How to Include Disadvantaged Students in Taking Action on Climate Change

OPEN: WIDE MINDS WILL FIND ECO VIRTUAL STEAM SOLUTIONS TOWARDS CLIMATE CHANGE! (WI-MI)
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ICEBREAKER ACTIVITY

The Name Game

- participants stand in a circle
- facilitator starts by saying their name followed by an adjective that begins with the same letter as their name (“Creative Carol”).
- The next person repeats the previous name and then adds their own.

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“**What you do makes a difference**, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.”

Dr Jane Goodall, Scientist & Activist

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OBJECTIVES

- Identifying Barriers to Participation for Disadvantaged Students
- Creating Safe Spaces for Dialogue and Expression on Climate Issues
- Providing Accessible Resources and Materials for All Students
- Tailoring Engagement Strategies to Diverse Backgrounds and Experiences
- Community Partnerships: Collaborating with Local Organizations for Support
- Utilizing Mentorship Programs to Empower Underrepresented Students

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PART 1
Participation of Disadvantaged Students and Creating Safe Spaces for Dialogue and Expression on Climate Issues

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PARTICIPATION OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS AND CREATING SAFE SPACES FOR DIALOGUE AND EXPRESSION ON CLIMATE ISSUES

- **Climate change education** helps people understand and address the impacts of the climate crisis, empowering them with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes needed to act as agents of change. (UNESCO)
- Educational systems around the world promote **climate change education** as a key component of its work in education for sustainable development.

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PARTICIPATION OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS AND CREATING SAFE SPACES FOR DIALOGUE AND EXPRESSION ON CLIMATE ISSUES

- **Climate change education** is crucial for empowering individuals and communities to understand and combat the challenges posed by climate change
- promote climate change education as a foundational tool to foster awareness, encourage behavioral change, and equip future generations with the skills necessary to develop sustainable solutions.

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Climate change as part of National curriculum

- In 2019. Croatian Ministry of Education introduced Sustainable development as one of 7 important cross-curricular themes within National Curriculum
- The cross - curricular theme Sustainable Development encompasses all three dimensions of sustainability – environmental, social and economic, and their interdependence. It prepares students for appropriate action in society in order to achieve personal and general well-being.

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Climate change as part of National curriculum

- The cross-curricular theme Sustainable Development provides the student with knowledge about the needs of the modern age on a global and local level, as well as knowledge about the diversity of nature, the necessity of sustainable management of natural resources, human potential, personal and joint responsibilities and rights. It supports the development of generic skills such as entrepreneurship, innovation, critical thinking, the ability to adapt to change and the ability to solve problems.

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Climate change as part of National curriculum

- By applying practical work, students are encouraged to behave responsably using natural resources and energy, locally produced food, rational treatment of waste, used materials, active work and cooperation in the community.
- Learning and teaching of the cross-curricular theme Sustainable Development seeks to raise awareness and deepen understanding of all issues related to sustainability, including climate change.

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Disadvantaged students & National curriculum

- Disadvantaged students have a learning problem or disability that make it more difficult for them to learn than most children their age. They may have problems with schoolwork, communication, behaviour or live in socio-economically unfavorable conditions.
- The ultimate goal of the formal educational process for disadvantaged students is the development of life competences.

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PARTICIPATION OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS AND CREATING SAFE SPACES FOR DIALOGUE AND EXPRESSION ON CLIMATE ISSUES

It is important to develop the following key competencies:

- **Self-awareness** is important for the development of positive personality traits and self-regulation. Includes the ability to recognize and understand one's own feelings, interests, strengths and strengths and other important features.
- **Self-regulation** refers to the skill of managing emotions, motivation and own behavior, which includes managing one's own learning. Includes appropriate expression of emotions, impulse control, dealing with stressful situations, perseverance in overcoming obstacles.

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PARTICIPATION OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS AND CREATING SAFE SPACES FOR DIALOGUE AND EXPRESSION ON CLIMATE ISSUES

It is important to develop the following key competencies:

- **Social awareness** includes seeing the perspective of another person and the ability to empathize towards others, recognizing and respecting similarities and differences. It includes recognition and use of resources from the family, school and community.
- **Responsible decision-making** refers to constructive decision-making about personal and social behavior based on critical reflection and analysis of social relations and influence while respecting others.

