

# *Inclusifying Non-Profit Board Rooms*

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# Inclusify

What does it mean to “Inclusify” an Organization?

# Inclusi-what?

**IN · CLU · SI · FY:** To live and lead in a way that recognizes and celebrates unique and dissenting perspectives while creating a collaborative and open-minded environment where everyone feels they truly **belong**. Inclusifying implies a **continuous, sustained effort** towards helping diverse teams feel **engaged, empowered, accepted** and **valued**.

- Stefanie Johnson "Inclusify: The Power of Uniqueness and Belonging to Build Innovative Teams"

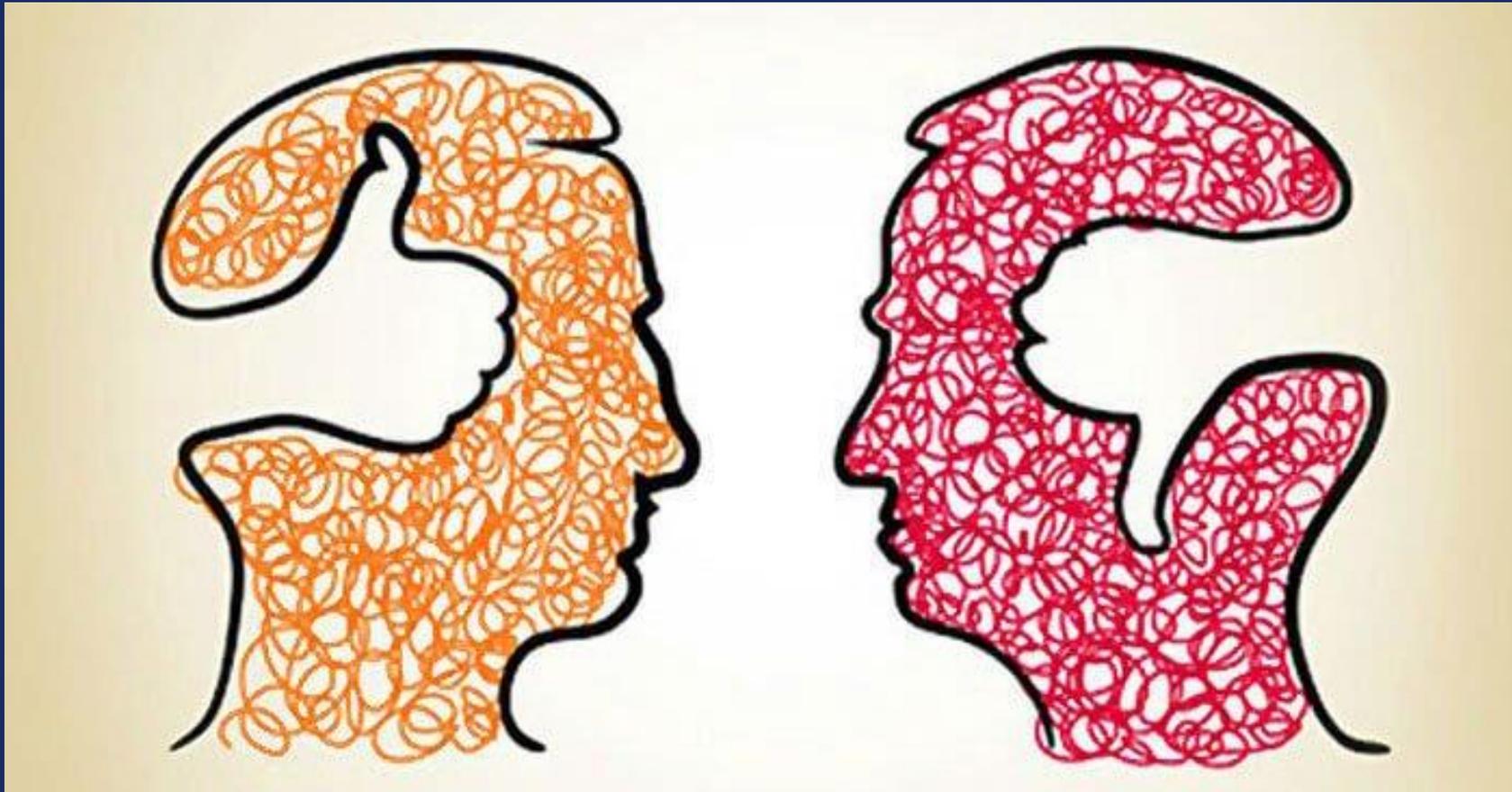
# Diversity, Inclusion, & Equity: What's the Difference?



