



Council on
Developmental
Disabilities

NYS CDD

DEIA Strategic Plan

Plain Language Version

2022-2026



DIVERSITY. EQUITY. INCLUSION. ACCESSIBILITY.

Thank You to Our Partners



**A special thank you to
our Cultural
Competency
Workgroup members
for guiding the NYS
CDD's DEIA journey
over the last 6+ years :**

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*Thank
You*

Acronyms

Here are some of the ways we will refer to things in this document

- **CDD** - NYS Council on Developmental Disabilities
- **CoP** - Community of Practice
- **DD** - Developmental Disability
- **DEIA** – Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility
- **LGBTQ+** - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer
- **NCCC** - National Center for Cultural Competence
- **NYS** - New York State
- **OPWDD** - Office for People with Developmental Disabilities

Our Mission



Our mission is to improve the lives of New Yorkers with developmental disabilities and their families. We do this by funding programs that focus on inclusion, advocacy, and innovation.

Our Core Values

- We see disability as a natural part of life.
- Self-advocates and their family members always have a say in our decisions.
- We work to make sure diverse voices are included in our research and projects.
- We want everyone to have access to DD services and resources. We work towards this goal with our projects.

Background: Our DEIA

Journey



Georgetown University is a national leader in cultural competence. They picked the CDD to work with on a 6-year project.

The NYS CDD started a cultural competency workgroup. We did this to hear from diverse voices on our projects.

2016

2017

2018

2019

2020

2021

2022

2023

We met 3 times a year for 6 years with the Cultural Competency Workgroup. That is 18 special meetings!

We learned a lot from our group! We shared resources and worked together to help solve problems.



Now, we are sharing what we learned with you. This report is the result of everyone's hard work. This plan will help us make decisions that are fair, inclusive, and person-centered!

The CDD had a full council meeting about DEIA. They voted to establish a DEIA workgroup and start working on this strategic plan.

Making DEIA Change in NYS



New York State is very diverse. We are lucky to have people from all walks of life in New York! Our diversity is a strength and our Council has an important role in promoting diversity.

To make positive change, we need to understand the problem. For improving diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility there are many problems.

Some problems are because people have biased ideas. People have biased ideas about people with disabilities. People also have biased ideas about diverse racial or ethnic communities or people who identify as LGBTQ+. These are a few examples of diversity but there are more.

Some problems are because of a practice or policy that started a long time ago and has not yet changed.

What do we do when we know there is a problem?



When we know a problem exists, it is important to learn and make change. At the NYS CDD, we are trying to learn from the negative experiences people with disabilities have shared with us. We learn by talking to people from many communities and listening to their stories. This information and these experiences have shaped this plan. They will also shape our strategy to drive positive change.

**It's important to make sure we
are actively listening to people
with lived experience!**



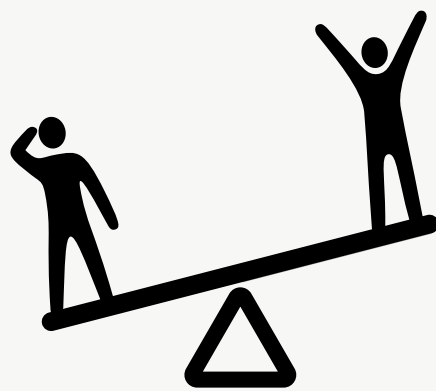
Who is affected by inequality in New York State?

Underserved Communities are groups of people who other people or systems treat unfairly. This unfair treatment is because of their shared identity. These shared features could be where they live, their race, or even who they love. A person could be a part of multiple underserved communities at once. Looking at how these identities work together to affect a person's life is called intersectionality.

Often, people from underserved communities have trouble accessing the services that they have a right to as New Yorkers.

Life can be difficult for people with developmental disabilities. It can be more difficult if someone is from an **underserved community**.

People from underserved communities sometimes have trouble trusting the government. This is because they may have had negative experiences in the past. The CDD will work hard to make sure we are an agency people can trust.



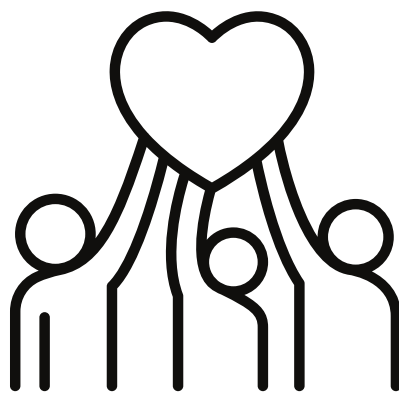
Who belongs to an underserved community?

All people with developmental disabilities are members of an underserved community. Some people belong to multiple underserved communities. For example, they might have a developmental disability *and* live in a poor area without access to services they need. When we think about how to best serve people, it is important to consider where they are coming from. This could include where they live, what food they eat, or what language they speak.

The DD Act considers several communities to be underserved, including:

- People of diverse racial or ethnic groups
- People who speak English as a second language
- People in rural areas
- People who use technology to communicate

When we help members of underserved communities, we help everyone. Our state is better off when we are all able to live inclusive lives.



Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) Goals and Objectives



Over the next 5-years, the NYS CDD will make progress on the following goals:

- 1 Goal 1. Council:**
Increase the diversity of Council membership.
- 2 Goal 2. Staff:**
Increase the diversity of Staff.
- 3 Goal 3. State Plan:**
Embed DEIA throughout the NYS CDD 5-Year State Plan.
- 4 Goal 4. Grants:**
Fund diverse grantees and grant projects focused on DEIA.
- 5 Goal 5. Self-Advocacy & Advocacy:**
Support the diversity of self-advocacy groups and advocacy efforts.

