



Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and  
Accessibility (DEIA)  
Glossary of Terms

DoD 2040 Task Force

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## Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility Glossary of Terms

The Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) Glossary of Terms is a collection of definitions and descriptions intended to support communication and understanding of terms used by DoD to discuss diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility concepts. For comparative consideration only, the Glossary includes definitions used by other Federal agencies and private sector organizations. The glossary is not exhaustive and will continuously be updated to include new, relevant DEIA terms/information as necessary.

### 1. Diversity

#### 1.1 Definitions of Diversity Used within DoD

Definitions of Diversity Used within DoD	
Definitions / Descriptions	Source
The practice of including the many communities, identities, races, ethnicities, backgrounds, abilities, cultures, and beliefs of the American people, including underserved communities.	<u>E.O. 14035</u> , Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Federal Workforce (25 June 2021)
All the different characteristics and attributes of the DoD’s total force, which are consistent with DoD’s core values, integral to overall readiness and mission accomplishment, and reflective of the Nation we serve.	<u>DoDD 1020.02E</u> . Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity in DoD. (June 1, 2018)
All the different characteristics and attributes of individuals from varying demographics that are consistent with the DoD’s core values, integral to overall readiness and mission accomplishment, and reflective of the nation we serve.	<u>DoDI 1020.05</u> (September 9, 2020) DoD Diversity and Inclusion Management Program
All attributes, experiences, cultures, characteristics, and backgrounds of the total force which are reflective of the Nation we serve and enable the Army to deploy, fight, and win.	<u>The Army People Strategy</u> . DEI Annex (September 1, 2020)
The different characteristics and attributes of individuals (as defined in DoDD 1020.02E).	<u>NAVADMIN 051/20</u> (February 27, 2022)
Teams that include diverse perspectives and modes of thinking solve problems faster and more creatively. Diversity provides us as a competitive warfighting advantage against our adversaries, particularly those who place a premium on uniformity of thought. To capitalize on the perspectives, skills, abilities, and experiences of the whole force, we must create and foster a culture where the contribution of every Marine is respected and valued.	<u>CMC 38 DEI Policy Statement; Talent Management 2030</u> (November 2021)



Definitions of Diversity Used within DoD	
Definitions / Descriptions	Source
A composite of individual characteristics, experiences, and abilities consistent with the Air Force Core Values and the Air Force Mission. Air Force diversity includes but is not limited to personal life experiences, geographic and socioeconomic backgrounds, cultural knowledge, educational background, work experience, language abilities, physical abilities, philosophical and spiritual perspectives, age, race, ethnicity, and gender.	<a href="#">Air Force Instruction 36-7001 Diversity and Inclusion</a> (February 19, 2019)
All characteristics and attributes of individuals, cultures, and organizations aligned with Department of Defense core values, integral to overall readiness, and mission accomplishment that reflect the Nation we serve.	<a href="#">CNGBI 9651.01A National Guard Diversity and Inclusion</a> (August 20, 2018)
All attributes, experiences, cultures, characteristics, and backgrounds of the Total Force which are reflective of the Nation we serve and enable the Army to deploy, fight, and win.	<a href="#">ADO About Diversity</a> (army.mil)
The variety of similarities and differences among people, including but not limited to: gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, native or indigenous origin, age, generation, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, socio-economic difference, appearance, language and accent, disability, mental health, education, geography, nationality, work style, work experience, job role and function, thinking style, and personality type.	<a href="#">United States Coast Guard Diversity &amp; Inclusion Action Plan</a> (2019-2023)

### 1.2 Definitions of Diversity Dimensions Used within the DoD

Term	Definition	Source
Cognitive Diversity	Differences in styles of work, thinking, learning and personality.	<a href="#">MyNavy HR 21<sup>st</sup> Century Sailors Office</a>
	Describes how individuals in a group vary in terms of their personalities, thinking styles, and education background.	<a href="#">Source: DIAP Executive Overview</a> (April 19, 2022)
Cognitive Diversity and Inclusion	A culture that leverages flexibility and fairness.	<a href="#">National Guard Bureau Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan 2017</a> (updated September 2020)
Cognitive/ Behavioral Diversity	Differences in styles of work, thinking, learning, and personality.	<a href="#">Air Force Instruction 36-7001</a> (February 19, 2019) in Air Force <a href="https://www.af.mil/Diversity/">https://www.af.mil/Diversity/</a>
Demographic Diversity	Inherent or socially defined personal characteristics, including age, race/ethnicity, religion, gender, socioeconomic status, family status, disability, and geographic origin.	<a href="#">Air Force Instruction 36-7001</a> (February 19, 2019) in Air Force <a href="https://www.af.mil/Diversity/">https://www.af.mil/Diversity/</a>



