



# DEI TOOLKIT

---

**PRSA**

Updated 2023



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

**Introduction and Purpose of the  
DEI Toolkit .....3**

**About the PRSA DEI Committee  
Roles/Responsibilities .....4**

**DEI Statement .....6**

**DEI Liaison Role Description .....7**

**About the PRSA Foundation .....8**

**Do’s & Don’ts of DEI Liaisons .....9**

**Engaging Local PRSSA Students and  
Faculty Advisers at HBCUs and HSIs .....10**

**About DEI Chapter Awards Program .....11**

**DEI Calendar of Events .....12**

**DEI Liaison Resources .....13**

**Your Guide to Creating a  
DEI Statement .....16**

**2023 DEI Executive Committee .....21**

# INTRODUCTION

---

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, gender identity, 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, Section, and District leaders, and DEI 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).

## *The PRSA Diversity Equity Inclusion (DEI) Committee*

### **2022 DEI COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS**

Anita Ford Saunders, APR  
she/her/hers  
[afs@afsanders.com](mailto:afs@afsanders.com)

Jaron Terry, APR, Fellow PRSA  
she/her/hers  
[jaronterry@columbus.rr.com](mailto:jaronterry@columbus.rr.com)

### **2023 DEI COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS**

Marsha Pitts-Phillips, APR  
she/her/hers  
[marsha.pittsphilips@gmail.com](mailto:marsha.pittsphilips@gmail.com)

W. Patrick McSweeney, APR, Fellow PRSA  
he/him/his  
[patrickmcsweeney22@gmail.com](mailto:patrickmcsweeney22@gmail.com)

# ABOUT THE PRSA DEI COMMITTEE

---

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

## **Terms and Appointments**

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

## **Officers**

- ***Co-Chairs***: The duties of the chair and/or co-chairs include, but are not limited to, running the monthly DEI 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 PRSA 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.
- ***Co-Vice Chairs***: The duties of the co-vice chairs include, but are not limited to, service on the DEI Executive Committee and performing chair responsibilities when the co-chairs are not available, and other responsibilities as needed.
- ***Immediate Past Co-Chairs***: The immediate past co-chairs' duties include, but are not limited to, service on the DEI Executive Committee and performing co-chair responsibilities when the co-chair or co-vice chairs are not available, and other responsibilities as needed. In addition to this role, the immediate past co-chairs serve as the liaison to the local Chapter diversity liaison group. In this capacity, the immediate past co-chairs work 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 DEI Committee and the movement to be a more diverse association.

## **Member Roles, Responsibilities**

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

## Subcommittees

The subcommittees of the DEI Committee are described below.

- Executive Committee: Determines DEI Committee's priorities, meets a week prior to the Committee meeting to plan the agenda, follows up with subcommittees on work progress and updates, discusses, and resolves any major issue regarding the Committee and provides counsel for 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 DEI Committee's annual priorities and holds monthly meetings with the assigned subcommittee. This group also ensures the PRSA website is updated with new information on Committee membership as per PRSA guidelines.
- Program Committee: Works with our DEI Staff Liaison to develop programming with a DEI focus, this includes but is not limited to the Diverse Dialogue series.
- Scholarship and Awards Committee: Oversees the promulgation of the DEI Chapter Awards program and related activities.
- Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBUCs) and Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs)

## Ex Officio Members

Ex officio members include the PRSSA representative for diversity and the executive director of the PRSA Foundation. Additionally, a representative from the DEI Chapter of the Year receives the honor to appoint a representative to join the DEI Committee for a year.

## PRSA Staff Liaison

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

# DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION STATEMENT

---

In lieu of a definition of diversity, equity and inclusion, the DEI Committee is focused on providing a contextual overview of these areas. Recognizing that members and Chapter DEI liaisons will require information to frame efforts, the diversity, equity and inclusion statement below was developed and approved for use:

*Diversity, equity 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, 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.*

*According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), the term “equity” refers to fairness and justice and is distinguished from equality: Whereas equality means providing the same to all, equity means recognizing that we do not all start from the same place and must acknowledge and adjust imbalances. The process is ongoing, requiring us to identify and overcome intentional and unintentional barriers arising from bias or systemic structures.*

*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, equity and inclusion are proactive behaviors.*

*Respecting, embracing, celebrating and validating those behaviors are integral to PRSA’s DNA. Diversity, equity 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.*

# DEI LIAISON ROLE DESCRIPTION

---

The DEI liaison plays an essential role within every facet of PRSA. The Chapter DEI liaison, along with Chapter leadership, is responsible for creating and implementing plans to promote diversity, equity 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 DEI leadership into their operating structure in ways that are most effective for membership. It is strongly recommended that a DEI liaison be appointed to the executive committee, or a subcommittee created to promote a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion in all Section and District activities.