Goal 1. Council:

We want to make our council membership more diverse, and more aware of DEIA. We will work on recruiting new members from underserved communities. We will give these members the resources they need to be successful. We will also educate our existing members about DEIA so they can support diverse new members.

Here are some of the things we will do to make our council membership more diverse:

- Track demographic data on our members.
- Continue our mentorship program for new members.
- Schedule at least one DEIA training for members per year.
- Put more DEIA resources on our website for council members.
- Incorporate DEIA into our member recruitment process.



Goal 2. Staff:

We want to make our staff more diverse, and more aware of DEIA. We will work on recruiting more diverse staff. We will give these staff the resources they need to be successful. We will also train our staff on how to work with everybody. This will make things easier for new employees with diverse social or cultural backgrounds.

Here are some of the things we will do to make our staff more diverse:

- Make sure that new jobs postings are reaching people in underserved communities.
- Hold at least 2 DEIA trainings for staff per year.
- Make sure employees have the resources and trainings they need to be competent and successful.
- Make sure there is a staff member that is in charge of DEIA in the agency and review their role annually.
- Work on advocating to make the state jobs more accessible for people from underserved communities.



Goal 3. State Plan

We want to make sure that our state plan reflects the diversity of New York State. We will work on listening to diverse voices when talking with stakeholders. We will also make sure to include goals or objectives for ourselves. The objectives will say that we need to help people from underserved communities.

Here are some of the things we will do to make our state plan more culturally competent:

- Hold focus groups with underserved community members.
- Conduct research specifically on underserved communities.
- Include goals and objectives that target underserved communities in the state plan.
- Pick a specific underserved population to fund focus projects on for each state plan.



Goal 4. Grants

We want to make sure that our grants are working to help people in underserved communities. We will write grant opportunities directed at people in underserved communities. We will also make sure to give extra help to smaller community-based organizations so that they can get more funding from us and other funders.

Here are some of the things we will do to make sure our grants reach underserved communities:

- Do more targeted advertising of grant opportunities to smaller nonprofits.
- Fund at least 5 DEIA grants over the next 5 yrs.
- Give more help to smaller community-based organizations in underserved communities.
- Analyze data from our grantees about who their grants are serving to make sure they are diverse.



Goal 5. Self-Advocacy & Advocacy

We want to make sure that our grants are helping a diverse group of self-advocates and advocates. We will make sure our advocacy programs and materials are sensitive to the unique perspectives of people in underserved communities.

Here are some of the things we will do to make sure we are uplifting the voices of diverse self-advocates and their families:

- Continue funding our small grants programs and prioritize grants to diverse organizations.
- Fund at least one self-advocacy and one parent-advocacy grant that includes DEIA trainings.
- Engage with leaders of diverse communities.
- Create a culturally competent advocacy resource toolkit.



Definitions of Key Terms and Concepts

Accessibility – Designing services, resources, materials, and workplaces, so that all people can fully participate. This includes people with disabilities.

Cultural Competence – The ability to provide services or resources to a person or a community effectively. An agency that is culturally competent can adapt a service or resource to meet a person's cultural needs. A person's culture can include:

- Language (American Sign Language, Spanish, Mandarin)
- Values and beliefs
- Attitudes
- Religion
- Communication style
- Home or community
- Food

LGBTQ+ – Refers to people who identify as lesbian, bisexual, bigender, gay, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, aromantic, and other diverse gender and sexual identities.

For more information, check out our initiative, *Proud and Supported*, in the resources section at the end of this document.

Definitions of Key Terms and Concepts

Diversity - The wide range of factors that distinguish one group or individual from another. This can include things like:

- Age
- Race / Ethnicity
- Disability
- Gender
- and much more!

Equity - The consistent, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals. There is particular focus on those who may face systemic disparities. The goal is to make sure systems treat everyone fairly.

Inclusion - The recognition, appreciation, and use of the talents and skills of people of all backgrounds.

Underserved Communities – Includes populations such as:

- Individuals from racial and ethnic minority backgrounds,
- Disadvantaged individuals,
- Individuals with limited English proficiency,
- Individuals from underserved geographic areas,
- Individuals who require assistive technology to participate in community life (DD Act).

Resources & References

The following are all the research articles, resources, and other Diversity Plans we used to inform this DEIA Strategic Plan. You can find even more data in the NYS CDD's full DEIA Strategic Plan, at the link below:

<https://cdd.nysits.acsitefactory.com/cultural-and-linguistic-competence>

Resources

ARC Diversity Action Plan: <https://thearc.org/wp-content/uploads/forchapters/16-049-Diversity-Action-Plan-v13-DIGITAL.pdf>

AUCD Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Action Plan:

https://www.aucd.org/docs/urc/20200124_Equity_Diversity_and_Inclusion_Action_Plan_Final.pdf

DD Act: Public Law 106-402 106th Congress October 30, 2000 (acl.gov)

Nation Center for Cultural Competence (NCCC) at Georgetown University:

[fccguide.pdf](https://www.ncccgeorgetown.edu/fccguide.pdf) (georgetown.edu)

NYS Power Authority DEI Strategic Plan:

<https://www.nypa.gov/-/media/nypa/documents/document-library/dei/nypa-2021-dei-journey.pdf>

Proud and Supported: https://proudandsupported.org/resources/#_Toc95902488

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[12] Movement Advancement Project. 2019. *LGBT People with Developmental Disabilities*. <https://www.lgbtmap.org/effective-messaging/lgbt-people-disabilities>

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