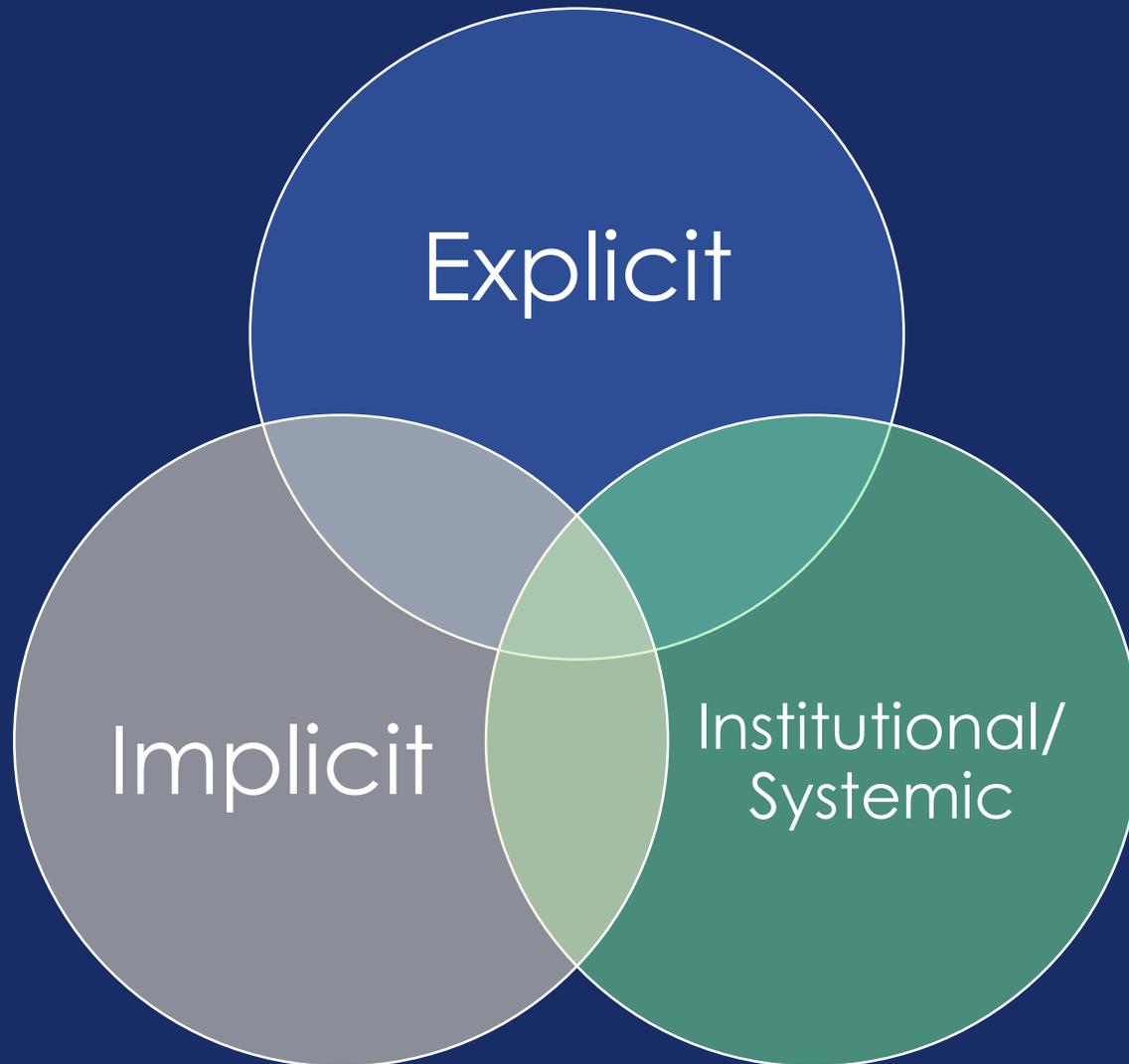
# Benefits of D/E/I in the Board Room

- Lower Attrition and Better Recruiting
  - Representation Matters!
- Increase Competitive Edge, Innovation, Creativity
