

DEI, DEIB, DEIA, DEIJ – Which is the right acronym?

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Whether you've been immersed in diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) work or not, chances are you've probably come across at least one of these acronyms at work, on social media, or in casual conversations. But which one is the correct one and which one are we using as an organization?

To start, common abbreviations that have been proposed include:

DEI = diversity, equity and inclusion

DEIB = diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging

DEIA = diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility OR diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism

DEIJ = diversity, equity, inclusion and justice

The reality is that each of these abbreviations exist to encourage and keep individuals/organizations accountable to our visions for a better community, society, and world. As a profession that tends to gravitate towards guidelines and consensus statements, it makes sense that we would naturally desire official, decided terms and definitions. Yet, the beauty of language is that it is constantly changing and often influenced by geographical areas, communities, and cultures (think "y'all" vs "you all"! More important than the abbreviation is the continuous action that supports its values. Otherwise, the abbreviation is nothing more than a meaningless "marketing tool." As such, CPS will continue to use "DEI" as the umbrella term that encompasses all of these values in our strategic efforts:

Diversity: All of the characteristics that make individuals different from each other, and in its most basic form refers to heterogeneity of individuals, ideas, perspectives, and values.

Equity: The guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that prevent the full participation of marginalized groups.

Inclusion: The notion that an organization or system is welcoming to new populations and/or identities. This new presence is not merely tolerated but expected to contribute meaningfully into the system in a positive, mutually beneficial way.

Belonging: Connotes full membership in the organization. This entails success in achieving not merely formal participation but also rewarding participation for all members of a diverse community in the opportunities, resources, and decision-making structures of the organization.

Accessibility: The "ability to access" the functionality of a system or entity and gain the related benefits. The degree to which a product, service, or environment is accessible by as many people as possible.

Anti-racism: the work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life.

Justice: A state in which everyone receives equitable economic, political, and social rights and opportunities. Put in other terms, justice is a desired state that can only be achieved through equitable and inclusive practices.

The terms contained in this glossary have been adapted and reproduced from the following resources:

1. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Glossary. [University of Washington](#).
2. DIB Glossary. [Harvard University](#).