A significant part of the DEI liaison role is promoting and developing programs to enhance understanding diversity, equity 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 DEI liaison work with the Chapter, Section, or District leadership and membership chair in the establishment of a plan and annualized DEI Calendar of activities.

Below are additional considerations for the DEI liaison role:

- Develop the DEI short-term and long-term goals and organize a group of volunteers to help with DEI initiatives.
- Design programs that reinforce diversity, equity and inclusion within the Chapter, Section, or District.
- Work with Chapter, Section, or District leadership to ensure that communications (website, social media channels, 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 DEI Committee.
- Utilize the annually updated Toolkit and Do's and Don'ts lists as a resource for efforts.
- Work to align and implement DEI activities into annual programming.
- Plan Chapter, Section, or District-based activities during Diversity Equity Inclusion Month (October)
- Support the Strategic Plan goals and objectives of the DEI Committee by sharing announcements, posts, and events with the members.
- Evaluate if the Chapter, Section, or District can apply for PRSA DEI Awards.

# ABOUT THE PRSA FOUNDATION

---

## ***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, 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 pursuing public relations careers. The PRSA Foundation awarded over \$60,000 in scholarships in 2022 and is set to award over \$100,000 in scholarships and awards in 2023. 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 2020 the PRSA Board of Directors, in partnership with the PRSA DEI Committee, established the first permanent endowment through the PRSA Foundation to ensure funding for the annual PRSA Diversity Multicultural Scholarship. This scholarship awards \$1,500 each to two undergraduate students of color for outstanding academic achievement and commitment to the practice of public relations. The endowment was fully funded through support from PRSA members, Chapters, and corporate partners.

In 2023, the PRSA Foundation launched the Foster the Future Initiative, which aims to build a more progressive future for the public relations industry by creating pathways for individuals who've been historically excluded from leadership positions. In the first year, the PRSA Foundation will award four fellowships for undergraduate public relations and communications students of color, with some combination of scholarships, stipends, and internships. The PRSA Foundation partnered with four PR agencies for the launch and intends to grow the initiative through expansion to other agencies.

For more information, visit [prsafoundation.org](http://prsafoundation.org)



# DO'S & DON'TS FOR DEI LIAISONS

---

The role of the PRSA DEI 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 serving in your role..

## **Do:**

- Develop a DEI plan for your Chapter, Section, or District that aligns with PRSA’s Strategic Plan.
- Brainstorm and seek ideas.
- Develop and send a yearlong calendar that highlights recognized religious observances of different groups.
- 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 DEI 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 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 (social media platforms, Op-Ed, etc.).
- Tag PRSA DEI Committee and PRSA Foundation in addition to your Chapter, Section, or District on significant posts. #prdiversity and @prsafoundation
- Participate in monthly/quarterly meetings of the DEI Committee.
- Consider a succession plan and select a vice chair.

## **Don't:**

- Take on too much or try to go at it alone.
- Get overwhelmed.
- Be intimidated by the moment. Breathe.
- Allow yourself to be defined as having the answers on 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

---

The DEI 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 PRSA 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, equity and inclusion and future practitioners. To that end, below are recommendations for your engagement in this regard.

- Help to diversify the industry by supporting underrepresented candidates who aspire to a career in public relations/communications 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 internship program, be creative about offering exposure to a professional work environment.
- Meet students where they are. PRSA Chapters can build in joint meetings with PRSSA Chapters, not only inviting them to your meetings but by attending their meetings.
- At the PRSA 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 PRSA 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 PRSA Chapter and the sponsor.
- Set aside a fundraising event for the sole purpose of sending a student or students to a District event or ICON.
- Partner with students or student groups to drive DEI initiatives locally, or to implement a new program or project for the community.
- Ask PRSA Chapters to offer ICON sponsorship/underwriting for students and Faculty Advisers to attend.

These are just some suggestions on how your PRSA Chapter, Section, or District can strengthen its relationship with our PRSSA students and their Faculty Advisers at HBCUs and HSIs. These suggestions are not all-encompassing. We encourage PRSA 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 DEI 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 CHAPTER DEI AWARDS PROGRAM

---

## **Chapter Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Awards**

Each year, PRSA spotlights several Chapters for their activities promoting diversity, equity and inclusion. The DEI Chapter Award is given to Chapters that embody and demonstrate key values in diversity, equity 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.

Below are hyperlinks to the applications of the most recent Chapter Diversity & Inclusion winners.

[Tampa Bay PRSA Chapter – First Place](#)

[Orange County Chapter – Second Place](#)

[Dallas Chapter – Honorable Mention](#)

---

[Download the application here.](#) Deadline for entries is Sept. 1 annually. The winner(s) are announced at ICON.

