

50
YEARS
1970-2020

The Association for
**Animal Welfare
Advancement**



Statement and Definitions for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Statement:

To achieve an equitable profession, diversity must be respected and embraced. The road to a just and fair animal welfare field is an ongoing process that requires an interminable, sustained effort and continuous learning. As a collective of people with diverse backgrounds and lived experiences, we will provide thoughtful suggestions and practical ways to further engage in advancing animal welfare organizations' diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives. In doing this work we acknowledge animal welfare has historically and predominantly been created and carried out by white people; we commit to lead intentionally by naming and calling out racism in the structures, systems, and culture of animal welfare. Successful DEI work in animal welfare requires internal organizational development as well as external facing strategies that impact society at-large. Both shifts are important, and one cannot occur genuinely and effectively without the other.

Acronyms:

- **BIPOC:** Black, Indigenous, People of Color
- **DEI:** Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- **LGBTQIA+:** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual/Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, Ally/Asexual, and "plus" which represents other sexual identities including pansexual, asexual and omnisexual

Definitions:

- **Ally:** A person of privilege seeks to operate in solidarity with a marginalized group of people. They recognize the power and privilege conferred by their identity; they actively work to dismantle oppressive systems that negatively impact marginalized groups; and are prepared to confer and share power with members of subjugated groups. (SOURCE: Journal for Social Movement Studies, Meredith D. Clark)
- **Cultural Humility:** The humble and respectful attitude toward individuals of all cultures that pushes one to challenge their own cultural biases, realize they cannot possibly know everything about other cultures, and approach learning about other cultures as a lifelong goal and process.

- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:** An organization that prioritizes diversity, equity and inclusion creates an environment that respects and values individual difference along varying dimensions. In addition, inclusive organizations foster cultures that minimize bias and recognize and address systemic inequities, which, if unaddressed, can create disadvantage for certain individuals. (SOURCED: Independent Sector)
- **Diversity:** Understanding that each individual is unique, with a range of backgrounds in race, ethnicity, socioeconomics, and culture as well as various identities, experience, and interests.
- **Equity:** A fair and just distribution of resources and opportunities including for all people. Equity values equal outputs of performance, achievement, resources, etc. Equity assumes everyone starts from different places in terms of history, lived experiences, opportunities, and resources and works to level the playing field so that diverse groups have similar outcomes. OR the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. Improving equity involves increasing justice and fairness within the procedures and processes of institutions or systems, as well as in their distribution of resources. Tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within our society.
- **Inclusion:** A process of involvement and empowerment where the inherent worth and dignity of all people are recognized, especially marginalized voices.
- **Micro-aggression:** The everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership. (SOURCE: Equityinthecenter.org)

RACE & ETHNICITY

- **Anti-Racism:** Work to actively oppose racist behaviors and impacts by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life. (SOURCE: Race Forward)
- **Code Switching:** the modifying of one's behavior, appearance, etc., to adapt to different sociocultural norm. (SOURCE: Dictionary.com)
- **Colonialism:** Colonialism is a relationship between an indigenous (or forcibly imported) majority and a minority of foreign invaders. The fundamental decisions affecting the lives of the colonized people are made and implemented by the colonial rulers in pursuit of interests that are often defined in a distant metropolis. Rejecting cultural compromises with the colonized population, the colonizers are convinced of their own superiority and their ordained mandate to rule. (SOURCE: Osterhammel, Jürgen (2005). Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview)
- **Oppression:** A systemic and institutional abuse of power by one group at the expense of others and inflicting harm on others.
- **Privilege:** Unearned, non-merited advantages granted to members of a group by powerful social, institutional, and cultural systems. Privilege allocates resources, value, immunity, benefits or access to social power to some people as a result of their membership in a

dominant social group. The absence of discrimination and oppression is one form of privilege.

- **Racial Equity:** The condition where one's race identity has no influence on how one fares in society. Race equity is one part of race justice and must be addressed at the root causes and not just the manifestations. This includes the elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race. (SOURCE: Equityinthecenter.org)
- **Racial inequity:** The condition where two or more racial groups are not standing on approximately equal footing, such as the percentages of each ethnic group in terms of dropout rates, single family home ownership, access to healthcare, etc.
- **Racial Justice:** The intentional and proactive creation and reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes, and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts, and outcomes for all. (Source: Race Forward).
- **Social Justice:** A world which affords all individuals and groups fair treatment and an equitable share of the benefits of society; eradicating unjust systems and unfair privileges.
- **Stereotype:** A fixed and oversimplified image or idea of a particular type of person or thing.
- **White Fragility:** Discomfort and defensiveness on the part of a white person when confronted by information about racial inequality and injustice. "a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable [for white people], triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium." (SOURCE: DiAngelo, Robin (2018). White Fragility)
- **White Supremacy:** The existence of racial power that denotes a system of structural or societal racism which privileges white people over others, regardless of the presence or the absence of racial hatred. White racial advantages occur at both a collective and an individual level, and both people of color and white people can perpetuate white dominant culture, resulting in the overall disenfranchisement of people of color in many aspects of society. (SOURCE: Equityinthecenter.org)
- **White Dominant Culture:** Culture defined by white men and white women with social and positional power, enacted both broadly in society and within the context of social entities such as organizations. (SOURCE: Equityinthecenter.org)
- **White Privilege:** The power and advantages benefiting perceived white people, derived from the historical oppression and exploitation of other non-white groups.

SEXUALITY & GENDER

- **Asexual:** The lack of a sexual attraction or desire for other people. (SOURCE: HRC.org)
- **Bisexual:** A person emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to more than one sex, gender or gender identity though not necessarily simultaneously, in the same way or to the same degree. (SOURCE: HRC.org)

- **Cisgender:** A person whose gender identity and expression matches the biological sex they were assigned when they were born
- **Implicit Bias:** Implicit bias refers to the attitudes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. The implicit associations we harbor in our subconscious cause us to have feelings and attitudes about other people based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, age, and appearance.
- **Intersexuality:** A variety of conditions that lead to atypical development of physical sex characteristics are collectively referred to as intersex conditions. These conditions can involve abnormalities of the external genitals, internal reproductive organs, sex chromosomes or sex-related hormones.
- **Pansexual:** of, relating to, or characterized by sexual or romantic attraction that is not limited to people of a particular gender identity or sexual orientation.
- **Queer:** A term used by some people—particularly youth—to describe themselves and/or their community. Reclaimed from its earlier negative use, the term is valued by some for its defiance, by some because it can be inclusive of the entire community, and by others who find it to be an appropriate term to describe their more fluid identities. Traditionally a negative or pejorative term for people who are gay, “queer” is still sometimes disliked within the LGBTQ community. Due to its varying meanings, this word should only be used when self-identifying or quoting someone who self-identifies as queer (i.e. “My cousin identifies as genderqueer.”) (SOURCE: PFLAG.org)
- **Questioning:** A term used to describe those who are in a process of discovery and exploration about their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or a combination thereof.
- **Transsexual/Transgender:** An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or expression is different from cultural expectations based on the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation. Therefore, transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, etc. (SOURCE HRC.org)