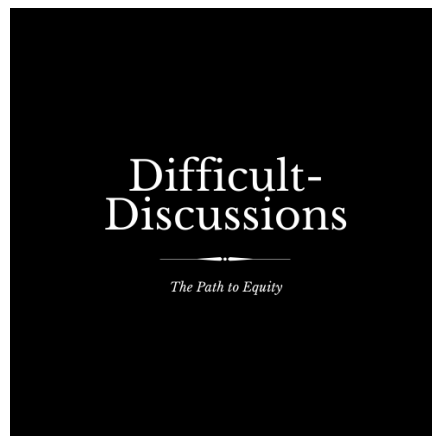


# The Difficult-Discussions Inc.

## "Three P" Strategy of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Work

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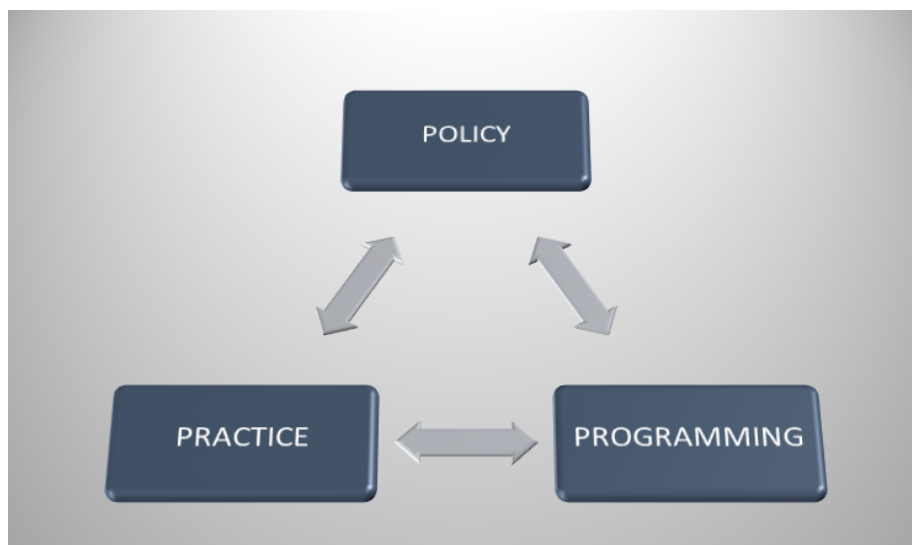
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# INTRODUCTION

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work can be controversial and variable in the methods utilized across geographic regions and professional sectors. The Difficult-Discussions Inc. "Three P" strategy is a three-pronged strategy to create diverse, equitable, and inclusive environments that are sustainable and multifaceted.

We identify Policy, Practice, and Programming to be the foundation of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work. All three P's should be given equal importance in order for the strategy to be fully effective.



## POLICY

A significant number of the policies that currently exist in the systems and institutions (government, workplaces, educational institutions, etc.) impacting our lives were created during times where diversity, equity, and inclusion were not a priority. This has led to policies that place marginalized communities in a position of disadvantage. Some examples are:

- a. **Healthcare-** Measuring kidney function directly can be burdensome and expensive, thus researchers have devised equations to calculate the estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR) from an accessible measure, i.e. serum creatinine levels. These equations produce higher reported eGFR values (which indicate better kidney function) for people who are identified as Black (Vyas, Darshali A., et al., 875).
- b. **Education-** Property taxes contribute more than 35 percent of public school revenue, this benefits and stabilizes funding in wealthier areas, while other communities must rely more on state funding, which can be volatile. Because of this, nonwhite school districts across the country receive \$23 billion less than their predominantly white counterparts each year (Chatterji).

- c. **Housing-** Before the end of the 1960s, racist housing laws and policies were legal and widespread. Today, it is illegal to discriminate against people in the housing and mortgage lending markets because of their race. However, due to these historically racist laws and policies, as well as a current race-neutral system, that favors upper-income homeowners who are disproportionately white. People from the Black and Latino/Latina/Latinx community have a hard time finding affordable housing, whether to own or to rent (Dickerson).
- d. **Gender Equality-** There are no federal laws in the United States that explicitly protect against discrimination based on gender identity.

