

Relevant Justice, Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion Terminology*

Developed by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

Ableism: discrimination against people who are socially considered to have disabilities; prioritization and bias towards “able-bodied” people.

Access: the opportunity to garner power, resources, and social mobility connected to education, health, political influence, etc.

Accessibility: ensuring access to people across identities, in particular people with disabilities.

Accomplice: a person who uses their own access to power, privilege, and resources to support people from marginalized and oppressed communities, at times risking their own well-being to stand with the oppressed communities.

Acculturation: cultural change that happens when aspects from different cultures are incorporated into another culture without causing the loss of unique cultural customs, practices, language, or beliefs.

Advocate: someone who actively supports a cultural community and intervenes to interrupt inequities and injustices that impact that cultural community.

Ageism: discrimination or bias based on real or perceived age.

Agency: the ability of an individual or cultural community to decide their own actions working towards self-determined goals.

Ally: a person who shows, through their beliefs, language, and actions, that they are a supporter of a cultural community.

Anti-Racism: Consistently challenging race-based bias and hate while intentionally working on expanding equity, inclusion, diversity, and justice. Anti-racism is not the same as “non-racism,” which does not exist in the context of social change; “Non-racism” is complacency with the dominant culture, systems, and structures that are created to maintain white supremacy and prioritize whiteness.

Anti-Semitism: prejudice, violence, or hate against Jewish people.

Affinity Groups: groups based upon dominant/subordinated group membership around a particular cultural identity. For example, affinity groups around race include dominant group — whites, and subordinate group — people of color.

Assimilation: cultural change that incorporates aspects of one cultural group into a different cultural group, causing the loss or damage of cultural identity to the group receiving the new cultural norms; this process is typically and historically from socially dominant groups towards socially subordinate groups.

Belonging is the act of building, maintaining, and expanding relationships and community to be inclusive of all people.

Discrimination: acting on bias towards an individual or group based on their real or perceived social identity or identities.

Bias: preconceived beliefs, real or unfounded, about a person or cultural community.

- **Implicit Bias:** preconceived beliefs, real or unfounded, about a person or cultural community that a person is not consciously aware they hold; also called unconscious bias.
- **Explicit Bias:** preconceived beliefs, real or unfounded, about a person or cultural community that a person is consciously aware of, is part of their belief system; also called conscious bias.

Bias Incident: behavior that constitutes an expression of hostility against a person or property of another because of the targeted person's real or perceived social identity based on preconceived beliefs about that social identity group.

Bigotry: intolerance of beliefs, practices, or identities differing from one's own.

Biphobia: the fear or hatred of someone who is or is perceived to be bisexual.

Brave Space: the creation of learning environments that are built on trust. It allows participants to share openly even when they have strongly differing opinions and perspectives and even when there is the possibility of retribution. When done well, participants in a brave space will freely confront, critique, and share differing perspectives from each other, but the conversation will not cease because of these disagreements or differing opinions.

Bystander: a third-party individual who witnesses issues impacting others; bystanders can choose to or not intervene as issues occur.

Cisnormativity: the belief that being cisgender within a gender binary context is normal and should be preferred and prioritized.

Classism: discrimination against someone based on their social class or caste.

Coalition: a collection of people or groups that are working towards a common goal.

Code-Switching: most often attributed to the ways in which we speak and communicate, code-switching is the ability to use different language, vernacular, idiomatic phrases and expressions, behaviors, and non-verbal communication fluidly when moving between two or more cultural groups; it is often done as a way for people from social minority groups to gain access to resources, power, and safety controlled by those in social majority groups.

Collusion: implicit and explicit behaviors taken that reinforce, agree with, and/or conspire with dominant social norms and behaviors to the disadvantage of others. It is also knowingly and unknowingly a way to gain favor and/or advantage from dominant group members.

Colonialism: is the exploitative process of expansion of a nation or cultural community to gain land, resources, power, and (at times) people for their own use; the colonialism enacted by European countries around the world has left a continued legacy of inequities, social injustices, genocide, cultural damage, and political instability to Indigenous and other non-European people globally.

Cultural Appropriation: is the adoption or use of elements of one culture by members of another culture. Cultural appropriation is seen as controversial when elements of a minority culture are used by members of the cultural majority; this is seen as oppressing the minority culture or stripping it of its group identity and intellectual property rights; this view of cultural appropriation is sometimes termed cultural misappropriation.

Cumulative Impact: a culmination of events (actions, language, non-verbal behaviors, etc.) that repeatedly occur that increase the impact the incidents have on an individual or community.

Dead Name: the name given to a person that is not their chosen or affirming name, often in relation to the hurtful use of the wrong name for people who identify as transgender, gender non-conforming, gender fluid, agender, non-binary, etc.

Disenfranchised: deprived or having removed the rights, privilege, agency, access, and power from a cultural community or individual.

