



2022-23 DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION (DEI) GUIDE



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Moving Forward Together	4
Defining DEI	5
Importance of DEI Initiatives	6
Chapters	7
Conferences	10
Future Impact	11
Resources	12
Sources	13

INTRODUCTION

When you have a diverse community with many different kinds of people, **conflict is inevitable**. Conflict and challenge can be good, leading to innovation and problem-solving. But conflict, when unmanaged, can also lead to silencing, exclusion, and various other negative outcomes. With a history dating back to 1937, Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) is known globally as is the largest business Career and Technical Student Organization in the world, helping over **230,000** members prepare for careers in business, each with a history of their own.

When it comes to treating people equitably, you must consider the history, context, and experiences each person has. Ensuring that everyone feels included in an environment with people different from themselves means that people feel safe enough to contribute their best ideas and tell their story. Within FBLA, every person has the right and ability to improve this organization and bring their own ideas to the table.

As the FBLA Creed states:

- Education is the right of every person.
- The future depends on mutual understanding and cooperation among business, industry, labor, religious, family, and educational institutions, as well as people around the world. I agree to do my utmost to bring about understanding and cooperation among all of these groups.
- Every person should actively work toward improving social, political, community, and family life.
- Every person has the right to earn a living at a useful occupation.

DEI work is less about calling out other people's mistakes or pushing blame onto others, and more about examining the intersection between our own privilege and oppression. As DEI expert Jennifer Brown says, "**Everyone has a diversity story.**" This guide contains tools and resources for you to build a welcoming community where each member can thrive.

MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

Dear Washington FBLA,

I hope you have had an amazing summer, filled with fun, laughter, family, and friends! Over these past few months, your State Officer team has been hard at work developing our state Program of Work, the objectives, and key results which will guide our state forward this year. Our focus will be on Member Engagement, Communication, Industry Relations, and Resources. One of the key projects of our Communications Program of Work group has been this Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Guide. It is a comprehensive guide that contains various DEI tools and resources for FBLA members, advisers, chapters, and the State Officer Team to explore.

For the members, advisers, and alumni who read this guide, **we encourage you to ask us questions, share feedback, and discuss new ideas.** Working together, we'll be better positioned to advance our DEI impact at both an organizational and a societal level if we work together.

For those of you who are new members or advisers, we welcome you to our FBLA community. And for our returning members and advisers, we urge you to hold us to DEI standards. **Continue to engage and challenge us on how we lead this movement and deliver the FBLA experience you deserve.**

Most importantly, continue to bring your **authentic selves and diverse stories** to chapter meetings, State Officer workshops, and our conferences. Together, we are **One Association For Service, Education, and Progress.** On behalf of our State Officer Team, thank you all for your support. Please feel free to email me at president@wafbla.org with any questions, I would be more than happy to connect and answer them!

Sincerely,

Cindy Chen (State President 2022-2023)

DEFINING DEI

What is Diversity?

Diversity can be defined as a variety of people, experiences, and perspectives. In a community, this is attributed to the many different demographics of people that are working together. These demographics can fall under various different categories including but not limited to:

- Ethnicity
- Race
- Gender identity
- Physical abilities
- Political perspective
- Religion
- Sexual orientation
- Socioeconomic status
- National origins

What is Equity?

Equity can be defined as the process of just and fair consideration. It also means pushing out any disparities within an organization to ensure there is equal opportunity. Whether this be an equitable distribution of resources, equitable access to the opportunities FBLA has to offer, or the potential for equal outcomes for all members, regardless of which demographic group they represent.

What is Inclusion?

Inclusion can be defined as the sense of belonging that people feel in an organization or community. It means people of all different demographics feel equally treated and welcome. This means ensuring all members are able to express themselves in the ways they see best fit, and their voices are heard in any discussion.

IMPORTANCE OF DEI INITIATIVES

1) Provides Broader Perspectives: Diversity, equity, and inclusion provide a broader perspective for problem-solving and developing creative solutions, keys to chapter and leadership success for FBLA members.

2) Fostering a Learning Environment: DEI creates and fosters an open, learning environment for FBLA members, which ultimately produces quality products and services for your customers.

3) Adds Integrity to the Team: By being transparent with your goals and actions through verbal and written communication, you have a greater sense of integrity.

