

BCDCC DEIR Policy- Compiled by Durga 3.14.21 for the EBoard

The Benton County Democratic Central Committee is an organization fully committed to diversity, equity, inclusion, and respect in principle and in practice. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to the organization's current and future success in engaging all individuals, households, communities, and policy makers in creating a more perfect democracy.

There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, native or indigenous origin, age, generation, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, socioeconomic status, language, accent, ability status, mental health, educational level or background, geography, nationality, work style, work experience, job role function, thinking style, personality type, physical appearance, political perspective or affiliation and/or any other characteristic that can be identified as recognizing or illustrating diversity.

DIVERSITY

Diversity includes all of the similarities and differences among people, not limited to: gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, native or indigenous origin, age, generation, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, socioeconomic status, appearance, language, accent, ability status, mental health, education, geography, nationality, work style, work experience, job role function, thinking style, personality type, physical appearance, and political perspective or affiliation.

Diversity refers to population groups that have been historically underrepresented in socially, politically, or economically powerful institutions and organizations. These groups include but are not restricted to populations of color, such as African Americans and Blacks, Latinx, Native Americans and Alaska Natives, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. They may also include lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender populations, people with disabilities, women, and other groups.

A team can be diverse and so can an organization. A person is not diverse. Diversity is about a collective or a group and can only exist in relationship to others. A candidate is not diverse—they are a unique, individual unit. They may bring diversity to your team, but they in themselves are not diverse. They are a woman; they are a person of color; they are part of the LGBTQ community.

EQUITY

Equity is an approach based in fairness to ensuring everyone is given equal opportunity; this means that resources may be divided and shared unequally to make sure that each person has a fair chance to succeed. Equity takes into account that people have different access to resources because of a system of oppression and privilege. Equity seeks to balance that disparity.

Improving equity involves increasing justice and fairness within the procedures and processes of institutions or systems, as well as in their distribution of resources, including professional growth opportunities. Tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within our society.

Equity prioritizes efforts to ensure the most underserved and marginalized among us has as much of an opportunity to succeed as the most well-served and advantaged. By taking into account the various advantages and disadvantages that people face, we work to ensure every person has an equal opportunity to succeed.

INCLUSION

Inclusion is an ongoing process, not a static state of being.

Inclusion is the dynamic state of operating in which diversity is leveraged to create a healthy, high-performing organization and community.

Inclusion refers to the degree to which diverse individuals are able to participate fully in the decision-making processes within an organization or group.

An inclusive environment ensures equitable access to resources and opportunities for all. It also enables individuals and groups to feel safe, respected, engaged, motivated, and valued for who they are and for their contributions toward organizational and societal goals.

While an inclusive group is by definition diverse, a diverse group is not always inclusive. Being aware of unconscious or implicit bias can help organizations better address issues of inclusivity.

RESPECT

Respect comes in many forms, and they're all fairly easy to demonstrate once you've made the commitment.

- Treat people how you'd like to be treated: with kindness, courtesy and politeness.
- Encourage other members to share their valuable ideas.
- Actively listen to others. Never interrupt or put in your two cents before they're finished.
- Use other people's ideas often to increase productivity and efficiency.
- Don't insult people or talk behind their back.
- Don't nitpick, micromanage, criticize or demean others.
- Be aware of your tone, your body language, your expression and your demeanor during all interactions. Some people can detect the slightest hints of what seems like disrespect, even if you aren't aware of it yourself.
- Treat people the same no matter how they identify. All people you interact with should be treated equally.
- Provide an equal opportunity for members to participate in committees or improvement teams.

- Always praise more than you criticize. In addition, encourage members to give praise to others where needed.

PRONOUN AND GENDER GUIDANCE

This guide is to help anyone learn how to use people's correct pronouns and to foster a more inclusive space. Everyone should engage in learning, educating, and advocating for the inclusive use of pronouns for all.

What Are Pronouns?

Pronouns are the words you may like others to use for you in place of your proper name. Some examples include "she/her" or "he/him" or gender-neutral pronouns, such as "ze/hir," [pronounced: zee/heer] or "they/them". Some people use specific pronouns, any pronouns, or none at all.

Here is an example of using "they/them" in a sentence: Maddie is an expert on justice reform, and they'll be leading our webinar today. Singular "they" pronouns have been used in the English language for centuries. If you are still struggling with using this, remember, it takes practice!

