



Developing a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Strategy

Shekhiynah Larks | July 31, 2024



Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

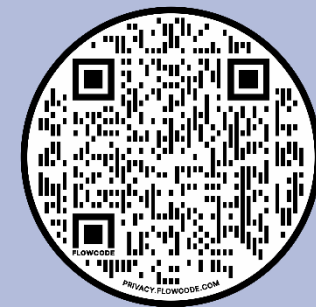
- We respectfully acknowledge that we live and work in territories where indigenous nations and tribal groups are traditional stewards of the land. Our California office resides in Tongva territory.
- Please join us in supporting efforts to affirm tribal sovereignty across what is now known as California and in displaying respect, honor, and gratitude for all indigenous people.

Whose land are you on?

Option 1: Text your ZIP code to 1-907-312-5085

Option 2: Enter your location at [Native Land CA](#)

Option 3: Access Native Land website via QR Code



Community Agreements

- Be present and be an active listener.
- Remember: One mic, one voice.
- Practice inclusivity.
- Honor pronouns and gender identity.
- Show respect (this may look different for each person).
- Allow conflicting perspectives to exist.
- Assume best intentions.
- Take space, make space.
- Share what you are comfortable sharing.
- Protect individual privacy.
- Practice self-care.
- Encourage growth of self and for others.
- Support resource sharing.



(Image: Microsoft)

Shekhiynah Larks

Shekhiynah Larks is a passionate DEI professional with a unique background in politics and Jewish studies (University of San Francisco). For more than 5 years, she has designed and delivered impactful DEI training programs, tackling issues like race, gender, and cultural humility. She skillfully weaves historical context and trauma-informed practices into her training, fostering a safe space for learning.

Shekhiynah's expertise extends beyond training. At Advocates for Human Potential (AHP), she has increased organizational involvement in DEI by 50 percent. She consults on projects across health equity, housing, and opioid disbursement, ensuring an equity lens is applied throughout AHP's work.

A published essayist, Shekhiynah contributes to Blavity, Hey Alma, and Jewish&. Her writing explores the intersection of Black and Jewish identities, reflecting her values of curiosity, humility, and respect.

Shekhiynah is a dedicated leader who empowers organizations to build more just and equitable environments. Her combined expertise positions her as a valuable asset in advancing social change.





Agenda Slide

- Understand the foundational principles of DEI
- Cultivating a culture of inclusion
- Begin considering how your organization can create and implement a DEI strategic plan

What Is DEI?

DIVERSITY

“A mixture of similarities and differences and their respective complexities and tensions including, but not limited to, psychological, physical, and social differences.”

(Population Connection Action Fund, n.d.)



INCLUSION

“Fostering environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate.”

