leader Recruitment and Application

awareness
CRITICAL IDENTITY SELF-REFLECTION

Objective	Rationale	Action Items (What and When)	
Provide opportunities throughout the season for leaders to reflect on their social identities, including backgrounds, socialization, racial and/or ethnic identity development, and dominant and/or non-dominant social identities	Leaders will be able to more effectively support a diverse group of students and respond to identity-related incidents if they have undergone a personal examination of individual power, privilege and bias. Incorporating these suggestions and opportunities throughout the process acknowledges the time needed for deep self-reflection and unlearning internalized oppression and domination Equity requires individual work	Add self-reflection for individual equity work as part of "enrichment" material provided to leaders before staff training (see appendix D for sample self-reflection exercises to be added to Canvas platform for leaders during pre-training onboarding phase) Add identity-related activity or icebreaker during leader pre-departure orientation. Add identity-related question to mid-program check-in with Experiment staff Add questions about leader social identities in post-program evaluations	Onboarding and Preparation for Training On-Program Post-Program
Provide leaders	Developing a more nuanced	Add suggested readings, videos and	Onboarding

resources to learn more about the historical and social forces of racism in U.S. American society and consider how those show up in their own lives	understanding of racism as a system that manifests in society and institutions will enable individuals to develop a personal anti-racist practice and pedagogy. Providing materials for leaders to read on their own time, especially white leaders who may have been less exposed to these issues, makes it more likely for all leaders to develop a shared understanding that serves as a platform from which to develop practices during training.	other resources for leaders to familiarize themselves with as part of "enrichment" material provided to leaders before staff training. (see appendix D for sample self-reflection exercises to be added to Canvas platform for leaders during pre-training onboarding phase)	and Preparation for Training
Encourage leaders to consider race, racism and other identity-related issues in their host country (both through personal experience and/or research) and consider how that might affect their and their students' experience	The international and intercultural context of an Experiment program requires an exploration of how social identities may manifest or differ in salience while abroad. Developing an international lens on diversity, equity and inclusion will allow leaders to serve as an effective intercultural "translator" between their student group and the local guides/context.	Borrow and/or develop country guides for each Experiment program country that outlines what leaders and students can expect in relation to salient social identities such as race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexuality, class, religion, etc. Include power flower activity for individual reflection, including extra petals for in-country context	Onboarding and Preparation for Training Staff Training
Encourage co-leader teams to discuss their social identities, including racial and/or ethnic identities, and how they influence their working relationship, including power dynamics, experience working with students, and personal processes (communication and facilitation styles, etc.)	Before processing identity-related incidents on program with students, leaders should be able to discuss their own identities and analyze how they may or may not represent their students, prepare for how that might come up on program, and how prepared they feel to address identity-related incidents with students. It is important for team members to be aware of places where they do and do not hold power and privilege and how that will play into their working relationship.	Either encourage leaders to have a pre-training phone conversation, or provide space during co-leader relationship session at Staff Training to answer identity-related questions: With what racial or ethnic identity do you identify most closely? When did you first become aware of that identity? How does it intersect with other social identities you hold? How has/have that/those identity(ies) influenced your… Experience in education? (as a student and educator) Working style? (communication, processing, learning style) Pedagogy with students? What student population have you worked with most? How comfortable are you discussing race and privilege with… People who share your racial/ethnic identity? People who do not share your racial/ethnic identity? What identity-related incidents have you felt equipped to handle in the	Onboarding and Preparation for Training Staff Training

		past? What identity-related incidents have you not felt equipped to handle in the past? Which social identities do we share? Which social identities do we not share? How will they affect our interpersonal dynamic, and our dynamic with students? What voices in our student group might not be represented in our leadership? How does race and racism manifest in our host country? What should we prepare for and prepare our students for?	
Encourage leaders to process their experiences across shared identities	Leaders may feel more comfortable sharing identity-related incidents and experiences with peers who share their identities. It is possible that leaders who share racial and/or ethnic identities (for example, leaders of whiteness and leaders of color) may be closer to each other on the trajectory of identity development. There is less likelihood that leaders of color will need to exert emotional labor to support white leaders' processing and fragility. Modeling the practice of affinity groups provides leaders with a tool they can practice with groups that have racial tensions or race-related incidents arise on program.	Create spaces for affinity groups during Staff Training (for example, groups including: leaders of color, leaders of whiteness, LGBTQ+ identifying leaders, male-identifying leaders, etc.) Provide continued opportunities for shared collaboration in affinity groups, such as online discussion forums while on-program and post-program	Staff Training On-Program Post-Program

