

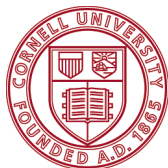
## Cultural Competency and Engaging Diverse Audiences

Successfully engaging diverse community members is an important part of any garden project. Without diversity, the garden will lack representation from the whole community and thus will likely be less successful. Just as the garden is more interesting and beneficial with diverse plantings, a community project will have more sustained success with inclusion and input from diverse community members.

### Steps for Inclusivity

- Build relationships
  - Learn about the community's needs/hopes/dreams
  - Meet them where they are
  - Understand where they are coming from
- Create a welcoming atmosphere
  - Share resources
  - Include everyone in decision making from the very beginning
- Increase accessibility
  - Transportation: Is there a bus stop nearby? Are bike racks available?
  - Encourage culturally diverse growing techniques
  - Include multilingual signage and educational materials
  - Consider wheelchair accessible raised beds
- Maintain relationships
  - Just as you would in a friendship: check in with, spend time with and maintain the relationship; don't let the relationship fall from your radar
  - Plan an annual garden celebration to honor the hard work and dedication of everyone involved
- Think of creative ways to partner with diverse organizations and agencies in your community

Adapted from the Natural Leaders Initiative, <http://csetompkins.org/community/natural-leaders-initiative>.



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