



## Outdoor Educators Institute Fall 2021 FAQ

Q: Given COVID-19 public health guidelines and limitations around convening outdoors in large groups, how many people can I expect to be in a cohort? What other COVID-19 precautions will be in place during the program?

A: With vaccination rates rising and COVID-19 restrictions lifting, we are determined to make every effort to ensure that everyone in the cohorts feels their safest. In addition, we are keeping up with COVID-19 public health guidelines and will be limiting each cohort to no more than 10 participants to allow for two to three staff to be present. We're following guidelines stringently in order to ensure as safe and healthy an environment for participants as possible. This includes staggering in-person gatherings with the explicit aim of mitigating risk. Additionally, mask-wearing and six-foot distancing will be required. There is also a mandatory bi-weekly temperature check that staff and participants must do on top of other precautions. We will avoid situations that pose unnecessary risk of infection, especially in small, enclosed spaces with minimal air circulation such as tents and cars. We will continually manage risks based on best practices and the latest science.

Q: If the areas where OEI cohorts are operating need to return to "shelter-in-place" at some point during the program, will OEI be cancelled?

A: No, we're committed to running the Fall 2021 cohorts between August 21/28 and Nov 14/21, 2021. If "shelter-in-place" returns, we'll adjust accordingly and move our programming online. Though we hope we'll be able to facilitate all outdoor trainings as planned, we are currently working with our program delivery partners to develop alternative scenarios, in the event that we need to convene virtually.

Q: If I identify as white, can I still apply to OEI?

A: Yes, while we prioritize BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) applicants, given our larger goal of furthering racial justice and equity in the outdoors, we take a multitude of factors into consideration when reviewing applicants, including personal commitment to challenging systemic oppression. We do, however, invite potential applicants who identify as white to think critically about whether OEI is the right fit for them, and how their participation may impact BIPOC participants. For more information on the idea of BIPOC affinity spaces, we invite you to read this essay:

<https://arrow-journal.org/why-people-of-color-need-spaces-without-white-people/>