

BEST PRACTICES FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION INITIATIVES

Stage 1: Establish Organizational Values

- Leadership commitment and support is essential
- Diversity and Inclusion should be tied to the organizational mission and values
- Document organizational values in regards to diversity and inclusion – do not leave this to interpretation

Stage 2: Assess and Clarify Goals

- Conduct appropriate organizational assessments; identify baseline attitudes and demographics, establish organizational readiness
- Clarify goals and resources

Stage 3: Create a Plan

- Create an action plan (short-term), strategic plan (long-term)

Stage 4: Create/Revise Policies, Systems, and Structures

- Create the organizational structure, policies, systems, and support for ongoing diversity and inclusion efforts (i.e. diversity and inclusion workgroup, recruitment policies, affinity/resources groups, analysis and skills-based training)

Stage 5: Ongoing Reflection and Adjustment

- Full implementation of the plan with appropriate policies, systems, and structures in place
- Ongoing assessment, evaluation, adaptation

A MESSAGE TO LEADERSHIP STAFF AND BOARD MEMBERS

- The most important quality that is found in leaders of organizations that are highly inclusive is that these leaders take a long-term, holistic approach to diversity and inclusion and integrate it into all of the work of the organization.
- Rather than considering diversity and inclusion to be one more thing that has to be done in a busy day, it is a fundamental part of the everyday work. It is neither perceived as a burden nor an additional responsibility.
- In highly inclusive organizations, leaders and the teams they assemble are constantly working with the external world to be responsive to diverse communities and their needs. They are intentional about working internally with their staff and board to create a welcoming environment and to expand people's knowledge and awareness of different cultures in a variety of ways.

Adapted from *Inside Inclusiveness: Race, Ethnicity, and Nonprofit Organizations*, a report from the Denver Foundation Inclusiveness Project