4) Give Opportunities to All: When everyone is given the opportunity to showcase their skills and ideas, they are able to thrive and grow their potential. Everyone deserves an opportunity to share their ideas and showcase their skills.

5) Nurture Innovation: When you allow different members with different skills, backgrounds, and outlooks on life to thrive in a community together, there's no limit to what they will create.

6) Experience Better Retention: Cultivating an inclusive work environment aids chapter 6) recruitment and membership numbers. Inclusion, diversity, and equity empower members to take pride in their work and this organization.

5 WAYS DEI STRATEGY CAN IMPROVE CHAPTERS

1) Better member communication: Having a chapter with diverse leadership means you can better connect with a diverse group of members. By placing emphasis on equity and inclusion, your members will also feel welcomed and heard by leadership.

2) Enhanced member experience: Creating an inclusive culture within your chapter creates a positive experience for everyone. When members' identities are affirmed and their voices heard, membership retention is boosted and satisfaction is increased because of member well-being.

3) Increased ideation: An inclusive environment gives diverse teams greater space for creativity. When you allow members to be who they are as individuals, they can work more effectively as a chapter, from planning your chapter community service project to fundraising for SBLC.

4) Learning opportunities: Cultivating an environment filled with members from different backgrounds and with different identities means opening the door to many different perspectives. These perspectives give everyone else an opportunity to see things uniquely.

5) Organizational integrity: Implementing DEI initiatives enables chapters to better fulfill the social commitments of FBLA stated in the FBLA-PBL Creed.

5 STEPS TO IMPLEMENT YOUR OWN CHAPTER DEI STRATEGY

1) Check in with members at the start of the membership year.

- a. Survey current members about their feelings about the current environment and goals of your chapter, and survey new members about what they hope to see happen in the coming year.
 - i. Example Questions:
 1. How would you describe the culture at our FBLA meetings?
 2. What do you hope to get out of FBLA this year?
 3. What opportunities do you want to partake in?
 - ii. Do your best to make sure they realize there are no wrong answers and they can speak as honestly as possible, through an anonymous survey or in a discussion environment. This is an important first step to increasing a sense of inclusion.

2) Incorporate DEI into your chapter POW.

- a. Draw up a strategic plan with your chapter Program of Work and incorporate DEI decision-making into making these goals concrete and tangible.
 - i. What are your membership goals?
 - ii. How will you maintain communication with your members?
 - iii. What workshops or projects are you planning to host?
 - iv. What are your financial plans for the year?

3) Create a plan for accountability.

- a. Make your chapter goals and metrics known to all members within your chapter, your Adviser(s), and your Region Vice President, so everyone can hold one another accountable.
 - i. Use metrics like the number of emails, number of meetings, or number of social media posts as a quantifiable measure.

