



# D&I TOOLKIT

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**PRSA**

Updated May 2021



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# INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF D&I TOOLKIT

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Diversity can be defined as the sum of the ways that people are both alike and different. The dimensions of diversity include, but are not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, language, culture, religion, mental and physical ability, class or immigration status.

The way that people react to diversity is driven by values, attitudes, beliefs and the like. Full acceptance of diversity is a major principle of social justice.

The concept of diversity presents both extraordinary promise and daunting challenges for PRSA. Our Fellows, Chapter, Professional Interest Section and District leaders, and D&I liaisons are critically important voices in helping to support the organization's efforts.

The purpose of this Toolkit is to assist you in developing relationships with diverse members of PRSA and in effectively executing your roles and responsibilities.

Information on the following pages will guide you through the general approach and components of these important volunteer roles to help build collaborative and effective programming. The Toolkit is updated annually to ensure its contents are current and relevant.

Please contact us with your thoughts and needs at [diversity@prsa.org](mailto:diversity@prsa.org). Feel free to use the social media tags [#prdiversity](https://twitter.com/prdiversity) and [@prdiversity](https://twitter.com/prdiversity).

## **PAYING HOMAGE TO OUR PRIOR AUTHORS**

This is the seventh edition of the Toolkit. The D&I Committee would be remiss if we did not acknowledge the authors and reviewers of the previous editions. Their work and the efforts of all those who contributed to the creation of this document have been invaluable and provided a strong foundation for the 2021 edition. Thank you for your service.

*The Diversity & Inclusion Committee*

## **2021 D&I NATIONAL COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS**

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# ABOUT THE PRSA D&I COMMITTEE

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PRSA's D&I Committee provides guidance, leadership and programming that undergirds the organization's D&I initiatives.

## Terms and Appointments

All Committee members and officers serve one-year terms. The Chair and Vice Chair positions are appointed by the Chair-elect of the PRSA Board of Directors. Members of the Committee may serve for additional one-year terms, upon reappointment. Appointments are made by the chair of the D&I Committee in consultation with myriad parties (i.e., staff, PRSA Chair, D&I Executive Committee).

## Officers

- *Chair*. The duties of the Chair or Co-chairs include, but are not limited to, running the monthly D&I Committee meetings; working closely with the appointed PRSA staff liaison and PRSA appointed Board liaison; and leading activities of the Committee as they align with fulfillment of the D&I Strategic Plan goals and objectives and/or as directed by the Board or other Committee governing documents. The Chair is also responsible for appointing subcommittee chairs, providing specific reports requested by the Board, running Executive Committee meetings and performing other duties as needed. The Chair also may represent the Committee on panels, in presentations, interviews and any other PRSA or external events.
- *Vice Chair*. The duties of the Vice Chair or concurrent Vice Chairs include, but are not limited to, service on the D&I Executive Committee and performing Chair responsibilities when the Chair is not available, and other responsibilities as needed.
- *Immediate Past Chair*. The immediate Past Chair's duties include, but are not limited to, service on the D&I Executive Committee and performing Chair responsibilities when the Chair or Vice Chair are not available, and other responsibilities as needed. In addition to this role, the Immediate Past Chair serves as the liaison to the local Chapter diversity liaison group. In this capacity, the Immediate Past Chair works with the PRSA Membership Department to maintain an up-to-date database of the Chapter diversity liaison, holds orientation calls or webinars for new Chapter liaisons and encourages Chapter liaisons to plan local programming/events that advance the priorities of the D&I Committee and the movement to be a more diverse association.

## Member Roles, Responsibilities

Members of the D&I Committee are expected to contribute actively to the array of activities designed to advance the diversity and inclusion conversation within and outside PRSA. Each member is expected to fully commit to the vision and work of the D&I Committee in carrying out PRSA's D&I Strategic Plan goals and objectives.

## Subcommittees

The subcommittees of the D&I Committee are described below.

- *Executive Committee*: Determines the D&I Committee's priorities, meets a week prior to the Committee call to plan the agenda, follows up with subcommittees on work progress and updates, discusses and resolves any major issue regarding the Committee and provides final reports and updates to the PRSA Board, as needed.

