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D&I Working Group TAC Update
January 8, 2025

Mission Statement

The goal of the Diversity & Inclusion Working Group at the Academy Software Foundation is to break down barriers to access and increase connection among participants in the Foundation's projects, the larger community, and the VFX & Animation industry. The working group brings together software engineers/developers, marketing/communication professionals, students & educators, and anyone else passionate about Diversity & Inclusion.

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D&I Working Group Focus Areas

Increase ASWF Diversity & Representation

Ensure there is diverse leadership and membership across the Academy Software Foundation and its projects.

External Outreach & Education

Encourage high school and college students to pursue technical careers in the motion picture and media industries and provide them with opportunities to participate in open source projects and learn from experienced software engineers.

Member Guidance

Provide guidance and resources for Foundation members to educate their colleagues on open source and D&I topics.

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For today's update…

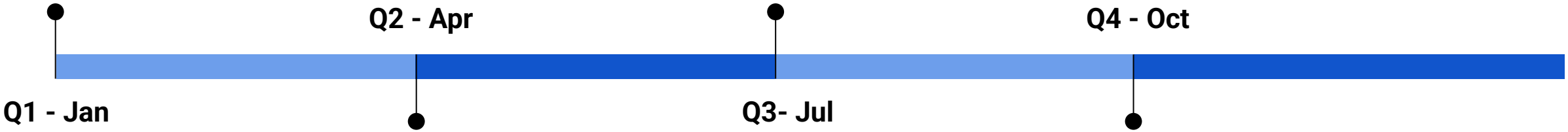
What did we do?

How did we do?

What are our plans?

What input do you have?

ASWF D&I Working Group 2024 Plans



D&I Framework [Guidance]
Scoping

Summer Learning Programming [Outreach]
Planning
Application Rollout

Summer Learning Program Organization [Outreach]
Application Review
Kickoff

D&I Framework [Guidance]
Planning with TAC

TAC Diversity [ASWF Representation]
Scoping

Summer Learning Program Execution [Outreach]
Let's finish this!

D&I Framework [Guidance]
Let's do this!

TAC Diversity [ASWF Representation]
Execution

International Science Fair [Outreach]
Scoping

2025 Planning
What to undertake in 2025?

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ASWF D&I Working Group 2024 Actuals

Q1 - Jan

D&I Framework [Guidance]
- Scoping

Summer Learning Programming [Outreach]
- Planning
- Application Rollout

Q2 - Apr

Summer Learning Program Organization [Outreach]
- Application Review
- Kickoff

~~**D&I Framework [Guidance]**~~
- ~~Planning with TAC~~

TAC Diversity [ASWF Representation]
- Scoping

Q3- Jul

Summer Learning Program Execution [Outreach]
- Let's finish this!

~~**D&I Framework [Guidance]**~~
- ~~Let's do this!~~

~~**TAC Diversity [ASWF Representation]**~~
- ~~Execution~~

Q4 - Oct

~~**International Science Fair [Outreach]**~~
- ~~Scoping~~

2025 Planning
- What to undertake in 2025?

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ASWF D&I Framework

What did we do?

Action: Guidance for Members

Explore whether providing an open source framework for DEI compiled from the best ideas from our member companies could be beneficial to our community

In Progress:

- Short Term Goal: Publish a D&I resource list as well as case studies regarding existing DEI initiatives
- Planning: Source information and spec out what a fully open source Framework could look like

ASWF D&I Framework

Action: Guidance for Members

What did we do?

Getting Involved!

Join us in the #dei-open-framework channel in the ASWF Slack!

Meetings: Continuing monthly in 2025

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ASWF TAC Diversity

Action: Increase ASWF Diversity & Representation

What did we do?

The ASWF is pushing to affect the issue of diversity and inclusion within vfx, animation, open source, and the ASWF.

We made a push to influence the makeup of the Governing Board. How do we do the same for the TAC over time to also reflect this important focus?

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ASWF TAC Diversity

Action: Increase ASWF Diversity & Representation

What did we do?

Pipeline

Our communities could be more diverse. *For TAC, TSC reps?*

Appointees

Need ways to encourage diversity in appointees.

Making Space

How can we make space for more great leaders?

