



# ASSESSMENT, ACCOUNTABILITY & TRAINING

***“Responsibility equals accountability equals ownership. And a sense of ownership is the most powerful weapon a team or organization can have.” – Pat Summit***

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this section is twofold: 1) to provide guidance for creating metrics and providing oversight for the assessment, evaluation, and reporting of data on Society demographics, climate, activities, and culture, and 2) to promote training and engagement opportunities that facilitate justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion for ASCE staff and members and which ensure all persons are treated with respect, dignity, and fairness while rejecting all forms of discrimination and harassment, consistent with the Code of Ethics.

## **Identification of Best Practices**

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) stresses the importance of data collection for accountability and targeted intervention<sup>1</sup> when leading efforts to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). The NASEM also emphasizes the importance of “filling knowledge gaps”<sup>2</sup> through education and outreach. The guidelines that follow are grounded in research on best practices that ensure DEI decisions are guided by an iterative data-driven process; and educational programming that aims to increase the knowledge, skills, and outreach necessary to create diverse, equitable, and inclusive organizational environments.

- **Measure and monitor DEI matters** – Identify and implement an iterative change process that diagnoses, informs action, and evaluates impact of actions on a consistent basis.
- **Share DEI measures that matter** – Demonstrate commitment and accountability to DEI through recognition and regular reporting of complex qualitative and quantitative data on diversity, equity, and inclusion on a routine basis.
- **Education, training, and outreach** – Develop and implement educational programming that aims to increase the knowledge, skills, and outreach necessary to create diverse, equitable, and inclusive organizational environments.

<sup>1</sup>National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2020. *Promising Practices for Addressing the Underrepresentation of Women in Science, Engineering, and Medicine: Opening Doors: Proceedings of a Symposium-in-Brief*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/25785>.

<sup>2</sup>National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2020.



## Summary of Best Practices

### Measure & Monitor DEI Matters

*Identify and implement an iterative change process that diagnoses, informs action, and evaluates impact of actions on a consistent basis.*

- Identify and utilize established change processes that are rooted in research and practice. For example, The PEER Group has a user-centered, iterative process for change and continuous improvement called MESA<sup>®</sup> (Measure, Evaluate, Strategize, Act) that it uses to help organizations strategically address DEI.<sup>3</sup> Likewise, the American Association for the Advancement of Science's STEM Equity Achievement (SEA) Change initiative employs "a proven self-assessment process to effect sustainable change" in higher education.<sup>4</sup> There's no need to reinvent the wheel.
- Gather and report complex qualitative and quantitative data on diversity, equity, and inclusion on a routine basis.
  - Implement "integrated, multiple approaches to monitoring and evaluation of DEI goals"<sup>5</sup> to track impact, outcomes, and effectiveness of efforts.
  - Conduct assessments to identify the extent to which your group (regions, sections, branches, institutes, student chapters, Board of Direction, committees, etc.) fosters an atmosphere of inclusion. Is your group welcoming to people of all cultures, backgrounds, and identities? Does every member of your group feel comfortable speaking up, even when their perspectives differ from the majority, and do they feel their opinions are valued? How effective is the group in terms of implementing policy and practice in an inequitable, consistent, and inclusive way? Are all members of the group able to engage equitably, and do they have an equitable opportunity to advance in leadership if desired? The more welcoming and open the group is to differing perspectives and the more equitable in engagement and advancement it is, the stronger the group will become, the better it can adapt in the future, and the more effective it will be.
  - Set SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound) goals and develop a plan to meet them. Remember not to limit goals to representational diversity (e.g., x% of y identity), but also include those that reflect how people experience the climate and culture and outcomes related to their success.
  - Conduct DEI assessments across the organization that include behavior, attitude, and perception and use the results to inform DEI strategies and implementation.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup>The Pearson Evaluation and Education Research Group. 2022. Services: Strategic Initiatives, <https://peergroupconsulting.com/services>.

<sup>4</sup>American Association for the Advancement of Science. 2021. See Change with STEM Equity Achievement, <https://seachange.aaas.org>.

<sup>5</sup>Molefil, N., O'Mara, J., and Richter, A. 2021. *Global Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Benchmarks: Standards for Organizations Around the World*, p. 45. The Centre for Global Inclusion, <https://centreforglobalinclusion.org/>.

<sup>6</sup>Molefil, N., O'Mara, J., and Richter, A. 2021.