- *Communications Committee*: Develops an annual communications calendar, assists in drafting or seeking volunteers to draft articles in support of the D&I Committee's annual priorities and holds monthly meetings with the assigned subcommittee. This Committee also ensures that the PRSA website is updated with new information on Committee membership as per PRSA guidelines.
- *D&I Speakers Bureau*: Performs a review and assessment of potential speakers for consideration by PRSA for conferences, panels, and presentations held each year. The focus for this group is to propose D&I experts for professional development sessions at the PRSA International Conference (ICON).
- *D&I Chapter Toolkit Committee*: Annually assesses and ensures that the elements of the Toolkit are appropriate, accurate and updated.
- *Scholarship and Awards Committee*: Oversees the promulgation of the D&I Chapter Awards program, the D. Parke Gibson Pioneer Awards program and related activities.
- *Strategic Planning Committee*: Oversees management and execution of the D&I Strategic Plan and conducts annual member surveys in the areas of diversity and inclusion, along with other related tasks.
- *Ad hoc Committee*: Historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and Hispanic serving institutions (HSIs)\*

\*Ad hoc committees are created from time to time to address a specific need.

### **Ex Officio Members**

Ex officio members include the Vice Chair for diversity of the PRSSA Board of Directors and the executive director of the PRSA Foundation. Additionally, a representative from the D&I Chapter of the Year receives the honor to appoint a representative to join the D&I Committee for a year.

### **PRSA Staff Liaison**

The PRSA staff liaison supports the D&I Committee. The staff liaison works to assist the D&I Committee in connecting with the PRSA staff, particularly the senior leadership team, to help coordinate and manage programs and initiatives of D&I interest as well as to counsel the D&I Committee. The staff liaison assists in compiling an annual roster for the D&I Committee and with scheduling some of the meetings and calls needed regularly. The staff liaison also functions as a member of the D&I Committee.

# DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

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In lieu of a definition of diversity and inclusion, the D&I Committee is focused on providing a contextual overview of these areas. Further, the D&I Committee believes that diversity in the context of PRSA may serve to “exclude” areas, communities, interests, etc. Recognizing that members and Chapter D&I liaisons will require information to frame efforts, the diversity and inclusion statement below was developed and approved for use:

*Diversity and inclusion are integral to the evolution and growth of PRSA and the public relations industry.*

*The most obvious contexts of diversity include race, ethnicity, religion, age, ability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, country of origin, culture and diversity of thought. However, in a rapidly changing society, diversity continues to evolve and can include class, socioeconomic status, life experiences, learning and working styles, and personality types and intellectual traditions and perspectives, in addition to cultural, political, religious and other beliefs.*

*These defining attributes impact how we approach our work, connect with others and move through the world.*

*Inclusion, according to the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), is defined as “the achievement of a work environment in which all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully, have equal access to opportunities and resources, and can contribute fully to the organization’s success.”*

*Inclusion is not just about having that “seat at the table” but is about ensuring everyone’s voice is heard and fully considered.*

*Diversity and inclusion are proactive behaviors.*

*Respecting, embracing, celebrating and validating those behaviors are integral to PRSA’s DNA. Diversity and inclusion are vital to the success of our profession, our members and the communities in which we live and work. It is essential and is our responsibility as members of PRSA to carry this forward.*

# D&I LIAISON ROLE DESCRIPTION

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The D&I liaison plays an essential role within every facet of PRSA. The Chapter D&I liaison, along with Chapter leadership, is responsible for creating and implementing plans to promote diversity and inclusion, explaining the importance of diversity as a key principle within each Chapter and supporting and engaging new and current volunteers of diverse backgrounds.

Likewise, Districts and Sections need to incorporate D&I leadership into their operating structure in ways that are most effective for membership. It is strongly recommended that a D&I liaison be appointed to the executive committee or a subcommittee created to promote a culture of diversity and inclusion in all Section and District activities.

A significant part of the D&I liaison role is promoting and developing programs to enhance understanding of diversity and inclusion issues. Additionally, working with historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) as well as Hispanic serving institutions (HSIs) within the regions where the Chapters exist is an important part of the work. This includes engagement with the associated Faculty Advisers of the HBCUs and HSIs in their areas.

Finally, a key expectation is that the D&I liaison works with the Chapter, Section or District leadership and membership Chair in the establishment of a plan and annualized D&I Calendar of Events.