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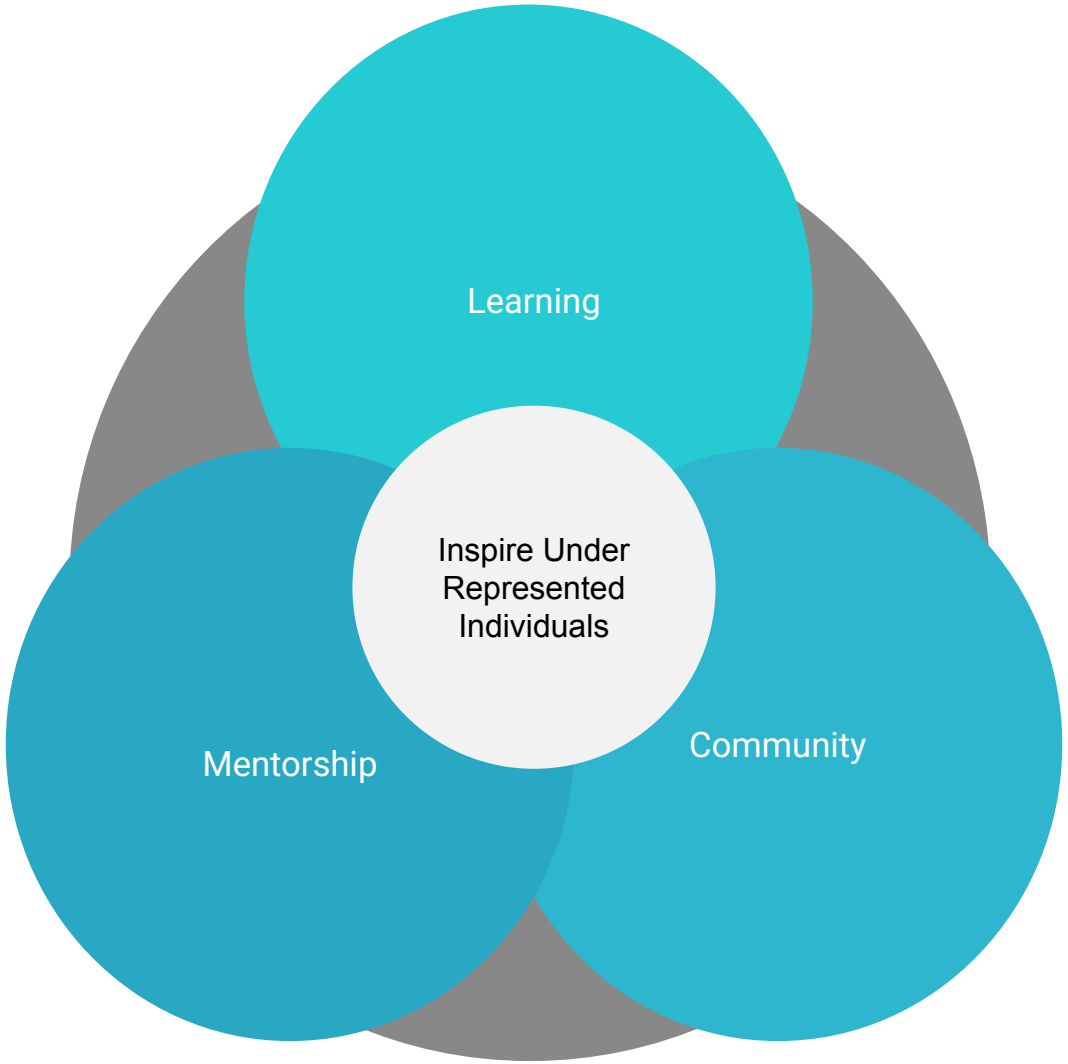
Summer Learning Program

Action: Student Education

Summer 2024:

- Open “Focus” year
- 20 Learners
- Industry Webinars
- Structured Group Learning Time
- Combo of FxPHD & Udemy



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Summer Learning Program

Action: Student Education

Big Wins:

- Continue success from organizational transition of 2023
- Prioritized Speaker Series
- Great, active cohort

Improvement Opportunities:

- Need to grow mentor pool to facilitate better matching
- Need to standardize long-term, operational support from greater ASWF