- Collect data on demographic diversity across a range of identities – race, ethnicity, gender identity, disability, nationality, sexual orientation, etc., using best practices for capturing that data.
  - Utilize demographic data as one (not the only) indicator of how or if the organization is becoming more diverse.
  - Utilize demographic information to create a member database that can streamline data collection during membership surveys and more deeply explore the experiences of people from historically marginalized identities.
- Integrate DEI measures into existing assessment and measurement tools.<sup>7</sup> For example:
  - ASCE membership application and renewals – collect and use demographic data as described in the previous bullet.
  - ASCE member satisfaction survey – integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion measures into existing survey.
  - ASCE Salary Survey – integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion measures into existing survey.
  - Develop and maintain a central database of survey questions related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Provide regular opportunities for people from traditionally marginalized identity groups to share information (e.g., through focus groups, interviews, etc.) to learn firsthand about their experiences and to identify challenges and ways the organization can provide support through programming, networking, and policy change.
  - Engage external, experienced professionals to administer climate surveys to measure and monitor factors such as inclusion, marginalization, and professional (de)valuation.
  - Analyze the survey data to gain insights into practices or actions that could be intentionally or unintentionally excluding and/or minimizing certain groups of people, paying attention to intersectional identities.
  - Care should be taken to protect respondents' identities in data collection, analysis, and reporting. Again, experienced professionals employ best practices to protect respondents.
  - Use data on member experiences and intersections of identity to inform actions.
- Monitor all events and activities to track full participation and access for all participants.
  - Administer postexperience/feedback surveys during conferences/events to ensure accessibility and inclusion for all participants. Use the results when planning future events to improve outcomes.
  - Dedicate time at ASCE conventions (or other gatherings) for data collection leaders to meet and work together.
  - Ensure event registration processes identify and address all participant and speaker requests for services and accommodations for full participation.
- Measure impacts of strategic actions.

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<sup>7</sup>Molefil, N., O'Mara, J., and Richter, A. 2021.





## Share DEI Measures that Matter

*Demonstrate commitment and accountability to DEI through recognition and regular reporting of complex qualitative and quantitative data on diversity, equity, and inclusion on a routine basis.*

- Report, on an annual basis, results of DEI measures and the specific actions taken in response to the results.
  - Document response trends on a chart to present to others.
  - Use assessment results to inform future initiatives.
- Create structures of accountability, recognition, and leadership to drive advancement of diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Publicize ASCE's DEI objectives, goals, policies, and investments to increase accountability and collaboration.
- Consider using platforms such as ASCE Collaborate for leaders to work together, share challenges and solutions, and disseminate internal data.

## Education, Training & Outreach

*Develop and implement educational programming that aims to increase the knowledge, skills, and outreach necessary to create diverse, equitable, and inclusive organizational environments and engineering practices.*

- Provide educational training that addresses issues of marginalization and exclusion within the profession. Training should include topics such as racism, ableism, sexism, classism/casteism, homophobia, transphobia, religious bias, and mental health awareness.
- Collaborate with DEI professionals, organizational leaders, and diversity networks to design, develop, deliver, and evaluate DEI training.<sup>8</sup>
  - Training should be taught by experienced professionals and should include behavioral and attitudinal elements.
  - Provide training for all new and existing members and staff, and refresh content every two years thereafter.
  - Training should be required for leaders throughout the organization.
  - Ensure training is accessible to all participants.
- Add a bias workshop into a leadership/management training.
- Collaborate with a diversity-centered consulting firm to receive further recommendations, learn practices to combat inequities, and create other methods of increasing and sustaining diversity among members, students, and employees.
- Co-sponsor workshops with strategic partners aimed at introducing K-12 students from minoritized identities to, and supporting their engagement in, engineering.
- Work with an experienced consultant to review and revise selection criteria and processes for scholarships, internships, awards, and other opportunities to ensure they are free from bias.
- Create an ASCE scholarship fund to help advance the education and careers of people from historically marginalized identities, including but not limited to women, persons with disabilities, people of color, and LGBTQ+ individuals.
- Develop a DEI “seed fund” for ASCE members and/or partners to establish DEI initiatives in their workplaces and member activities.
- Feature and celebrate members representing all identities and backgrounds within the profession.
  - Normalize and make visible (without exploiting) the disciplinary and technical expertise of civil engineers from historically marginalized identities. For example, invite a disabled woman to present her water resources engineering work at a conference as opposed to asking her to give a talk or serve on a panel focused on DEI.

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<sup>8</sup> Molefil, N., O'Mara, J., and Richter, A. 2021.





- Spotlight individuals of all identities in civil engineering who are addressing issues of marginalization and exclusion within the profession.
- Share the events and materials of partner organizations such as the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), Society of Women Engineers (SWE), Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE), American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES), and others.
- Implement best practices in the Events section of this guide to ensure ASCE conferences and other meetings and events are accessible to and inclusive of all participants.
- Recognize programs, prizes, and awards.
  - Advertise opportunities for grants, scholarships, awards, and other programs to a range of groups through outreach to all student chapter faculty advisors, the Department Heads Coordinating Council, and partner organizations such as NSBE, SWE, SHPE, AISES, etc.
  - Create and implement programs that support equal and equitable engagement of students whose colleges and universities may have limited resources. For example, funds might support student engagement in section, branch, or institute activities; student conferences; national conferences and conventions; ENVISION® credentialing; or other professional activities. Awards could also be established to identify and/or facilitate public and/or private internships.
- Increase investment in efforts to help advance the education and careers of people from historically marginalized identities, including but not limited to women, persons with disabilities, people of color, and LGBTQ+ individuals.





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