5 STEPS TO IMPLEMENT YOUR OWN CHAPTER DEI STRATEGY

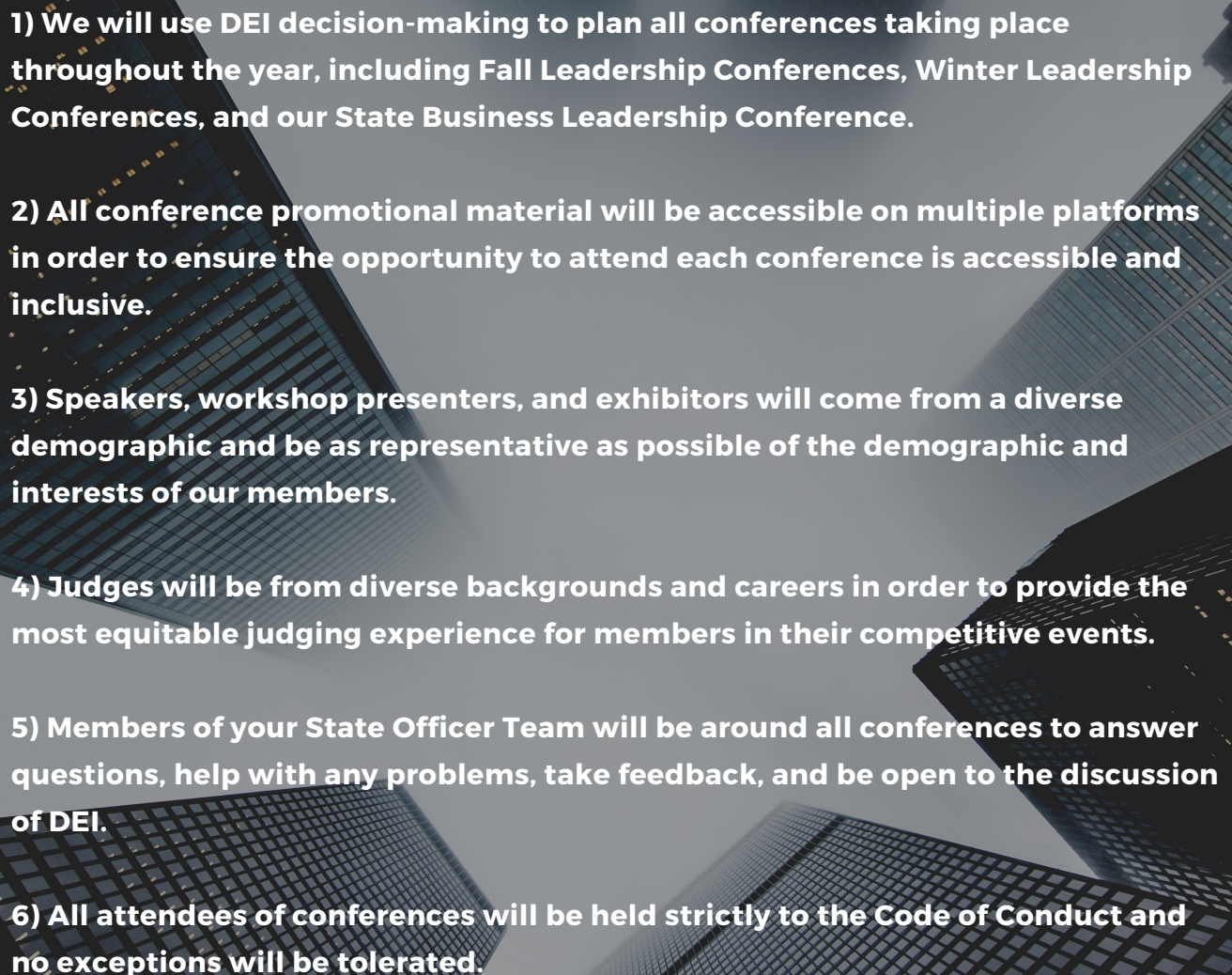
4) Identify disparities.

- a. Throughout the year, at meetings it's important to recognize where disparities exist, and root out inequalities to ensure your chapter environment is inclusive and equitable.
 - i. Did you miss a deadline on your Program of Work?
 - ii. Has a member reached out to an Adviser or Chapter Officer about a problem?
 - iii. Have you noticed a recurring issue that needs to be addressed?

5) Seek out external resources.

- a. Team up with a nonprofit organization or local business to learn more about their DEI efforts.
 - i. **Nonprofit/local business ideas:**
 - 1. Restaurants
 - 2. Local firms
 - 3. City government
 - 4. School board
 - 5. Youth organizations etc.
 - ii. **Partnership ideas:**
 - 1. Bring in a guest speaker to one of your chapter meetings
 - 2. Host a fundraising activity
 - 3. Plan a community service event
- b. Attend the State Officer Team's three DEI workshops taking place throughout the membership year (**more information will be provided through social media and Adviser emails**).
- c. Contact other chapters or the State Officers with questions or to seek guidance.
 - i. Main social media account: @wafbla

HOW WE AIM TO MAINTAIN DEI AT CONFERENCES

- 
- A low-angle, upward-looking photograph of several modern skyscrapers with glass facades, creating a sense of height and urban density. The buildings are dark against a lighter sky, and the perspective draws the eye towards the top of the frame.
- 1) We will use DEI decision-making to plan all conferences taking place throughout the year, including Fall Leadership Conferences, Winter Leadership Conferences, and our State Business Leadership Conference.
 - 2) All conference promotional material will be accessible on multiple platforms in order to ensure the opportunity to attend each conference is accessible and inclusive.
 - 3) Speakers, workshop presenters, and exhibitors will come from a diverse demographic and be as representative as possible of the demographic and interests of our members.
 - 4) Judges will be from diverse backgrounds and careers in order to provide the most equitable judging experience for members in their competitive events.
 - 5) Members of your State Officer Team will be around all conferences to answer questions, help with any problems, take feedback, and be open to the discussion of DEI.
 - 6) All attendees of conferences will be held strictly to the Code of Conduct and no exceptions will be tolerated.