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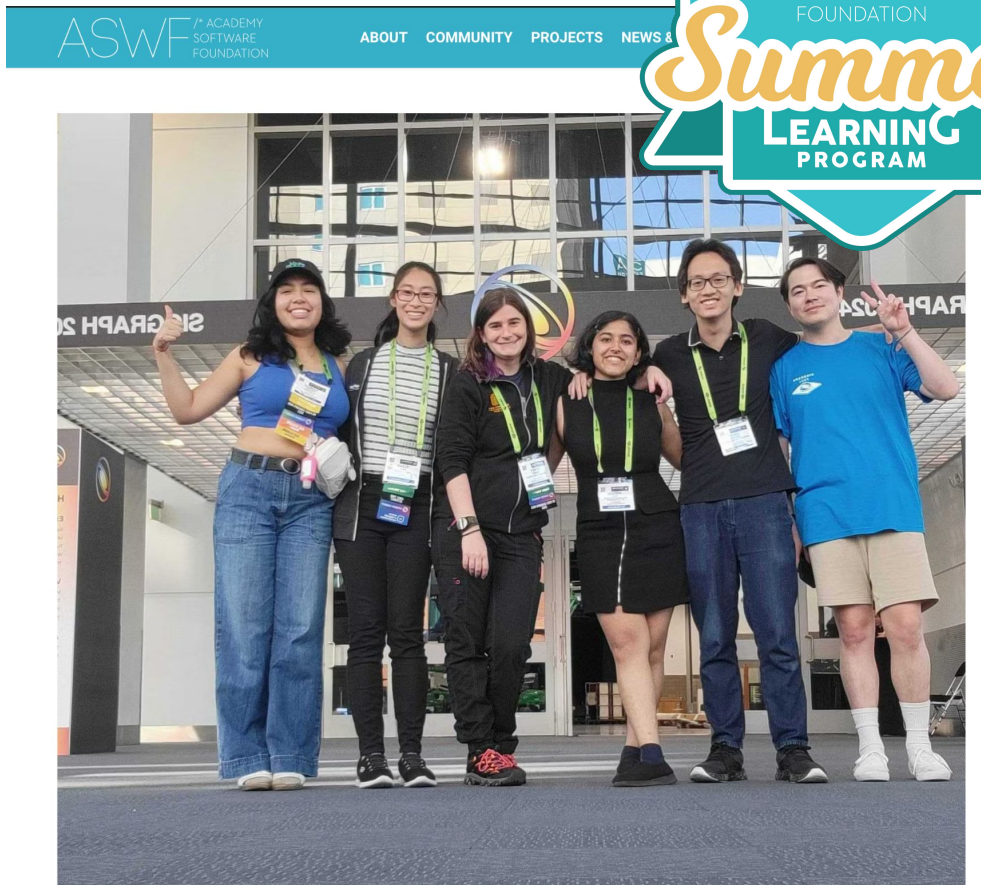
Summer Learning Program

Action: Student Education

- The program is **working**
- Internship placements at Pixar, Disney Animation, Bolt Graphics
- Job placements at Dreamworks, Google, Epic Games, Jellyfish Animation, Sony Interactive Entertainment, and more
- Many learners continuing higher education in technical / entertainment focused areas of study



Some Summer Learning Program participants attending SIGGRAPH 2024

We recently wrapped up the Academy Software Foundation's fourth annual Summer Learning Program, with 20 student participants from around the world joining us to learn more about coding and potential technical career paths within visual effects and animation. This year's Program ran from June 16 through August 9, 2024.

Organized annually by the Foundation's Diversity & Inclusion Working Group, the Summer Learning Program aims to give practical skills, coding experience, and professional mentorship to students and early career learners from traditionally underrepresented communities. Summer Learning Program cohorts are typically comprised of participants that identify as BIPOC, Latinx, female, non-binary, LGBTQIA+, and neurodivergent, among others. Past graduates of the Program have gone on to successfully pursue technical careers through roles at DreamWorks Animation, Sony Interactive Entertainment, Epic Games, Jellyfish Animation, Microsoft, Amazon Web Services (AWS), and Technicolor Creative Studios.

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Organizational Opportunities

How did we do?

- Leadership transition
- Strengthen SLP
- Form bridge between D&I / Outreach group
- Partner with OpenUSD DEI Group

Up Next: Initiatives

What are our plans?

- SLP 2025
- D&I Framework Initiative
- TAC Diversity Initiative
- International Science Fair Discovery

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TAC Feedback

What input do you have?

- Are we focused in the correct areas?
- Where could we help your projects succeed?

Please encourage participation from your company!

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Thank you!