



# Defining: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA)

## Introduction

In 2022, a conglomerate of prominent advocacy organizations determined to secure equitable outcomes for our respective constituents, reached out to 60 DEI executives working for studios, networks, and other entertainment industry institutions, to understand how the values of **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility** are defined within their corporate policies and procedures. Adopting the name, the Reimagine Coalition, the affiliates believe identifying a baseline definition for these widely used terms is absolutely essential to achieving industry-wide progress. Of the 60 industry executives queried, only 20% provided responses. Instead, many questioned the purpose and intention behind the Coalition’s request. Although the number of replies were far fewer than expected, the breadth of responses provided a representative sampling worthy of review.

The undersigned Reimagine Coalition has analyzed the following responses and summarized key takeaways associated with each term in the corresponding sections below, and has provided recommendations that serve to unify our understanding and elevate the pursuit of such values in the entertainment industry. As promised, the following report offers no attribution as to the identity of the respondents.

## Diversity

Diversity Definitions
Psychological, physical, and social differences that occur among any and all individuals; including but not limited to race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, age, gender, sexual orientation, mental or physical ability, and learning styles.
We embrace the literal definition of diversity – difference. Difference must be manifest amongst and throughout our organizational composition through many characteristics, including, but not limited to race, gender identity, age, nationality, culture, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic background, and sexual identity and preference. We are committed to substantial representation in each of these areas, and beyond those listed, through the individuals who comprise our organization.
Increasing the diversity of our audiences by ensuring diverse representation of talent (in front of and behind the camera, above and below the line).
A varied array of identities, experiences, and perspectives that encompasses all genders, races, ethnicities, abilities, sexual orientations, and any other markers of cultural or personally significant identity; one person cannot be “diverse”—only a group can be such.
The state of having people of different races, cultures, etc., in a group or organization.
Diversity is individual differences, characteristics and experiences that make a person unique and distinct.
Storytelling that reflects the viewpoints and experiences of all creators and audiences – addressed through gender parity, <i>authentic</i> cultural representation, and pipeline recruitment opportunities from underrepresented communities in our industry.

The myriad differences comprising one's identity, such as ethnicity, gender identity, sex, religion, age, language, ability, orientation, socioeconomic status, education, geographic region, values, veteran status, marital status, national origin, experiences, worldview and other cognitive/neuro and behavioral attributes. It also involves different ideas, perspectives and values.

Diversity is defined broadly as the range of unique characteristics, perspectives, similarities and differences an individual or organization have that shape the workplace and culture. These may include national origin, language, race, education, disability, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, military status, life experiences and family structure.

Diversity as the array of human characteristics and differences that make people unique, including but not limited to their experiences as well as their race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, physical ability or attributes, religion, and national origin.

Diversity is the range of human differences and presence of people of diverse identities and backgrounds that should be engaged and included to achieve business outcomes.

-Example Being invited to the party.

Diversity - Our uniqueness as individuals, from our demographic to our experience, role, viewpoints and more.

## Takeaways

1. Definitions of diversity generally featured a lengthy list of demographic characteristics and identity markers (e.g. race, ethnicity, age, gender, disabilities, neurodivergence, and more) which represented an effort to be comprehensive.
2. There was some variance in which stakeholder groups were mentioned as being relevant (e.g. employees, audiences, or talent either above or below the line).
3. Some definitions expressed a pragmatic purpose behind supporting diversity such as “increasing the diversity of our audiences” to presumably increase box office sales.
4. Some definitions focused on the unique qualities of an individual, while others spoke to the overall heterogeneity across a collective population.

## Recommendations

***Industry responses focused on listing different dimensions of diversity. We recommend expounding on the value of collective diversity across various functions and highlighting what makes diversity substantive and impactful.***

1. Include verbiage that directly focuses on underrepresented groups.
2. Challenge existing dominant notions of what it means to be “normal.”
3. Be comprehensive when listing dimensions of diversity, and include verbiage that acknowledges the dimensions referenced are not exhaustive.
4. Convey the importance of diversity is self-evident, rather than being subservient to a pragmatic motive.
5. Convey the importance of diversity across all populations engaged in the creation and exchange of media content (employees, talent, creatives, audiences, etc.).
6. The presence of unique individuals does not sufficiently translate into diversity across entire populations. Adjust for the benefit of the collective rather than extrapolate results achieved by individuals.
7. Recognize and communicate that achieving substantive diversity is an outcome of successful equity, inclusion, and accessibility-related initiatives, with “substantive diversity” being defined as that which is not merely performative or tokenizing.