Policies that differentially create a disadvantage to marginalized groups are termed systemic/institutional/structural marginalization. These policies can have a direct or indirect impact on marginalized groups. An example of the direct impact can be seen in the healthcare example listed above. In this example, the policy in question is still in place and is actively impacting the marginalized group. An example of the indirect impact can be seen in the housing example listed above. In this example, the policy is no longer in place however it still has a lingering impact on marginalized groups.

The policy aspect of this strategy focuses on dismantling systemic/institutional/structural marginalization.

## Policy Action Plan

1. **Identify stakeholder groups and organizations that focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion work within your community:** These organizations will be able to provide structure and direction for the work that must be completed to create equitable and inclusive policy changes. This step is essential as you do not want to undermine the work being done by leaders from marginalized groups by bypassing them.  
OR  
**If you do not identify any such organizations or groups, form a workgroup:** The workgroup will focus on creating or removing policies to make your organization/community more inclusive and equitable. This group should be led by individuals from the marginalized group you are advocating for.
2. **Identify biased policies and gaps in policies that impact the marginalized group that you are working for:** Utilize the stakeholder groups and organizations you identify in the first step or the workgroup you create for this process.
3. **Develop a working plan to create new policies to fill the gaps or dismantle the biased policies identified:** The working plan should consist of the following-
  - a. Who your policy change impacts and the need for your policy change (this will set the foundation for your project).
  - b. The membership of your team (it is essential that this group is primarily occupied by people from the group you are advocating for).
  - c. The roles and responsibilities of each member in your team (assign their roles based on the strengths of your team and reach out to other

individuals to fill the roles that you do not have existing membership for). Some recommended positions on your team are:

- Executive Director/Chair: This individual will coordinate the efforts of the team and run the meetings.
  - Financial Director/Treasurer: This individual will handle the finances of the team.
  - Executive Assistant/Secretary: This individual will keep records, take minutes, handle correspondence, and assist with the clerical needs of the team.
  - Legislative Director: This individual will author the policy change.
  - Marketing Director/Public Relations Chair: This individual will promote the work being done by your team to garner support and interest.
  - Lobbying Director/Legislative Liaison: This individual will secure the support of the voting members of the entity that will need to approve your policy change.
  - It is usually most effective when these directors/positions have committees to work with.
- d. The financial resources available to you and a detailed budget on how you plan to utilize your funds (look into grants and fundraising).
  - e. A list of intermediate outcomes that you can achieve in the process of accomplishing your goal (these would be minor victories for the group that you are advocating for that arise from the work you are doing).
  - f. A list of the end outcomes that will result from your policy change (based on the first point in this work plan).
  - g. The process you have to go through to achieve your goal and the individuals that are involved in the process (i.e. the process that is utilized by the legislative or administrative body that will need to approve your policy to enact it and the members of the body).
  - h. A proposed timeline with steps to achieve your goal (small achievable goals with projected completion dates).
  - i. The process to create a draft of the new policy you want to put in place (wording and layout).
  - j. The review process of the draft completed by a panel of individuals from the affected group.
  - k. The lobbying efforts required to have your policy change approved (social media strategy, calls and letters to members of the voting body, petitions).
  - l. Plan to introduce the policy for approval (who will need to introduce it, who will be able to defend the policy, how many votes do you require, and what is the appeal process if it does not pass).
  - m. Communication strategy for the success or failure of the policy.
  - n. Potential next steps if the plan passes or fails.

#### 4. **Execute the working plan.**

Note: For your policy to be most effective utilize evidence-based policy recommendations.