action
Equitable & Inclusive Practices

Objective	Rationale	Action Items (What and When)	
Provide tangible tools and "how-to"s in leader training resources and	In-person training with leader cohorts should not be an introduction to "Diversity, Equity and Inclusion 101". The purpose of training is tangible, applicable skills for educators to lead groups of youth abroad.	Include list of tools and practices in leader handbook for reference during training and on program. For example: "How to...	Onboarding and Preparation for Training

materials, including tools for supporting students in identity-related incidents abroad		-Name and address microaggressions -Have difficult conversations -Talk to the group about privilege" "What to do if… -Students experience racism in-country -A student uses racial slurs -The group is naturally segregating across racial lines" Examples of: -Inquiry-based approach -Strengths-based approach	Staff Training On-Program
Develop resources and training workshops with accessible language and scale that are appropriately scaffolded.	Not all leaders and staff have had academic exposure to power, privilege and oppression. There exists a vast wealth of resources that creates possibility for participants to become overwhelmed and shut down or disengage. Participants are on various points of the "exposure spectrum" or continuum (DiAngelo); it is impossible to provide a "one-size fits all" approach. Leaders are preparing to travel abroad with a group of high school students; there is a lot to learn and digest in a short amount of time.	Provide a resource list that is succinct and easily digestible. (see appendix D) Scaffold training topics and materials in levels for leaders to self-select into. Include "equity primes" to provide background knowledge for relevant topics.	Onboarding and Preparation for Training Staff Training
Empower Experiment staff to model equitable practices, creating an inclusive environment for leaders.	"Staff Training" is a participatory training of trainers including Experiment staff. Leaders and staff are all working together to advance practice and move forward collectively in journey of liberation for social justice. Students are included by leaders are included by staff (staff engage with leaders the way they hope for leaders to engage with students). Leaders should feel that the diversity of their social identities is respected, celebrated, and included. This is crucial for their experience with The Experiment and if not, could affect their decision to apply to lead with The Experiment in the future. The Experiment on-call team serves as a sounding board and guiding voice for	Facilitate staff capacity building before training to create a shared language and common ground around diversity, equity and inclusion. Individuals' gender pronouns are named and respected both across The Experiment staff team and for leaders throughout their "life cycle," especially during in-person training. SJE facilitation practices are not only provided for leaders but demonstrated by staff. (See Appendix C)	Onboarding and Preparation for Training Staff Training

	leaders in the field, and should therefore be able to support leader management of identity-related incidents.		
Incorporate experiential activities to analyze power, privilege and oppression into training	Leader participation in activities will allow them to better facilitate them with students. Activities such as role plays and scenario-based training incorporate experiential learning theory for leader training. Leaders can practice responding to interpersonal and group dynamic issues that may come up on program. These can be unpredictable, so practicing them beforehand will help leaders prepare for what to expect.	Include activities in leader handbook. Develop a race-based scenario for "Simulation Day," a day of training dedicated to simulations and role plays. Develop bank of activities that can be incorporated in DEI-specific workshop and concurrent sessions, including: Affinity groups Storytelling Power analysis Power flower activity with petals for context of identity abroad Exercises to demonstrate or learn about privilege Critical incidents, concept mapping, consciousness raising, life histories, and participation in social action (Mezirow)	Onboarding and Preparation for Training Staff Training
Weave topics of diversity, equity and inclusion throughout the entire structure and design of the in-person leader training	Approach to equity and inclusion becomes holistic, smooth, and integrated, rather than an afterthought. Leaders have more opportunities to learn, reflect and make connections. Experiment staff are invited to incorporate a lens of equity and inclusion in their curriculum development.	Each workshop session in the in-person training discusses how the content intersects with equity and inclusion. For example, the re-entry workshop encourages leaders to invite their students to discuss social identities as they might have arisen or changed on program, and consider what might happen when they travel home. Diversity Abroad's "Country Diversity Climate Notes" are provided and discussed during program briefings. There are continued opportunities for community building and conversations across differences. Affinity groups meet more than once. SJE pedagogy is incorporated throughout facilitation of the training.	Staff Training
Incorporate theoretical groundings and	Leaders' understanding of why certain dynamics are at play (for example, student segregation across gender lines) will be	Topics Anti-racist and/or social justice education practices	Staff Training

| nuanced perspectives of equity, diversity and inclusion into training topics | critical in their ability to address them. | International perspectives of diversity, equity and inclusion
Intersectionality
Whiteness, white fragility, white privilege
Group dynamics vs. outer group/host country
Student identity development
Supporting heritage students | |

