



Diversity, Equity, Equality and Inclusion Policy Framework

Developed by the Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management for use by all public relations and communication professionals globally,

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The Global Alliance *Diversity Equity, Equality and Inclusion Policy Framework* was developed through an inclusive consultation program with members across a six-month period in 2024-25 by the working group members, **Fiona Cassidy (New Zealand), Irene Lungu (Zambia), Shreya Krishnan (India), Priya Bates (Canada), and Jennifer Muir (Australia).**

1. Introduction

Purpose:

This policy serves as a comprehensive guide to fostering Diversity, Equality, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) across all Global Alliance for Public Relations and Communication Management. Aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the UN Global Compact, and the UN Global Digital Compact, it aims to ensure that everyone involved in the organisation can actively contribute to a culture of inclusivity.

Adaptable to regional contexts, it is grounded in universal human rights principles and values of equality and empowerment for all.

Global Alliance's members represent diverse cultures and communities who have specific and collective experiences that include the enduring impacts of colonisation, conflict, and tyranny on cultures, communities, and Indigenous peoples, and commits to addressing these legacies through restorative and inclusive approaches. This policy framework recognises and responds to these experiences that are too often excluded.

Scope:

The Global Alliance aims to set the global standard for within public relations and communication management professionals, and this DEI Policy Framework aims to provide a global point for consistency and applicability for all members to align to, while applying the Framework to its own actions and standards.

This policy guides all staff, members, and partners in building an inclusive and equitable environment, focusing on collaboration, empowerment, and shared responsibility.

We view ourselves, our members, and the broader profession as stewards of DEI, promoting collective action to advance equality & equity globally, nationally, and locally.

Global Alliance and its members, guided by our mission and values, stand as champions for DEI in every jurisdiction, organisation, and community; where these values and principles are challenged, members and public relations and communication management professionals are empowered through a unified commitment to advocate for DEI.

- **Global Level:** Encouraging international cooperation to reduce inequalities between nations and promoting collective social and economic inclusion.
- **National Level:** Supporting equitable policies that foster social cohesion, stimulate economic growth, and remove systemic barriers.
- **Community Level:** Ensuring local communities thrive by uplifting diverse voices and promoting equitable collaboration.

Its effectiveness depends on comprehensive education, rigorous training, and consistent championing of DEI values throughout the organisation's culture.

To reinforce this, the Global Alliance will draw upon the advanced DEI leadership of its global membership—curating and sharing easy-to-use resources, best-practice insights, and targeted training modules—to support members as they initiate or advance DEI policies and programmes in their local contexts.

2. Defining Diversity, Equality, Equity, and Inclusion

Diversity: Recognises the full spectrum of differences—race, gender, ethnicity, age, nationality, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background, and beyond—valuing diverse perspectives and experiences to ensure full contribution.

Equality: Means that all individuals are entitled to equal protection and benefit, ensuring fairness, dignity, and respect so everyone has the opportunity to participate fully. In contexts where legal frameworks may not yet reflect these standards, this framework encourages organizations to role model DEI best practices and advocate for progressive reform to advance equality globally.

Equity: Means ensuring fair treatment by providing resources and opportunities tailored to unique needs and circumstances, dismantling barriers for marginalised groups to achieve true inclusion.

Inclusion: The active practice of ensuring individuals feel valued, respected, and fully involved in decision-making, creating spaces for equitable power-sharing without fear of exclusion.

Note: The intentional involvement of individuals who possess direct, personal experience with specific challenges, identities, or systemic barriers in the design, development, implementation, and evaluation of DEI policies and programs. People with lived and living experience bring critical insights, expertise, and contextual knowledge that enrich decision-making, ensure relevance, and foster authentic, empathetic, and responsive DEI interventions.

Intersectionality: Recognises that multiple identities intersect to shape unique experiences of discrimination and privilege, essential for integrated DEI strategies.

Note: In DEI, equality and equity are both used: equality provides equal rights and protection, while equity acknowledges varied needs and barriers, ensuring tailored support.

3. Values/Principals

Global Alliance Mission: To empower public relations and communication professionals to serve society ethically and inclusively.

