DEI DICTIONARY OF TERMS WORKING DOCUMENT
(ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

We recognize the evolution of acceptable language related to race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and gender identity among others. This DEI Glossary is a living document and should be reviewed annually to incorporate revisions that reflect the ever-changing nature of these complex topics. The latest revision date will be reflected at the bottom of each page.

The **terms** in this glossary are in alphabetical order. The original document orders the terms to enhance one's understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion in our shared communities. To access the original version of the DEI Dictionary of Terms please visit the FIRST Center's DEI website.

Individuals with recommendations for revisions to this glossary can submit their suggestions via *FIRST CENTER - CONTACT US.*

We appreciate your engagement and contributions to this living document.

TERMS

Able-Bodied - An able-bodied person is someone who does not have a disability.

Ableism - discrimination against people with disabilities and in favor of abled-bodied people.

Ageism - stereotyping or discrimination against individuals or groups based on age.

Ally / Allyship / Active Ally – an ally is a person who is not a member of a marginalized or disadvantaged group but who actively and consistently provides support to achieve equality. An active ally is willing to use their position of power or privilege to dismantle systems of inequality.

There is diversity in the thinking around this term in that some folks feel that "Ally" is a term they can use to identify themselves as supporting a marginalized/ underrepresented group. While others feel that the term "Ally" can only be given to someone outside of the group by those who have been marginalized or disadvantaged.

American Indian or Alaska Native – a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Americas and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.

Antiracism – the conscious choice to take actions to reduce systems of inequality based on race.

Antisemitism - hostility toward or discrimination against people who are Jewish. Antisemitism can take the form of promoting negative stereotypes, social exclusion, or violence.

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Asexual is used to describe people who lack sexual attraction or desire for other people without regard to gender identity.

Asian – a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia or the Indian subcontinent.

Belonging - A sense of belonging occurs when diverse employees feel they are safe to bring their unique and authentic selves to the workplace. They are comfortable at work, connected with the people with whom they work, and can make a meaningful contribution to the workplace.

Bias is a preference for or against something, an individual, or social group. It is generally agreed that all persons have biases they are either conscious or unconscious of having. Biases interfere with our ability to make impartial judgments.

Bigotry - an unreasonable belief or an irrational attachment to negative stereotypes and prejudices about other groups of people

BIPOC is an acronym used to describe *Black* people, *Indigenous* people, and *People of Color.*

Bisexual generally refers to individuals who experience attraction to or sexual behavior with those of the same or other sex.

Black or African American – a person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa.

Cisgender is a term used to describe a person whose gender identity matches the gender they were assigned at birth.

Cisgenderism - the systemic impact of attitudes, policies, and practices that assume transgender and/or non-binary people are inferior, 'unnatural,' or disordered.

Classism - hostility or prejudice toward a group based on their social class. **Culture** represents the patterns of daily life learned consciously or unconsciously by a group of people in society. People within a culture share a language, traditions, food, values, attitudes, and beliefs. Workplace culture is defined by the norms of an industry and organizations within the industry.

Deadnaming - calling someone by their birth name after they have changed their name. This is associated with transgender people who have changed their name as part of their transition.

DEI – acronym used for diversity, equity and inclusion

Disability is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits on or more major life activities. Some disabilities are *invisible* or are not readily identified from looking at a person. The systemic effect of not having people with disabilities "at the table" is there are many structures of society that are not accessible to persons of differing abilities.

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Discrimination - is defined by the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission as unfair treatment directed at one or more people as a result of their race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), citizenship or immigration status, national origin, disability, age (age 40 or over), or genetic information.

Diversity is the representation of different types of people in a group, in an organization, community, or workplace, based on visible and invisible identity traits or characteristics.

Equality is sameness or equivalence in number, quality, measure, or power. Equality in society is optimal. Equality in the workplace is achievable.

Equity occurs when all people have fair access to opportunities, resources, and the ability to thrive. Equity requires the removal of historical and systemic barriers to access. Equity is sometimes confused with equality.

Ethnicity describes a group based on shared cultural heritage, language, ancestry, and customs.

Gay often refers to men who are primarily attracted to men or engage in sexual behavior primarily with men, but some women with same-sex attractions or behavior use this term.

Gender Expression refers to how people present their gender identity through appearance, behavior, and/or dress.

Gender Identity refers to whether someone thinks of themselves as a man, woman, or something else (i.e., as both or neither man nor woman)

Heterosexism - the belief or presumption that heterosexuality is superior to homosexuality and other sexual orientations.