Below are additional considerations for the D&I liaison role:

- Develop the D&I short-term and long-term goals, and organize a group of volunteers to help with D&I initiatives.
- Design programs that reinforce diversity and inclusion within the Chapter, Section or District.
- Work with Chapter, Section or District leadership to ensure that communications (website, social media pages, etc.) are consistent with the practices and culture of PRSA.
- Maintain diversity metrics.
- Act as a liaison to underrepresented groups within the Chapter, Section or District and work to ensure that all voices are heard.
- Participate in quarterly conference calls to discuss and review initiatives led by the D&I Committee.
- Utilize the annually updated Toolkit and Do's and Don'ts lists as resource for efforts.
- Work to align and implement D&I activities into annual programming.
- Plan Chapter-, Section- or District-based activities during PRSA's Diversity & Inclusion Month.
- Support the D&I Strategic Plan goals and objectives of the D&I Committee by sharing announcements, posts and events with the members.
- Evaluate if the Chapter, Section, or District is in a position to apply for PRSA D&I awards.
- Participate in quarterly calls with the D&I Committee leadership and other D&I liaisons to learn best practices.
- Provide a one-page update of the Chapter's, Section's, or District's D&I activities for the year to the local Chapter and to the D&I Chair. *(The D&I Committee will provide a template for this report.)*

# ABOUT THE PRSA FOUNDATION

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## *Rising Talent. Raising Diversity.*

The PRSA Foundation is an independent, 501(c)(3) charitable organization committed to promoting diversity among public relations professionals and their organizations to enable them to best serve the public good and address the needs of a diverse world.

The PRSA Foundation supports programs that attract, assist and prepare young adults to enter the public relations profession, and works with employers and industry organizations to create workplace-based inclusion efforts to welcome, support and retain a diverse workforce.

Headquartered in New York City, with a 25-person Board led by an executive director, the PRSA Foundation was chartered under section 403 of the New York State Corporation Law as a not-for-profit organization.

As one of its primary functions, the PRSA Foundation invests in the next generation of public relations practitioners by awarding scholarships and grants to students active in PRSSA campus Chapters as well as other deserving undergraduate and graduate students in the U.S. and around the world. Visit [www.prsafoundation.org/scholarships-awards](http://www.prsafoundation.org/scholarships-awards) for an overview of scholarships available.

The PRSA Foundation's signature event is the Paladin Awards, with proceeds from the evening going to awards and scholarships as well as industry education, research and awareness initiatives to help promote diversity and inclusion within public relations. The event honors industry leaders who have made an indelible impact on the community, particularly in the struggle to open the doors of diversity and inclusion for the next generation of public relations leaders.

In 2018, the PRSA Foundation, in partnership with the Museum of Public Relations, published the book "Diverse Voices" that features interviews with more than 40 multicultural corporate, academic and PR agency leaders. The book is accompanied by a lesson plan and is presently being taught within university courses at numerous universities including DePaul University, University of Florida, Boston University and Baruch College.

Most recently, the PRSA Foundation joined forces with distinguished organizations such as PRSA, the Page Society, the PR Council, the Institute for Public Relations, and The Plank Center to launch the Diversity Action Alliance, a coalition of public relations and communications leaders, to accelerate progress in the achievement of meaningful and tangible results in diversity, equity and inclusion across the profession.

Below are websites that provide additional information:

- PRSA Foundation: [prsafoundation.org](http://prsafoundation.org)
- Diversity Action Alliance: [diversityactionalliance.org](http://diversityactionalliance.org)
- "Diverse Voices" book: [diverseleadership.net](http://diverseleadership.net)



# DO'S & DON'TS FOR D&I LIAISONS

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The job of the PRSA D&I liaison is one that is vitally important to our PRSA Chapters, Sections and Districts. There may be a desire to quickly take on the role with gusto, but below are varied “do’s” and “don’ts” to ensure you remain effective while doing your job:

## Do:

- Develop a D&I strategic plan for your Chapter, Section or District that aligns with the PRSA D&I Strategic Plan.
- Brainstorm and seek ideas.
- Develop and send a yearlong calendar to your Chapter, Section or District.
- Proactively lay out how others can contribute to the success of your plan.
- Provide guidance on how to leverage personal and PRSA social media platforms to advance your D&I efforts and initiatives.
  - Build guidance on acceptable/unacceptable content.
- Seek opportunities to partner with other affinity groups and civic organizations.
- Represent your Chapter, Section or District by offering to serve on or moderate panels.
- Use the Toolkit and also develop a list of resources to have readily available to refer to and share with others.
- Remain aware of the passage of prosocial programs and the elevation of trailblazers in your community and determine how to acknowledge them (social media platforms, Op-Ed, etc.).
- Tag PRSA D&I Committee and PRSA Foundation in addition to your Chapter, Section or District on significant posts. #prdiversity, @prdiversity, @prsafoundation.
- Participate in monthly/quarterly meetings of the D&I Committee.
- Consider a succession plan and select a Vice Chair.