Core Values:

- **Collaboration:** Actively fostering partnerships and teamwork across cultures, sectors, and regions through shared decision-making, joint problem-solving, and co-development of DEI initiatives to leverage collective strengths and build mutual respect.
- **Professionalism & Credibility:** Upholding the highest ethical standards, transparency, and subject-matter expertise in all actions, ensuring accountability, rigor, and adherence to DEI best practices to enhance the profession's trust and reputation.
- **Integrity:** Demonstrating honesty, moral courage, and accountability by consistently aligning behaviours with stated values, openly addressing gaps or misconduct, and translating commitments into measurable, impactful outcomes.
- **Innovation & Change:** Embracing creativity, experimentation, and continuous improvement by applying inclusive design thinking, leveraging emerging technologies, and iterating strategies to proactively meet evolving DEI challenges.
- **Openness & Dialogue:** Cultivating transparent, two-way communication channels, active listening, and regular feedback loops to create psychologically safe environments where all voices are encouraged, respected, and capable of influencing policies and practices.

This framework embeds these values in each DEI principle to ensure authenticity and consistency. These values in each DEI principle to ensure authenticity and consistency.

4. Alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

This DEI policy is closely aligned with the following [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), which guide the Global Alliance in promoting equity, fairness, and sustainable growth globally:

- Goal 1: No Poverty – Foster economic empowerment for marginalised groups by promoting fair wages and employment opportunities.
- Goal 3: Good Health and Well-Being – Support mental health and well-being initiatives, ensuring equitable access to healthcare and well-being services for underrepresented groups.
- Goal 4: Quality Education – Invest in continuous learning and DEI training, ensuring access to quality education and professional development for all employees.
- Goal 5: Gender Equality – Commit to gender parity across leadership and decision-making roles, while eliminating workplace discrimination based on gender.
- Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth – Foster inclusive hiring, equitable compensation, and safe working conditions for all individuals, promoting diversity as a driver of innovation and economic growth.
- Goal 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure – Promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation by ensuring fair access to digital technologies and infrastructure.
- Goal 10: Reduced Inequalities – Proactively reduce social, economic, and political inequalities, promoting inclusion regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status.
- Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities – Ensure that communications strategies contribute to the development of inclusive, safe, and resilient communities.
- Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production – Advocate for responsible business practices that reflect environmental sustainability and equity in supply chains.
- Goal 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions – Build strong, transparent, and inclusive institutions that respect human rights and ensure equal access to justice and opportunity for all.
- Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals – Foster partnerships with other organisations and international bodies, such as the UN, to further the Global Alliance’s DEI objectives.

5. Integration of the UN Global Digital Compact

The [UN Global Digital Compact](#) emphasises the need for universal digital inclusion, privacy protection, and ethical use of technology. The Global Alliance is committed to aligning its DEI policy with the Global Digital Compact in the following ways:

- **Digital Inclusion:** Ensure that digital tools and platforms used within the organisation are accessible to all, particularly those from underrepresented or marginalised groups. This includes complying with global accessibility standards such as [WCAG](#) for online content.
- **Ethical Digital Practices:** Promote responsible communication and transparency in the digital sphere, ensuring that digital campaigns and communications respect privacy rights, avoid misinformation, and counter harmful narratives or stereotypes.
- **Privacy and Data Protection:** Implement robust policies to protect the privacy and personal data of all individuals engaged with the Global Alliance, adhering to international data protection frameworks, such as [GDPR](#), and upholding the Global Digital Compact's privacy principles.
- **Digital Equity:** Support equitable access to digital technologies, especially for individuals in underserved or remote areas, ensuring that technology is a tool for reducing inequalities rather than exacerbating them.
- **Intersectionality Across Policies:** Embed intersectionality not only in cultural competency training but across recruitment, leadership, pay audits, and mentorship programs. This can be done by explicitly considering how multiple forms of discrimination (e.g., race, gender, disability) overlap and ensuring solutions address these complex dynamics.

The Global Alliance will advocate for the Global Digital Compact's objectives within its DEI policy by:

- **Promoting digital literacy and equity:** By empowering communication professionals with the tools and knowledge to harness digital platforms responsibly and inclusively.
- **Using technology to foster global partnerships:** Aligning digital communication strategies with the Compact's vision of creating a more inclusive, secure, and sustainable digital future.
- **Engaging in ethical digital leadership:** Leading efforts to maintain transparency, ensure responsible data use, and advocate for inclusive digital access at every level of the communications profession.

6. DEI Principles

Principle 1: Collaboration for Inclusion

Description:

We collaborate across sectors and communities to build inclusive communication practices that reflect real-world diversity and lived experience.

Purpose:

Our focus is on influencing where we have the greatest reach—within our organization, with our clients, and across our national sector. We believe that driving meaningful change starts with getting our own house in order. By role-modelling inclusive practices through action and accountability, we set a standard others can follow.