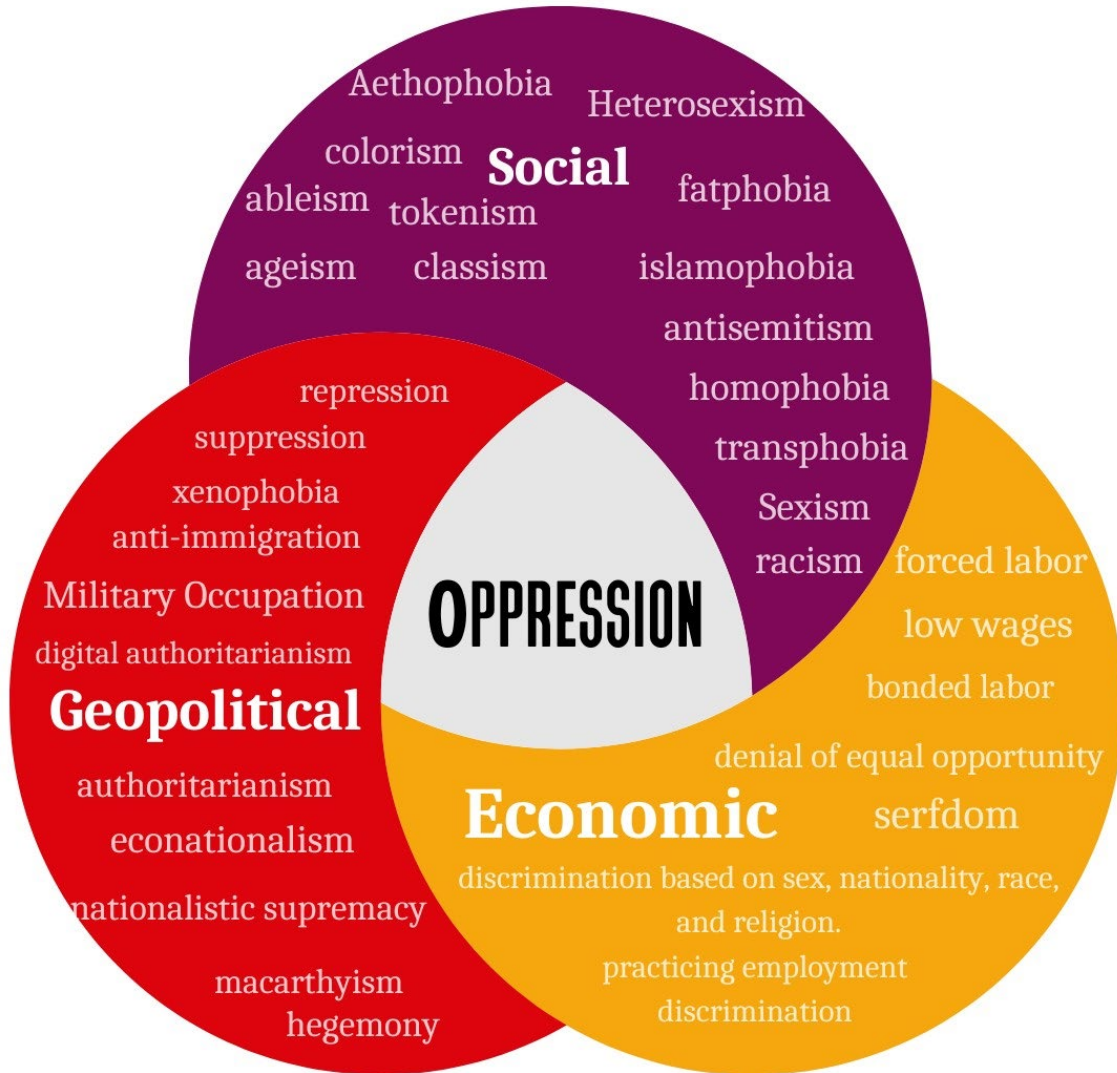
(Population Connection Action Fund, n.d.)

EQUITY

“Vigilantly identifying where fairness, context, or access gaps exist and intentionally learning and designing what is needed to close them.”

(Population Connection Action Fund, n.d.)

Overarching Framework of DEI



- **Acknowledge the interlocking aspects of oppression** in geopolitical, economic, and social systems heavily contribute to an individual's quality of life.
- **Understand that systems of oppression have created barriers to access** and resources in both historical and contemporary contexts and your positionality within those systems.
- **Intentionally and actively work to challenge and transform systems of oppression and inequity.**

What Are the Benefits of a DEI Strategy?

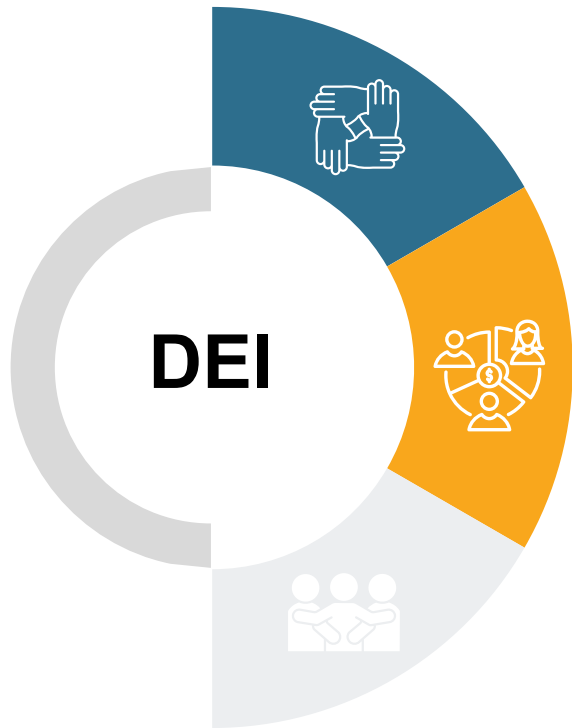


1. Reach a more extensive and inclusive talent pool
2. Diverse workplace teams are more likely to perform better financially
3. DEI fosters a sense of belonging for employees
4. Higher employee retention and lower turnover
5. Diverse workplaces breed innovation
6. Inclusion can improve business decision-making
7. Equity and inclusion can tackle workplace burnout
8. Creates competitive business advantage
9. DEI protects company culture

