

ALL ARE WELCOME HERE: BUILDING A CULTURE OF INCLUSION AND RESPECT AT INTERFAITH OUTREACH

Our Commitment to Diversity

Interfaith Outreach embraces diversity and is committed to promoting an inclusive environment across all types of difference. Inclusionary relationships are core to our role as an employer, service provider, partner and community leader. We commit to engaging in respectful dialogue, courageous conversations and bold action in service of a community becoming its best.

Diversity includes differences of perspective and preference, sexual orientation, political affiliation, economic status, veteran status, national origin or culture, race, age, gender, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, language, religion or non-religious background, physical, mental and developmental ability, and all other visible and non-visible differences.

Differences enhance our lives; they make us richer. We want to discover commonalities, rather than assume similarities. We hope that you will join us as we all work to gain skills in how to work across difference.

Our Goal of Conscious Inclusion

While this list is not all encompassing, we want you to be able to envision with us some of the ways we are able to show one another that we see one another and value all of our various roles in the building, whether the individual is a volunteer, staff person, client or donor. These include:

- Getting to know each person as an individual instead of making generalizations about a group of people that are not true of that entire group. We would not want to speak louder to someone strictly based on the appearance of their age or to someone who is an English language learner. We would not want to assume that certain groups of customers are more likely than others to shoplift, or that certain racial groups are looking for particular jobs.
- Getting to know Interfaith Outreach staff, clients and volunteers by their name so that we can identify them when we see them in the building. This is because people of color in our building are often called by another person's name by mistake, or our staff are confused with our clients.
- When a person shares their pronouns, such as she/her/hers, he/him/his, or they/them/theirs, using those pronouns. If you are ever unsure of someone's pronouns, you can use their name.
- Being aware of our surroundings. We want to be able to share our lives together, but we always want to be sensitive about what that looks like. For example, we may not want to have conversations about large financial expenses (such as a home remodel project or international travel) around others in the building who may not have the means for such expenses.
- Committing to learning together. We will make mistakes and that is okay.
- Seeking support from staff when we find ourselves in situations where we realize we have a lack of understanding or even if we wonder, "Can I say this?" Start by directing questions to your staff supervisor or Katie Shepherd, Associate Program Director, before asking someone with a specific identity to educate you about their identity. (kshepherd@iocp.org, 763-489-7513)

We understand that each time we walk through these doors, we are active participants in the work of building a community of conscious inclusion.

Glossary of Terms

- **Conscious Inclusion:** Critical awareness of the act of including others.
- **Culture:** The way we do things around here; also, shared patterns of basic assumption that's taught as the right way to believe, think and feel.
- **Cultural Humility:** A lifelong process of self-reflection and self-critique whereby the individual not only learns about another's culture, but starts with an examination of one's own beliefs and cultural identities.
- **Diversity:** The fact of human difference that may make a difference.
- **Equity:** Everyone gets what they need to accomplish a goal.
- **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.
- **Gender Identity:** A person's internal sense of being male, female, some combination of male and female, or neither male nor female.
- **Identity:** The distinguishing character or personality of an individual or group affiliation.
- **Inclusion:** To be included in.
- **Race:** A social construct that divides people into distinct groups based on certain characteristics such as physical appearance, ancestral heritage, cultural affiliation and ethnic classification.
- **Unconscious Bias:** The attitudes, opinions and judgments we hold about a person or group of people before the presence of evidence that either confirms or contradicts. We all have unconscious biases.



Definitions for: Culture, Diversity, Equity, Identity, and Inclusion obtained from the Minnesota Literacy Council *Foundations of Intercultural Development* webinar series.

Definitions for: Gender Identity obtained from <https://www.merriam-webster.com>

Definition for: Ethnicity and Race obtained from University of Minnesota's Equity and Diversity Certificate Program

Definition for: Cultural Humility obtained from *Cultural Humility: Essential Foundation for Clinical Researchers* by Katherine A. Yeager, PhD, RN and Susan Bauer-Wu, PhD, RN, FAAN

Definition for: Unconscious Bias obtained from the YWCA Minneapolis Racial Justice Facilitator Program