## DEI CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Recognizing that programming efforts by the DEI liaison can be helped through knowledge of national celebrations of diversity, equity and inclusion, this 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 at the end of April.</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 Islander Heritage Month
	Congratulations to PRSSA graduates
<b>June</b>	LGBTQ Pride Month
<b>July</b>	DEI Chapter Award submissions accepted July through September 1.
<b>August</b>	OPEN
<b>September</b>	Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15 – Oct. 15)
<b>October</b>	PRSA DEI Month
	National Disability Employment Awareness Month
	PRSA ICON - Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Celebration (with DEI Training during Leadership Rally)
<b>November</b>	Indigenous Peoples Month *
<b>December</b>	OPEN

\*Guidance from the Native American Journalists Association:  
 "There was an overwhelming preference for "Indigenous Peoples' Month" over "Native American Heritage Month." The board's position is that the proper recognition should include Indigenous Peoples across the continent, not just those in the U.S., and also recognize that we are more than our history and heritage..."

# DEI LIAISON RESOURCES

---

[Voices4Everyone](#) is an 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 DEI 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 DEI Calendar and empower DEI liaisons to customize programming for their members. The DEI 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 DEI 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

[PRSA Black History Month – Resources](#)

[Code Switch](#) (podcast)

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

[13TH](#) (Netflix film)

## **March** - Women's History Month

[PRSA Woman's History Month – Resources](#)

[Men and Women Seeking #MeToo Congruence: Being the #MeToo Imperfect](#)

[Ally Model](#) (The Winters Group, 2017)

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](#) (TED Talk)

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

[The Accessible Stall](#) (podcast)

[Crip Camp](#) (Netflix film)

International Day of Transgender Visibility (March 31)

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

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

[Disclosure Documentary](#) (Netflix film)

# DEI LIAISON RESOURCES

---

## **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 & 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 Pacific American Heritage Month](#) (multiple podcasts)

[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)

## **August** - Religious Groups

[America's dynamic diversity and what it means for PR professionals](#) (PRSay)

[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)

## **October** - DEI & 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** - Indigenous Peoples Month (NAJA)  
[Native American Calling](#) (podcast)  
[National Museum of the American Indian](#) (website)  
[Code Talkers](#) (Why We Serve)

**December** - International Day of People with Disabilities (December 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: A Disability Revolution](#) (Netflix film)

# YOUR GUIDE TO CREATING A DEI 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 DEI 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 for your members for their input to ensure their buy-in.
- Revisit the statement and strategy annually, to reiterate the commitment of your Chapter, District, or Sections and make sure all members are aligned.
- Consider including some 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 \(Spanish\)](#)



<b>Race, Ethnicity and National Origin</b>		
<b>Identity</b>	<b>Explanation</b>	<b>Example(s)</b>
<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, AfroLatino 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>
<b>Hispanic, Latin(a/o) and Latinx</b>	<p>Hispanic refers to people from Spanish-speaking countries.</p> <p>Latino, Latina or Latinx (La-Teenex) 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>

Identity	Explanation	Example(s)
<p align="center"><b>Native American American Indian or Alaskan Native (AIAN)</b></p>	<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>	
<p align="center"><b>People of Color (POC/BIPOC)</b></p>	<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>	
<p align="center"><b>Underserved/ Historically Underrepresented Groups (HUGs)</b></p>	<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”; however, 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>
<p align="center"><b>Immigration Status</b></p>	<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/ cis-normative gender or sexuality. LGBTQ stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer. The “+” includes all other nonhetero/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 Non-Conforming</b>	A gender identity label that indicates a person who identifies outside of the gender binary (binary: man or woman).	

## Disabilities

---

When discussing language surrounding disability status, the preferred language of the majority of the disabled population is to go 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.

Reference to the new AP Guide...

## 2023 DEI EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

---

[www.prsa.org/about/diversity-inclusion](http://www.prsa.org/about/diversity-inclusion)

Marsha Pitts-Phillips, APR, Co-Chair

marsha.pittsphilips@gmail.com

Patrick McSweeney, APR Fellow PRSA, Co-Chair

patrickmcsweeney22@gmail.com

Rene' Petties-Jones, Co-Vice Chair

rpetties-jones@nfjcwny.org

Raquel Rivera Torres, APR, Co-Vice Chair

raquel.rivera@gfrpr.com

Anita Ford Saunders, APR, Immediate Past Co-Chair

anitafordsaunders@gmail.com

Jaron Terry, APR, Fellow PRSA, Immediate Past Co-Chair

jaronterry@columbus.rr.com

Andrea Gils Monzon, PRSA Board Liaison

andreagilsm@gmail.com

Jeneen Garcia, PRSA Staff Liaison

jeneen.garcia@prsa.org