Why Focus on Pronouns?

You may have noticed that people are sharing their pronouns in introductions, on name tags, and at the beginning of meetings. This gives everyone in the room the opportunity to self-identify instead of assuming someone's identity or which pronouns they use. Including pronouns is a first step toward respecting people's identity and creating a more welcoming space for people of all genders.

How Is This More Inclusive?

Pronouns can sometimes be a signifier for someone's gender identity but not always. We do not want to assume people's gender identity based on their expression (shown through clothing, hairstyle, mannerisms, etc.) By providing an opportunity for people to share their pronouns, you're showing that you're not assuming their gender identity is based on their appearance.

ACCOMMODATION

Officers, membership, and volunteers will receive the accommodations they need for full inclusion in BCDCC meetings and activities. BCDCC will be responsive to individual's requests for accommodations in our meetings, and events.

Intersectionality



- The interaction between different aspects of our identities
- How people experience advantages or disadvantages in society depends on their identities
- Our identities—race, class, sexuality, age—form our experiences, and we each can experience privilege and oppression simultaneously

Proposed BCDCC Glossary of commonly used words with detailed definitions and their sources.

1. **Diversity**- Includes all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the characteristics that make one individual or group different from one another. It is all-inclusive and recognizes everyone and every group as part of this should be valued. *Source: Racial Equity Tools; UC Berkeley Center for Equity, Inclusion and Diversity, Glossary of Terms.*

2. **Equity**- To treat everyone fairly; an emphasis on this seeks to render justice by deeply considering structural factors that benefit some social groups/communities and harms other social groups/communities. Sometimes justice demands an unequal response to achieve this. *Source: Everyday-Democracy; YWCA Social Justice Glossary.*

3. Inclusion- Authentically brings traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities and decision/policy making. *Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Crossroads Charlotte Individual Initiative Scorecard for Organizations Scorecard Overview, revised 3/12/07.*

4. Ally- Describes someone who supports a group other than one's own. [This someone] acknowledge[s] disadvantage and oppression of other groups than their own; take[s] risks and support[s] action on their behalf; commit[s] to reducing their own complicity or collusion in oppression of those groups and invest[s] in strengthening their own knowledge and awareness of oppression. *Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Center for Assessment and Policy Development.*

5. Bigotry- Intolerant prejudice which glorifies one's own group and denigrates members of other groups. *Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation; National Conference for Community and Justice St. Louis Region — unpublished handout used in the Dismantling Racism Institute program.*

6. Collusion- When people act to perpetuate oppression or prevent others from working to eliminate oppression. Example: Able-bodied people who object to strategies for making buildings accessible because of the expense. *Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell and Pat Griffin, editors. Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook. New York: Routledge.*

7. Culture- A social system of meaning and custom that is developed by a group of people to assure its adaptation and survival. These groups are distinguished by a set of unspoken rules that shape values, beliefs, habits, patterns of thinking, behaviors and styles of communication. *Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Institute for Democratic Renewal and Project Change Anti-Racism Initiative. A Community Builder's Tool Kit.*

8. Ethnicity- A social construct that divides people into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as shared sense of group membership, values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history and ancestral graphical base. *Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell and Pat Griffin, editors. Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook. New York: Routledge.*

9. Implicit Bias- A negative association that people unknowingly hold. Expressed automatically, without conscious awareness. Many studies have indicated that [it] affects individuals' attitudes and actions, thus creating real-world implications, even though individuals may not even be aware that [it] exist[s] within themselves. Notably, [it has] been shown to trump individuals' stated commitments to equality and fairness, thereby producing behavior that diverges from the explicit attitudes that many people profess. *Source: Racial Equity Tools; State of the Science Implicit Bias Review 2013, Cheryl Staats, Kirwan Institute, The Ohio State University.*

10. "Ism"- A way of describing any attitude, action or institutional structure that subordinates (oppresses) a person or group because of their target group, [e.g. color, gender, economic status, age, religion, sexual orientation, language, citizenship, etc.] *Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Institute for Democratic Renewal and Project Change Anti-Racism Initiative. A Community Builder's Tool Kit. Claremont, Calif.: Claremont Graduate University.*

11. Oppression- The systemic and pervasive nature of social inequality woven throughout social institutions as well as embedded within individual consciousness. Fuses institutional and systemic discrimination, personal bias, bigotry and social prejudice in a complex web of relationships and structures that saturate most aspects of life in our society.