## Don't:

- Take on too much or try to go it alone.
- Get overwhelmed.
- Be intimidated by the moment. Breathe.
- Allow yourself to be defined as having the answers to how to solve all inequities.
- Be afraid to add your voice to the conversation.

# ENGAGING WITH YOUR LOCAL PRSSA STUDENTS AND FACULTY ADVISERS AT HBCUs AND HSIs

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The D&I Committee has established an ad hoc committee on historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) and Hispanic serving institutions (HSIs). Conversations with PRSSA Faculty Advisers at these institutions have revealed a consistent need for support both in professional development and financial resources for local PRSSA Chapters. There are often opportunities that are not available for students and Faculty Advisers from these institutions. The lack of these resources should never prevent students or their Faculty Advisers from taking advantage of the exceptional assets PRSSA has to offer. After numerous insightful conversations with Faculty Advisers from HBCUs and HSIs, we offer some recommendations to strengthen our collective commitment to the principles of diversity and inclusion and future practitioners. To that end, below are recommendations for your engagement in this regard:

- Help to diversify the industry by supporting minority candidates who aspire to a career in public relations by helping them develop industry familiarity and knowledge, relevant skills and a network of professional contacts.
- Be generous in offering internship and/or mentorship opportunities. Even though your business or organization may not have a formal paid or unpaid internship program, be creative about offering exposure to a professional work environment.
- Meet students where they are. PRSSA Chapters can build in joint meetings with PRSSA Chapters, not only inviting them to your meetings but by attending their meetings.
- At the PRSSA Chapter level, host training sessions with the PRSSA Chapters consistently and regularly.
- Have agency, corporate and other speakers come to campuses to help with LinkedIn profiles, professional social media presence and resume writing and interviewing.
- Work closely with local PRSSA Chapters or diversity departments at local colleges/universities in addition to specific HBCUs and HSIs.
- If your PRSSA Chapter has a strong relationship with a sponsor, partner with the sponsor in support of diverse students. The advantage of “priming the pipeline” benefits students, your PRSSA Chapter and the sponsor.
- Set aside a fundraising event for the sole purpose of sending a student or students to a District event or the PRSSA International Conference.
- Partner with students or student groups to drive diversity and inclusion initiatives locally, or to implement a new program or project for the community.
- Ask PRSSA Chapters to offer PRSSA International Conference sponsorship/underwriting for students and Faculty Advisers to attend.

These are just some suggestions on how your PRSSA Chapter, Section or District can strengthen its relationship with PRSSA students and their Faculty Advisers at HBCUs and HSIs. These suggestions are not all-encompassing. We encourage PRSSA members to create opportunities that fit the personalities of their Chapter, Section or District and the needs of diverse students within their reach.

Our commitment to providing opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds has never been stronger. Members of the D&I Committee will continue the dialogue with Faculty Advisers — with emphasis on those at HBCUs and HSIs — and continue to develop strategies and tactics to meet these needs.

# ABOUT D&I AWARDS PROGRAMS: CHAPTER DIVERSITY AND D. PARKE GIBSON PIONEER AWARDS

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## **Chapter Diversity Awards**

Chapter diversity awards are given to Chapters that embody and demonstrate key values in diversity. Winners are announced at the PRSA International Conference. Up to three Chapters may be recognized with financial awards for their diversity programming, be featured on the PRSA Diversity webpage and be awarded with participation in D&I Committee initiatives (webinar, Twitter chat/social media events).

Each year, PRSA spotlights several Chapters for their activities promoting diversity and inclusion. The D&I Chapter Award is given to Chapters that embody and demonstrate key values in diversity and inclusion, and that contribute to advancing diversity as shown by submissions of their best practices and/or case studies. These awards recognize their local efforts as well as provide further support for continued achievements at the Chapter level. Deadline for entries is Sept. 1 annually.

[Download the application here.](#) Submit your entry with supporting documents via the website or by email at [diversity@PRSA.org](mailto:diversity@PRSA.org) with your Chapter's name in the subject line.

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## **D. Parke Gibson Pioneer Award**

Established in 1990, the D. Parke Gibson Pioneer Award is PRSA's highest individual honor presented to a communications professional who has contributed to increased awareness of the public relations profession within multicultural communities, and has participated in heightening awareness of issues that meet the needs of these diverse communities. This award memorializes one of PRSA's pioneers.