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PARTICIPATION OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS AND CREATING SAFE SPACES FOR DIALOGUE AND EXPRESSION ON CLIMATE ISSUES

It is important to develop the following key competencies:

- **Social skills** are important for establishing and maintaining healthy relationships based on cooperation and mutual respect. They include the ability to manage and solve problems interpersonal conflicts, resisting peer pressure and asking for help when needed necessary.

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PARTICIPATION OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS AND CREATING SAFE SPACES FOR DIALOGUE AND EXPRESSION ON CLIMATE ISSUES

Creating an environment conducive to learning

- An environment conducive to learning is supportive and pleasant for all students, and it is especially important for disadvantaged students. It is an environment where diversity is nurtured, personal strengths and weaknesses are respected through collaboration learning, and learning from one's own and others' mistakes.
- In such an environment, the student's body and mind are in a state of relaxed alertness, and then learning is most effective. The development of cognitive, socioemotional and creative abilities is encouraged.

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PARTICIPATION OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS AND CREATING SAFE SPACES FOR DIALOGUE AND EXPRESSION ON CLIMATE ISSUES

Creating an environment conducive to learning

- The role of the teacher is to create and select a suitable learning environment and guide students through the learning process.
- The ultimate goal of this process is a self-regulated student, a student who manages his own lifelong learning process.
- To reach self-regulation of learning a students should reach self-regulation of thoughts, emotions, motivation and behavior.

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Disadvantaged students and metacognition

- Disadvantaged students show the greatest progress in achieving educational outcomes when the development of **metacognition** is systematically encouraged in them.
- **Metacognition** is the name for the process that can be best described as thinking about one's thinking and how to manage it.
- That's it awareness of what: we know, we can, we do, we feel and we want.

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Disadvantaged students and metacognition

- **Metacognition** empowers these students to better understand their own learning processes, strengths, and areas where they might need additional support so that they can reach their maximum.
- How **metacognition** works you can see in a video:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=elZFL4FLVLE

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PARTICIPATION OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS AND CREATING SAFE SPACES FOR DIALOGUE AND EXPRESSION ON CLIMATE ISSUES

4 Strategies for Teaching About Climate Change

1. **Focus on both problems and solutions** - climate anxiety is a growing issue among youth. To minimize this impact, climate education materials should highlight opportunities for action. These ideas about solutions will leave students feeling empowered.
2. **Connect climate change to your existing curriculum** - incorporate climate education into course curricula through topics you already teach.

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PARTICIPATION OF DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS AND CREATING SAFE SPACES FOR DIALOGUE AND EXPRESSION ON CLIMATE ISSUES

4 Strategies for Teaching About Climate Change

- **Connect global issues to local ones** - use local or place-based resources to discuss climate change issues that are happening in your school, city or region.
- **Lean on simulations and games - Simulations** can help students learn about and negotiate real-world policy problems and **Games** can help students gain a range of perspectives on an issue and engage in realistic tasks from daily life. These approaches can lead to better learning outcomes, can improve skills, and are more engaging than traditional instructional methods.

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PART 2

Strategies, resources and materials to engage disadvantaged students to take action on climate change

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CLIMATE-FRIENDLY SCHOOLS

- More and more schools around the world are adopting whole-school approaches to climate action. In a whole-school approach, students' classroom learning about climate change is reinforced by the formal and informal messages promoted by the school's values and actions.
- In other words, students – girls and boys alike - and other members of the school community **live what they learn, and learn what they live.**