- Denotes structural and material constraints that significantly shape a person's life changes and sense of possibility.
- Signifies a hierarchical relationship in which dominant or privileged groups benefit, often in unconscious ways, from the disempowerment of subordinated or targeted groups.
- Resides not only in external social institutions and norms but also within the human psyche as well.

- Eradicating this ultimately requires struggle against all its forms, and that building coalitions among diverse people offers the most promising strategies for challenging this systematically.

Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell and Pat Griffin, editors. Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook. New York: Routledge.

12. Power- Unequally distributed globally and in U.S. society; some individuals or groups wield a greater amount than others, thereby allowing them greater access and control over resources. Wealth, whiteness, citizenship, patriarchy, heterosexism, and education are a few key social mechanisms through which this operates. *Source: Racial Equity Tools; Intergroup Resources, 2012.*

13. Prejudice- A pre-judgment or unjustifiable, and usually negative, attitude of one type of individual or groups toward another group and its members. Such negative attitudes are typically based on unsupported generalizations (or stereotypes) that deny the right of individual members of certain groups to be recognized and treated as individuals with individual characteristics. *Source: Racial Equity Tools; Institute for Democratic Renewal and Project Change Anti-Racism Initiative. A Community Builder's Tool Kit.*

14. Privilege- Unearned social power accorded by the formal and informal institutions of society to ALL members of a dominant group. Is usually invisible to those who have it because we're taught not to see it, but nevertheless it puts them at an advantage over those who do not have it. *Source: Racial Equity Tools; Colors of Resistance Archive Accessed June 28 2013.*

15. Race- A social construct that artificially divides people into distinct groups based on characteristics such as physical appearance (particularly color), ancestral heritage, cultural affiliation, cultural history, ethnic classification, and the social, economic, and political needs of a society as a given period of time. *Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell and Pat Griffin, editors. Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook. New York: Routledge.*

16. Racism- A system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate [a certain type of] inequity. It identifies dimensions of our history and culture that have allowed privileges associated with "whiteness" and disadvantages associated with "color" to endure and adapt over time. It is not something a few people or institutions choose to practice. Instead it has been a feature of the social, economic and political systems in which we all exist. *Source: Everyday-Democracy; Aspen Institute.*

17. Social Justice- Includes a vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure. Involves social actors who have a sense of their own agency as well as a sense of social responsibility toward and with others and the society as a whole. *Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell and Pat Griffin, editors. Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook. New York: Routledge.*

18. Social Power- Access to resources that enhance one's chances of getting what one needs or influencing others in order to lead a safe, productive, fulfilling life. *Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell and Pat Griffin, editors. Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook. New York: Routledge.*

19. White- A historically based, institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and Supremacy oppression of continents, nations and peoples of color by white peoples and nations of the European continent; for the purpose of maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power and privilege. *Source: Racial Equity Tools; Transforming White Privilege: A 21st Century Leadership Capacity, CAPD, MP Associates, World Trust Educational Services, 2012.*

All of the following terms and definitions sourced from GLAAD

20. Sexual Orientation- The scientifically accurate term for an individual's enduring physical, romantic and/ or emotional attraction to members of the same and/or opposite sex, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, and heterosexual (straight) orientations. Avoid the offensive term "sexual preference," which is used to suggest that being gay, lesbian, or bisexual is voluntary and therefore "curable." People need not have had specific sexual experiences to know their own sexual orientation; in fact, they need not have had any sexual experience at all.

21. Gay- The adjective used to describe people whose enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attractions are to people of the same sex (e.g., *gay man*, *gay people*). Sometimes *lesbian* (n. or adj.) is the preferred term for women. Avoid identifying gay people as "homosexuals" an outdated term considered derogatory and offensive to many lesbian and gay people.

22. Lesbian- A woman whose enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction is to other women. Some lesbians may prefer to identify as gay (adj.) or as gay women. Avoid identifying lesbians as "homosexuals," a derogatory term (*see Offensive Terms to Avoid*).

