

TITLE: Using a Cluster Hire of Diversity-Invested Faculty to Integrate Biology and Social Justice Teaching

AWARD YEAR: 2023

BUDGET: \$499,946

INVESTIGATOR(S): Natalie C Holt, Assistant Professor, Department of Evolution, Ecology & Organismal Biology (EEOB)

ABSTRACT: UC Riverside (UCR), and the Evolution, Ecology and Organismal Biology (EEOB) department, has one of the most racially diverse student populations in the US. However, departmental hiring has not historically been focused on recruiting diversity-invested faculty with strong DEI expertise, skills, and commitment. This is of particular concern as EEOB has disproportionate impacts on UCR students and its broader community. While the EEOB department has made progress in recent years by implementing diversity-focused best practices in hiring and improving its overall climate, building a more diverse faculty from the ground up is difficult. This proposal seeks AFD funding to conduct a special cluster hire of three diversity-invested faculty that draws heavily on the Presidential Postdoctoral Fellows Program. Faculty retention and success will be supported by expert mentoring from an AFD-funded retention program. The additional capacity and expertise provided by these faculty will enable the department to develop an empowering and educational Biology in Society core curriculum and sustainable systems of evaluation.