

Kelly Sophia Soluri, 2021 EDI Fellow for Miami-Dade County FL



Project Overview and Role

This project focused on identifying strategies and actions that the County could prioritize to tackle extreme heat and its impacts on the community. I conducted more than 20 interviews with various stakeholders and interest groups to share knowledge and perspectives. Interview questions focused on understanding the participants' current and previous work in the extreme heat space, identifying heat-related concerns, and soliciting actions that the County could take to uplift the stakeholder in their work. My role was to research and compile extreme heat literature, lead the interviews, analyze the data

and draft an Extreme Heat Toolkit that summarized these efforts to present to the Chief Heat Officer and other municipal leaders to inform their future work.

What did you learn from the project?

Some key takeaways:

- Extreme Heat is an incredibly pervasive problem and some of our most powerful tools have various intersections and applications in sea level rise, creation and protection of natural habitats, and addressing infrastructure in our vulnerable communities of color.
- Our nonprofit sector is the most connected partner in heat to the County and thus represented the majority of those interviewed followed by academic affiliations.
- The group identified that is needed to engage more in the space is the private sector.

What was the impact of your work?

The Heat Toolkit is currently going through the communications process for printing and other distribution but a beta is accessible through the Miami-Dade Extreme Heat website. Multiple actions recommended through the Extreme Heat toolkit have been moving forward through the goals of the Chief Heat Officer, Jane Gilbert. These actions include:

- Forming a Climate and Heat Health Taskforce for community engagement and policy to action accountability
- Gathering baseline data of heat effects including community stories, heat health
 - During the fellowship, I was able to be involved with a heat information gathering campaign for Miami-Dade County's Parks and Recreation Summer Camps.

We were able to highlight partner initiatives and strengthen the heat network in Miami-Dade.

- Miami-Dade County currently attends monthly group meetings with various partners to update, collaborate, and share knowledge about the heat space.

Creation of internal tools for the Office of Resilience

- Visual Network Analysis tool
- Compiled research including academic papers, software tools for analysis or communication, best practice reports, and more.

Project Links

- Extreme Heat Measures by Miami Dade County
<https://www.miamidade.gov/global/economy/environment/heat.page>
 - Chief Heat Officer, Jane Gilbert, on Heat and Equity:
<https://time.com/6078019/city-heat-climate-change-inequity/>
 - <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2021-09-29/miami-chief-heat-officer-sets-out-resilience-agenda>
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