Gibson established the first black-owned public relations firm in the early 1960s and his impact is still felt decades later. He published "Race Relations and Industry," a periodic report on equal-opportunity compliance, and "The Gibson Report," a marketing guide on the black consumer market. His 1969 book, "The \$30 Billion Negro," showed large companies and corporations how they needed to alter communications strategies to appeal to the increasingly affluent African American community.

[Download the application here.](#) Deadline for entries is Sept. 1 annually. The winner is announced at the PRSA International Conference.

# D&I CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Recognizing that programming efforts by the D&I liaison can be helped through knowledge of national celebrations of diversity and inclusion, this initial calendar of activities is intended to provide insights and information for execution of Chapter-, Section- or District-specific and coordinated activities.

MONTH	AREA
<b>January</b>	New Year/Welcome
	PRSA Foundation Scholarships <i>The window for scholarship submission typically opens annually in January with a deadline of end of May.</i>
<b>February</b>	Black History Month (in USA and Canada)
<b>March</b>	Women's History Month National Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month
<b>April</b>	Deaf History Month
<b>May</b>	Asian American & Pacific American Heritage Month Congrats to PRSSA graduates.
<b>June</b>	LGBTQ+ Pride Month
<b>July</b>	D. Parke Gibson Pioneer Award/D&I Chapter Award <i>The window for scholarship submission typically opens annually in July with a deadline in September.</i>
<b>August</b>	OPEN (suggestions in Appendix)
<b>September</b>	Hispanic Heritage Month
<b>October</b>	PRSA D&I Month National Disability Employment Awareness Month PRSA International Conference Diversity and Inclusion Celebration D&I Member Survey Unconscious Bias Training (Leadership Rally)
<b>November</b>	Native American Heritage Month
<b>December</b>	OPEN (suggestions in Appendix)

# D&I LIAISON RESOURCES

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[Voices4Everyone](#) is a recent initiative by PRSA that supports a national conversation building mutual understanding, trust, and civic engagement through more inclusive civil discourse. For the most up-to-date D&I resources, visit [voices4everyone.prsa.org/diversity/](https://voices4everyone.prsa.org/diversity/).

The following resources are organized to help Chapters, Sections, and Districts better utilize the PRSA D&I Calendar and empower D&I liaisons to customize programming for their members. The D&I Committee also continues to host webinars on relevant topics, which can be found under Diverse Dialogues at [prsa.org/diverse-dialogues](https://prsa.org/diverse-dialogues).

## **January** – General D&I Education

[Partnerships & Collaborations Can Advance the D&I Movement](#) (Diverse Dialogues)

[Why DE&I Needs to Be More than an HR Initiative](#) (PRsay)

[Pitfall to Avoid When Mentoring Diverse Professionals](#) (Strategies & Tactics)

[How get serious about diversity and inclusion in the workplace](#) (TED Talk)

[Moving Beyond Equality: Perspectives on Achieving Inclusion Through Equity in Our Organizations & Beyond](#) (The Winters Group, 2018)

## **February** – Black History Month

[What You Need to Know about HBCUs: A Reservoir of Public Relations Talent & Desire](#) (Diverse Dialogues)

[Find Media Opportunities Beyond Black History Month or Other Observances](#) (PRsay)

[Marsha R. Pitts-Phillips on Proactive D&I Efforts](#) (Strategies & Tactics)

[Code Switch](#) (podcast)

[How microaggressions are like mosquito bites](#) (video clip)

[13TH](#) (Netflix film)

## **March** – Women's History Month

[Celebrating Women in Tech](#) (Diverse Dialogues)

[5 Leadership Lessons from Top Women Executives](#) (PRsay)

[7 Phrases That Matter in Mentoring](#) (Strategies & Tactics)

[Men and Women Seeking #MeToo Congruence: Being the #MeToo Imperfect Ally Model](#) (The Winters Group, 2017)

# D&I LIAISON RESOURCES

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## **March cont'd** – National Developmental Disabilities Month

[Widening the Aperture of Diversity to Include People with Disabilities](#) (PRsay)

[Team Members with Disabilities Provide Fresh Perspectives](#) (Strategies & Tactics)

[I got 99 problems... palsy is just one](#) (TEDx Talk)

[Taking the 'invisible' out of invisible illnesses](#) (TEDx Talk)

[The Accessible Stall](#) (podcast)

[Crip Camp](#) (Netflix film)

## **March cont'd** – International Day of Transgender Visibility (March 31)

[LGBTQ Workplace Discrimination](#) (PRSA webinar)

[Transgender Justice Initiative](#) (Human Rights Campaign)