# Equity

## Equity Definitions

The guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups.

Equity is revealed and sustained through several organizational commitments, among these are fair and impartial treatment on all matters, considering and accounting for relevant differences in each individual's past or current circumstances that may require unique consideration, support, and/or action, as well as establishing and maintaining institutional policies and processes for addressing instances of breach or transgression that run counter to this commitment. This commitment to equity must also serve as a cornerstone that enables and encourages the pursuit of internal professional opportunities and advancement amongst our diverse composition.

Working to dismantle longstanding barriers to success in the Industry and inspecting our processes so we do not create or perpetuate inequities.

A recognition of historical inequities that have created an uneven playing field and a conscious effort to level it through allocating resources, support, and access to groups who have been historically deprived; the GOAL of equity is equality but the process of arriving there may require unequal investments to bring about a more equal outcome.

The guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. The guiding principle of equity acknowledges that there are marginalized and underrepresented populations and that fairness (not necessarily equal treatment) regarding these unbalanced conditions is needed to ensure that all groups have equal access to opportunities.

Equity is creating fair and impartial working conditions for those involved.

What does it mean to have equitable stake? My voice is revered as everyone else at the table. I can participate by answering/asking questions. I can initiate conversation.

The fair treatment, access, opportunity and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that prevent the full participation of some groups. The principle of equity acknowledges that there are historically underserved and underrepresented populations and that fairness regarding these unbalanced conditions is necessary to provide equal opportunities to all groups. Embed diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and antiracism objectives into all business practices and processes. It involves providing various levels of support and assistance for all employees. Disallowing marginalizing behaviors, including microaggressions, tokenism, onliness, invisibility, and underestimation/ utilization of one's talent. If equality is the goal, equity must be the means by which people are positioned to be truly equal.

Equity refers to the fair and equitable treatment of all employees so that everyone has access to the opportunities, structures, systems, and resources needed to perform their jobs. Ensuring equity requires the elimination of institutional, and structural barriers that prevented the full participation and advancement of groups of people who have been historically excluded and underserved.

Equity means promoting equal outcomes through the removal of barriers. Equity is intrinsically tied to our efforts to ensure the right resources and opportunities are available for each employee to achieve their full potential regardless of individual circumstances. It extends from career opportunities to advancing digital equity. This approach spans across all of our businesses and communities we support.

Equity recognizes the advantages and barriers that require the need for differentiated strategies to bring people to parity and to achieve equitable outcomes.

- Example Taking additional steps to ensure strong representation in attendance at the party.

Equality – The state of being equal, especially in status, rights, and opportunities.

Equity – A process catalyzed by acknowledging that advantages and barriers lead to unequal opportunities and then continuing to correct and address the imbalance.

## Takeaways

1. Definitions of equity commonly utilized words like “fair” and “impartial” or concepts like “equality of outcome” and “equality of opportunity.”
2. Equity was consistently defined in contrast to “equality,” with the implication that the reader of such a definition may be prone to conflate the two concepts. This contrast also seemed to imply that practices in pursuit of mere equality are outdated or insufficient.
3. Some respondents alluded to historical and systemic barriers afflicting certain demographic groups, and a subset of these respondents prescribed guidelines around addressing such imbalances in pursuit of equity.

## Recommendations

*Industry responses tended to define equity in contrast to other similar terms. We recommend approaching equity as a stand-alone concept with inherent value, contextual nuance, and practical relevance*

1. Define equity as a stand-alone term, rather than in contrast to other terms such as “equality.” This definition should function as a conversation starter, as opposed to a response to one.
2. Adopt an empirical definition of equity, based on the more finite relationship between asset value and accrued stakeholder interest in the asset. Develop recognition and appreciation for sources of cultural contribution and reconcile stakeholder interests to reflect “equitable” outcomes.
3. Provide explanatory detail when using adjacent terms or concepts that require additional clarification such as “fair,” “equal in opportunity,” etc.
4. Allude to historical and systemic barriers insofar as they are integral to understanding what equity is, but refrain from focusing on specific solutions.
5. Consider and communicate what equity specifically looks like within one’s organization, industry, etc., acknowledge the stakeholder interests that contribute to intended outcomes, and define the dimensions across which equity will be evaluated.