Appendix C: Social Justice Education (SJE) Principles and Practices for Facilitators

Pedagogical Principles of Social Justice Education:
1. Create and maintain a welcoming and inclusive learning environment based on clear norms and guidelines agreed to by the entire learning community.
2. Help participants acknowledge their own multiple positions within systems of inequality in order to understand how oppression operates on multiple levels
3. Anticipate, acknowledge, and balance the emotional with the cognitives components of SJE learning
4. Draw upon the knowledge and experiences of participants and the intergroup dynamics in the room
5. Encourage active engagement with the issues and collaboration among participants
6. Foster and evaluate personal awareness, acquisition of knowledge and skills, and action-planning processes to create change

Adapted from Adams (2016)

Practices in Self-Awareness for Educators:
- Social identities shape communication styles, how we interact with others, and our comfort with self-disclosure.
- Families and communities have different norms around eye contact, touch, speaking patterns, expression of humor and emotion, and degree of directness and indirectness in conversation and gestures.
- White people are socialized to view the world from a white normative frame and may not notice the racial dynamics when a white participant interrupts or minimizes comments by group members of color.
- Examining our own social identities and cultural conditioning can help us learn to address group dynamics directly: naming what is going on, asking clarifying questions, providing time for people to take a moment to reflect silently on the situation, or opening up a discussion about the impact of language and behavior and how people are feeling.
- How we personally handle emotional intensity affects our ability to allow and handle emotion in the classroom in constructive ways.
- People with dominant group identities may jump in unnecessarily, interrupt their co-facilitator, take more time for their parts than was planned, or overcompensate for their identities by 'playing small'.
- People with marginalized identities may hold back due to a lack of confidence, let the other facilitator routinely take the lead, or back off from handling more challenging moments.

Adapted from Bell, L. A., Goodman, D., & Varghese, R. (2016)

Appendix D: Resources for Leaders

Starting Resources for Self-Education on Race, Racism, Anti-Racism, Whiteness

W a t c h
- Ted Talk: Color blind or color brave? | Mellody Hobson
- Dr. Robin DiAngelo's work on whiteness and white fragility
    - Option 1 (22 mins) Deconstructing White Privilege with Dr. Robin DiAngelo
    - Option 2 (1:23) Dr. Robin DiAngelo discusses 'White Fragility'

R e a d
Articles:
- White Supremacy Culture by Tema Okun and Kenneth Jones
- Opening a Dialogue with Youth about Racism
- Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack by Dr. Peggy McIntosh
- Diversity Abroad article: Discrimination Abroad
- Teaching Tolerance Guide to Having Difficult Conversations
- Examples of Microaggressions in the Classroom

Books:
- "White Fragility" by Dr. Robin DiAngelo
- "Why are all the Black kids sitting together in the cafeteria?" by Beverly Daniel Tatum

E x p l o r e
1. http://www.dismantlingracism.org/
2. https://www.racialequitytools.org/home
3. https://www.tolerance.org/ (Teaching Tolerance - Social Justice Standards)
4. http://witnessingwhiteness.com/
5. Curriculum for White Americans to Educate Themselves on Race and Racism

L i s t e n
1. Teaching While White podcast
2. Episode of Invisibilia: The Culture Inside

Activities for Self Reflection

1. Power Flower exercise : [“A Tool for Everyone - Revelations from the ‘Power Flower’” by Wenh-In Ng based on Doris Marshall Institute](#)
   a. Suggestion: add a third “petal” for the dominant identity in your **host** country (idea borrowed from Caitlyn Lamdin, Jenna Tantillo, Maren Haas, Diversity Abroad conference)

2. Consider the following questions. We encourage you to discuss these questions with your co-leader either before or during Staff Training.

- With what racial or ethnic identity do you identify most closely?
- When did you first become aware of that identity?
- How does it intersect with other social identities you hold?
- How has/have that/those identity(ies) influenced your…
  - Experience in education? (as a student and educator)
  - Working style? (communication, processing, learning style)
  - Pedagogy with students?
- What student population have you worked with most?
- How comfortable are you discussing race and privilege with…
  - People who share your racial/ethnic identity?
  - People who do not share your racial/ethnic identity?
- What identity-related incidents have you felt equipped to handle in the past?
- What identity-related incidents have you not felt equipped to handle in the past?
- How does race and racism manifest in your host country?

3. Self-reflection worksheet (adapted from Bell, Goodman, Varghese, 2016)

- What aspects of my social identities and most and least important to me?

  _____
  _____
  _____

- Which identities are most/least salient in different contexts?