**[DIFFICULT-DISCUSSIONS INC. FREE POLICY TEMPLATES](#)**

# PRACTICE

Thoughtful active practices that create an inclusive and equitable climate within your community/organization are essential to attract and retain diversity. Some of the benefits of a diverse community where inclusion and equity are practiced are:

- a. **Increased Effectiveness-** There is a larger knowledge pool to draw information from, which results in enhanced effectiveness (Brodbeck and Greitemeyer; Collins and Geutzkow as cited in Hofhuis, Joep, et al.).
- b. **Community Development-** Inclusive and equitable communities promote multiculturalism, which introduces new art, gastronomy, businesses, and activities in the community.
- c. **Economic Advantages-** Recruiting and retaining diversity within your community will increase the tax base, the number of skilled workers, homeownership, and the spending power of your community.
- d. **Increased Access to Education-** Higher levels of segregation based on racial identity are associated with decreased levels of attainment of bachelor's degrees for both the Black and white community (Acs, Gregory, et al.).

The practice part of this strategy focuses on creating equitable and inclusive environments that foster sustainable growth in diversity.

## Practice Action Plan

1. **Identify stakeholder groups and organizations that focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion work within your community:** These organizations will be able to provide some framework on the best practices required to create diverse communities that are built on inclusion and equity. This step is essential as you do not want to undermine the work being done by leaders from marginalized groups by bypassing them.

OR

**If you do not identify any such organizations or groups, form a workgroup:** The workgroup will focus on promoting diversity through creating an inclusive and equitable environment. This group should have representation from individuals from marginalized groups.

2. **Collect data on the diversity that exists in your community/organization:** You can use Census Bureau data, conduct surveys, and talk to local community leaders. Some things to keep in mind when doing this are-
  - a. Categories of diverse groups that exist in your community/organization.
  - b. How long have these populations been a part of your community/organization?
  - c. What attracted these populations to your community/organization?
  - d. What keeps these populations in your community/organizations?
  - e. What prompts people from these populations from leaving your community/organization?

NOTE: WHEN COLLECTING DATA ON CERTAIN GROUPS SUCH AS IMMIGRATION STATUS OR GENDER IDENTITY IT IS IMPORTANT TO KEEP IN MIND THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS THAT COULD OCCUR TO THAT

COMMUNITY IF PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION IS LEAKED.

In order to avoid this, do not collect any personally identifiable data.

3. **Develop a working plan to promote practices that attract and retain diverse populations to your community/organizations:** Your plan should be based on the data you collected, some recommendations we have are-
  - a. Create interactive resources, handouts, and training that instill values of equity and inclusion in members of your community/organizations.
  - b. Use social media strategies to promote the values that you identified.
  - c. When members in your community/organization practice these values, it will encourage other people to think about these topics and possibly change their outlooks.
4. **Assess the success of your plan:** Utilize survey methods or measurable checkpoints when implementing your plan to assess its effectiveness and make changes as needed.

## **Recommended Practices to Create Inclusive Environments as an Individual**

1. Recognize your privilege and the unconscious/implicit biases you may possess. Once you do so, you can use your privilege to be an ally for marginalized communities, and you can actively work to overcome your implicit biases. An inclusive organization has members that are allies and accomplices.
2. If you don't know something, FIND OUT. It is not the marginalized group's responsibility to teach you. Teaching one person might not be a big deal but constantly having to teach people around you can be mentally exhausting.
3. Don't make assumptions. If you make a mistake, own it, acknowledge it, learn from it, and move forward.
4. Use people-first language. Eg: Instead of saying colored people (which is extremely offensive) say people of color.
5. If you are uncomfortable in a situation involving diversity, equity, and inclusion, take a minute to identify why you are feeling that discomfort. **SOMETIMES YOU NEED TO SIT WITH YOUR DISCOMFORT AND USE IT TO GROW.**
6. If you are working on a project or idea, take time to see if it will negatively impact a marginalized group. Ensure that the material you generate is not culturally insensitive. A good way to do this would be to do research on the material before releasing it.

[\*\*DIFFICULT-DISCUSSIONS INC. FREE HANDOUTS AND INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES\*\*](#)

# **PROGRAMMING**

Programming is essential to increase awareness and celebrate diversity. Many organizations use mandatory training as the only approach to addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion. This, however, is not effective. Mandatory diversity training for liability management was found to be ineffective and harmful to the success of marginalized groups, while voluntary

diversity training to further the organization's goals was found to be beneficial to the success of marginalized groups (Vedantam).

