



We Believe

As an organization dedicated to making our community a better place to live for everyone, Tree Pittsburgh stands against racism and hate. Tree Pittsburgh is dedicated to the fair, just, and equitable treatment of all races, cultures, national origins, genders, gender identities, gender expressions, religions, sexual orientations, and socioeconomic statuses.

We believe that no one should be excluded or feel unwelcomed from participating in environmental stewardship or contributing their voice to plans or activities that impact their community.

We Acknowledge

Tree Pittsburgh recognizes that not everyone has equal access to trees and the benefits they provide. Although more than 40% of the City of Pittsburgh is covered by trees, more than half of Pittsburgh's neighborhoods fall below that average. Nearly half of those lower canopy communities have both poverty rates and Black populations higher than citywide averages.

We believe it is critical to acknowledge and understand the historical, structural racism that created this inequity and to identify barriers to achieving greater equity today.

We Know

Numerous studies provide evidence that these decades of structural racism have resulted in communities with low tree canopy. A study shared by [Vibrant Cities Lab](#) has shown that the lack of trees in an area correlates with poor academic performance, increased crime rates, serious health issues, and more deaths due to poor air quality and extreme heat.

We know that we must keep this information and these communities at the forefront as we continue to advocate for the urban forest.

We Strive

Tree Pittsburgh recognizes that we must be more intentional in our efforts to include those who have been historically marginalized. We commit ourselves to focusing our efforts on areas that suffer from a lack of tree canopy across all of our programs.

Tree Pittsburgh's view of equity in the environmental sector is driven by centering our work in [Environmental Justice \(EJ\) communities](#) and bringing anti-racist practices to every aspect of our mission. When we center our work in EJ communities, it positively impacts the entire region.



Equity does not happen by accident, and we must be deliberate and intentional. Tree Pittsburgh is committed to the following:

How We Operate

- We will continue to build a staff and board that reflect the communities in which we work.
- We will continually educate our staff and board on Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion (JEDI), and access.
- We will continuously evaluate and refine our programs to ensure JEDI principles are woven into every aspect of our work.

How We Engage

- We will meet communities where they are, listen to their wants and needs, and work with them on developing tailored solutions for their neighborhood.
- We will be deliberate to take notice of who is at the table during community discussions and ask ourselves what could we have done differently to include more diverse representation.
- We will respect community organizations and those doing the work on the ground by bringing financial, material, educational, and data/science support to empower their further work.
- We will work to make our campus a more accessible place for the community at large.

How We Educate

- We will collaborate with EJ and underserved communities to bring engaging and relevant education programs and assist with barriers to entry, such as cost, transportation, and childcare.
- We will use our programming to shine a light on the background and history of environmental racism, contextualizing the current health and distribution of the urban forest.
- We will use our voice to advocate for trees and green spaces, and the benefits they provide to elected officials at every level. When advocating, we will work to elevate the voices of our community partners as well.

It takes many years for a tree to grow to maturity. It is within that context that we undertake this work knowing that what we do now can and will have a lasting impact. Tree Pittsburgh is here to be part of the change.

Resources

[Tree Equity in Pittsburgh](#)

Presented by Dr. Christine Carmichael and Danielle Crumrine

[Redlining and Trees](#)