



Rally Shared Language

If our organization is to progress and advance equity, having an understanding of keywords and concepts pertaining to race and racism is a necessity. Below is a selection of words and phrases that are useful to learn as we continue to develop competence and awareness of the issues surrounding racial and social equity.

- **AAPI:** Asian American and Pacific Islander
- **BIPOC:** [BIPOC](#) means Black, Indigenous, People of Color. People of Color, Brown & Black, Minorities, African American, Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Hispanic, Native, First Americans.
- **Black Lives Matter (BLM):** An international activist movement bringing justice, healing, and freedom to Black people across the globe. #BlackLivesMatter was founded by Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi. As a queer Black woman, Patrisse Cullors has worked to center queer and trans people of color at the core of the cause, as witnessed through the #BlackTransLivesMatter sub-movement.
- **Latinx:** [Latinx](#) is a gender-neutral neologism, sometimes used to refer to people of Latin American cultural or ethnic identity in the United States. The ⟨-x⟩ suffix replaces the ⟨-o/-a⟩ ending of Latino and Latina that is typical of grammatical gender in Spanish. Its plural is Latinxs
- **Gender Expression:** The external manifestations of gender, expressed through such things as names, pronouns, clothing, haircuts, behavior, voice, body characteristics, and more.
- **Gender Identity:** One's internal, deeply held sense of gender. Some people identify completely with the gender they were assigned at birth (usually male or female), while others may identify with only a part of that gender, or not at all. Some people identify with another gender entirely. Unlike gender expression, gender identity is not visible to others.
- **Sex:** At birth, infants are commonly assigned a sex. This is usually based on the appearance of their external anatomy and is often confused with gender. However, a person's sex is actually a combination of bodily characteristics including chromosomes, hormones, internal and external reproductive organs, and secondary sex characteristics. As a result, there are many more sexes than just male and female, just like there are many more genders than just male and female, as well.
- **Sexual Orientation:** The desire one has for emotional, romantic, and/or sexual relationships with others based on their gender expression, gender identity, and/or sex. Many people choose to label their sexual orientation, while others do not.



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- **Bisexual, or bi:** Someone who is attracted to those of their same gender as well as to those of a different gender (for example, a woman who is attracted to both women and men). Some people use the word bisexual as an umbrella term to describe individuals that are attracted to more than one gender. In this way, the term is closely related to pansexual, or omnisexual, meaning someone who is attracted to people of any gender identity.
- **Cisgender, or cis:** A person whose gender identity matches the gender they were assigned at birth.
- **Gender Nonconforming:** Someone whose [gender identity](#) and/or gender expression does not conform to the cultural or social expectations of gender, particularly in relation to male or female. This can be an umbrella term for many identities including, but not limited to:
 - **Agender** (or neutrois, gender-neutral, or genderless): Someone who has little or no personal connection with gender.
 - **Bigender:** someone who identifies with both male and female genders, or even a third gender.
 - **Genderfluid:** someone whose gender identity and/or expression varies over time.
 - **Genderqueer** (or third gender): someone whose gender identity and/or expression falls between or outside of male and female.
 - **Intergender:** someone whose identity is between genders and/or a combination of gender identities and expressions.
 - **Pangender:** someone whose identity is comprised of all or many gender identities and expressions.
- **LGBT+:** The acronym for “lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender” (sometimes seen as “GLBT”). The plus sign represents the fact that many communities choose to expand the acronym to include other identities. For example, while it is common in the United States to see “LGBT” or “LGBTQ” (for queer), it is more common to see “LGBTI” (for intersex) in Europe.
- **Non-Binary:** The idea that there are only two genders is sometimes called a “gender binary,” because binary means “having two parts” (male and female). Therefore, [“non-binary”](#) is one term people use to describe genders that don’t fall into one of these two categories, male or female.
- **Transgender or Trans:** [Transgender](#) is a broad term that can be used to describe people whose gender identity is different from the gender they were thought to be when they were born. “Trans” is often used as shorthand for transgender.