[4 Ways to Make Your Workplace Equitable for Trans People](#) (NPR)

[Disclosure Documentary](#) (Netflix film)

## **April** – Deaf History Month

[National Association of the Deaf](#) (webinars)

[National Deaf History Month: Exploring Deaf Culture](#) (Library of Congress)

[Deaf History Month - Global Views](#) (podcast)

[Celebrating Deaf History Month](#) (YouTube playlist)

## **May** – Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

[Speaking Up Against Anti-Asian Racism](#) (PRsay)

[We Are Not Invisible](#) (PRsay)

[AAPI Resource Center](#)

[AAPI Heritage Website](#) (Library of Congress)

[Asian Enough](#) (podcast)

[Asian Pacific American Heritage Month](#) (multiple podcasts)

[Watch List: Celebrate Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month](#) (movies)

[The Problem with Apu](#) (film available on Amazon or iTunes)

## **June** – LGBTQ+ Pride Month

[Celebrating the PR Profession's LGBTQ Community](#) (PRsay)

[Making the Business Case for LGBTQ Inclusion](#) (Strategies & Tactics)

[LGBTQ Workplace Discrimination](#) (PRSA webinar)

## **July** – General D&I Education

[The Problem with Diversity in PR: We Talk Too Much](#) (PRsay)

[Who Gets to Be Afraid in America](#) (The Atlantic)

[The moral obligation to know our veterans](#) (TEDx Talk)

# D&I LIAISON RESOURCES

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## **August** – Religious Groups

[America's dynamic diversity and what it means for PR professionals](#) (PRsay)  
[Creating a Third Space: Communicating Across Religious and Cultural Boundaries Through the Arts](#) (Associated Church Press)  
[Religious Literacy](#) (Religion Communicators Council)  
[The Story of God Trailer - National Geographic](#) (movie)  
[Books on Religion](#) (website)  
[U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum](#) (website)

## **September** – Hispanic Heritage Month

[The Growing Power of the Hispanic Market](#) (PRsay)  
[Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month](#) (PRsay)  
[Determining the Right Hispanic Terms to Use](#) (Strategies & Tactics)  
[Printing the Revolution! The Rise and Impact of Chicano Graphics, 1965 to Now](#) (SAAM) [Latino USA](#) (podcast)  
[Gentefied](#) (Netflix series)

## **October** – D&I & Addressing Disinformation

[The Financial Drain of Misinformation](#) (PRsay)  
[The Consequences of Misinformation](#) (PRsay)  
[Nina Jankowicz on Disinformation and How Communicators Can Help Dispel It](#) (PRsay) [Trust and Transparency in Times of Crisis](#) (Strategies & Tactics)  
[Media Literacy](#) (Voices4Everyone)  
[Why Educating Employees on Inclusive Language Matters](#) (PRsay)  
[4 Tips to Create an Inclusive Crisis Comms Plan](#) (Strategies & Tactics)  
[Advancing Your Communication Strategy in DE&I](#) (PRSA Certificate Program)  
[Equal Access: Achieving Better Representation Across the Media Landscape](#) (webinar)

## **November** – Native American Heritage Month

[Native American Heritage Month](#) (Library of Congress)  
[Native American Calling](#) (podcast)  
[National Museum of the American Indian](#) (website)  
[Code Talkers](#) (Why We Serve)

## **December** – International Day of People with Disabilities (Dec. 3)

[Being Blind Has Not Stopped Rachel Carver, APR, from a Successful PR Career](#) (PRsay)  
[Widening the Aperture of Diversity to Include People with Disabilities](#) (PRsay)  
[Team Members with Disabilities Provide Fresh Perspectives](#) (Strategies & Tactics)  
[Crip Camp](#) (Netflix film)

# APPENDIX

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In businesses and organizations large and small, the importance, relevance and impact of strategic diversity and inclusion (D&I) efforts, and most importantly the “business case” for D&I, are becoming better understood. Last year, PRSA launched its 2020–2022 D&I Strategic Plan ([click to download](#)) that will guide the organization over the course of three years to help achieve targeted milestones.

This three-year strategic plan was drafted by the D&I Strategic Planning team with input from myriad teams including the PRSA staff and Board of Directors and is based on the 11-month research initiative launched in 2019 among PRSA members.

