

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Overview

United Way of Kennebec Valley (UWKV) recommends that its partner programs read this document before completing the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) questions (Section B, #8-9) on the 2021 Funding Application.

I. How does UWKV define diversity, equity and inclusion¹?

DIVERSITY: Term that describes the presence of individuals from various backgrounds and/or with various identities. The term is often used to include aspects of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, and ability.

EQUITY: Equity is the intentional inclusion of everyone in society. Equity is achieved when systemic, institutional and historical barriers based on race, gender, sexual orientation, and other identities are dismantled and no longer predict socioeconomic, education and health outcomes.

INCLUSION: The degree to which individuals with diverse perspectives and backgrounds are able to participate fully in the decision-making processes of an organization or group.

CULTURAL COMPETENCY: The process by which individuals and systems respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, languages, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, religions, spiritual traditions, immigration status, and other diversity factors in a manner that recognizes, affirms, and values the worth of individuals, families and communities and protects and preserves the dignity of each.

II. General Recommendations for Partner Programs:

- We recognize that a commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion is an ongoing and never-finished process. We also understand that many of our partner programs are just beginning this work. No matter where you are in your organization's DEI journey, we want to hear about it. There are no wrong answers; we encourage you to be thoughtful in your responses.
- Not sure where to start? Consider the following questions when completing the DEI portion of the UWKV application:
 - Policies and Procedures
 - Do you have a non-discrimination policy that outlines your commitment to fair employment practices?

¹ These definitions come from "Living United: A Guide for Becoming a More Equitable Organization," published by United Way Worldwide, and "Funder Guide: Incorporating Diversity, Equity & Inclusion," by Missouri Common Grant Application.

- Do you have a statement on DEI that summarizes your organization's values and stance on DEI?
 - Is DEI reflected in your values statements?
 - Board, Staff and Volunteers
 - Do you have goals for board, staff and/or volunteer diversity?
 - Do you offer cultural competency trainings to board, staff and/or volunteers?
 - Do board, staff and volunteers reflect consumer demographics?
 - Do you have diverse program leadership?
 - Consumers
 - Do you provide materials in multiple languages? Do you offer interpreting services?
 - Do you serve diverse populations?
 - How do you reach diverse populations?
 - Do you collect participant income data?
 - Do you disaggregate program outcome data by income level?
 - Do you primarily serve individuals and/or families with an income at or below the federal poverty level?
 - Do you offer income-based scholarships or intentionally remove income-based barriers?
 - Program Design
 - Is your program designed to be culturally responsive?
 - Are consumers involved in program design and continuous improvement?
 - Do you have specialized programming to intentionally serve people of color, immigrants/refugees, LGBTQ+ community, and/or people with disabilities?
- If your program does not have any or has limited active efforts or initiatives, please describe any DEI goals that you hope to achieve in the future.

III. How does UWKV conduct its own work through a DEI lens?

Because UWKV is requiring partner programs to examine their DEI practices, it's only fair that UWKV share its own DEI efforts. We recognize and embrace the fact that UWKV's efforts will be ongoing as DEI becomes more embedded in our daily work.

- Policies & Procedures
 - We have a board-approved [Statement of Diversity & Inclusion](#), posted publicly online.
 - We have an internal Statement of Non-Discrimination as part of our Employee Handbook.
 - DEI is reflected in our new [values statements](#).
 - United Way Worldwide, our parent organization, has added a three-part commitment to DEI to its bylaws.
- Board, Staff and Volunteers

- We collect and analyze board, staff and volunteer demographic data annually.
- We have a concrete goal for diversity among board and committee membership.
- In 2021, all board and staff will complete mandatory DEI training.
- We offer the annual Day of Caring volunteer program to 5,200 local students, many of whom have diverse backgrounds or identities.
- Consumers
 - We have updated our 2021 Funding Application to include questions about our partner programs' DEI practices. We also reviewed this application through an equity lens and made significant changes to our process.
 - The 24/7 statewide helpline that we fund, 211 Maine, offers interpreting services to support people in need through phone calls and texting.
- Program Design
 - We actively seek out programs that serve diverse populations and educate leadership about UWKV's work and partnership opportunities.
 - Our executive director serves on the national Community Investments Equity Work Group at United Way Worldwide.
 - We consider requests to serve as a fiscal agent for emerging nonprofit organizations.
 - In 2021, UWKV will offer a DEI training to partner programs as part of its Nonprofit Excellence Series.