Term	Definition	Source
	The degree to which a unit is heterogeneous with respect to demographic attributes that generally include characteristics such as age, gender, race, and ethnicity.	<a href="#">National Guard Bureau Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan 2017</a> (updated September 2020)
	Race, ethnicity, gender, and other demographic variables.	Source: DIIAP Executive Overview (April 19, 2022)
Experiential Diversity	A person’s background, interests, and experiences, unique to them that shape their individual identity.	<a href="#">DIIAP Executive Overview (April 19, 2022)</a>
Global Diversity	Intimate knowledge of and experience with foreign languages and cultures, inclusive of both citizen and non-citizen personnel, exchange officers, coalition partners and foreign nationals with whom interaction is part of a globally engaged maritime strategy.	<a href="#">MyNavy HR 21<sup>st</sup> Century Sailors Office</a>
	In-depth knowledge of and experience with foreign languages and cultures, inclusive of both citizens and non-citizens, exchange officers, coalition partners, and foreign nationals with whom we interact as part of a globally engaged Air Force.	<a href="#">Air Force Instruction 36-7001</a> (February 19, 2019) in Air Force <a href="https://www.af.mil/Diversity/">https://www.af.mil/Diversity/</a>
	Encompasses differences among people concerning geographic origin, differences of thought, and life experiences.	<a href="#">National Guard Bureau Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan 2017</a> (updated September 2020)
Organizational Diversity	Organizational background characteristics affecting interaction, including Service, Component, and occupation/career field.	<a href="#">MyNavy HR 21<sup>st</sup> Century Sailors Office</a>
	Organizational/institutional background characteristics and experience affecting interaction within and between teams/groups, including Service, component, and occupation/career field.	<a href="#">Air Force Instruction 36-7001</a> (February 19, 2019) in Air Force <a href="https://www.af.mil/Diversity/">https://www.af.mil/Diversity/</a>
	Structural and organizational diversity connects each individual to the organization and encourages collaboration, so all individuals are able to participate and contribute to their full potential.	<a href="#">National Guard Bureau Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan 2017</a> (updated September 2020)
Warfighting Diversity	The different missions, functions and tasks that encompass Navy’s operational capabilities.	<a href="#">MyNavy HR 21<sup>st</sup> Century Sailors Office</a>

1.3 Definitions of Diversity Used by Other Federal Agencies / Industry / Academia

Diversity	
Definitions / Description	Source
The collective mixture of differences and similarities that includes individual and organizational characteristics, values, beliefs, experiences, backgrounds, and behaviors. It encompasses our personal and professional histories that frame how we see the world, collaborate with colleagues and stakeholders, and serve communities.	<a href="#">Georgetown University</a>



Diversity	
Definitions / Description	Source
The age, socioeconomic background, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, and ethnicity differences in the workforce.	<a href="#"><u>Cornell University</u></a>
The range of human differences, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes, religious or ethical value system, national origin, and political beliefs.	<a href="#"><u>National Institutes of Health</u></a>
Any dimension that can be used to differentiate groups and people from one another. It means respect for and appreciation of differences.	<a href="#"><u>United States Department of Housing and Urban Development</u></a>
The range of human differences, encompassing the characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. Diversity includes, but is not limited to, the following characteristics: race, ethnicity, culture, gender identity and expression, age, national origin, religious beliefs, work sector, physical ability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, physical appearance, and cognitive differences.	<a href="#"><u>Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology</u></a>
Involving the representation or composition of various social identity groups in a work group, organization, or community. The focus is on social identities that correspond to societal differences in power and privilege, and thus to the marginalization of some groups based on specific attributes—e.g., race, ethnicity, culture, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, religion, spirituality, disability, age, national origin, immigration status, and language. (Other identities may also be considered where there is evidence of disparities in power and privilege.) There is a recognition that people have multiple identities and that social identities are intersectional and have different salience and impact in different contexts.	<a href="#"><u>The American Psychological Association</u></a>
Diversity refers to who is represented in the workforce.	<a href="#"><u>McKinsey</u></a>
A measure of how an individual's personal characteristics differ from those of the normative majority of an organization.	<a href="#"><u>Forbes</u></a>