  - You aren't as smart as you think you are without diversity
- Greater Productivity and Engagement
  - Improved competency

# Bias



# Types of Biases

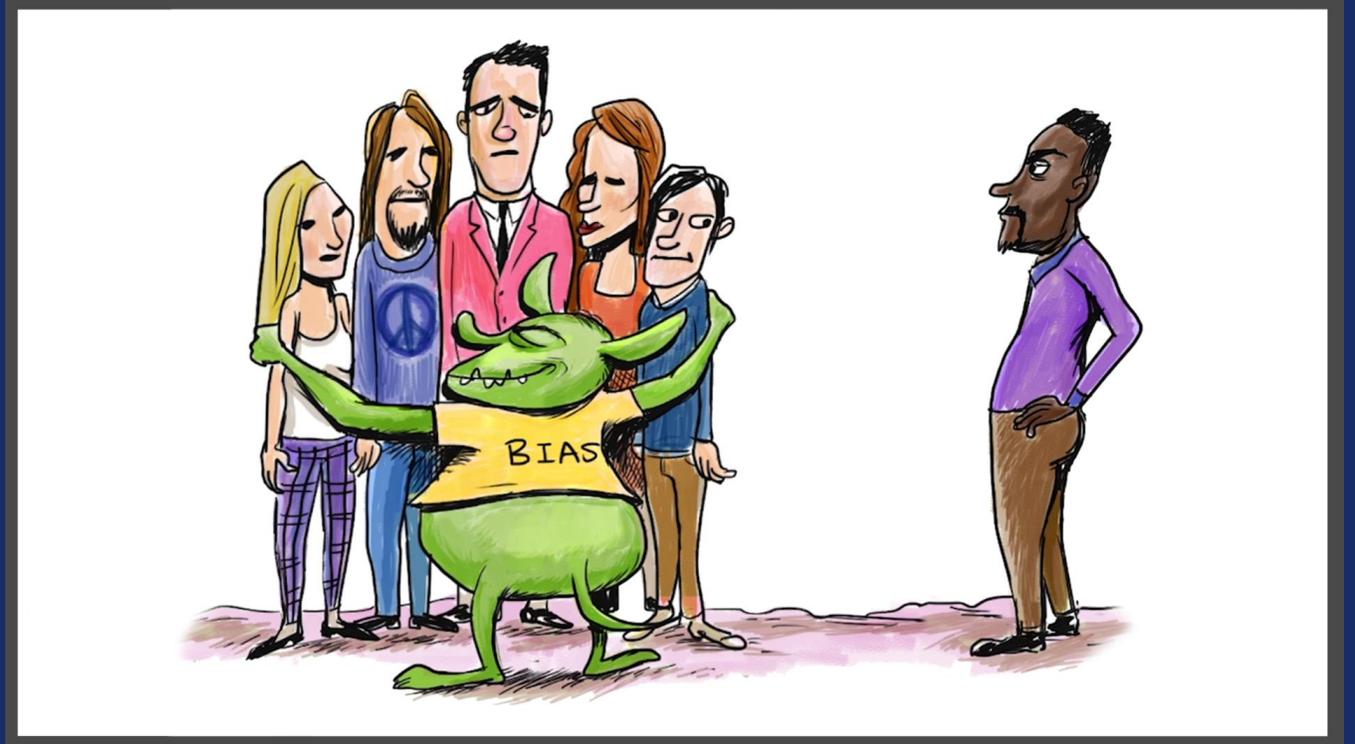


Can occur separately  
but are not mutually  
exclusive!