(Parker, 2022)

DEI in the Workplace

2020 *Diversity Wins* report includes the following findings:



- **Overall sentiment on diversity: 52 percent reported positive feelings and 31 percent reported negative feelings in relationship to DEI initiatives at their companies.**
- **Correlations between increased diversity and business performance**
- **The greater the representation of gender diversity, the higher the likelihood of outperformance**

Yet progress in building diverse workplaces remains slow. Why is that?

Discussion Question

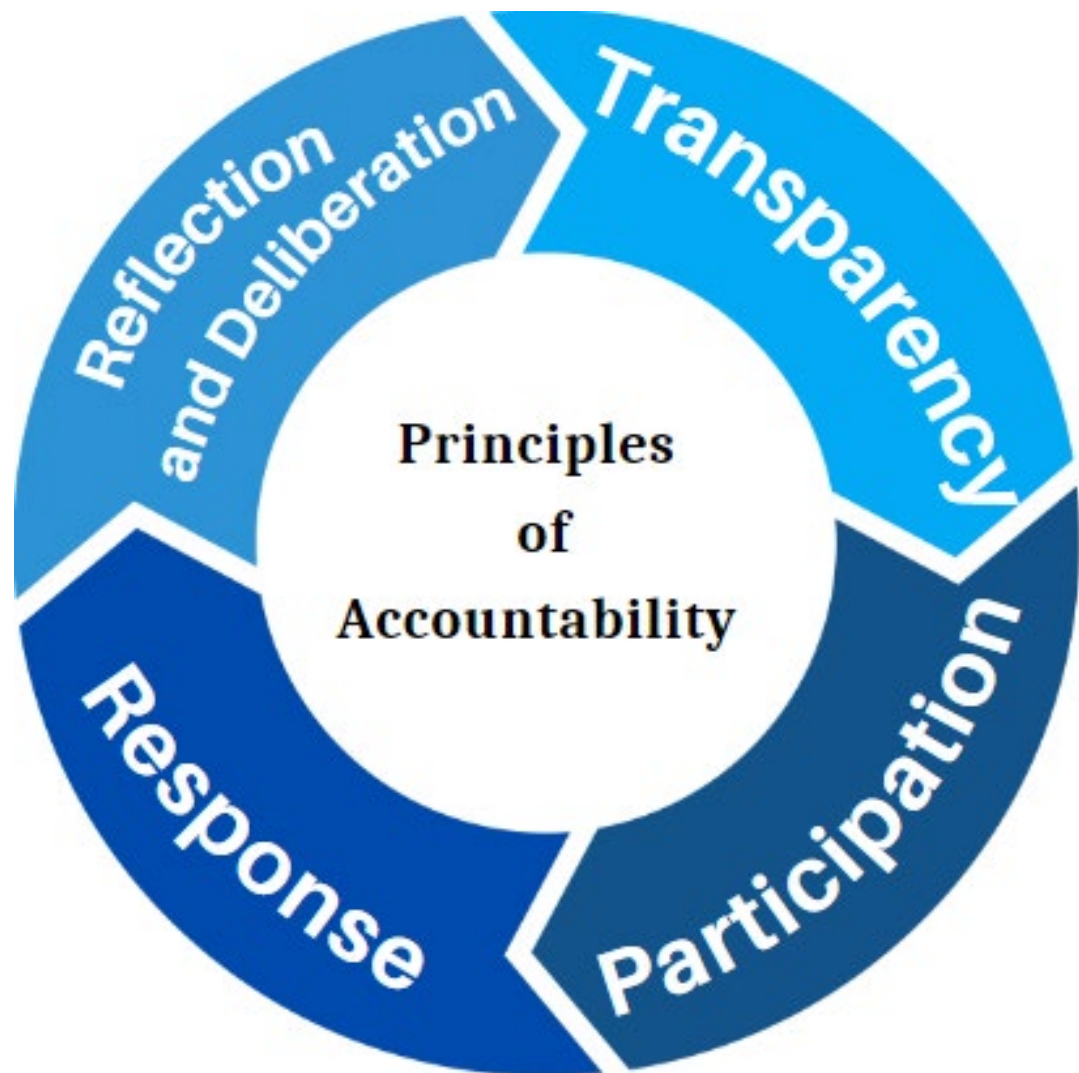
What have been your experiences with DEI initiatives in your organization? How have these initiatives or lack of these initiatives impacted the organization's culture, employee engagement, and overall effectiveness in achieving its mission?