## Inclusion

Inclusion Definitions
The act of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate and bring their full, authentic selves to work. An inclusive and welcoming climate embraces differences and offers respect in the words/actions/ thoughts of all people.
Inclusion requires that no member of the organization is excluded from any organizational function or pursuit based on any characteristic that is reflective of our diverse composition.
Ensuring inclusive narratives within the stories we are telling, and how we market those stories to a globally diverse audience.
Culture, processes, policies and norms that ensure that every single voice may equally speak, be heard, and influence outcomes within their realm of expertise without any aspect of their identity being a barrier to that ability.
The act or practice of creating environments in which an individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued to fully participate. <b>INCLUSIVE CULTURE:</b> A system where all members can thrive, feel a sense of belonging, contribute their abilities and perspectives, and receive credit and recognition for these contributions.
Inclusion is when all employees feel valued, respected and empowered to fully contribute as their unique selves at work.

Inclusion is having different types of people in the room, at the table and they are allowed to speak during the meat of the discussion and helping to drive the conversation, not just window dressing.

The act of creating an environment where the inherent worth and dignity of all people are recognized. An inclusive climate and environment, conveys a sense of belonging, values and practices respect for the talents, beliefs, backgrounds, perspectives, and ways of knowing of all of its members. It involves creating a safe and welcoming culture and climate where all employees are valued, have an authentic sense of belonging, experience psychological safety, and are empowered to thrive.

Inclusion is the intentional action to connect each employee to the company's mission and values, to encourage collaboration, flexibility, and fairness; so that employees from all backgrounds thrive. Belonging is the experience of employees when they feel seen & heard for who they are, accepted and valued as members of the organization.

Inclusion means an environment in which our employees, customers, and partners feel welcome, valued, and empowered. It means creating a culture of belonging where the inherent worth and dignity of all people are recognized. We are proactive in our approach to this work, particularly with our employee base, creating programs to foster open, honest feedback and dialog.

Inclusion is creating a collaborative, supportive and respectful environment that increases the participation and ongoing engagement of people from diverse backgrounds in the culture, business practices and processes. Example Being asked to dance at the party. Belonging means everyone feels they are safe to be their authentic self and that all facets of their unique identities are welcome. This is accomplished through a culture that prioritizes empathy and vulnerability to foster respect, security, and support for employees. Achieving this increases the participation and ongoing engagement of people in the culture, business practices and processes in service of the mission of the organization. Example: Dancing to your song however you want, while others cheer you on.

**Inclusion – A practice by which different groups or individuals of different backgrounds feel welcomed, accepted, and treated equally.**

## Takeaways

1. Some organizations shared definitions of inclusion with substantial overlap in scope or meaning with their own definitions of diversity.
2. Some definitions were more specific and focused only on a limited application of inclusion such as organizational inclusion or inclusive narratives.
3. There were frequent allusions to a nebulous “environment” in which diverse participants are afforded the right and access to participate in decision-making processes.

## Recommendations

***Industry responses generally provided definitions for inclusion that were either too narrow in scope or too vague in concept. We recommend highlighting practical functions within a broad scope of inclusion and how such functions are instrumental to creating a sense of belonging.***

1. Define the term with specificity such that it is distinct from one’s definition of diversity.
2. Convey the importance of inclusion as general and self-evident. Be comprehensive if referencing multiple specific arenas in which inclusion is valued and pursued.
3. Call out how inclusion can practically be woven into decision-making structures and processes with meaningful and substantive impact.
4. Caution against common mistakes that are made in the pursuit of inclusion such as tokenization.
5. Consider that efforts related to inclusion can only be deemed successful if they result in a perceived sense of belonging among all stakeholders.