Hispanic or Latino is an ethnicity. It describes a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American or other Spanish culture, origin, or ancestry, regardless of race.

Homophobia - an irrational hostility towards or prejudice against homosexual people or homosexuality.

Implicit Bias / Unconscious Bias are judgements and assumptions we make for or against something, an individual, or social group unconsciously and without thoughtful judgment or rational assessment.

Inclusion is an outcome where diverse employees are welcomed to the table and their perspectives are valued and supported. Each person is able to demonstrate their strengths to make meaningful contributions to the common goals of the organization.

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Indigenous People share ancestral relationships and ties to the physical land and resources they currently occupy or from which they have been displaced due to historic colonization and conflict.

Individual / Interpersonal Racism occurs between individuals. These often involve negative racial slurs, biases, and hateful words or actions.

Institutional / Structural Racism is the result of policies, practices, and procedures of institutions, including employers, that marginalize diverse racial groups.

Internalized Racism refers to the acceptance by marginalized racial populations of the negative societal beliefs and stereotypes about themselves which can lead to the perception of themselves as devalued, worthless, and powerless.

Intersectionality refers to the complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination combine, overlap, or intersect to produce and sustain complex inequities. Recognition that various parts of our identity overlap to create unique experiences of oppression and privilege. For example, a White transgender woman might experience discriminatory behavior targeted towards women and transgender individuals.

Invisible Diversity Traits are not readily viewed by another individual and include diversity of thought, perspectives, education, family status, values and beliefs, working style, and socioeconomic status. In some situations, age, physical/mental ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, or religious identity cannot be ascertained by another.

Islamophobia - hostility towards or prejudice against people who practice Islam as a religion.

-ism - The suffix "-ism" denotes the condition of systemic oppression resulting from prejudices embedded in an organization or society's culture. Subordinated group members (by gender, race, age, sexual orientation, ability, etc.) experience disadvantages by being excluded, underutilized, unrecognized, and underdeveloped.

Lesbian refers to women who are primarily attracted to women or engage in sexual behavior primarily with women.

LGBTQ is an acronym used to describe lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer populations. NOTE: Some refer to the "Q" as "questioning" instead of "queer". Other variations include **LGBTQ (+), LGBTQIA, LGBTQ2S**. It is important to remember that while the acronyms representing sexual and gender minorities (SGM) may change, the goal is to be inclusive and respectful to the SGM community.

Marginalized individuals are usually relegated to or placed in an unimportant or a depowered position in society.

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Microaffirmations - small actions that can clear the way for opportunity, gestures of inclusion and caring, and graceful acts of listening. Microaffirmations foster inclusion and support to people who may feel isolated.

Microaggressions are verbal and nonverbal subtleties, insults, and slights towards members of marginalized populations that are either intentional or unintentional. Microaggressions can sometimes be intended as a compliment by the offender who is unaware of the negative impact to the recipient.

An example of a microaggression is someone stating to an Asian American, "You speak great English." The speaker may have intended the comment as a compliment, but the receiver may wonder, "What did you expect?", and take the comment as a subtle insult.

Minority is an outdated term in the US. Historically, it was the way to describe a subgroup of the population with less power than the majority group in the population. It is now preferrable to use the specific name of the group being described using socially acceptable language.

Minority Stress represents the stress resulting from stigma, prejudice and discrimination that members of underrepresented groups experience which can lead to negative mental, emotional and physical health outcomes. Members of underrepresented groups expend emotional labor such as soothing, comforting, and easing the way for others in the dominant group, usually in the workplace, at the expense of one's own emotions. Minority Stress is uniquely experienced by people who are members of non-dominant or stigmatized groups. It is chronic and socially based.

Misgendering – is when one mistakes or misstates a person's gender in terms that do not reflect the gender with which that person identifies.

Misogynoir - is an intersectional construct that describes a uniquely anti-Black form of misogyny which Black women experience in the form of stereotypes, violence, disregard for bodily integrity, and physical or emotional suffering. One example of misogynoir is the "angry Black woman."

Misogyny - hostility towards or prejudice against women.

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander – a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

Neurodiversity exists in the population. It is the awareness that every person's brain operates differently. People also have different ways of learning, remembering information, as well as different ways of processing information and socially interacting with others. Some examples of **neurodiverse identities** include People with - autism, ADHD, ADD, dyslexia, OCD.

Non-Binary is one of the more common terms in the US to describe a person whose gender identity is neither man nor woman.

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Othering - the process by which social exclusion occurs, where a dominant group claims normative status and everyone outside of the group is defined in relation to the dominant group.