There are many types of programs that can promote diversity, equity, and inclusion, such as training, workshops, conferences, seminars, multicultural celebrations, and town halls.

The programming part of this strategy will focus on offering a collection of the different types of programs to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.

## **Programming Action Plan**

1. **Identify stakeholder groups and organizations that focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion work within your community:** These organizations will be able to provide guidance on what events to organize and possibly provide you with resources to organize events. This step is essential as you do not want to undermine the work being done by leaders from marginalized groups by bypassing them.  
OR  
**If you do not identify any such organizations or groups, form a workgroup:** The workgroup will focus on planning, promoting, executing, and managing programs that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion. This group should have representation from individuals from marginalized groups.
2. **Determine the program you wish to organize:** The organization/group you identify in the first step will play a large role in this process. Use the following factors to determine the type of program-
  - a. What are your desired outcomes?
  - b. How much money do you have available?
  - c. Who is your target audience?
  - d. Is this a unique program for your community/organization?
  - e. Is your program accessible and inclusive to the marginalized populations in your community/organization?
3. **Develop a working plan to organize, execute, and assess the program you have decided upon:** Your working plan should consist of the following-
  - a. The purpose/goal of your program.
  - b. The target audience of your program.
  - c. The membership of your team (it is essential that this group is primarily occupied by people from the group you are advocating for).
  - d. The roles and responsibilities of each member in your team (assign their roles based on the strengths of your team and reach out to other individuals to fill the roles that you do not have existing membership for). Some recommended positions on your team are:
    - Event Coordinator: This individual will coordinate the work being done by the members of your team.
    - Activities Coordinator: This individual will be responsible for coordinating the speakers and entertainers who are a part of the event.
    - Venue Coordinator: This individual will be responsible for coordinating the set-up, tear-down, and day-of program needs for the venue of your program.

- Refreshments Coordinator: This individual will be responsible for coordinating the procurement, serving, and clearing of the refreshments provided at the program.
  - Equipment Coordinator: This individual will be responsible for the set-up, tear-down, and day-of program technological needs for the program.
  - Graphic Design Coordinator: This individual will be responsible for designing all promotional material and background material for your program.
  - Marketing and Outreach Coordinator: This individual will be responsible for promoting your program, communicating with external entities, and managing press requests for your program.
- e. The financial resources available to you and a detailed budget on how you plan to utilize your funds (look into grants and fundraising).
- f. Create a facility and services checklist, this checklist should consist of-
- The location of the program. The following factors must be considered:
    - The number of attendees you wish to host.
    - The geographical accessibility of the location via public transit for people who do not have private means of transportation.
    - The physical accessibility of the location for people who are differently-abled.
    - The restroom facilities available to people who are a part of the transgender community.
  - The materials you require for the program (projector, microphone, lighting, stage, internet access, laptop, electrical cables, electrical cords, seating, check-in desk, podium, tables, etc.).
  - The food you require for the program. The following factors must be considered:
    - Do you have vegan options?
    - Do you have options that are diabetic-friendly?
    - Do you have options that are culturally diverse?
  - The staff you require for the program. The following categories must be considered:
    - Speakers, performers, and talent required for the event.
    - Staff to check people in at the event.
    - Staff to seat people at the event.
    - Staff to provide photography and videography services at the event.
    - Staff to serve food at the event.
    - Onsite technical support.
    - Onsite program execution staff who will coordinate the event needs and resolve problems if they arise.
    - Security for the event.
- g. Create a marketing and outreach checklist, this checklist should have the means to address-
- The creation of a logo.
  - Communicating with potential sponsors and funding sources.



- Communicating with press inquiries and media outlets.
  - The creation and dispersion of social media pages/events.
  - The creation and dispersion of promotional material.
  - The creation and dispersion of television/radio marketing material.
  - The creation and dispersion of invitations.
  - Photography and videography services for the day of the event for future promotional material.
- h. A proposed timeline with steps to achieve your goal (small achievable goals with projected completion dates).
- i. All the materials/services associated with the project must be reviewed by an oversight group/committee. This process will serve to eliminate potential cultural appropriation, cultural and racial insensitivity, lack of accessibility, hate, and bias.
4. **Assess the success of the program:** After you plan and execute your plan, assess the effectiveness of your program by sending out feedback surveys. Use the feedback you receive when planning your next program.

