

PATH Intl.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Key Terms and Definitions

The following glossary presents key terms used to discuss Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). The intent of this document is to serve as a starting point for PATH Intl. DEI communication efforts, facilitate a shared language and create a common understanding. The language society uses to talk about DEI is evolving. Thus, this glossary is a living document and will be updated periodically to reflect the evolution of communication. The terms below are drawn from glossaries developed by human resource, business, academic and government DEI experts. The glossaries are noted at the end of the document.

Diversity - The presence of different and multiple characteristics that make up individual and collective identities, including race, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, national origin, socioeconomic status, language, and physical ability.

Equity - The process of identifying and removing the barriers that create disparities in the access to resources and means, and the achievement of fair treatment and equal opportunities to thrive.

Inclusion - Creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to participate fully.

Affinity Group - A group that allows members with common characteristics (race, gender, sexuality, etc.) to connect. Members can use such groups to embrace their identities, share resources and pursue professional development opportunities.

Ally/allyship - Rooted in the term “alliance” an ally is an individual in a position of privilege or power who makes consistent efforts to understand, uplift, empower, and support equity deserving groups. An ally is not a member of the group but seeks to stand in solidarity with an equity deserving group to end oppression, discrimination and/or prejudice.

Anti-Racism - The work of actively opposing discrimination based on race by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life.

Belonging - A sense of being secure, recognized, affirmed, and accepted equally such that full participation is possible.

Bias - The conscious (explicit) or unconscious (implicit) opinion, preference, prejudice, or inclination formed without reasonable justification that prevents a balanced judgement. Examples of types of bias:

Affinity bias - tendency to connect with individuals most like oneself.

Confirmation bias - only accepting information that aligns with current beliefs.

Implicit Bias - Attitudes and stereotypes that influence judgment, decision-making, and behavior in ways that are outside of conscious awareness and/or control.

Intersectionality - The intertwining of social identities such as gender, race, ethnicity, social class, religion, sexual orientation, or gender identity, which result in unique experiences, opportunities, barriers, or social inequality.

Microaggression - Commonplace daily verbal, behavioral or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate derogatory slights toward marginalized groups.

Marginalization - The process that occurs when members of a dominant group relegate a particular group (minority groups and cultures) to the edge of society by not allowing them an active voice, identity, or place for the purpose of maintaining power. Marginalized groups have restricted access to resources like education, healthcare, and recreation for achieving their aims.

Privilege – Unearned access, benefits, and opportunities possessed by members of a social group with a high level of power (such as whites and males). A privilege is also the absence of a barrier. Privilege occurs when structures and institutions have been historically designed for the benefit of or to be accessed by a particular group.

Social justice - The view that all people should have equitable access to resources, opportunities, and human rights. Social justice is actions taken towards addressing the root cause of inequities and is based on the belief that all people are equal in value.

Systemic Barrier - Policies, practices or behaviors in society that exclude marginalized and underrepresented groups.

Underrepresented Groups - Groups who traditionally (or historically) have not had equal access to economic opportunities because of discrimination or other societal barriers. This may vary by context and geography but can include race, gender, ethnicity, sexual-orientation, disability, or low-income status.

Suggested References Compiled by Human Resource, Business and Government DEI Experts

Canadian Centre for DEI Glossary of Terms <https://ccdi.ca/media/3507/ccdi-glossary-of-terms-v11-eng.pdf>

Diversity Style Guide <https://www.diversitystyleguide.com>

Harvard University Foundational Concepts and Affirming Language <https://edib.harvard.edu/dib-glossary>

National Association of Counties DEI Key Terms and Definitions
<https://www.naco.org/resources/featured/key-terms-definitions-diversity-equity-inclusion>

Senior Executive DEI Glossary Terms that Matter <https://seniorexecutive.com/dei-glossary-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-terms-that-matter/>