The overarching goal of PRSA’s trailblazing plan is to “position PRSA as a model for the communications profession, reflecting exemplary leadership in diversity and inclusion.” The plan details tactics and strategies supporting four objectives:

- 1. Increase awareness and understanding of PRSA as a diverse and inclusive organization among its members and staff by 15% by 2023.**
- 2. Increase diverse representation among leadership throughout all levels of PRSA by 25% by 2023.**
- 3. Increase awareness of PRSA as a diverse and inclusive organization among external stakeholders by 15% by 2023.**
- 4. Increase and retain the number of multicultural students in PRSSA and new multicultural professionals into PRSA by 15% by 2023.**



# Your Guide To Creating a D&I Statement

## Helpful References

- [How Communicators Can Lead the Way on Diversity and Inclusion.](#)
- [Writing a Diversity and Inclusion Statement: How to Get it Right.](#)
- [Inequity is Ubiquitous - How "Diversity & Inclusion" is the Case Study.](#)

## Drafting Your Statement\*

- Use the PRSA D&I Committee's statement as a starting point. Define what you mean by diversity, equity, and inclusion and the value you place on each as a Chapter, Section or District.
- Ask your members for input to ensure their buy-in.
- Revisit the statement and strategy annually, to reiterate the commitment of your Chapter, District or Section and make sure all members are aligned.
- Consider including key performance indicators to measure your statement and strategy's success.

*\*Steps adapted from guidelines provided by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.*

# Media Style Guides for Race, Ethnicity and Religion

## Writing Tips for Engaging With Diverse Audiences

### Inclusive language Guides

- [Conscious Style Guide](#)
- [National Association of Black Journalists Style Guide](#)
- [Asian American Journalists Association Handbook](#)
- [Native American Journalists Association Reporter's Indigenous Terminology Guide](#)
- [Religion Stylebook](#)
- [GLAAD Media Reference](#)
- [RAADH \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Guia de Lenguaje Inclusivo de Genero \(Spanish\)](#)
- [Guia para el uso del lenguaje inclusive \(Spanish\)](#)

Race, Ethnicity and National Origin		
Identity	Explanation	Example(s)
<b>African American / Black</b>	<p>Black and African American are not always interchangeable. Some individuals prefer the term black because they do not identify as African and/or American.</p> <p>Individuals may identify as African, Afro-Caribbean, Afro-Latino or other.</p>	<p>Refer to groups as Black students, Black faculty members, etc., not "Blacks."</p> <p>Consider the necessity of using race within your text. Ask yourself: "Would I mention 'white student' or 'white faculty member' when discussing others?"</p>
<b>Asian, Asian American, Pacific Islander (AAPI)</b>	<p>Asian refers to people who are citizens of countries in the Far East, Southeast Asia or the Indian subcontinent, or to describe people of Asian descent.</p> <p>Asian Americans trace their origins to these regions.</p> <p>Pacific Islander includes Native Hawaiian, Samoan, Guamanian, Fijian and other peoples of the Pacific Island nations.</p> <p>Use Asian/Pacific Islander when referring to the relevant population in its entirety. Otherwise, use the preferred term of the individual or group.</p>	<p>Refer to groups as Asian students, Asian faculty members, etc., not Asians.</p> <p>Consider the necessity of using race within your text. Ask yourself: "Would I mention 'white student' or 'white faculty member' when discussing others?"</p>

Identity	Explanation	Example(s)
<b>Hispanic, Latin(a/o) and Latinx</b>	<p>Hispanic refers to people from Spanish-speaking countries.</p> <p>Latino, Latina or Latinx (La-Teen-ex) is a person of Latin American descent who can be of any background or language. If the individual or group does not identify as either Latino or Latina, the gender-neutral term Latinx can be used. When referring to a group, generally use Latinx as it is gender inclusive.</p>	<p>People from Mexico, Cuba and Guatemala who speak Spanish are both Hispanic and Latin(o/a)/Latinx.</p> <p>Brazilians who speak Portuguese are Latin(o/a)/Latinx but not Hispanic.</p> <p>Spanish-speaking people in Spain and outside Latin America are Hispanic but not Latin(o/a)/Latinx.</p>
<b>Native American American Indian or Alaskan Native (AIAN)</b>	<p>Native American is preferred unless the individual or group specifies otherwise. Some prefer American Indian, however this is not universal.</p> <p>AIAN refers to Indigenous people with origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America)</p>	
<b>People of Color (POC/BIPOC)</b>	<p>Do not use the term minority to refer to individuals/students from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. Instead, use “people of color/ students of color.” Do not ever use the term “colored people.” You may also use BIPOC when appropriate, which stands for Black, Indigenous and POC.</p>	
<b>Underserved/ Historically Underrepresented Groups (HUGs)</b>	<p>Do not use the term minority to describe students from diverse backgrounds. When referring to multiple groups of students from diverse backgrounds, use “Underserved/ Underrepresented students. Use the specific group title when possible.</p>	<p>For example: LGBTQ+ students, Black students, undocumented students, etc.</p> <p>You may use descriptors like marginalized, minoritized, or historically underrepresented.</p>
<b>Immigration Status</b>	<p>Do not use the word “illegal immigrant” or “illegal alien” to refer to individuals who are not U.S. citizens/permanent residents, who do not hold visas to reside in the U.S. or who have not applied for official residency.</p> <p>These words dehumanize the individual by stripping their identity down to a legal status. Instead of saying “illegal immigrant” or “illegal alien,” use “undocumented.”</p>	<p>Example: undocumented students; undocumented individuals</p>

