Developing racial equity and social justice GIS learning content with inclusive and culturally sensitive considerations

Niki Wong, MPH
Product Engineer, Esri
Presentation overview

01
WHY DOES TONE & NARRATIVE MATTER FOR LEARNING?

02
DEVELOPING THE REVIEW PROCESS

03
RECOMMENDATIONS
Important for narratives and tone to describe impacted communities with dignity and empathy

- What is the tone of the narrative?
- Whose perspective is narrative being told from?
- Is this how the communities would describe or understand themselves?

Creates a welcoming space for learning

- Consider thoughtfully developed content as a form of hospitality
- Removes any possible barriers for learning
Learn ArcGIS x RESJ team

- **Learn ArcGIS** manages 300+ hands-on scenario-based lessons for ArcGIS products and GIS workflows

- **Esri’s Racial Equity and Social Justice (RESJ) team** provides guidance, resources, and tools for applying RESJ values and principles to GIS workflows
Learn’s RESJ Review Process

1. Content Review
2. Enhancements & Revisions
3. Developed guidance documents and review committee
4. RESJ review committee for ongoing new proposals
Identified **15** lessons for enhancement or revision

- **Enhancement** – opportunity to add a RESJ workflow component
- **Revision** – contained narratives or terminology that could be received as insensitive and tone-deaf to impacted communities
Rewriting enhancements and revisions

1. Identify lesson for enhancement or revision
2. Complete lesson rewrite proposal form
3. Author/stakeholders receives and reviews proposal
4. Author provides feedback and signs proposal
5. Incorporate enhancement or revision recommendations and author feedback
6. Author/stakeholders reviews rewritten lesson
7. Copy edit rewritten lesson
8. Publish rewritten lesson

May schedule separate meeting to discuss details of the proposed changes.
Guidance document

• Require authors with new proposals for RESJ related workflows to review document
• Includes considerations for narrative, tone, and voice

Review committee

• Authors are notified that proposed lessons with RESJ component will undergo a review process
• Committee made up of Learn and RESJ members
Review committee process
Responses

Hesitant resistance
• Individual follow-up conversations sufficient
• Lay out what is at stake if content is not revised
• Providing draft of revised text can be helpful

Strong resistance
• Discussion alongside a committee to provide diversity of perspectives
• Be ready to table continued development

Enthusiastic gratitude
• Eager to include RESJ considerations with no reservations
• Express gratefulness for RESJ subject matter expert’s feedback
• Recognizes the value for such considerations
Results

RESJ lessons for training, conferences, curriculum packages

Supported 6 new lesson proposals this year

Vetted proposals not in line with standards
Recommendations

- Cross-cultural awareness and communication training
- Develop team specifically for RESJ
- Model posture of learning
- Establishing process upfront
Thank you!

- Check out more learning resources on the Racial Equity and Social Justice hub

Contact:
Niki Wong
nwong@esri.com

https://gis-for-racialequity.hub.arcgis.com/