Diversity: socially, a broad range of different or unique identities at the individual or group level, including race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, skin color, immigrant status, language, age, abilities, religion, political affiliation, work style, parental status, etc.

Dominant Identities are individual characteristics (i.e., men, White, heterosexual, “able-bodied”) that identify group membership. In most cases, dominant group membership affords the individual unearned social, educational, economic, and political privileges and power. These privileges are usually invisible to individuals and groups who benefit from them and often go unexamined. Most people have both dominant and subordinate identities.

Ethnocentrism: centering on and having bias in favor of one’s own cultural/ethnic/racial group.

Equity: aims to create fair treatment and access to resources and opportunities for all people with consideration and allowances for historical and current imbalances in power, resources, and opportunities, as well as injustices based on social group identity.

Equality: aims to ensure that everyone gets the same things in order to enjoy full, healthy lives. Although it attempts to promote fairness and justice, it can only work if everyone starts from the same place and needs the same things.

Eurocentrism: centering on and having bias in favor of European cultural/ethnic/racial groups.

Hate Crime: a crime motivated by bias towards a particular social identity group; the broad definition of a hate crime may differ from the legal definition.

Hegemony: the dominance of one group over another, often maintained through real-time and slow violence.

Heteronormativity: the belief that heterosexuality within a sexual/romantic/gender binary context is normal and should be preferred and prioritized.

Heterosexism: centering on and having bias towards heterosexual people and culture.

Homophobia: the fear or hatred of those who are or perceived to be gay/lesbian/queer/same-gender-loving.

Horizontal hostility/oppression: the phenomenon of members of a subordinated group(s) directing distorted messages and/or stereotypes toward other members of their same subordinated group or toward members in different subordinated groups; this most often occurs when there are limited resources.

Genocide: the systematic extermination of a group of people based on their social identity.

Gentrification: the process of renovating or changing a neighborhood or community to meet the needs, standards, and norms of a cultural group that has historically been outsiders to that community; communities of color and lower-income communities may face this when white, middle-class+ people change, move into, and “flip” properties and spaces.

Inclusion: creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued as a fully participating member. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in words and actions for all people.

Intercultural: difference within one cultural community.

Intercultural Competence or Cultural Competence: the ability to shift, adapt, and bridge seamlessly between and across cultures.

Intergenerational Trauma: is the transmission of historical oppression and its negative consequences across generations. There is evidence of the impact of intergenerational trauma on the health and well-being and on the health and social disparities of those in subordinate groups (e.g., slavery, the Holocaust, rape culture).

Intergroup Dialogue: intentional conversations between members of different cultural groups to build community, empathy, and coalitions between groups.

Intersectionality: the interconnections between multiple social identities each person holds; this recognizes the needs and experiences of the whole person and not just a singular identity.

Insider/Outsider: terms used to describe how human beings often “tribe up,” creating in-groups and out-groups that tend to intentionally or unintentionally include or exclude individuals. Insider/outside dynamics are evident in almost every culture, society, and organization.

Internalized oppression: the phenomenon of people in the subordinated group internalizing (i.e., believing or buying into) the stereotypes and distorted messages about their own group.

Intent v. Impact: the acknowledgment of how an action has impacted an individual regardless of how it was intended.

Intracultural: differences between cultural communities.

Islamophobia: the fear or hatred of people who are or are perceived to be Muslim.

Majority: from within a social context, the group in society with the greatest access to power, privilege, and resources and/or with simple numerical preponderance.

Marginalization: the act of pushing individuals and groups to the peripheral or out of focus.

Microinequities:

- **Microaggression:** everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.
- **Microassault:** is an explicit derogation characterized primarily by a local or non-verbal attack meant to hurt the intended victim through name-calling, avoidant behavior, or purposeful discriminatory actions.
- **Microinsult:** A micro-insult is characterized by communications that convey rudeness and insensitivity and demean a person's identity. Micro-insults can also occur nonverbally, as when a White teacher fails to acknowledge students of color in the classroom.
- **Microinvalidations:** are characterized by communications that exclude, negate, and nullify the psychological thoughts, feelings, or experiential reality of a person with a subordinated identity.
- **Microadvantages:** Unconscious behaviors that often bestow unearned advantages to the receiver that supports them in building relationships, obtaining employment, receiving promotions, and feeling a sense of comfort, which allows them to navigate environments more easily.

Minority: from within a social context, a group in society with less access to power, privilege, and resources and/or with simply less numerical representation.

Misgendering: identifying someone by the wrong gender, intentionally or unintentionally.

Mobility: the ability to move between social classes within society, based on economic status, education, class, etc.

Multicultural: involving differences in cultural norms, often used interchangeably with “diversity.”

Oppression: systematic unjust treatment, abuse, harm, and subjection of a group of people.

Othering: is the act of destroying, neglecting, and minimizing relationships and community between different groups or individuals.

Patriarchy: a societal system that gives preferential treatment to and prioritizes the needs of (cisgender) men.