Through intentional engagement with diverse stakeholders, we co-create DEI strategies that amplify underrepresented voices, integrate multicultural insights, and reflect collective expertise. From this grounded approach, we contribute to solutions that are locally relevant, nationally credible, and globally resonant.

Principle 2: Professionalism & Credibility through Equality & Equity

Description: Uphold the highest ethical standards by ensuring fair treatment, access, and opportunity in all practices.

Purpose: Build trust and demonstrate our commitment to DEI by embedding equality & equity across all talent and stakeholder processes—from inclusive recruitment and equitable compensation structures to transparent promotion and career development pathways, unbiased performance recognition, supplier diversity, and continuous policy review—ensuring every individual and group experiences fair access, support, and opportunity throughout their engagement with the Global Alliance.

Principle 3: Integrity via Accountability

Description:

Support and enable transparent goal setting, progress tracking, and shared ownership of DEI outcomes among leaders across organizations and communities.

Purpose:

Foster a culture of integrity and accountability by equipping those in roles of influence—including executives, public relations professionals, and communications leaders—with the insight, tools, and support needed to drive meaningful DEI progress. We assist in setting clear targets, building strong monitoring systems, and facilitating open channels for dialogue and feedback. Through regular, transparent reporting and responsive support, we help ensure DEI commitments lead to measurable action. Our role is to empower—not direct—those responsible, strengthening their capacity to lead authentically and visibly on equity in both organizational and public spheres.

Principle 4: Innovation with Intersectionality

Description: Design solutions that reflect the interconnected nature of identities and barriers.

Purpose: Catalyze creative change by applying intersectional analysis to identify complex needs and innovate inclusive programs, policies, and communications—leveraging diverse methodologies, technology, and design thinking to address overlapping dimensions of diversity and dismantle systemic barriers for all individuals and communities.

Principle 5: Openness & Dialogue for Belonging

Description: Encourage respectful, transparent conversations and feedback across all levels.

Purpose: Cultivate a culture of psychological safety and belonging by fostering open dialogue, active listening, and inclusive communication channels—empowering individuals to share experiences, challenge biases, and co-design solutions, thus strengthening community cohesion and ensuring every voice contributes to our collective progress.

7. Core Components of the DEI Policy

Cultural Responsiveness & Contextual Adaptation:

DEI policy development and implementation is an opportunity to embrace the legal, cultural, religious, political, and resource-based contexts of each region and to drive progressive change in these areas to realize our DEI objectives.

This includes acknowledging and redressing the historical and ongoing impacts of colonisation, conflict, and tyranny—particularly on Indigenous peoples and marginalised communities—and working collaboratively to restore equality & equity and social justice.

By leveraging these unique environments, we co-create adaptive policies and programs that champion inclusivity, equality & equity, and belonging in every community, while maintaining a unified global standard.

Education, Training & Cultural Embedding:

Success requires continuous education, hands-on training, and active DEI champion networks to embed the principles into everyday practices and organisational culture—fostering sustained commitment and accountability across all levels.

Policy Integration & Alignment:

Ensure that all organisational policies—including procurement, digital governance, and member engagement—align with DEI principles. Regular policy reviews and updates guarantee coherence and reinforce DEI objectives in every operational area.

Stakeholder Engagement & Partnerships:

Forge meaningful partnerships with internal and external stakeholders—such as member organisations, community groups, and industry partners—to co-develop initiatives, share resources, and amplify impact.

Data & Measurement:

Establish clear metrics, baseline assessments, and transparent reporting mechanisms to track progress, identify gaps, and drive continuous improvement. Utilize both quantitative and qualitative data to provide a holistic view of DEI outcomes.

Communication & Transparency:

Maintain open communication channels to share DEI goals, progress, and challenges. Transparency builds trust and encourages collective ownership of DEI efforts.

Resource Allocation:

Dedicate appropriate budgets, personnel, and technological support to DEI initiatives. Strategic investment underscores the organisation's commitment and enables effective implementation.

Advocacy, Communication & Industry Impact:

Global Communications Standards: Ensure that all internal and external communications promote DEI values, reflect diverse communities, and avoid perpetuating harmful stereotypes.

External DEI Advocacy: Partner with global organisations, such as the UN, to advocate for DEI initiatives within the public relations profession and beyond

8. How to Use This Framework Locally

Step 1. Assess Contextual Factors:

Conduct a cultural responsiveness audit to map legal, cultural, religious, political, and resource-based conditions.