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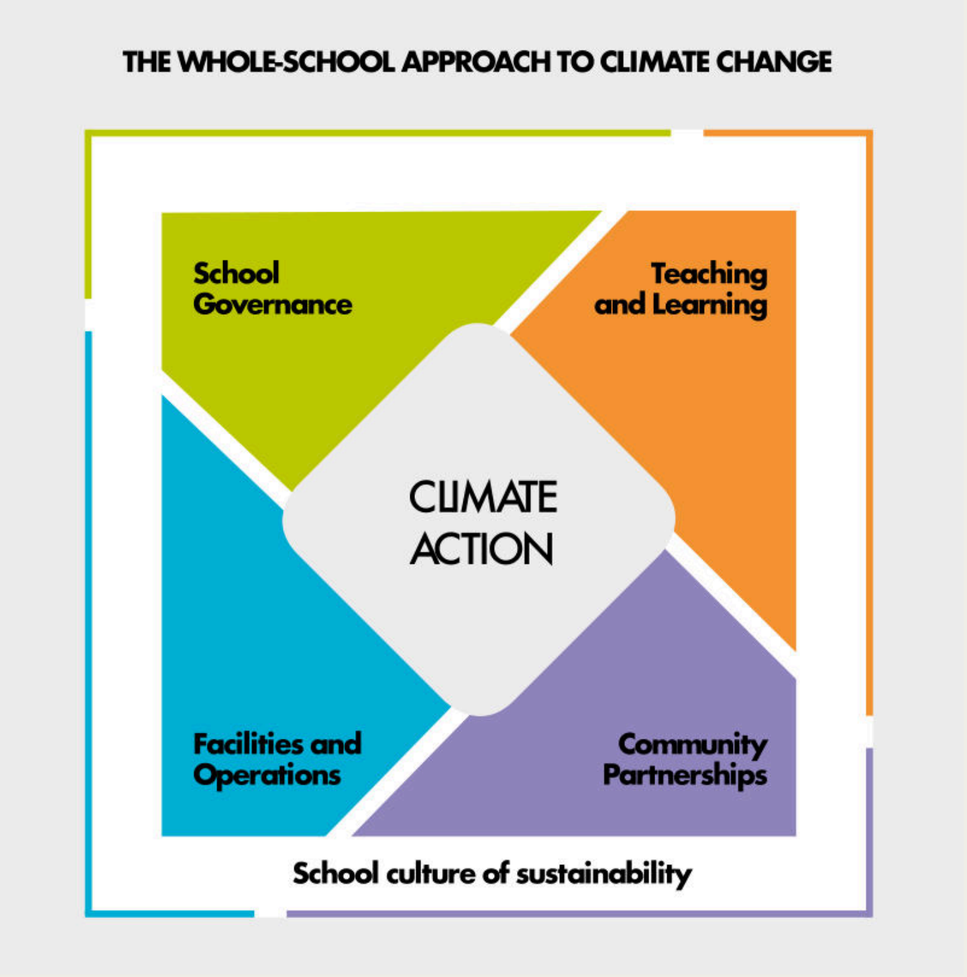
STRATEGIES, RESOURCES AND MATERIALS TO ENGAGE DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS TO TAKE ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

The whole-school approach to climate change means that an educational institution includes action for reducing climate change in every aspect of school life. This includes school governance, teaching content and methodology, campus and facilities management as well as cooperation with partners and the broader communities.



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CLIMATE-FRIENDLY SCHOOLS

- A climate-friendly school, or eco-school, encourages the education of sustainable developments, especially by reducing the amount of carbon dioxide produced in order to decrease the effects of climate change.
- Example of good practice as introduction video to the topic:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HEiMWxVEAxE

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CLIMATE-FRIENDLY SCHOOLS

- Defining what climate action means to your school requires input from everyone in your school: students, families, cleaning and kitchen staff, administrators and other teachers.
- Everyone in your school has a role to play in working towards your school's climate action goals.
- By having everyone participate, you are giving everyone a chance to acquire knowledge and develop skills such as critical thinking, consensus-building, and empathy needed for creating a more sustainable society.

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STRATEGIES, RESOURCES AND MATERIALS TO ENGAGE DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS TO TAKE ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

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Possible roles

Principals and Administrators

- Championing your school's vision and values for climate action
- Supporting teachers and other staff by giving them the resources, professional development, and release time they need to lead effective climate action projects
- Considering knowledge, experience, and values related to climate action when making decisions about hiring new teachers and staff

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Possible roles

Teachers

- Teaching lessons that help students develop knowledge about climate change, the skills to investigate different possibilities for action, and the resolve to take action
- Urging everyone in your school community to take part climate-related school initiatives
- Reinforcing expectations for climate-friendly behaviour by celebrating actions such as turning off the lights when not in use

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Possible roles

Students

- Planning and leading climate action projects, in class or as part of a club
- Carrying out assessments (such as waste and energy audits) to measure your school's progress in becoming more sustainable
- Mentoring younger students who are just learning how to take part in climate action

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Possible roles

Custodians and Building Operators

- Suggesting changes to building operations to reduce the school's ecological footprint
- Teaching students to take care of school gardens and sort waste properly
- Making energy-saving changes to your school's heating, cooling or lighting systems

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Possible roles

Cafeteria Staff

- Preparing healthy snacks and meals made with local ingredients
- Separating kitchen waste that can be composted from kitchen waste that can not
- Giving input into the types of plants that could be grown in the school garden and used in the school cafeteria

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Possible roles

Families

- Adopting climate-friendly practices at home, such as saving water and planting a garden
- Volunteering in school-led climate action campaigns
- Donating and collecting money and materials to support your school's climate action projects