Share any successes, challenges, and insights you have gained from working toward a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment within your organization.

Break



Top Five Barriers to Success



1. Lack of Goals and Metrics
2. Inadequate Training
3. No Buy-In From Leadership
4. Budgetary Restrictions
5. Cultural Resistance

(WellRight, 2023)

Trainings Are a Good First Step



“

The first thing employers must understand is that training alone cannot solve the problem of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Training should be thought of simply as one step or resource in the journey and is not meant to be the entirety of the destination.

”

—J. Israel Greene, DEI Strategist and Facilitator,
Greene Consulting Group (WellRight, 2023)

Cultivating a Culture of Inclusion

“Inclusive leadership is an authentic, empathetic, and culturally intelligent leadership style that facilitates the inclusion of all individuals in a group, organization, or society.” (PowerToFly, n.d.)



- 1. Ensure inclusive policies and equitable procedures.**
- 2. Use affirming person-first language; acknowledge the individual.**
- 3. Be open to redesigning processes to reach target demographics.**
- 4. Leave space for listening.**
- 5. Mentoring/sponsorship/scholarship.**

Intentional Inclusion

01

“**Inclusion** is a state of being valued, respected, and supported. It’s about focusing on the needs of every individual and ensuring the right conditions are in place for each person to achieve their full potential.”

“**Intentional inclusion** at work refers to a deliberate action (or set of actions) that brings underrepresented groups into a company’s culture in a way that truly values their input, perspectives, and roles, without tokenizing them.”

02

What Is a DEI Strategic Plan?

“A **strategic plan** shapes and guides” how an organization is designing and implementing DEI strategy, “who it serves, what it does, and why. Effective strategic plans also articulate how an organization will know it is successful.

“**Strategic planning answers the following key questions:**

- Where are we?
- Where are we going?
- How will we get there?
- Are we getting there?” (AAMC, n.d.)



Image Credit: Shekhiyah Larks, adapted from AAMC, n.d.

Getting Started

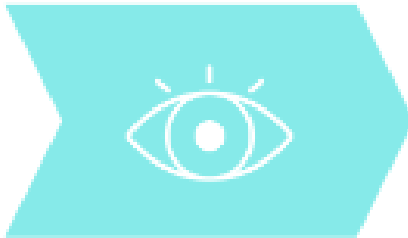


- Understand how your organization could benefit from developing a DEI strategy.
- Identify organizational and individual blind spots.
- Consider how you will design your internal and external DEI strategies to work in tandem.
- It's OK to work in phases; organizational change doesn't happen overnight.

Five Stages of DEI Maturity

**WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BEST DESCRIBES
YOUR COMPANY'S DEI EFFORTS?**

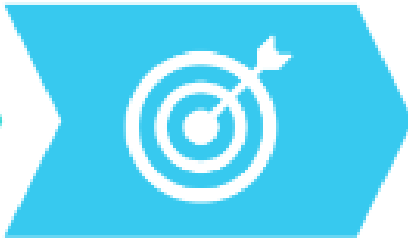
1 - Aware



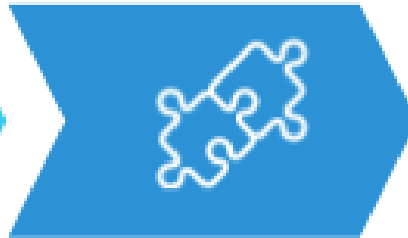
2 - Compliant



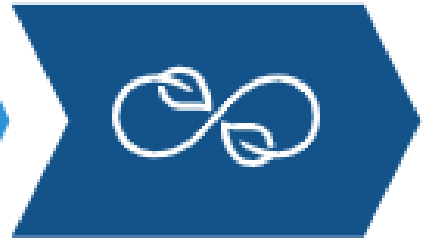
3 - Tactical



4 - Integrated



5 - Sustainable



Harvard Business Review in partnership with Slack's 2022 Future Forum

Image Credit: Shekhiyah Larks, adapted from
Washington, 2022

Environmental Scan

Review the DEI Strategic Planning Environmental Scan during your discussions with colleagues. This tool is crafted to pinpoint areas needing enhancement and suggest ways to create a DEI strategy tailored to your organization's current landscape. It will assist you in forming a DEI team and identifying essential stakeholders and resources to kickstart a DEI plan.



