

Difficult-Discussions Inc.

VISION

2027

Difficult-
Discussions

The Path to Equity

difficult-discussions@outlook.com

715-544-2010

www.difficult-discussions.com

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ABOUT DIFFICULT-DISCUSSIONS INC.

MISSION

Founded in 2019, Difficult-Discussions' mission is to provide resources such as legislative support, educational handouts, and interactive activities that can help make an institution more equitable while building a community where activists help each other. Our primary focus is to serve universities, businesses, and community organizations. Join us in the path to equity.

VISION

Create easily accessible resources that equip our allies in the fight for equity with the necessary tools to tackle systematic, institutional, and individual marginalization while building a community of social justice activists.

PURPOSE

Difficult-Discussions Inc. is driven by a core purpose—to overcome the challenges posed by financial and geographic barriers, resulting in an inequitable access to diversity, equity, and inclusion resources for rural American communities. Our mission is to bridge this gap by extending our services across the United States. As a Social Welfare Organization operating within the guidelines of the Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(4), we are committed to providing essential resources and fostering difficult yet crucial discussions on these critical matters. In adherence to our organizational principles, no part of our net earnings shall benefit individual members, trustees, officers, or any private persons, ensuring that our efforts contribute solely to the enhancement of social welfare in communities nationwide.

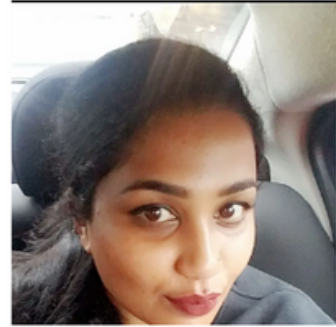
OUR TEAM



Christopher Benny
Executive Director
Co-Founder



Zantasia Johnson
Operations Director
Co-Founder



Crisma Benny
Finance Director



Sage Lefebvre
Marketing Director



Riley Garski
Board Member



Troy Lee
Board Member



Eve Kramer
Board Member



Meleesa Johnson
Board Member

INTRODUCTION

In December 2023, the Board of Directors at Difficult-Discussions Inc. engaged in a collaborative effort, pooling their insights to craft a strategic action plan that would chart the course for the organization's future endeavors. This report stands as a testament to their collective commitment, encapsulating the culmination of their efforts in the form of the Difficult-Discussions Inc. Vision 2027 Action Plan—a forward-looking roadmap that will guide the organization through the intricacies of the next four years.

The formulation of this action plan was not arbitrary; rather, it was a result of a conscientious and systematic approach. To garner a comprehensive understanding of the perspectives held by the members of the Difficult-Discussions Inc. Board of Directors, a succinct yet insightful three-question survey was thoughtfully designed and disseminated. This survey served as the primary instrument through which the board members could articulate their thoughts and contribute to the shaping of the organization's strategic trajectory.

Contained within the pages of this report is a thorough exposition of the responses garnered through the aforementioned survey. Each input has been meticulously outlined, analyzed, and contextualized to present a nuanced overview of the collective vision and strategic priorities articulated by our esteemed board members. The ensuing sections delve into the key thematic areas that emerged from the survey, providing a holistic perspective on the aspirations and insights that will guide Difficult-Discussions Inc. towards its Vision 2027 objectives.

As we embark on this journey, we invite our stakeholders, partners, and supporters to delve into the rich content of the Difficult-Discussions Inc. Vision 2027 Action Plan report. May this document serve not only as a strategic guide for the organization but also as a testament to our unwavering commitment to fostering meaningful discourse and effecting positive change in the realm of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Together, let us navigate the path towards a more inclusive and equitable future.

FOCUSED ONGOING ACTIVITIES

Since its establishment in 2019, Difficult-Discussions Inc. has deployed a diverse array of activities—more than 11 in total—to address the accessibility gap in diversity, equity, and inclusion services for rural American communities. In an effort to optimize our limited resources, the board has strategically chosen to prioritize the following four initiatives.