# Types of Biases

## Explicit Bias

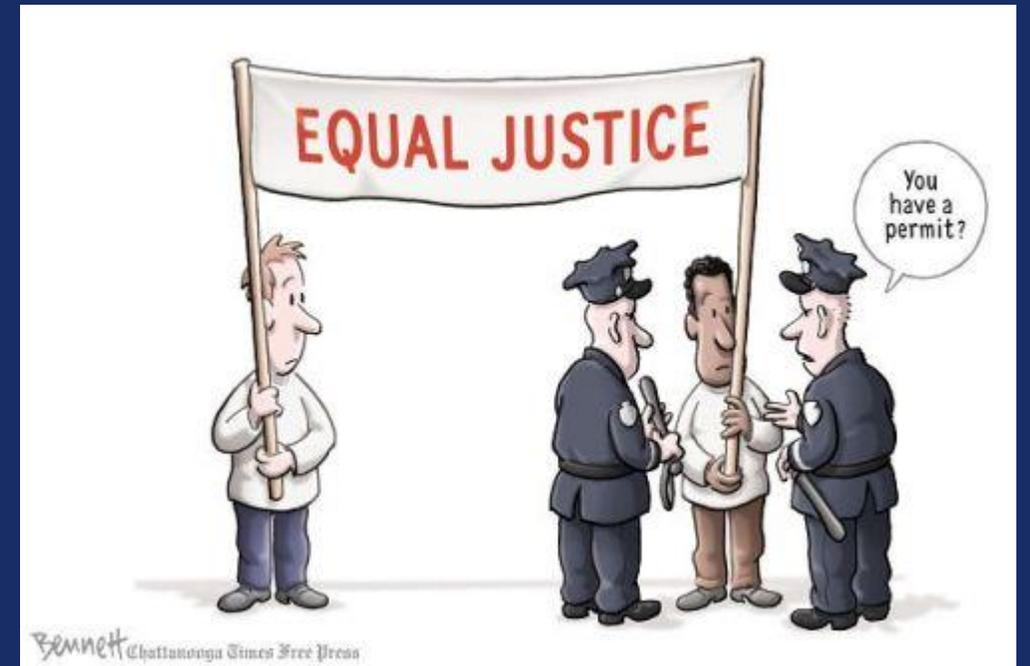
Conscious awareness of attitudes and stereotypes



# Types of Biases

## Institutional/Systemic Bias

Inherent tendency of procedures and practices of institutions to operate in ways that result in some social groups being advantaged or favored while others are disadvantaged or disfavored.

