

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is Diversity?

Diversity in its most simple form can be defined as “all the similarities and differences amongst people.” In other words, it’s a combination of all the characteristics that make us individuals such as age, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, disability, military experience, and socioeconomic background, ideas, attitudes, beliefs, educational background, perspectives, values, and so on. A culture of diversity embodies understanding ourselves and each other, moving beyond tolerance to acceptance, and wholly embracing the richness of each individual.

Isn't diversity just another fancy name for Affirmative Action or Equal Employment Opportunity?

No. Affirmative action is a legally driven mandate that government contractors take positive steps (“affirmative actions”) to ensure the recruitment and advancement of qualified minorities, women, persons with disabilities, and covered veterans, in areas such as education and employment. Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) is employment practices that ensure nondiscrimination, fairness, and equity in the workplace.

What is Inclusion?

Inclusion is the active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity in communities (intellectual, social, cultural, geographical) where individuals connect in ways that increase awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and empathetic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and units in a safe and welcoming environment

What is equity, why don't we use equality?

The NAHB DEI Taskforce debated which word to use in the formation of the NAHB DEI Compact and the guiding philosophy of the taskforce. Webster's indicates that the words equity and equality are interchangeable. The Taskforce defined Equity as: An approach with a goal to equalize access to opportunities while recognizing that not everyone has the same advantages. Equity, in the view of the Taskforce, is an action word that implies a need for action to support others. The dictionary defines Equity as “justice according to natural law or right. Specially: Freedom from bias or favoritism”.

The dictionary defines Equality as “the quality or state of being equal”.

The word equity recognizes that advantages and barriers exist and not everyone starts from the same place. Striving for equity is the process of seeking balance of advantages.

Are you trying to change my personal opinion on accepting other “lifestyle” choices?

No, personal opinions are just that: Personal. Our goal is to create educational programs, resources, and opportunities for our members to learn why DEI is important in the construction industry and help employers treat all employees with the same level of respect regardless of national origin, race, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation.

What does equity and inclusion look like in the workplace?

Equity is the process of ensuring that processes and programs are impartial, fair and provide equal possible outcomes for every individual. Inclusion is the practice of ensuring that people feel a sense of belonging in the workplace.

Does DEI mean that I am agreeing to a quota?

You are not agreeing to a quota, you are agreeing to give everyone an equal opportunity.

NAHB DEI Taskforce is working to increase awareness and highlighting pathways for movement in a positive direction.

Is this just a phase so you can respond to current events or is NAHB really concerned about diversity in construction?

This is not just a phase. NAHB believes this a movement not a moment. The construction industry must work to build diversity, equity, and inclusion in construction both for workers as well as ensure our members are treating ALL of their customers in an equitable and inclusive manner. The construction industry is behind in building DEI measures, and we must respond to stay relevant and attract a diverse population in our workforce and business owners.

How can I tell if my company follows DEI protocols?

Each company must assess their diversity, equity and inclusion processes and procedures. Do documents and team member composition reflect the principals of DEI?

How does volunteering help with diversity and inclusion in NAHB committees?

When you remove the barriers that may hinder some people from volunteering, you can welcome more people into your ranks. Your diverse volunteers can also act as role models to others with similar identities. People often feel more welcome at an organization when fellow members their backgrounds or ideas.

Are you going to provide companies like mine with DEI policy and implementation toolkit?

In addition to creating educational programs and discovery events, the goal is to create toolkits and templates for our members to use in creating their own DEI programs.