[BOOK A WORKSHOP WITH DIFFICULT-DISCUSSIONS INC.](#)

## CONCLUSION

By effectively executing all three aspects of this strategy with equal importance you will be able to move one step closer creating an equitable environment. If you require assistance in any of the three P's please contact Difficult-Discussions Inc. by emailing [difficult-discussions@outlook.com](mailto:difficult-discussions@outlook.com). We offer free and low-cost resources for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion work. You can view these resources on [www.difficult-discussions.com](http://www.difficult-discussions.com).

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## AUTHOR AND CONTRIBUTORS

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Executive Director of Difficult-Discussions Inc.



Christopher (He/Him/His) is a co-founder of Difficult-Discussions Inc. He has been doing work related to equity and inclusion since 2014. Chris began his journey in the field by founding and serving as the president of a Socio-Environmental organization, Reformation and Improvement of Society and Environment in Bangalore, India. Eventually he took this organization to Stevens Point, Wisconsin where he attended the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point to earn a Bachelor of Science in Biochemistry. With his leadership and recruitment of fellow social justice activists, RISE established branches in nine different countries across the globe. He was also a founder, chair and later student advisor for the UWSP Alliance of Multicultural and Diversity Organizations, directly serving over 1000 students and consisting of 20 member organizations. Working as the Inclusivity Director for the UWSP Student Government Association catalyzed his leadership development, inspiring noteworthy legislation, activism, and diversity and inclusion trainings which resulted in institutional change to create a more inclusive community. In addition to serving as our Executive Director he also serves as a voting member for the Portage County Diversity Affairs and Inclusiveness Committee. Chris is exceptional at bringing diverse groups of people together to create organizations and systematically address marginalization.

Editor: Yasamin Aftahi, Master's of International Affairs



Yasamin is a first generation Iranian-American writer, activist and public health advocate. She received her undergraduate degree in English in 2017 from CSU Long Beach. During this time, she was published and won awards for a piece of creative non-fiction entitled Maman, about her mother's immigration experience. In 2020, she graduated from UCSD in International Affairs, where she studied global policy and Latin American studies. Her passion is connecting people through language and policy changes that make equity a reality for everyone. She currently lives in Stevens Point and works as a health educator for the National Farm Medicine Center.

Editor: Eve Kramer

Board Member for Difficult-Discussions Inc.



Eve (She/Her/Hers) graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point (UWSP) with a Bachelor of Science in Wildlife Ecology and minors in Professional Writing and Biology. Growing up on a small family farm in the Driftless Area of Wisconsin instilled a strong desire to live harmoniously with the rest of nature and to fight to protect it. While in college she carried this passion with her, pursuing a natural resources degree and becoming heavily involved in two student organizations, 350 Stevens Point and Reformation and Improvement of Society and Environment (RISE). She served as an officer for both organizations, acting as the Public Relations Officer and Editor-in-Chief, respectively. While she was with 350 Stevens Point, an environmental advocacy organization, she attended many actions throughout the state to fight against pipelines, mines, and other infrastructure that

disproportionately harms minority communities. In 2018, Eve was part of organizing a protest against Foxconn during their groundbreaking ceremony in Mount Pleasant. She continues to advocate for social and environmental justice in her daily life and is currently focused on spreading her passions through environmental education, hoping to inspire the next generation of environmental stewards and activists.

***Difficult-Discussions Inc. is primarily a free resource and we would appreciate your help in increasing the accessibility that people have to the resources we have to offer. If you would like to help with this please follow us and share our website: <https://difficult-discussions.com>, our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/difficultdiscussions/>, LinkedIn page: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/difficult-discussions>, and our Instagram page: [https://www.instagram.com/difficult\\_discussions/](https://www.instagram.com/difficult_discussions/) to your circles.***