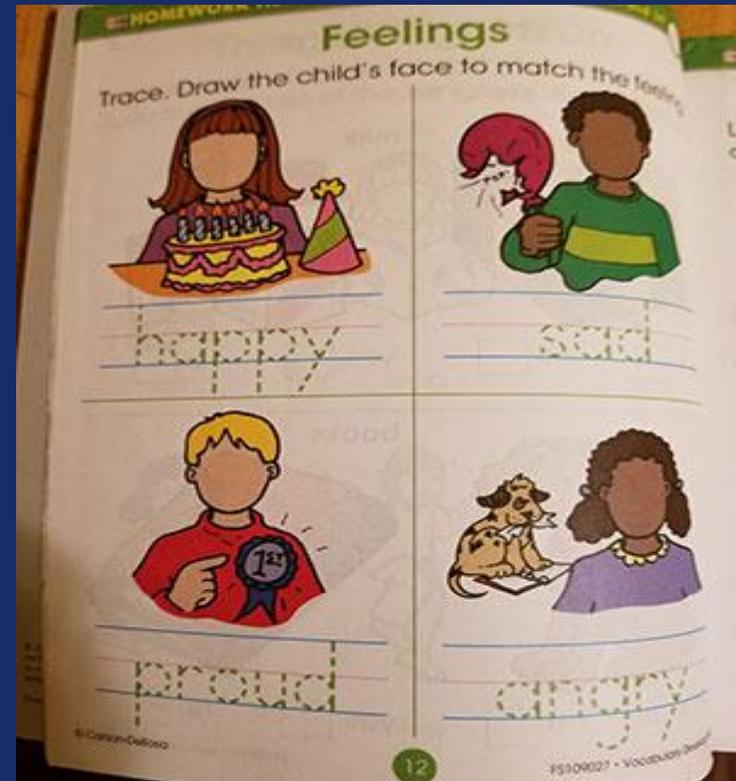


Lock in past inequalities, reproduce them, and exacerbate them even without formally treating persons worse simply because of attitudes and stereotypes about the groups to which they belong.

# Types of Biases

## Implicit/Unconscious Bias

Unaware of attitudes, beliefs or stereotypes that affect an individual's understanding, actions and decision-making.



# Affinity Bias

- Bias for people like yourself; have things in common
- Feel more comfortable
- Results in favoritism



# Rankism Bias

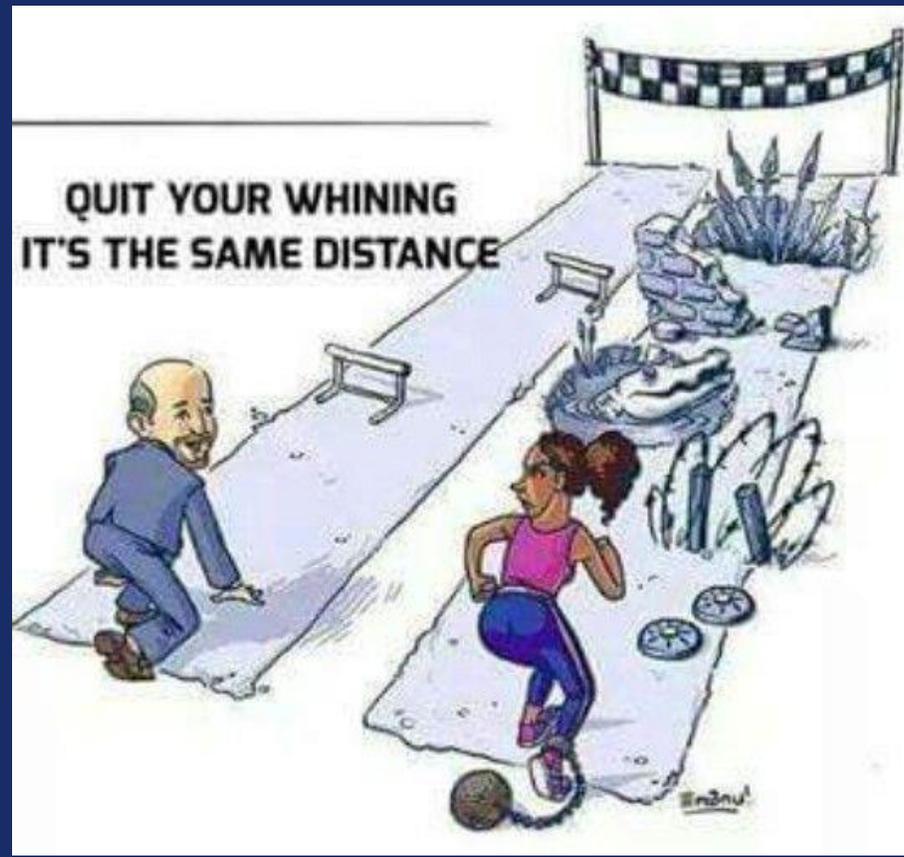
- Based on differences of power attached to rank/title
- Undermines:
  - Creativity
  - Productivity
  - Constituent service
  - Board member commitment