DEI Strategic Planning - Environmental Scan

A DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) strategy is a comprehensive plan created by an organization to foster a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion both internally and externally.

This guide is designed to highlight areas for improvement and propose methods for developing a successful diversity, equity, and inclusivity plan within your organization. It provides a chance to assess the advantages of a DEI strategy for your organization, recognize key stakeholders and supporters, evaluate support levels, and start outlining your organization's DEI objectives.

Section 1 - Why DEI?

Please write your organization's current mission, vision, and values.

| | |
|---------|--|
| Mission | |
| Vision | |
| Values | |

Discussion Questions:

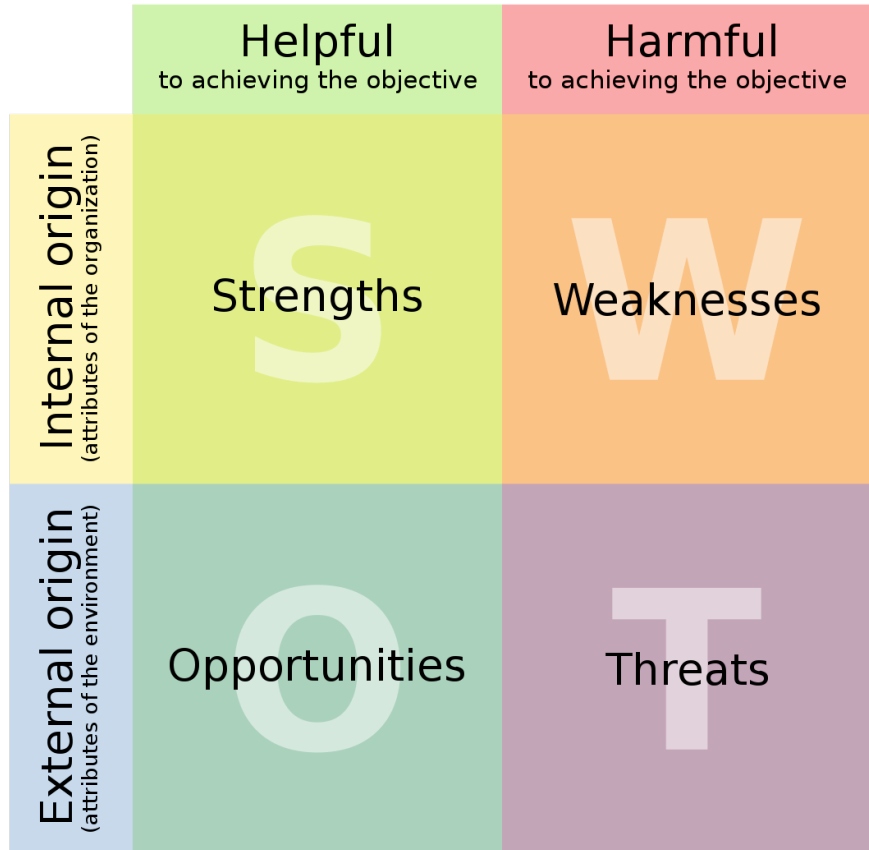
1. How do DEI philosophies and practices expand your organization's mission vision and values?
2. What are the key motivations for integrating a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) strategy in your organization?
3. Is this progression towards DEI an organic development within your organization, or is your organization more motivated by external stakeholders, such as funders, necessitating DEI initiatives? How will your organization sustain its commitment to its DEI strategy if the language employed in the initiatives encounters legal scrutiny?