Step 2. Engage Stakeholders:

Convene leadership, staff, and community to align local priorities with the five principles.

Step 3. Conduct a Gap Analysis:

Review existing policies, resources, and culture; identify principle-based gaps.

Step 4. Customize Goals:

Set SMART targets aligned with local context.

Step 5. Develop an Action Plan:

Assign responsibilities, timelines, and resources.

Step 6. Implement & Communicate:

Launch initiatives and establish feedback loops.

Step 7. Measure & Report:

Track progress against indicators and share outcomes transparently.

Tip: Use the Principles & Guidelines Toolkit to adapt templates and tools.

9. Tools and Frameworks for Policy Implementation and Measurement

9.1. Tracking and Measuring DEI Progress

To track and measure DEI progress effectively, the Global Alliance will:

- Establish Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):
 - Diversity Metrics: Track the representation of gender, racial and ethnic minorities, LGBTQIA+, and disabled individuals across leadership roles.
 - Pay Equality and Equity Metrics: Regularly analyse compensation data to ensure there are no disparities to encourage transparency in compensation structures across member organisations to prevent discrepancies in pay based on race, gender, or other identities.
 - Inclusion Metrics: Conduct employee engagement surveys and cultural competency assessments to evaluate workplace inclusion.
- Create a DEI Dashboard: Use tools to develop a DEI dashboard, tracking real-time progress towards DEI goals. This tool will be accessible to leadership and DEI working groups.
- Issue Annual DEI Reports: Publish a public-facing report annually, outlining key achievements, challenges, and next steps, alongside quantitative data and employee experiences as well as specifically focusing on addressing barriers faced by marginalised groups.
- Regular Audits and Adjustments: Incorporate regular audits not just for diversity metrics, but also for the effectiveness of initiatives addressing specific barriers. For example, measure the success of accessibility improvements or track the promotion rates of underrepresented groups.
- Feedback Mechanisms: Build feedback mechanisms directly into the policy framework, allowing employees from marginalised groups to provide anonymous feedback on DEI efforts.

9.2. UN SDG Tools and Digital Compact Integration

- Gender Equality Seal: Use this UN tool to certify gender equality initiatives within the organisation, demonstrating compliance with SDG 5.
- Global Compact Self-Assessment Tool: Leverage this tool to assess alignment with the UN Global Compact principles in human rights, labour, environment, and anti-corruption.

10. Addendum: Glossary of DEI Terms

- **Bias:** A tendency, inclination, or prejudice for or against a particular group or individual, often in a way considered to be unfair.
- **Unconscious Bias:** Social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their conscious awareness.
- **Blind Recruitment:** A recruitment process where identifiable information (such as gender, name, or race) is removed from applications to minimise unconscious bias.
- **Cultural Competency:** The ability to understand, communicate with, and effectively interact with people across cultures.
- **Diversity:** The presence of a range of differences in individuals within a group, including but not limited to race, gender, age, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic background.
- **Equity:** Fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups.
- **Inclusion:** Ensuring that all individuals feel respected, valued, and engaged within a group or organisation, regardless of their differences.
- **Intersectionality:** A concept that describes how different aspects of a person's identity (e.g., race, gender, disability) intersect and interact, often leading to unique experiences of discrimination or privilege.
- **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):** Quantifiable measures used to evaluate the success of an organisation or individual in meeting objectives.
- Indigenous Peoples are communities that have historical continuity with pre-colonial societies, distinct cultural, social, and political characteristics, and a strong connection to their ancestral territories. They self-identify as Indigenous and are recognized as such by others. While the United Nations has not adopted a formal definition, it emphasizes self-identification and the right of Indigenous Peoples to determine their own identity and membership. The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples affirms their rights to self-determination, cultural preservation, and control over their lands and resources.
- First Nations Peoples is a term primarily used in Canada to describe Indigenous groups who are neither Métis nor Inuit. It encompasses over 600 distinct nations and communities, each with unique cultures, languages, and histories. First

Nations Peoples are recognized as one of the three Indigenous groups in Canada and play a vital role in the country's cultural and historical landscape.

- In Australia, the term First Nations Peoples refers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, the original inhabitants of the land. They possess diverse cultures, languages, and spiritual connections to the land, with histories spanning over 60,000 years. First Nations Australians maintain strong cultural identities and continue to advocate for recognition, rights, and reconciliation.

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