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Possible roles

Local Community Members and Organizations

- Identifying local sustainable development issues the school could tackle
- Sharing technical expertise about climate change and how to address it
- Hosting students on field trips that offer a real-world context for learning about climate change

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STRATEGIES, RESOURCES AND MATERIALS TO ENGAGE DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS TO TAKE ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Teaching resources & materials

Climate Workshop Pack

https://worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Climate-Pack-May-21.pdf

SEND Resources

https://edu.earthwatch.org.uk/send

EPOS Resources

https://www.bluebellparkknowsley.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Zelena-ucna-okolja_brosura_eng_final.pdf

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STRATEGIES, RESOURCES AND MATERIALS TO ENGAGE DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS TO TAKE ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Teaching resources & materials

Climate Change Teaching Resources

https://teachwisconsinclimate.org/teacher-guides/climate-change-teaching-resources

SEEd

https://se-ed.org.uk/a-collated-list-of-online-climate-change-learning-resources/

Subject to Climate

https://subjecttoclimate.org/teacher-guides/10-climate-change-games-for-the-classroom

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PART 3
Community Partnerships: Collaborating with Local Organizations for Support

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COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS: COLLABORATING WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR SUPPORT

Community partnership

- Collaborative partnerships bring together diverse perspectives, expertise, and resources to tackle complex sustainability challenges that no single entity can solve alone.
- Non-profit organizations and civil society groups often serve as advocates for environmental and social causes, driving awareness, mobilizing communities, and holding businesses and governments accountable for their actions.

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COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS: COLLABORATING WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR SUPPORT

- NGOs bring deep subject matter expertise, grassroots networks, and a strong moral compass to collaborative partnerships, ensuring that sustainability efforts are grounded in principles of equity, justice, and accountability.

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COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS: COLLABORATING WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR SUPPORT

Strategies for maximizing the effectiveness of collaborative partnerships:

- **Establish Clear Goals and Objectives:** Define shared goals, outcomes, and indicators of success from the outset to ensure alignment and focus among partners.
- **Build Trust and Relationships:** Trust is the foundation of successful partnerships. Invest time and effort in building authentic relationships, fostering open communication, and cultivating mutual respect among partners.

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COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS: COLLABORATING WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR SUPPORT

Strategies for maximizing the effectiveness of collaborative partnerships:

- **Promote Diversity and Inclusion:** Embrace diversity of perspectives, expertise, and backgrounds within collaborative partnerships. Encourage participation from stakeholders representing diverse interests, communities, and sectors to ensure that solutions are inclusive, equitable, and culturally relevant.
- **Facilitate Effective Communication:** Establish clear communication channels, mechanisms, and protocols for sharing information, making decisions, and resolving conflicts.

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COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS: COLLABORATING WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR SUPPORT

Strategies for maximizing the effectiveness of collaborative partnerships:

- **Embrace Shared Leadership and Governance:** Distribute leadership roles, responsibilities, and decision-making authority among partners to promote shared ownership and accountability.
- **Leverage Complementary Resources and Expertise:** Identify and leverage the unique strengths, resources, and expertise that each partner brings to the table.

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COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS: COLLABORATING WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR SUPPORT

Strategies for maximizing the effectiveness of collaborative partnerships:

- **Foster Innovation and Learning:** Create an environment that encourages experimentation, innovation, and continuous learning. Encourage partners to take risks, explore new ideas, and adapt their approaches based on evidence and feedback.
- **Ensure Accountability and Evaluation:** Establish mechanisms for monitoring, evaluating, and reporting on the progress and impact of collaborative initiatives. Hold partners accountable for their commitments and contributions, and use evaluation findings to inform decision-making and improve future efforts.

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COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS: COLLABORATING WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR SUPPORT

Creating student-NGO partnerships for climate solutions:

- **Talk to your class** - Discuss your students' interests and find out how they wish to engage in climate-related topics such as mitigation and justice. Show that you care about their concerns and explore these subjects in your class to help them determine their approach for collaboration.
- **Frame your class participation in climate action** - Explore the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)'s publication on youth engagement for climate action.

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COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS: COLLABORATING WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR SUPPORT

Creating student-NGO partnerships for climate solutions:

- **NGOs as partners** - When considering an NGO for collaboration, it's important to choose one that aligns with your students' characteristics and interests.
- **Think local, act local** - Encourage hope by showcasing the results of students' actions. Explore local climate crisis impacts and their causes, then collaborate with a community-focused NGO to address these issues through various activities and approaches.