Notes:



Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)

SWOT ANALYSIS



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Example:

- Strengths:
 - Established network
 - Dedicated staff
 - Positive reputation
 - Access to resources
- Weaknesses:
 - Lack of diversity in leadership
 - Limited budget
 - Resistance to change
- Opportunities:
 - Community partnerships
 - Grants
 - Increased public awareness
 - Tailored programs
- Threats:
 - Competition for funding
 - Changing political landscape
 - Staff turnover
 - Public backlash

Vision, Mission, and Values as Part of Strategic Goals

Example: [Nonprofit Network](#)

- **Mission:** We support nonprofits in building governance, management, and organizational strength.
- **Vision:** To be a valued partner working alongside nonprofits and their leaders to transform communities so that all people can thrive.
- **Values: Integrity, Respect, Diversity, Inclusion, and Continuous Learning**
 - **Integrity:** Nonprofit Network respects and models highest level principles, practices, values, and moral character. We believe our integrity enhances public confidence and trust in all we do.
 - **Respect:** Nonprofit Network strives to have mutual positive impact on those we serve. We will be a partner, ally, and advocate, respecting the dignity of people with diversity of experiences, backgrounds, and cultures.
 - **Diversity:** Nonprofit Network values, seeks, and recognizes the unique contribution of each individual who we partner with-including those who lead us, serve, and employ us. We know that a variety of lived experiences enriches and improves everything we do.
 - **Inclusion:** Nonprofit Network strives to be a model of inclusion. We embrace individuality with dignity and respect. We include the thoughts, ideas, and perspectives of those who engage in learning alongside us. We seek the influence of diverse voices and know that our effectiveness is enhanced by our differences as well as our commonalities.
 - **Continuous Learning:** Nonprofit Network honors the power of change through learning. We learn from the collective diversity of experiences and shape our services and practices accordingly. We envision a culture that encourages and improves our potential and that of nonprofits. We seek constant expansion of skills and mind-sets through continuous lifelong learning.

(Excerpt from Nonprofit Network, n.d.)

Vision, Mission, and Values as Part of Strategic Goals

Example: [Nonprofit Network](#)

- **Strategies: Equity and Advocacy, Sustainability & Financial Stewardship, Talent Development & Capacity, Program Relevancy and Growth**
 - **Equity and Advocacy:** We will lead with and through our values to be a partner in building equity within organizations to better serve both their clients and employees. Through resources, programs, and initiatives, we will raise awareness and consistently advocate for equitable solutions. We seek to be an equitable employer and organization that recognizes and supports the emotional and intellectual labor our work requires.
 - **Goal:** *Nonprofit Network will reduce systemic barriers that impact nonprofit governance and management in our organization and beyond. We will address root causes and contributing factors internally and externally in our core service communities.*
 - **Sustainability and Financial Stewardship:** Nonprofit Network will work to ensure we have the financial resources required to meet our mission and current organizational needs as well as future opportunities related to our vision. We will accomplish this while sustaining a values-driven organization that consistently models and teaches effective practices.
 - **Goal:** *We will have adequate financial resources for long-term growth and unforeseen needs. We will utilize our assets to strategically invest in our programs, people and capacity.*
 - **Talent Development and Capacity:** Since people are the heart of Nonprofit Network and most nonprofit organizations, we will focus on attracting, developing, retaining and growing a diverse workforce within our organization and for the nonprofit organizations we serve and seek to serve. As community and individual needs remain unmet and continue to grow, we will build leadership capacity and agility in service of and within nonprofits.
 - **Goal:** *We will develop a diverse team skilled and committed to building organizational capacity and transforming communities. We will build our organization so employees can be their best selves at work.*
 - **Program Relevancy and Growth:** Nonprofit Network will offer organizations we serve and seek to serve a range of initiatives and programs that help them govern, manage and build organizational strength. We will intentionally provide offerings that are accessible, impactful and equitable.
 - **Goal:** *We will provide a diverse set of programs to meet the needs of organizations in any stage of their life cycle. We intentionally partner with under resourced nonprofits in our key geographic areas.*

Objectives, Tasks, and Metrics

“Measures are quantifiable performance statements, and they must follow certain guidelines. Measures should be **SMART**:

- **Specific.** Metrics are clear and unambiguous. They answer, Who? What? Where? When? Which? Why?
- **Measurable.** There are concrete criteria for measuring progress: How much? How [m]any? How will I know when the measure is accomplished?
- **Attainable.** Measures are not extreme and can be met by the team with a reasonable amount of effort.
- **Relevant.** Measures are directly linked to the goals and objectives.
- **Timely.** Measures are grounded within a time frame, having starting and ending points and a fixed duration.”