# Accessibility

## Accessibility Definitions

The set of properties that allows a product, service, or facility to be used by people with a wide range of capabilities, either directly or in conjunction with assistive technologies. Although the term "accessibility" typically addresses users who have a disability, the concept is not limited to disability issues.

Accessibility has two meanings. The first meaning requires that our organization constantly ensure that the physical spaces in which we operate, both on permanent and temporary basis, enable complete and easily managed access to all individuals, regardless of able-bodied capacity. Beyond the structural considerations of physical space, accessibility must also include establishing and maintaining an inviting, welcoming, and comfortable atmosphere for all individuals, regardless of able-bodied capacity. The second meaning of accessibility is a commitment to provide access to and through our organization to other institutions to advance professional development, achievement, and societal contribution.

Enabling those with disabilities to experience our content and receive the benefit in alignment with our customers. Accessibility is about identifying and addressing usage barriers thus affording persons with disabilities boundary-less experiences in ableist environments.

Culture, processes, policies and norms that allow each person to fully contribute and participate regardless of their ability or disability status.

Accessibility is making our products, content, and experiences accessible to the widest possible audience, including people with disabilities.

Ensuring that all environments are usable and accessible for each person to fully participate, engage, and be valued. This includes all communication, activities, and spaces, which promotes independence and empowerment.

Accessibility describes our steadfast commitment to making products, technology, experiences, and support available to the widest audience, and by ensuring the best possible experience for people with disabilities. It also speaks to our fundamental belief that all our employees should be afforded the opportunity to access the same systems, acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally effective and equally integrated manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use.

Accessibility is giving equitable access to everyone along the continuum of human ability and experience. Accessibility encompasses our commitment beyond compliance and refers to how the company makes space for the characteristics that each person brings.

Accessibility – The practices of designing products, resources, and experiences that are usable to the widest possible range of abilities.

## Takeaways

1. Some organizations did not provide definitions for accessibility at all, implying a deprioritization of this value compared to the other three.
2. Some definitions were more specific and focused only on a limited application of accessibility such as physical accessibility within an office building or making media more consumable for differently abled audiences.
3. Definitions varied in scope, with narrower ones only addressing the disability community, while broader ones related accessibility to a variety of demographic dimensions (often the same dimensions that constitute diversity).
4. Broader definitions of accessibility tended to share substantial overlap in meaning with definitions of diversity and inclusion provided by the same organizations.

## Recommendations

*Industry responses tended to undervalue accessibility and/or limit its scope of relevance to the disability community. We recommend approaching accessibility as a more universal concept that accounts for how access can differ across all dimensions of human variance.*

1. Consider the importance of accessibility across all populations that participate in and all arenas that are relevant to the creation and exchange of media.
2. Define accessibility in broad terms without limiting its scope to specific dimensions of human variance. Just as diversity should be defined in a comprehensive manner, accessibility should also encompass considerations of access for variation across all demographic dimensions and identity markers.
3. Define accessibility specifically such that the term is distinct from one's definitions of diversity and inclusion.
4. Focus on the structural and systemic barriers that exist to inhibit accessibility, rather than real or perceived "limitations" of any individual(s).
5. Avoid terminology that possesses negative connotations such as "limitations," "disorders," "impairments," "differences," etc. which only serve to force an onus on the disability community.

## Next Steps

Each affiliate of the Reimagine Coalition will continue to engage with the institutions of media and entertainment, on behalf of their respective constituents. We recognize our collective bond represents the interests of the general public. "Mainstream" audiences are also targeted consumers and deeply coveted by creators and distributors of media content. Meaningful exchange with our collective Coalition and each affiliate represents invaluable opportunity to configure corporate policy and procedure to align with the needs and expectations of intended customers.

The Reimagine Coalition will soon announce a diagnostic plan to assist industry institutions in identifying and articulating strategies to achieve intended DEIA results. The implementation of those strategies will be monitored and evaluated by the Reimagine Coalition, ensuring outcomes are commensurate with consumer needs and expectations. Recognition of institutional implementation efforts will be further acknowledged by tiered certification, affirming and substantiating corporate commitments to workforce wellness and product appeal.