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- **Inclusive Leadership:** [Inclusive leadership](#) is a leadership style committed to ensuring all team members are: treated equitably, feel a sense of belonging and value, and. have the resources and support they need to achieve their full potential.
- **Anti-racism:** [Anti-racism](#) is the process (or actions) of actively identifying and opposing racism. The goal of anti-racism is to challenge racism and actively change the policies, behaviors, and beliefs that perpetuate racist ideas and systems.
- **Racial Trauma:** [Racial trauma](#) or race-based traumatic stress (RBTS) refers to the mental and emotional injury caused by encounters with racial bias and ethnic discrimination, racism, and hate crimes
- **Power:** Have power over others is the ability to exert influence over others, make decisions on their behalf or direct their work. Power is not always explicitly defined. [Power dynamics](#) exist in every workplace.
- **Privilege:** A benefit that you have that you did not earn. [Social privilege](#) conveys an advantage or entitlement for belonging to a class, race, gender, or relative proximity to a class, race, gender, that is considered superior or preferred.
- **Bias:** An inclination. Prejudice or preference in favor of or against one thing, person, group, or ideology compared with another.
- **Implicit Bias:** Thoughts and feelings are “implicit” if we are unaware of them. We have an implicit bias when, rather than being neutral, we have a preference for (or aversion to) a person or group of people but are unaware of the bias. Thus, we use the term “[Implicit Bias](#)” to describe when we have attitudes towards people or associate stereotypes with them without our conscious knowledge. A fairly commonplace example of this is seen in studies that show that white people will frequently associate criminality with black people without even realizing they’re doing it. It is the tendency to make decisions, hold a belief, or take action in an unknowingly irrational or unfounded way.
- **Explicit Bias:** The attitudes and beliefs we have about a person or group on a conscious level. With explicit bias, individuals are aware of their prejudices and attitudes toward certain groups. Positive or negative preferences for a particular group are conscious. Overt racism and racist comments are examples of explicit biases. Much of the time, these biases and their expression arise as the direct result of a perceived threat. When people feel threatened, they are more likely to draw group boundaries to distinguish themselves from others.
- **Microaggressions:** Brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative slights, invalidations, and insults to an individual or group because of their



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marginalized status in society. [Microaggressions](#) are often [challenging to recognize](#) and often difficult to [address](#).

- **Ally:** Someone from a privileged group who is aware of how oppression works and struggles alongside members of an oppressed group to take action to end oppression. Being a white (or straight) [ally](#) entails building relationships with both marginalized people, and also with white people in order to challenge them in their thinking about race
- **Cultural Safety:** The recognition that one needs to be aware of and challenge unequal power relations at the level of individual, family, community, and society. In a culturally safe learning environment, each person feels that their unique cultural background is respected and they are free to be themselves without being judged, put on the spot, or asked to speak for all members of their group.
- **Heteronormativity:** The belief that heterosexuality is the default, preferred, or normal mode of sexual orientation. It assumes that gender is binary (i.e., that there are only two distinct, opposite genders) and that sexual and marital relations are most appropriate between people of the opposite sex.
- **Intersectionality:** According to the woman and scholar who founded the concept, [Dr. Kimberle Crenshaw](#), intersectionality is “a metaphor for understanding the ways in which multiple forms of inequality or disadvantages compound themselves and create obstacles that are not always understood in conventional ways of thinking. It is a prism for understanding certain types of problems. African American girls are six times more likely to be suspended than white girls. That is not just a race problem; it is also a gender problem. You cannot change outcomes without understanding how they come about.”
- **Center:** to prioritize or bring to the forefront.
- **Social Location:** The social position an individual holds within society and is based upon social characteristics deemed to be important by any given society. Some of the social characteristics deemed to be important by U.S. society include social class position, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, race, religion, and so on.
- **Racial Justice:** The systematic fair treatment of people of all races, resulting in equitable opportunities and outcomes.
- **Equality:** Equality means each individual or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities.
- **Equity:** Equity recognizes that each person has different circumstances and one may need to allocate different resources and opportunities to ensure an equal outcome.



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- **Inequity:** lack of fairness, justice, or reparatory justice.
- **Disparity:** a significant difference.
- **White Supremacy:** A belief that the white race and culture are superior.
- **Reconciliation:** the process of being reconciled. It is the process of opposing groups or entities agreeing to make amends, heal and move forward.
- **Structural Inequities:** Structural inequities are the personal, interpersonal, institutional, and systemic drivers—such as, racism, sexism, classism, ableism, xenophobia, and homophobia—that make those identities salient to the fair distribution of opportunities and outcomes.
- **Health Disparities:** If a health outcome is seen to a greater or lesser extent between populations, there is disparity. Race or ethnicity, sex, sexual identity, age, disability, socioeconomic status, and geographic location all contribute to an individual's ability to achieve good health.
- **Health Equity:** Everyone has a fair and equal opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to a living wage, quality food, education and housing, safe environments, and access to health care.
- **Disenfranchisement:** The state of being deprived of a right or privilege, especially the right to vote or work.
- **Decolonization:** [Decolonization](#) is the process of deconstructing colonial ideologies of the superiority and privilege of Western thought and approaches. On the one hand, decolonization involves dismantling structures that perpetuate the status quo and addressing unbalanced power dynamics. On the other hand, decolonization involves valuing and revitalizing Indigenous knowledge and approaches and weeding out settler or colonizer biases or assumptions that have impacted Indigenous ways of being.
- **Indigenous:** Indigenous peoples are the holders of unique languages, knowledge systems, and beliefs and possess invaluable knowledge of practices for sustainability.
- **Pronouns:** a person's preferred identification. He, she, they.
- **Indifference:** Apathy towards racial justice, which is a form of racism. When one has the privilege of being indifferent or unconcerned, they may not be directly impacted by racism.