## Gender and Sexuality

Identity	Explanation	Example(s)
<b>LGBTQ+</b>	Shorthand or umbrella term for individuals who have a non-hetero/cisnormative gender or sexuality. LGBTQ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer. The “+” includes all other non-hetero/cis normative identities not included within the LGBTQ acronym.	
<b>Lesbian</b>	Women who are primarily attracted to other women. It is not appropriate to use the word “homosexual” or “WSW” (women who have sex with women).	
<b>Gay</b>	Men who are attracted to other men.  Some individuals refer to lesbian women as “gay women.” Generally, do not do so unless preferred by the group/individual.  It is not appropriate to use the word “homosexual” or “MSM” (men who have sex with men).	
<b>Bisexual</b>	An individual who experiences attraction to two or more genders.	
<b>Transgender</b>	A gender description for someone who has transitioned (or is transitioning) from living as one gender to another. Transgender can sometimes be written as trans.*  It is not appropriate to ask a transgender individual which part of their transition they are currently in ;a biological man who is transitioning into a woman is a transgender woman, or transwoman.	
<b>Queer</b>	An umbrella term to describe individuals who do not identify as straight and/or cisgender.	It is important to consider the context when using the word queer as it was formally used as a derogatory word. It has since been reclaimed.  Never add “a” in front of the word. Example: He is queer.
<b>Ally</b>	A typically straight and/or cisgender person who supports and respects members of the LGBTQ community.	
<b>Cisgender</b>	A gender description for when someone’s sex assigned at birth and gender identity corresponds in the socially constructed and socially expected way.	
<b>Gender-Nonconforming</b>	A gender identity label that indicates a person who identifies outside of the gender binary (binary: man or woman).	

## Disabilities

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When discussing language surrounding disability status, the preferred language of the majority of the disabled population is to lead with **identity first language**. The goal is to be factual and descriptive.

The term disabled is no longer seen as a bad or negative word. Instead, referring to an individual as a disabled person is the norm and is considered most respectful. The disability pride movement has grown in recent years and the disabled community has embraced the term for themselves. It is also okay to use their specific disability as an identifier. The people first language should largely be avoided except for discussing mental illness. Those cases should be done on a case-by-case basis, but at this time it's acceptable to use phrases such as "with mental illness."

When referring to facilities, use the term accessible instead of disabled or handicapped friendly. Avoid outdated, offensive words such as handicapped, retarded, crippled, crazy, etc. Avoid using self-diagnosing language such as, "I'm so OCD" and "I'm insane" unless these mental illnesses have been diagnosed. It is essential you do not use terms such as special abilities, special needs, differently abled or (dis)ability.

It is also important to avoid using terms such as person with autism or person on the spectrum. Instead, you should say, autistic person or autistic. Again, identity first language is preferred largely by the community. The terms neurodivergent and neurodiverse are also appropriate descriptors in cases describing conditions including ADHD, autism and dyslexia.

When discussing the Deaf and hard of hearing community, capitalize the "D" in deaf, and you may use the abbreviation HoH. For example, when discussing the wider community, say d/Deaf/HoH.

There are a variety of nuances across the disabled community; and disability is not a monolith. When in doubt, defer to the community you are communicating with and use the language they most prefer.

### Noun Usage

Subjective	Objective	Possessive Adjectives	Possessive Pronouns	Reflexive	Pronunciation
She	Her	Her	Hers	Herself	Pronounced as it looks.
He	Him	His	His	Himself	Pronounced as it looks.
Ze	Zim	Zir	Zirs	Zirself	Pronounced Zay or Zee/Zim (rhymes with them) /Zir (rhymes with their).
They	Them	Their	Theirs	Themselves	Pronounced as it looks.