

DEI Glossary of Terms

Below is a glossary of commonly used words with detailed definitions and their sources. As you read through ask the following:

1. What definitions surprised you?
2. What definitions are new to you?
3. What familiar definitions have you used interchangeably?
 - a. In reviewing them, what differences can you see and why are they important to how and when the words are used?
4. What role can you play in connecting these definitions to League work and sharing them with your League network?

Diversity

Includes all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the characteristics that make one individual or group different from one another. It is all-inclusive and recognizes everyone and every group as part of this should be valued.

Source: Racial Equity Tools; UC Berkeley Center for Equity, Inclusion and Diversity, Glossary of Terms.

Equity

To treat everyone fairly; an emphasis on this seeks to render justice by deeply considering structural factors that benefit some social groups/communities and harms other social groups/communities. Sometimes justice demands an unequal response to achieve this.

Source: Everyday-Democracy; YWCA Social Justice Glossary

Inclusion

Authentically brings traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities and decision/policy making.

Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Crossroads Charlotte Individual Initiative Scorecard for Organizations Scorecard Overview, revised 3/12/07.

Ableism

The normalization of able-bodied persons resulting in the privilege of “normal ability” and the oppression and exclusion of people with disabilities at many levels in society. Ableism involves both denying access to people with disabilities and exclusive attitudes of able-bodied persons.

Ally

Describes someone who supports a group other than one’s own. [This someone] acknowledge[s] disadvantage and oppression of other groups than their own; take[s] risks and support[s] action on their behalf; commit[s] to reducing their own complicity or collusion in oppression of those groups and invest[s] in strengthening their own knowledge and awareness of oppression.

Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Center for Assessment and Policy Development

[A member of a group that benefits from increased social power or privilege that acts to intentionally dismantle systems of oppression.]

Bias

Bias is a tendency to be in favor or against a thing, person, or group compared to another. This favor is typically implied to be unfair or prejudicial. Bias can be innate or learned. Implicit bias is usually expressed

unconsciously or automatically, and can be oppositional to a person's expressed beliefs or values. Explicit bias, by contrast, is an intentional expression of bias.

Bigotry

Intolerant prejudice which glorifies one's own group and denigrates members of other groups.

Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation; National Conference for Community and

Justice St. Louis Region — unpublished handout used in the Dismantling Racism Institute program.

Collusion

When people act to perpetuate oppression or prevent others from working to eliminate oppression.

Example: Able-bodied people who object to strategies for making buildings accessible because of the expense.

Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell and Pat Griffin, editors. Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook. New York: Routledge.

Colonization

The violent taking of land, wealth, labor of indigenous peoples through domination & conquest leading to their diminishment, oppression, and/or extermination.

Culture

A social system of meaning and custom that is developed by a group of people to assure its adaptation and survival. These groups are distinguished by a set of unspoken rules that shape values, beliefs, habits, patterns of thinking, behaviors and styles of communication.

Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Institute for Democratic Renewal and Project Change Anti-Racism Initiative. A Community Builder's Tool Kit.

[The social customs, values, beliefs, behaviors, habits, styles of communication, and innovations that are created by social groups to ensure their adaptation and survival. Culture is usually maintained through unspoken rules and social pressure.]

Cultural Competency

A process of learning about and becoming allies with people from other cultures, thereby broadening our own understanding and ability to participate in a multicultural process. The key element to becoming more culturally competent is respect for the ways that others live in and organize the world and an openness to learn from them.

Discrimination

The unjust or unequal treatment of groups based on social categories like race, gender, class, physical ability, age, and other categories.

Equality

A system of provision in which everyone has the same amount of resources despite their existing needs or assets.

Equity

Equity is the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. Improving equity involves increasing justice and fairness within the procedures and processes of

institutions or systems, as well as in their distribution of resources. Tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within our society.

Ethnicity

A social construct that divides people into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as shared sense of group membership, values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history and ancestral geographical base.

Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell and Pat Griffin, editors. Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook. New York: Routledge.

[A social construct that divides people into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as shared sense of group membership, values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history and ancestral geographical base.]

Gender

A complex interplay of identity used to distinguish socio-cultural factors shaping behaviors and attitudes from biological factors related to sex. The definition of gender has evolved to consider multiple dimensions including an individual's **body**, their **gender identity** (the name individuals use to convey their gender based on their deeply held sense of self), and **the way individuals present their gender in the world--and how that gender presentation is perceived by, interacted with, and shaped by society**.

Gender and sex are not interchangeable terms. A person's gender identity can correspond with or differ from the sex they were assigned at birth.

Heterosexism

A system of advantage based on sexual orientation.

Homophobia

Homophobia is the fear and persecution of people of different sexual orientations, which is rooted in a desire to maintain the heterosexual social order.

Implicit Bias

A negative association that people unknowingly hold. Expressed automatically, without conscious awareness. Many studies have indicated that [it] affects individuals' attitudes and actions, thus creating real-world implications, even though individuals may not even be aware that [it] exist[s] within themselves. Notably, [it has] been shown to trump individuals' stated commitments to equality and fairness, thereby producing behavior that diverges from the explicit attitudes that many people profess. *Source:* Racial Equity Tools; State of the Science Implicit Bias Review 2013, Cheryl Staats, Kirwan Institute, The Ohio State University.