Outing - an inadvertent or intentional sharing of information about another person's sexual orientation or gender identity without their consent. Outing someone can place them at risk for harm.

Person / People of Color is used primarily to describe people who do not racially identify as White.

Person / People-First language - Using person/people-first language is preferrable to making a descriptor the focus of the statement. A person has a particular condition or issue. Using person/people-first language recognizes the person is not the condition/issue/disease they may have. Therefore, one should aim to say, "person with a disability" instead of "disabled person" or "person with alcoholism" instead of "alcoholic" when describing people with these conditions.

Note: Some people may not use person-first language when speaking about themselves as a matter of choice, e.g. "I am autistic" instead of "I am a person with autism."

Phobia - A fear, horror, strong dislike, or aversion of an object, person, animal, activity, or situation.

Prejudice - an unreasonable opinion or dislike of something or someone.

Privilege refers to groups that hold certain social advantages, benefits or degrees of prestige and respect that an individual has by virtue of belonging to certain social identity groups. It is important to note that having privilege does not mean that one does not experience oppression based on their other identities.

Queer used by some individuals to describe a non-heterosexual identity or to refer to the LGBTQ community at large.

Race is a social construct that describes a group based on physical traits or characteristics.

Race and **Ethnicity** are not interchangeable. Both are used by the United States Census Bureau to describe groups of people in the overall population. The terms used by the US Census Bureau are listed below.

Racism - is an umbrella term about a belief that racial differences are associated with superiority or inferiority of a group of people who belong to a particular racial category. Dr. Camara Jones' - Allegories on race and racism (TEDxEmory, 2014)

Religious Identity refers to a person's experience and connections to being a member of or affiliated with a religious group. This can change over time. Someone can have a religious identity without being a strong believer or practitioner of the religion.

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Respect - the unbiased consideration for the rights, values, and beliefs and property of other people.

Reverse discrimination - when a member of a dominant or non-marginalized group is unfairly treated in favor of a member of a historically disadvantaged or marginalized group for an opportunity.

Sex refers to biological or physiological categories of male or female based on characteristics present at birth such as chromosomes, hormones, and/or genitalia.

Sex Assigned at Birth generally refers to whether an individual is categorized as male or female at the time they are born, often based on appearance of their genitalia.

Sexism - the systemic oppression based on sex and/or gender.

Sexual Orientation may refer to an identity, attraction to people of same and/or different sex, or sexual behavior with people of the same and/or different sex.

Social Class is a major group or division of society having a common level of power and prestige based on a common socioeconomic status. Often, the members of a particular social class share values and have similar cultural interests and social patterns.

Socioeconomic Status is the position of an individual or group on the socioeconomic scale, which is determined by a combination of social and economic factors such as income, amount and kind of education, type and prestige of occupation, and place of residence.

Stereotype - a set of cognitive generalizations about the qualities and characteristics of the members of a group or social category. Stereotypes are often exaggerated and negative. Stereotypes are resistant to revision even when perceivers encounter individuals with qualities that are not congruent with the stereotype.

Stigma - the negative social attitude attached to a characteristic of an individual that may be regarded as a mental, physical, or social deficiency. A stigma implies social disapproval and can lead unfairly to discrimination against and exclusion of the individual.

Systemic Racism is the overarching system of racial bias across institutions and society that sustains racism.

Transgender is a term used to describe a person whose gender identity does not align with their sex assigned at birth.

Transphobia - an irrational fear or hatred of transsexual or transgender people.
Two or More Races – a person who identifies as two or more of the listed racial categories. The US Census Bureau estimates the number of people who identify as two or more races will triple by 2060. People in this category may have parents or grandparents of different races.

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However, some people who might fit in to this category may identify with only one racial category and will self-select one of the other categories to describe one's race.

Unconscious Bias/ Implicit Bias are judgements and assumptions we make for or against something, an individual or social group unconsciously and without thoughtful judgment or rational assessment.

Underrepresented members of a group identities whose numbers are demographically fewer than the larger majority groups in a population. Underrepresented is the preferred term to "minority".

Visible Diversity Traits include characteristics which may be viewed or logically ascertained by another individual such as race, ethnicity, and culture. In some situations, age, physical/mental ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, or religious identity can be ascertained by another.

White – a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East or North Africa. **Caucasian** is used as a synonym for White and describes people with origins in the Caucasian countries.

Xenophobia - the hostility or prejudice towards people, cultures, and customs that are foreign, or perceived as foreign.

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Endnotes

Note to reviewers, I will update endnotes after final reviews are done for the sake of easy editing.

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