  _____
  _____
  _____

- With which social identities am I most/least comfortable?

  _____
  _____
  _____

Appendix E: Sample Email for Marketing Plan

Dear leaders,

We hope you are enjoying preparing for your program leading young people abroad with The Experiment this summer!

As you know, The Experiment values diversity and inclusion and is committed to providing an equitable experience for our students. We are living in a time when injustice and inequity is vast. The youth participating in our programs this summer will learn more about the world around them, and begin to think critically about how they can effect change as future leaders.

You, our group leaders, have an immense power as educators to make a mark on their development and worldview. What is the frame that informs your pedagogy? What beliefs and assumptions that you have about the world will affect the way you guide your students? What social identities are most salient for you? How do they intersect with one another? Do you enjoy privileges that increase your power as an educator?

These questions, among others, are ones which we encourage you to consider. Attached to this email are self-reflection questions and activities that are suggested for leaders to spend a bit of time with before you arrive to Staff Training. They are designed to get you thinking about your social location, or positionality, and how that informs your role as a group leader this summer. Additionally, there are some educational and informational resources about power, privilege and oppression, to be used in tandem with the activities if you would like to learn more about the historical influences that show up in our society today. We encourage you to continue doing your own research at a level that is appropriate for you.

> *"When educators model self-awareness about their own identities, processes of identity development, and inevitable gaps in knowledge and consciousness, they are likely to garner more trust and respect from students."*
> - *Bell, Goodman and Varghese, Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*

As always, please don't hesitate to get in touch with questions, comments or feedback. We look forward to enriching discussions about equity, diversity and inclusion at Staff Training!

Best wishes,
The Experiment team

Appendix F: Budget

Beyond the Buzzwords | Annual* Budget	
Level 1	
Diversity Abroad membership (Student Enrollment of 251 - 500)**	$1,045
Paid Postings	$1,000
Level 1 total	**$2,045**
Level 2	
External Trainer for Experiment staff	$10,000
Level 2 total	**$10,000**
Total Annual* Budget	**$12,045**
*these costs, though recommended to be implemented every year, are scaffolded to be expanded as funds become available **source: https://www.diversitynetwork.org/page/membershiplevels	

Appendix G: Evaluation Plan

Access (Leader Diversity) How are leaders finding out about the position? How positive and inclusive is the leader experience?	• Add questions to post-program leader survey related to equity and inclusion; revise leader answers and adjust practices and training accordingly • Track demographics of group leaders, share them openly, and corroborate against recruitment efforts • Keep track of recruitment efforts annually and compare where leaders find out about the position against allocation of time, energy and budget for recruitment • Evaluate leader retention through surveys and phone debriefs	Please rate your opinion on the following statements: The Experiment's commitment to diversity and inclusion was a factor in my decision to apply for the leader position. I felt that my social identities were respected and included throughout my time as a leader. In your opinion, how could The Experiment create more inclusive spaces for students? In your opinion, how could The Experiment create more inclusive spaces for leaders?
Awareness (Self-Reflection) Are leaders taking advantage of opportunities and resources provided for critical self-reflection?	• Include reflection-based questions in daily Staff Training surveys • Include questions in post-program leader survey to: 1. Help leaders benchmark their own growth in knowledge, skills and attitudes related to equity, diversity and inclusion 2. Gather feedback from leaders about the amount, scale and type of content and activities provided	How did you and your co-leader address your social identities and how they affected your relationship with each other and your students? What do you need to better equip you to apply practices focused on equity and inclusion to your work? (i.e. resources, knowledge, skills, awareness/attitudes, etc.) Please rate the level of utility and helpfulness of the self-reflection resources prior to Staff Training.
Action (Tools	• Capture identity-related	Please describe an identity-related

| **and Skills)**

What situations are coming up on program that leaders should be equipped to manage?
Is Staff Training providing adequate preparation for the necessary tools and skills? | incidents in the incident reporting system by adding a category to distinguish among other types of incidents (behavioral, health and safety, etc.)
● Compile anecdotal evidence through return leader interviews
● Add more explicit questions about identity-related incidents to weekly surveys and post-program surveys for leaders
● Include questions about inclusion in participant surveys to gauge their perception about social identities and how their leaders supported them | situation on program that you felt equipped to handle.

Please describe an identity-related situation on program that you did not feel equipped to handle.

Please rate your opinion on the following statements about the Diversity and Inclusion training session at Staff Training:

The session appropriately prepared me to lead a diverse group of students abroad.

The session caused me to reflect on my own social identities as they related to my position as Experiment Group Leader. |

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