Inclusion

Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality is the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

“ism”

A way of describing any attitude, action or institutional structure that subordinates (oppresses) a person or group because of their target group, [e.g. color, gender, economic status, age, religion, sexual orientation, language, citizenship, etc.]

Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Institute for Democratic Renewal and Project Change Anti-Racism Initiative. A Community Builder's Tool Kit. Claremont, Calif.: Claremont Graduate University.

Marginalization

The social process making a group or class of people less important or relegated to a secondary position (e.g., when one class of people is grouped together as second class citizens).

Microaggression

The everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.

Oppression

The systemic and pervasive nature of social inequality woven throughout social institutions as well as imbedded within individual consciousness. Fuses institutional and systemic discrimination, personal bias, bigotry and social prejudice in a complex web of relationships and structures that saturate most aspects of life in our society.

- Denotes structural and material constraints that significantly shape a person's life chances and sense of possibility.
- Signifies a hierarchical relationship in which dominant or privileged groups benefit, often in unconscious ways, from the disempowerment of subordinated or targeted groups.
- Resides not only in external social institutions and norms but also within the human psyche as well.
- Eradicating this ultimately requires struggle against all its forms, and that building coalitions among diverse people offers the most promising strategies for challenging this systematically.

Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell and Pat Griffin, editors. Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook. New York: Routledge.

[The systematic subjugation of one social group by a more powerful social group for the social, economic, and political benefit of the more powerful social group. Oppression is maintained by systems of discrimination and social inequity.]

Power

Unequally distributed globally and in U.S. society; some individuals or groups wield a greater amount than others, thereby allowing them greater access and control over resources. Wealth, whiteness, citizenship, patriarchy, heterosexism, and education are a few key social mechanisms through which this operates.

Source: Racial Equity Tools; Intergroup Resources, 2012.

[A complex concept, power is the ability of an individual or institution to influence or impose beliefs on others. Power grants access to and control of resources, which includes tangible resources like money and intangible resources like public opinion. Power is enacted through relationships and relationships of power constantly shift. Individuals may benefit from power that they are not aware of.]

Prejudice

A pre-judgment or unjustifiable, and usually negative, attitude of one type of individual or groups toward another group and its members. Such negative attitudes are typically based on unsupported generalizations (or stereotypes) that deny the right of individual members of certain groups to be recognized and treated as individuals with individual characteristics.

Source: Racial Equity Tools; Institute for Democratic Renewal and Project Change Anti-Racism Initiative. A Community Builder's Tool Kit.

Privilege

Unearned social power accorded by the formal and informal institutions of society to ALL members of a dominant group. Is usually invisible to those who have it because we're taught not to see it, but nevertheless it puts them at an advantage over those who do not have it.

Source: Racial Equity Tools; Colors of Resistance Archive Accessed June 28, 2013.

[Social benefit afforded to all members of a dominant group by formal and informal institutions of society. Individuals who have privilege are taught not to see it and taught not to recognize the advantages that it affords.]

Prejudice

A pre-judgmental, unjustifiable and usually negative attitude of one type of individual or groups toward another group and its members. Such negative attitudes are typically based on unsupported generalizations (or stereotypes) that deny the right of individual members of certain groups to be recognized and treated as individuals with individual characteristics.

Race

A social construct that artificially divides people into distinct groups based on characteristics such as physical appearance (particularly color), ancestral heritage, cultural affiliation, cultural history, ethnic classification, and the social, economic, and political needs of a society as a given period of time.

Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell and Pat Griffin, editors. Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook. New York: Routledge.

[A socially created categorization construct based on arbitrary genetic characteristics designed to create hierarchies of privilege, power, and worth between humans.]

Racism

A system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate [a certain type of] inequity. It identifies dimensions of our history and culture that have allowed privileges associated with "whiteness" and disadvantages associated with "color" to endure and adapt over time. It is not something a few people or institutions choose to practice. Instead it has been a feature of the social, economic and political systems in which we all exist.

Source: Everyday-Democracy; Aspen Institute

[Racism involves one group having the power to carry out systematic discrimination of groups deemed racially inferior through the institutional policies and practices of society and by shaping cultural beliefs and values that support those racist policies and practices.]

Sex

The biological classification of people based on the reproductive organs that they possess at birth.

Sexism

Sexism involves one group having the power to carry out systematic discrimination of groups deemed inferior on the basis of their sex. Sexism is maintained through the institutional policies and practices of society and by shaping cultural beliefs and values that support those racist policies and practices.

Social Justice

Includes a vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure. Involves social actors who have a sense of their own agency as well as a sense of social responsibility toward and with others and the society as a whole.

Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell and Pat Griffin, editors. Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook. New York: Routledge.

Social Power

Access to resources that enhance one's chances of getting what one needs or influencing others in order to lead a safe, productive, fulfilling life.

Source: W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell and Pat Griffin, editors. Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook. New York: Routledge

Systemic

Refers to systems of power maintained at the structural level of society. Something is referred to as systemic when it is deeply embedded in a given system such that its presence may be subtle as opposed to explicit.

White Supremacy

A historically based, institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression of continents, nations and peoples of color by white peoples and nations of the European continent; for the purpose of maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power and privilege.

Source: Racial Equity Tools; Transforming White Privilege: A 21st Century Leadership Capacity, CAPD, MP Associates, World Trust Educational Services, 2012