# Organizational Bias



Status Quo Bias



# Part Two: Privilege & Power In The Board Room

# Dynamics of Social Groups

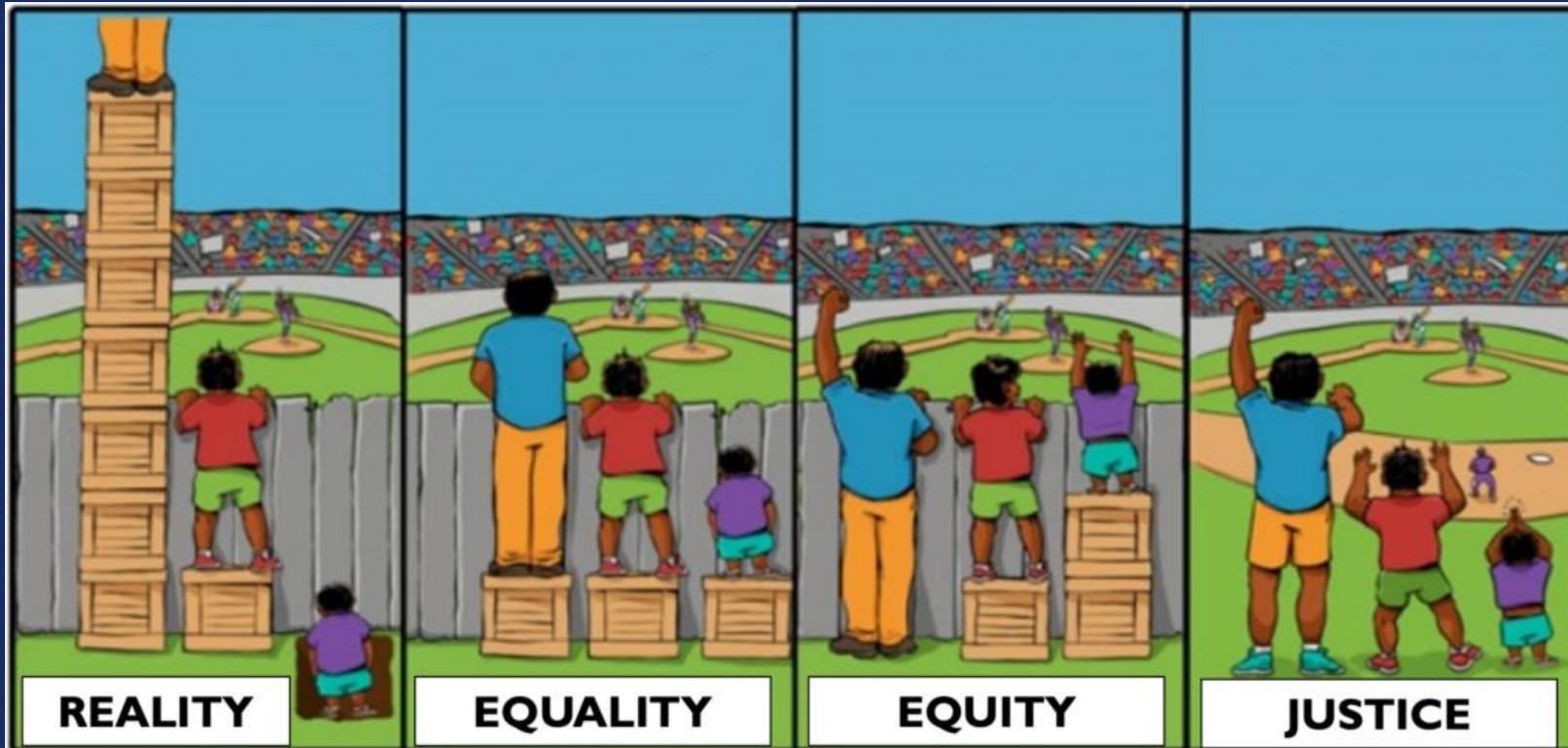
- **Social statuses:**
  - Within each social identity category, some people have greater access to social power and privilege based on membership in their social group.
- **Social groups** are afforded different status in the United States based on multiple historical, political, and social factors.
  - This affects the abilities of people in different groups to access resources
  - **Social construction:** taken for granted assumptions about the world, knowledge, and ourselves assumed to be universal rather than historically and culturally specific ideas created through social processes and interactions.