23. Bisexual, Bi- A person who has the capacity to form enduring physical, romantic, and/ or emotional attractions to those of the same gender or to those of another gender. People may experience this attraction in differing ways and degrees over their lifetime. Bisexual people need not have had specific sexual experiences to be bisexual; in fact, they need not have had any sexual experience at all to identify as bisexual. Do not use a hyphen in the word "bisexual," and only capitalize bisexual when used at the beginning of a sentence.

24. Queer- An adjective used by some people, particularly younger people, whose sexual orientation is not exclusively heterosexual (e.g. queer person, queer woman). Typically, for those who identify as queer, the terms *lesbian*, *gay*, and *bisexual* are perceived to be too limiting and/or fraught with cultural connotations they feel don't apply to them. Some people may use queer, or more commonly genderqueer, to describe their gender identity and/or gender expression (see non-binary and/or genderqueer below). Once considered a pejorative term, queer has been reclaimed by some LGBT people to describe themselves; however, it is not a universally accepted term even within the LGBT community. When Q is seen at the end of LGBT, it typically means queer and, less often, questioning.

25. LGBTQ- Acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer. Sometimes, when the Q is seen at the end of LGBT, it can also mean questioning. LGBT and/or GLBT are also often used. The term "gay community" should be avoided, as it does not accurately reflect the diversity of the community. Rather, LGBTQ community is preferred.

26. Intersex- An umbrella term describing people born with reproductive or sexual anatomy and/or a chromosome pattern that can't be classified as typically male or female. Those variations are also sometimes referred to as Differences of Sex Development (DSD.) Avoid the outdated and derogatory term "hermaphrodite." While some people can have an intersex condition and also identify as transgender, the two are separate and should not be conflated. (For more information, visit interactyouth.org.)

27. Asexual- An adjective used to describe people who do not experience sexual attraction (e.g., asexual person). A person can also be aromantic, meaning they do not experience romantic attraction. (For more information, visit asexuality.org.)

28. Heterosexual- An adjective used to describe people whose enduring physical, romantic, and/ or emotional attraction is to people of the opposite sex. Also *straight*. "Queer" was once considered a pejorative term, but has been reclaimed by some LGBT people to describe themselves. However, it is not a universally accepted term even within the LGBT community.

29. Homosexual- Outdated clinical term considered derogatory and offensive. The Associated Press, *New York Times* and *Washington Post* restrict usage of the term.

30. **Homophobia**- Fear of people attracted to the same sex. *Intolerance, bias, or prejudice* is usually a more accurate description of antipathy toward LGBTQ people.

31. **Biphobia**- Fear of bisexuals, often based on stereotypes, including inaccurate associations with infidelity, promiscuity, and transmission of sexually transmitted infections. *Intolerance, bias, or prejudice* is usually a more accurate description of antipathy toward bisexual people.

32. **Coming Out**- A lifelong process of self-acceptance. People forge a LGBTQ identity first to themselves and then they may reveal it to others. Publicly sharing one's identity may or may not be part of coming out.

33. **Out**- A person who self-identifies as LGBTQ in their personal, public, and/or professional lives. For example: *Ricky Martin is an out pop star from Puerto Rico.* Preferred to *openly gay*.

34. **Openly Gay**- Describes people who self-identify as gay in their personal, public, and/or professional lives. Also *openly lesbian, openly bisexual, openly transgender, openly queer*. While accurate and commonly used, the phrase still implies a confessional aspect to publicly acknowledging one's sexual orientation or gender identity. See *out* above.

35. **Closeted**- Describes a person who is not open about their sexual orientation. Better to simply refer to someone as "not out" about being LGBTQ. Some individuals may be out to some people in their life, but not out to others due to fear of rejection, harassment, violence, losing one's job, or other concerns.

36. **Outing**- The act of publicly declaring (sometimes based on rumor and/or speculation) or revealing another person's sexual orientation or gender identity without that person's consent. Considered inappropriate by a large portion of the LGBTQ community.

37. **Lifestyle**- Inaccurate term used by anti-LGBTQ extremists to denigrate LGBTQ people. As there is no one straight lifestyle, there is no one LGBTQ lifestyle.

38. **Marriage**- In June 2015, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *Obergefell v. Hodges* that every American has the constitutional right to marry the person they love. When reporting on marriage for same-sex couples, preferred terminology includes marriage equality and marriage for same-sex couples. Note, the terms "gay marriage" and "same-sex marriage" should be avoided, as they can suggest marriage for same-sex couples is somehow different than other marriages.

