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LANDInG (Leadership Academy and Network for Diversity & Inclusion in Geosciences): AGU's New Program to Build, Develop, and Sustain DEI Leaders

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An equitable and inclusive geosciences discipline requires a systemic cultural shift. Despite four decades of consideration and federal investment, persons identifying as both white and men overwhelmingly outnumber people from marginalized groups in geosciences courses of study and professions. Cultural shifts can be facilitated by leadership, and research indicates that diversity and inclusion initiatives are more often effective when championed from the top. AGU, in strong partnership with other organizations and institutions, created the LANDInG program based on the rationale that both increasing capacity for DEI leadership within the geosciences and fostering recognition for the value for DEI champions are needed to significantly improve DEI outcomes across geosciences. LANDInG comprises: (1) a sustainable DEI Community of Practice Network, to engage and support a broad representation of DEI champions within the geosciences; and (2) a DEI Leader Academy, to build the DEI leadership capacity of select cohorts of DEI champions in the geosciences through intensive, cohort-based professional development tailored for them. The LANDInG DEI Leader Academy will include opportunities for direct experience leading DEI initiatives in the geosciences. Also part of the LANDInG program will be increasing the visibility and recognition of DEI champions and leaders in order to elevate their value within the discipline. Our model for change draws from research and theory spanning social and organizational sciences, including the literatures on professional networks/mentoring, and implementing effective diversity and leader training. Our methods for enacting change are evidence-based and framed by national models for cohort-based professional development within higher education/STEM. A steering committee and an advisory board of leading DEI scholars, social scientists, and representatives of other geoscience societies will broaden the expertise and diversity perspectives over the project's life.