(AAMC, 2016)



Implementation and Alignment

Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan: Tools and Templates



Task 7: Establish roles, responsibilities, and decision-making channels

Purpose: This is a top-level framework for understanding all the diversity functions and work.

Directions: Read down each column (not across).

- Column heads identify all functions under general Diversity & Inclusion work.
- Associated programs or initiatives are listed below the appropriate head.

| Key | |
|-----|-------------------------|
| | System-Wide |
| | UMMS (medical school) |
| | UMMHC (clinical system) |
| | Students |

| University of Massachusetts Medical School/UMass Memorial Health Care Diversity & Inclusion Centralized Department Functions | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|-------------------------------|--|--|
| Engagement | Inclusive Environment | Cultural Competence | Community | Core Values | Compliance | Talent Management |
| Programs and Events sponsored by D & I Office, CEOD, and its committees; UMMHC/UMMIG Events | Committee on Equal Opportunity and Diversity (CEOD) Civility Disabilities LGBT Mature Workforce MAAC Professional Women International CWM Cultural Diversity Committee MBL Cultural Diversity Committee UMass Medical Center Diversity Council Employee Resource Groups | Workplace Harassment Prevention | MLK Observance | Chancellor's Awards/CEO Award | Affirmative Action Plan | Workforce Demographic Trends |
| Work/Life Balance: Parents in a Pinch, Dry Cleaning Services, Farmer's Market, Mother's Room, On-Site Day Care | Women's Faculty Committee (WFC) | Cultural Competence and Patient Experience | Hispanic Heritage Month | Chancellor's Awards/CEO Award | EEO/OFCCP | Standardized Search Processes |
| Metrics: Diversity Engagement Survey | Students Advancing Diversity | Accommodating, Managing, and Recruiting Employees with Disabilities | LGBT Convocation Week Welcome Luncheon | Holiday Guidelines | Chapter 151B | Baccalaureate/MD Pathway |
| Workplace Benchmark Surveys | Student National Medical Association (SNMA) | LGBT Health | Supplier Diversity | Civility Statement | Title VII of the Civil Rights Act | Emerging Professionals Summer Internship Program |
| Mother's Room | Diversity Speaker Series | Diversity Toolkit | Women's History Month | | American Disability Act | New Employee Orientation |
| Engagement Events | Diversity Leaders Meetings | Professionalism and Cultural Sensitivity | Veteran's Celebration | | Vets 100 Report | Faculty Diversity Scholars Program (FDSP) |
| | | Stereotyping in Medicine | International Festival | | LCME Standards/ NEASC/JC Standards, CLAS Standards | Workforce Development |
| | | | Building Brighter Futures Program | | Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) | Health Science Preparation Program (HSPP) |
| | | Diversity in Health care Forums | Community Advisory Panel | | Appropriate Treatment of Students | URM Mentoring Circles |
| | | Language Enrichment Programs | Women's Health Conference | | Title IX | Human Capital Report |

Used with permission from the University of Massachusetts Medical School.



Internal Strategy Goal Setting Tips

1. Work to recognize and unpack your biases.
2. Write better job descriptions
3. Start a dialogue about bias with your team
4. Add DEI Initiatives to onboarding
5. Diversify the pipeline
6. Be Transparent

Develop External Strategy

1. **Survey customers/clients** to gather feedback on their experiences with your products or services, then adjust programs to better meet their needs.
2. **Contribute to the community** by offering your products or services to those in need or allocating resources to support the community your organization serves (such as donating essential items to a local underfunded school or organizing park clean-ups). When providing internships, prioritize community engagement.
3. If you lack the desired demographic diversity, **consider expanding your service area**. Adjust your hiring process to gain more candidates that reflect the service area or are representative of the demographics you seek to engage.
4. **Develop adaptable strategies and contingency plans** that prioritize equity, and remain open to change based on new information.
5. **Engage a third party to audit** your organization's progress toward goals, highlighting successes and areas for improvement and uncovering any blind spots.

Next Steps

- Advancing Racial Equity: A Framework for Federal Agencies
 - [Advancing racial Equity: A Framework for Federal Agencies](#)
- Ready for Equity in Workforce Development : Racial Equity Readiness Assessment Tool
 - [Ready for Equity in Workforce Development](#)

RACIALEQUITYALLIANCE.ORG



Q&A



(Image: Microsoft)



Please fill out the attendance form and feedback survey in the chat to meet your requirements for today's event.

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Thank You