What does it mean to have **privilege**?

It is defined as “**unearned access to resources (social power) only readily available to some people as a result of their advantaged social group membership**”

**Determining who has privilege or disadvantage is complex:**

- Some may **pass** as members of an advantaged group
- Some may be given privileged because they are **assumed** to be members of an advantaged group



Equality is not Equity!

The goal is to ensure that everyone gets what they need to succeed and the barriers to access are removed.



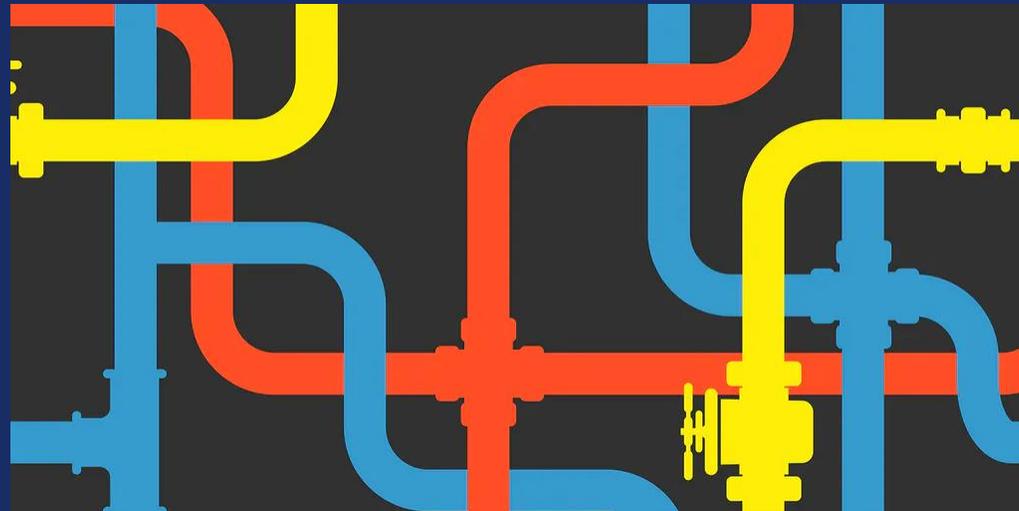
# Part Three: Building Inclusive & Equitable Board Rooms

# Creating a Strategy

- Assessing Mission & Values
  - Defining the “why”
  - Collecting the metrics (General members & Leaders)
- Designating area(s) of focus:
  - A thread through the organizational strategic plan
  - Addressing Institutional Barriers:
    - Leadership & Governance
    - Recruitment & Retention
- Identifying the “who”
  - Who will lead?
  - Who needs to have a seat at the table?
  - Who needs to be “brought along” through the process?
- Defining the Outcome
  - A strategic plan
  - An action plan
  - An organizational review & recommendations
  - A new procedure or system, etc.

# Building: Leadership Pipeline

- Key Concepts
  - Build a more broad and diverse pool of board and leadership applicants.
  - Be intentional about recruiting diverse members - it will not happen organically.
  - Encourage diverse leaders to apply for openings through transparency, clarity and personal one-on-one, meaningful outreach.