FREE WEBINARS

Difficult-Discussions' free webinar series provides live workshops, equipping individuals in the pursuit of equity with essential tools to address systemic, institutional, and individual marginalization. This resource serves to disseminate ideas and educate participants on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) topics.

WORKSHOPS

Difficult-Discussions Inc. provides specialized equity and inclusion workshops for organizations, including a pre-workshop survey, a tailored interactive session, and a post-workshop evaluation. Priced at \$100 per group workshop, we offer a fee waiver for those facing financial constraints, ensuring accessibility to our valuable services.

PATH TO EQUITY PODCAST

The Difficult Discussions podcast series is a vital resource in our commitment to fostering equitable and inclusive communities. Accessible on 11 major streaming platforms, it aims to propagate ideas and educate audiences on topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

EDUCATIONAL HANDOUTS

Our repository of free downloadable educational resources serves as a versatile tool for conducting workshops, distributing informative handouts, and initiating or sustaining difficult discussions surrounding marginalization and the promotion of equity.

LONG-TERM INITIATIVES

To facilitate the ongoing growth of our organization, the board has identified three new long-term initiatives for strategic focus:

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION GAME

Introducing an innovative and interactive Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion game aims to foster values of diversity, equity, and inclusion in a dynamic manner.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION CLEARINGHOUSE PROJECT

The Difficult-Discussions Inc. DEI Clearing House Project aims to compile a centralized list of DEI resources and funding opportunities across the U.S., directing individuals and organizations to relevant sources for advancing inclusion initiatives.

501(C)(3) INCORPORATION

Currently operating as a 501(c)(4) organization, Difficult-Discussions Inc. recognizes the potential advantages of transitioning to a 501(c)(3) status. While the 501(c)(4) classification denotes tax-exempt status, it lacks the benefit of tax-deductible donations and limited grant opportunities. Originally aligned with the organization's focus on public policy work, the shift in methodology now permits a seamless transition to a 501(c)(3) structure. This change not only eliminates concerns about IRS restrictions but also opens avenues for potential grants and tax-deductible donations, contributing to the sustained success of our activities.

VISION FOCUS AREAS

To guide the vision of Difficult-Discussions Inc. for the year 2027, the board sought input on primary focus areas or themes. The responses were diverse, reflecting a collective perspective on the organization's future trajectory.

Consolidated Themes:

1. Monetization and Workshop Expansion:

- a. Emphasis on monetization through workshops.
- b. Consideration for transitioning from organizational infancy to maturity for longevity and sustainability.

2. Free Outreach Efforts:

- a. Continued commitment to free initiatives such as webinars and podcasts.
- b. Ensuring visibility and promotion of services to make people aware of the organization.

3. Current Events and DEI Representation:

- a. Focus on addressing how DEI is represented in current events.
- b. Exploration of ways to incorporate DEI into work while adhering to political guidelines.

4. Community Engagement and Identity:

- a. Completion of projects providing services to the community for exposure.
- b. Efforts to find the organization's primary identity or most effective service.

5. Internal Organization and Outreach:

- a. Emphasis on internal organization for efficient operations.
- b. Strategic outreach to promote resources and services.

6. Online Presence:

- a. Recognition of the importance of establishing a strong online presence.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The forthcoming section of this report will delineate a systematic, step-by-step approach designed to realize the objectives established within the Vision 2027 plan.

FOCUSED ONGOING ACTIVITIES STRATEGIC PLAN

FREE WEBINARS

- Establish a schedule for regular live workshops on diverse DEI topics.
- Develop promotional strategies to increase participation and audience reach.
- This activity will be lead by Zantasia Johnson.

WORKSHOPS

- Review existing workshops and identify areas for improvement.
- Incorporate feedback from pre-workshop and post-workshop surveys to refine content.
- Expand workshop offerings to cover emerging DEI issues and tailored organizational needs.
- This activity will be lead by Christopher Benny.