“Perfectly Logical Explanation”: A reasonable explanation most often given by a member of the dominant group that ignores and/or invalidates the experience of a subordinate group member’s experience.

Political Correctness: abbreviated to “PC,” a term which is used to describe language, policies, or actions which are intended not to offend or disadvantage a social identity group; being “PC” has been used to avoid dialogue about and interrogation of bias, oppression, and racism.

Power: the ability to control resources, authority, and societal norms.

Prejudice: a biased belief or action towards a person or group.

Privilege: advantages, both unearned and earned, that advantages individuals and groups based on their social identities.

Racism: prejudice based on race plus power of the dominant group that systematically disadvantages and discriminates against Black people, Indigenous people, and people of color (BIPOC) while securing advantages for white people; the act of racism can be actively perpetrated, or it can be passively perpetuated.

Racial Battle Fatigue: describes the chronic exposure to racial discrimination as analogous to the constant pressure soldiers experience on the battlefield. Those who experience constant racial discrimination can experience anxiety, higher levels of stress, fatigue, or serious physical ailments like heart attacks on the job or significant health issues.

Reclaiming: the act of taking back words, resources, land, labor, time, etc., from a majority group to a minority group.

Reconciliation: bringing together individuals or different groups of people to acknowledge and work through harm and differences to find a common way forward that is mutually agreed upon.

Restorative Practice/Justice: the socially agreed-upon convention of building, maintaining, and repairing relationships using self-reflective work and intergroup dialogue.

“Reverse Racism”: A term often used by the dominant group, often in the context of affirmative action, to describe a feeling of being discriminated against. However, this is difficult to justify, as minorities do not have the power to exercise racism against the majority.

Safety v. Discomfort: Safety refers to one’s emotional, psychological, mental, and physical state of being. Discomfort refers to the feelings that may be invoked as a response to intense dialog.

Sexism: prejudice based on sex (and/or gender) plus power of the dominant group that systematically disadvantages and discriminates against women, transgender, non-binary, gender fluid, and non-conforming peoples while securing advantages for cisgender men; the act of sexism can be actively perpetrated, or it can be passively perpetuated.

Slow Violence: harm experienced by social communities that adversely impact or kill them over time, such as pollution, prison-industrial complex, limited access to healthcare, etc.

Social Justice: is both a process and a goal of creating equitable, inclusive, and just systems and societies for all peoples.

Solidarity: being unified in beliefs and actions with others.

Stereotype: a fixed and oversimplified generalization about a social identity group.

Subordinate Identities: are individual characteristics (i.e., woman, Asian, LGBTQ+, ability) that identify group membership. In most cases, these subordinate group members are believed to be and treated as “inferior” to members of the dominant group, which causes social, educational, economic, and political disadvantages. These disadvantages are not always obvious or visible due to dominant cultural norms and standards. Most people have both dominant and subordinate identities.

Systematic/Institutional/Structural Oppression: all the ways that groups and organizations have prejudice and bias embedded into their policies, practices, laws, etc.

Tracking/Panning: noticing, naming, and paying attention to behaviors (and feelings) within ourselves or within a group, trying to avoid judgment, interpretation, or assumption.

Transphobia: hate or fear of people who are or perceived to be transgender/gender non-conforming/non-binary/gender fluid.

Triggers: events that arouse strong, spontaneous emotional reactions that cause great discomfort or negativity, typically related to historically traumatic events, personally or communally.

White Guilt: when people who are white feel ashamed about the harm that racism and oppression have caused to Black people, Indigenous people, and people of color (BIPOC) that was perpetrated or perpetuated by the white community; people experiencing white guilt can become paralyzed and unable to act to address racism and oppression.

White Supremacy: the belief that white people are superior to those of all other races, especially the black race, and should therefore dominate society.

Whiteness: structures and systems that center, prioritize, normalize, and advantage white culture and white communities over non-white peoples.

Xenophobia: the fear or hatred of those who are or perceived to be “other” or an “outsider.” Most often used today to describe fear and hatred of immigrants.

* This is a curated but not an exhaustive list of inclusive, diversity, anti-racism, and equity (IDARE) related terms and definitions. These terms and definitions are continuously evolving, but this list may provide a basic framework and common language when engaging in IDARE conversations. The list was adapted from the following sources:

1. "Beyond the DE&I Acronym: What are Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion?" YW Boston Blog. <https://www.ywboston.org/2019/03/beyond-the-acronym-dei/>.
2. "Diversity Advisory Council: Glossary." University of Maryland, Baltimore. <https://www.umaryland.edu/diversity/resources/glossary/>
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4. "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Terms and Definitions." Hollins University. <https://www.hollins.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/DI-dictionary.pdf>.
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7. "Glossary of Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (DIB) Terms." Harvard University. https://dib.harvard.edu/files/dib/files/dib_glossary.pdf.
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10. "Whiteness." National Museum of African American History & Culture. <https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/whiteness>.