FUTURE IMPACT

Whether you pursue a future career in business or another field, DEI programs are an essential aspect of building engagement, happy employees, and thriving workplaces.

Organizations with strong DEI initiatives are more likely to have employees with increased job satisfaction, higher levels of trust, and are more engaged. But it's not just the moral aspect of DEI that lifts when DEI programs are made a priority, there are benefits that can be seen at every level of the business.

According to the 2013 Center for Talent Innovation Report on Innovation, Diversity and Market Growth:

- Employees: Teams are **158% more likely to understand target customers** when they have at least one member who represents their target's gender, race, age, sexual orientation, or culture.
- Managers: Companies with higher diversity in management earned, on average, **38% more revenue** than companies with lower diversity.
- Leaders: Organizations in the top 25% when it comes to gender diversity among executive leadership teams are **21% more likely to be profitable** and **27% better at creating value.**

Simply put, reinforcing robust DEI programs fosters higher degrees of engagement, productivity, and innovation that contribute to the revenue and environment of any business career you choose to pursue in the future.

DEI is at the core of the business world. It starts through the diverse, equitable, and inclusive community Future Business Leaders of America has to offer, and continues through each member onward into their careers and beyond.

RESOURCES

Transformative leaders put people first, which can influence workplace cultures. Leaders set the tone and vision for an organization or a business.

Resources for Chapter Officers and Advisers:

- **How to Be an Inclusive Leader by Jennifer Brown**
 - We know why diversity is important, but how do we drive real change at work? Diversity and inclusion expert Jennifer Brown provides a step-by-step guide for the personal and emotional journey we must undertake to create an inclusive workplace where everyone can thrive.
- **“Why Diverse Teams are Smarter”** https://hbr.org/2016/11/why-diverse-teams-are-smarter?referral=03759&cm_vc=rr_item_page.bottom, David Rock and Heidi Grant – Harvard Business Review
- **“How to Elevate Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Work in Your Organization”** <https://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/elevate-diversity-equity-inclusion-work-organization/>, The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania

The core of a community is its members. Without dedication to the principles of DEI, all diversity efforts will fail.

Resource for Members:

- **A Great Place to Work For All by Michael C. Bush**
 - Through inspiring stories and compelling research, the authors demonstrate that great places to work for all benefit the individuals working there and contribute to a better global society—even as they outperform in the stock market and grow revenue three times faster than less-inclusive rivals. This is a call to lead so that organizations develop every ounce of human potential.
- **“How Diversity Can Drive Innovation”** <https://hbr.org/2013/12/how-diversity-can-drive-innovation>, Sylvia Ann Hewlett, Melinda Marshall, and Laura Sherbin – Harvard Business Review

SOURCES

Claremont Lincoln University. "12 Reasons Why Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Are Important in Business." Claremont Lincoln University, 17 July 2021, <https://www.claremontlincoln.edu/news/12-reasons-why-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-are-important-in-business/>.

Hewlett, Sylvia Ann, et al. "Innovation, Diversity, and Market Growth." Coqual, Center for Talent Innovation, https://coqual.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/31_innovationdiversityandmarketgrowth_keyfindings-1.pdf.

Ly, Sydney. "The True Value of Bringing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion into Your Workplace." 15Five, 16 May 2022, <https://www.15five.com/blog/diversity-equity-and-inclusion/>.

MasterClass. "DEI Guide: How to Boost Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Work." MasterClass, 17 Nov. 2021, <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/dei-guide#6AZdXDivMil4tKu4fDuHr1>.

Publishers, Berrett-Koehler. "The Ultimate Guide to DEI." Berrett-Koehler Publishers Blog, <https://ideas.bkconnection.com/ultimate-guide-to-dei>.