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COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS: COLLABORATING WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR SUPPORT

Creating student-NGO partnerships for climate solutions:

- **Narratives** - To drive real change show your class what's been done, why it hasn't worked, key stakeholders and other relevant factors to reveal systemic issues. This also encourages critical thinking about prevention, mitigation and adaptation strategies and their impact on the crisis.
- **Working on the project: start small** - First, start small. A good way to do this is by making sure your students know which target they're working on.
- **Remember that the project needs to be as focused as possible** yet also requires complex preparation so it ends with real climate action and students feeling empowered.

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COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS: COLLABORATING WITH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR SUPPORT

Community Partnership Projects

Mobile Apps for Climate Change
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6u5xbtBfgZE

Science Projects that Protect Biodiversity
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AIB8Vc76jE8

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PART 4
Utilizing Mentorship Programs to Empower Underrepresented Students

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Mentorship Programe

- A mentoring program is a structured initiative designed to pair experienced individuals with less experienced ones to provide guidance, support and knowledge transfer.
- formal mentoring programs are structured around defined objectives, timelines, matching criteria and measurement methodologies to ensure effectiveness.

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UTILIZING MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS TO EMPOWER UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS

Mentorship Programe - how to make it successful

- **Thorough planning and preparation:** Successful mentoring programs invest time in designing clear objectives, timelines and methodologies, ensuring alignment with organizational goals and participant needs.
- **Careful matching of mentors and mentees:** A successful program pays attention to the compatibility of mentor-mentee pairs, considering factors such as skills, experience, personality, and goals to foster effective relationships.

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UTILIZING MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS TO EMPOWER UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS

Mentorship Programe - how to make it successful

- **Prioritization of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB):** Successful programs recognize the importance of diverse perspectives and experiences, actively seeking to create inclusive environments where all participants feel valued and supported.
- **Leadership buy-in and support:** Successful mentoring programs secure support from organizational leaders, who provide resources, visibility, and endorsement, reinforcing the program's legitimacy and fostering a culture of learning and development.

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Mentorship Programe - how to make it successful

- **Tracking progress and measuring outcomes:** Successful programs establish mechanisms to track the progress of mentor-mentee relationships, gather feedback, and measure the impact of mentoring on participants' development and organizational goals, enabling continuous improvement and accountability.

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UTILIZING MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS TO EMPOWER UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS

Why Start a Mentoring Program?

- Mentoring is a powerful practice that facilitates learning, development and growth in individuals and organizations.
- Mentorship programs offer benefits for students who actively participate in them gaining valuable insights into their strengths, weaknesses and areas for growth, enhancing their overall effectiveness and confidence.

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How to Start a Successful Mentoring Program

- Mentoring is a proven approach to drive rich learning and career development for both mentees and mentors. Mentoring also benefits the organization.
- Watch a quick overview video on how to do it:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZP2uWpmqg1E&t=8s

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UTILIZING MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS TO EMPOWER UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS

How to mentor students?

- **Be flexible** – Adopting a flexible schedule can help mentors accommodate student needs without sacrificing their own commitments.
- **Maintain clear and consistent communication** – Mentorships work best when both parties are on the same page, which is why frequent and transparent communication is so vital.

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UTILIZING MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS TO EMPOWER UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS

How to mentor students?

- **Track student progress** - Measuring student progress over time using this data can help mentors make sure their students are on the right track. It can also enable them to catch minor issues before they escalate into major problems.
- **Create strong connections** - A strong bond of trust and understanding is critical for a successful mentorship. A mentor matching system can help you pair each student with their ideal mentor.

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UTILIZING MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS TO EMPOWER UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS

20 Tips for Mentoring Underrepresented Students

- Effective mentors can serve as role models, advocates, and confidantes, fostering a sense of belonging and promoting academic success.
- 20 Tips for Mentoring Underrepresented Students:

https://heprofessional.co.uk/edition/20-tips-for-mentoring-underrepresented-students-release

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UTILIZING MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS TO EMPOWER UNDERREPRESENTED STUDENTS

Mentorship programs on Climate Change

Women4Climate
https://www.c40.org/women4climate/mentorship-programme/

Youth Challenge International
https://www.yci.org/InnovateMYFuture/Climate-Leader-mentor/

AEYN
https://www.aeyn.org/mentorship-program

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