PATH TO EQUITY PODCAST

- Continue producing and publishing podcast episodes on major streaming platforms.
- Develop a content calendar to cover a diverse range of DEI subjects.
- This activity will be lead by Christopher Benny.

EDUCATIONAL HANDOUTS

- Maintain and update a repository of downloadable educational resources.
- Develop a distribution strategy for workshops and other educational initiatives.
- This activity will be lead by Christopher Benny.

LONG-TERM INITIATIVES STRATEGIC PLAN

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION GAME

- Form a dedicated team to design and develop the interactive game.
- Test the game internally before releasing it to the wider audience.
- Implement a marketing strategy to promote the game.
- This activity will be lead by Eve Kramer.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION CLEARINGHOUSE PROJECT

- Identify and compile a list of DEI resources and funding opportunities.
- Develop a user-friendly platform for the Clearinghouse.
- Promote the Clearinghouse to organizations and individuals interested in DEI initiatives.
- This activity will be lead by Christopher Benny.

501(C)(3) INCORPORATION

- Conduct a comprehensive review of the transition process from 501(c)(4) to 501(c)(3).
- Develop a timeline and allocate resources for the incorporation process.
- Establish a communication plan to inform stakeholders about the organizational shift.
- This activity will be lead by Meleesa Johnson.

VISION FOCUS AREAS STRATEGIC PLAN

1. **Monetization and Workshop Expansion:**

- a. Analyze workshop attendance and revenue data.
- b. Explore partnerships or collaborations for workshop expansion.
- c. Develop a financial model for sustainable monetization.
- d. This activity will be lead by Christopher Benny.

2. **Free Outreach Efforts:**

- a. Utilize social media and other platforms for free initiative promotion.
- b. Develop targeted campaigns to increase visibility and awareness.
- c. This activity will be lead by Sage Lefebvre.

3. **Current Events and DEI Representation:**

- a. Establish a monitoring system for DEI representation in current events.
- b. Develop guidelines for incorporating DEI into organizational work.
- c. Conduct training sessions for staff on navigating political guidelines.
- d. This activity will be lead by Sage Lefebvre.

4. **Community Engagement and Identity:**

- a. Prioritize and execute community service projects.
- b. Conduct a strategic analysis to define the organization's primary identity.
- c. Engage in branding initiatives to enhance visibility and identity.
- d. This activity will be lead by Christopher Benny.

5. **Internal Organization and Outreach:**

- a. Implement internal organizational tools for efficiency.
- b. Develop an outreach plan targeting potential clients and partners.
- c. This activity will be lead by Christopher Benny.

6. **Online Presence:**

- a. Conduct a website audit and implement necessary updates.
- b. Develop a content calendar for consistent online engagement.
- c. Explore digital marketing strategies to enhance online presence.
- d. This activity will be lead by Sage Lefebvre.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Difficult-Discussions Inc. Vision 2027 Action Plan stands as a strategic blueprint shaped by the collaborative insights of our board of directors. This comprehensive guide outlines our organizational direction for the next four years, focusing on key initiatives to bridge accessibility gaps in diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Our immediate priorities include ongoing activities such as free webinars, specialized workshops, the Path To Equity Podcast, and educational handouts. These initiatives aim to provide accessible resources and cultivate awareness on DEI topics. Simultaneously, our long-term vision encompasses transitioning to a 501(c)(3) status, introducing an interactive Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion game, and establishing the DEI Clearinghouse Project.

Guided by our vision focus areas, our step-by-step strategic plan details the specific actions required for successful implementation. We are committed to fostering inclusivity, innovation, and sustained impact, ensuring that Difficult-Discussions Inc. remains at the forefront of advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion objectives in the years to come. Together with our stakeholders, partners, and supporters, we look forward to realizing these goals and making a meaningful difference in the communities we serve.

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