39. **Civil Union**- Historically used in the U.S. to describe state-based relationship recognition for same-sex couples that offered some or all of the state (though none of the federal) rights, protections, and responsibilities of marriage. While many Western countries (including the United States) have now legalized marriage for same-sex couples, others only legally recognize same-sex relationships through civil unions.

40. **Domestic Partnership**- Civil/legal recognition of a committed relationship between two people that sometimes extends limited protections to them.

41. **Sodomy Laws**- Historically used to selectively persecute gay people, the state laws often referred to as "sodomy laws" were ruled unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003). "Sodomy" should never be used to describe same-sex relationships or sexual orientation. "Out" is preferred to "openly gay." Though both terms are accurate and commonly used, "openly gay" still implies a confessional aspect to publicly acknowledging one's sexual orientation or gender identity.

42. **Sex**- The classification of a person as male or female. At birth, infants are assigned a sex, usually based on the appearance of their external anatomy. (This is what is written on the birth certificate.) A person's sex,

however, is actually a combination of bodily characteristics including: chromosomes, hormones, internal and external reproductive organs, and secondary sex characteristics.

43. Gender Identity- A person's internal, deeply held sense of their gender. For transgender people, their own internal gender identity does not match the sex they were assigned at birth. Most people have a gender identity of man or woman (or boy or girl). For some people, their gender identity does not fit neatly into one of those two choices (see non-binary and/or genderqueer below.) Unlike gender expression (see below) gender identity is not visible to others.

44. Gender Expression- External manifestations of gender, expressed through a person's name, pronouns, clothing, haircut, behavior, voice, and/or body characteristics. Society identifies these cues as masculine and feminine, although what is considered masculine or feminine changes over time and varies by culture. Typically, transgender people seek to align their gender expression with their gender identity, rather than the sex they were assigned at birth.

45. Sexual Orientation- Describes a person's enduring physical, romantic, and/or emotional attraction to another person. Gender identity and sexual orientation are not the same. Transgender people may be straight, lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer. For example, a person who transitions from male to female and is attracted solely to men would typically identify as a straight woman.

46. Transgender (adj.)- An umbrella term for people whose gender identity and/or gender expression differs from what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth. People under the transgender umbrella may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms - including *transgender*. Some of those terms are defined below. Use the descriptive term preferred by the person. Many transgender people are prescribed hormones by their doctors to bring their bodies into alignment with their gender identity. Some undergo surgery as well. But not all transgender people can or will take those steps, and a transgender identity is not dependent upon physical appearance or medical procedures.

47. Transsexual (adj.)- An older term that originated in the medical and psychological communities. Still preferred by some people who have permanently changed - or seek to change - their bodies through medical interventions, including but not limited to hormones and/or surgeries. Unlike *transgender*, *transsexual* is not an umbrella term. Many transgender people do not identify as transsexual and prefer the word *transgender*. It is best to ask which term a person prefers. If preferred, use as an adjective: transsexual woman or transsexual man.

48. Trans- Used as shorthand to mean *transgender* or *transsexual* - or sometimes to be inclusive of a wide variety of identities under the transgender umbrella. Because its meaning is not precise or widely understood, be careful when using it with audiences who may not understand what it means. Avoid unless used in a direct quote or in cases where you can clearly explain the term's meaning in the context of your story.

49. Transition- Altering one's birth sex is not a one-step procedure; it is a complex process that occurs over a long period of time. Transition can include some or all of the following personal, medical, and legal steps: telling one's family, friends, and co-workers; using a different name and new pronouns; dressing differently; changing one's name and/or sex on legal documents; hormone therapy; and possibly (though not always) one or more types of surgery. The exact steps involved in transition vary from person to person. Avoid the phrase "sex change."

50. Sex Reassignment Surgery (SRS)- Also called Gender Confirmation Surgery (GCS). Refers to doctor-supervised surgical interventions, and is only one small part of transition (see transition above). Avoid the phrase "sex change operation." Do not refer to someone as being "pre-op" or "post-op." Not all transgender people choose to, or can afford to, undergo medical surgeries. Journalists should avoid overemphasizing the role of surgeries in the transition process.

This list while comprehensive is not complete and will need to be built upon and updated in the future.