# Building: Leadership Pipeline

- Make leadership appointment process transparent, simple and encouraging:
  - Create selection committee and appointment procedures that are followed each year
  - Use the word “apply” instead of “nominate” as it encourages a broader applicant pool and creates less confusion
  - Create a standardized application process
  - Publish leadership opportunities regularly throughout the year in all available board communication mechanisms (don't just wait until it is time to select the next class)

# Building: Leadership Pipeline

- Build a pool of diverse leadership candidates for your leadership positions:
  - Invite diverse community members to meetings, events, and micro-volunteering opportunities - do this consistently and repeatedly as it takes more than one invitation
  - Use messaging similar to the language below when reaching out:
    - "We are reaching out to you because we haven't before."*
    - "We are reaching out to you because our section wants more voices at table."*
    - "We are reaching out to you because we haven't engaged you before."*
  - Engage in meaningful personal, one-on-one outreach to diversity business associations and other community stakeholders to invite diverse candidates to apply

# Building: Leadership Pipeline

- Appoint diverse leaders to leadership openings:
  - Ensure that your executive council and committee chairs have diverse leaders
  - Ensure that your rotation for the chairperson includes diverse leaders
  - Publicize and educate interested candidates on your governance and leadership appointment process
  - Create a buddy system/mentoring program to shepherd diverse members into the pipeline and to keep your members engaged
  - Follow up with applicants who were not selected for a leadership position to encourage their continued engagement with the board and to apply again

# Messaging: Promoting & Outreach

- Key Concepts:
  - Equity, Diversity & Inclusivity help raise the organization and make us better practitioners, better professionals and better leaders.
  - Tell the story, tell it again, tell it once more and keep telling it.
  - Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity are strategic goals and values of the organization.
  - Boards are leaders of the organization's values and priorities. We set the standards and vision in our organizations. When boards prioritize EDI, they institutionalize these critical values.



# Messaging: Promotion & Outreach

- Include the topic of EDI on every governance agenda & discuss goals regularly
- Engage in personal one-on-one outreach to members, not just emails
- Create consistent messaging and promotional materials

# Implementing: Tools to Succeed

- Key Concepts:
  - Create the tools, relationships, programs, policies and bylaws for board members to implement Equity, Diversity & Inclusivity goals.
  - It is about more than putting new people in the room or creating a sense of belonging but developing the systems that make all of that and the steps in between, possible.
  - By asking the right questions and in turn developing initiatives, actions and programs to address them, equity creates the conditions for inclusivity.
  - The board needs the tools, consistent procedures and coherent institution-wide strategies to successfully achieve their Equity, Diversity & Inclusivity goals.



# Identifying Institutional Barriers to Equity

Institutional barriers are policies and systems that disadvantage certain groups of people primarily diverse populations



# Implementing: Tools to Succeed

- Engage leadership to implement your organization's EDI goals through an Individual Action Plan
- Create a toolkit for committee leaders to implement organization-wide EDI goals
- Create a standing inclusivity and equity team
- Designate organizational ambassadors to outside community stakeholders and design consistent engagement with these partners
- Solidify new bylaws, policies, and procedures to achieve EDI goals
- Engage in educational programming on how to lead an inclusive meeting and design inclusive events
- Add EDI to your organization's retreat each year

# Accountability: Transparency, Measuring & Reporting Progress

- Key Concepts:
  - Introduce leadership-wide transparency and accountability through reporting, tracking, implementing, and measuring progress.
  - Ensure that Equity, Diversity & Inclusivity is a top leadership priority and communicate that engagement from all levels of governance is necessary to succeed.
  - Publish the board's progress on achieving Equity, Diversity & Inclusivity goals to promote transparency.
  - Equip all leaders and governing entities with tools to ensure that they are educated with programming, empowered to act and accountable for achieving Equity, Diversity & Inclusivity goals.

# Accountability: Transparency, Measuring & Reporting Progress

- Set specific EDI goals
- Survey your executive council and members for feedback on EDI efforts
- Track your progress and report the data consistently
- Assess and Revise



# Resources

- Why Diversity Programs Fail (Harvard Business Review)
  - <https://hbr.org/2016/07/why-diversity-programs-fail>
- Why Inclusive Leaders Are Good for Organizations, and How to Become One (Harvard Business Review)
  - <https://hbr.org/2019/03/why-inclusive-leaders-are-good-for-organizations-and-how-to-become-one>

Questions?

Let's Connect!

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