## 2. Equity

### 2.1 Definitions of Equity Used within the DoD

Equity	
Definitions / Description	Source
The consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved	<a href="#"><u>E.O. 13985, Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government (January 20, 2021)</u></a>



Equity	
Definitions / Description	Source
communities that have been denied such treatment, such as Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; women; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.	
The consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment.	<a href="#">E.O. 14035, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Federal Workforce</a> (June 25, 2021)
The fair treatment, access, opportunity, choice, and advancement for all Soldiers and Civilians while striving to identify and encourage drivers and identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of the total force.	<a href="#">The Army People Strategy. DEI Annex</a> (September 1, 2020)
Our job as leaders is to create an institutional playing field that is even, allowing all Marines an equal opportunity to succeed and enabling our most talented to advance. We must also seek to create a game that is equitable, where all players have the right equipment and a thorough knowledge of the rules. Today, some Marines have the leadership abilities, intelligence, and fitness to succeed, but lack the mentorship, experiences, or education that would enable them to take full advantage of their skills. Fostering equity in the force is about identifying, and then eliminating, structural impediments that limit our Marines from reaching their full potential.	<a href="#">CMC 38 DEI Policy Statement; Talent Management 2030</a> (November 2021)
The guarantee of fair treatment, access and opportunity for advancement for all (employees) while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. The principle of equity acknowledges that there are historically underserved and underrepresented populations and that fairness regarding unbalanced conditions is needed to assist in fostering equality in the provision of effective opportunities to all groups.	<a href="#">United States Coast Guard Diversity &amp; Inclusion Action Plan</a> (2019-2023)

2.2 Definitions of Equity Used by Other Federal Agencies / Industry / Academia

Equity	
Definitions / Description	Source
When everyone has access to the same opportunities.	<a href="#">Cornell University</a>
The creation of access and opportunity for the advancement of all members of our community.	<a href="#">Columbia University</a>



Equity	
Definitions / Description	Source
The state, quality, or ideal of being just, impartial, and fair.	<a href="#"><u>National Institutes of Health</u></a>
Providing resources according to the need to help diverse populations achieve their highest state of health and other functioning. Equity is an ongoing process of assessing needs, correcting historical inequities, and creating conditions for optimal outcomes by members of all social identity groups.	<a href="#"><u>The American Psychological Association</u></a>
The fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, achieved by intentional focus on their disparate needs, conditions and abilities.	<a href="#"><u>Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology</u></a>
Ensures everyone access to the same opportunities. Equity recognizes that advantages and barriers exist, and that, as a result, we all do not start from the same place. Equity begins by acknowledging that unequal starting place and continues to correct and address the imbalance.	<a href="#"><u>The American Bar Association</u></a>
The fair treatment for all people, so that the norms, practices, and policies in place ensure identity is not predictive of opportunities or workplace outcomes.	<a href="#"><u>Mckinsey</u></a>
Equity is what happens when all members of a diverse population of employees have equal opportunities and support to succeed and grow.	<a href="#"><u>Forbes</u></a>

### 3. Inclusion

#### 3.1 Definitions of Inclusion Used by the DoD

Inclusion	
Definitions / Descriptions	Source
The recognition, appreciation, and use of the talents and skills of employees of all backgrounds.	<a href="#"><u>E.O. 14035, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Federal Workforce (June 25, 2021)</u></a>
Valuing and integrating each individual's perspectives, ideas, and contributions into the way an organization functions and makes decisions.	<a href="#"><u>DoDD 1020.02E, Diversity Management and Equal Opportunity in DoD (June 1, 2018)</u></a>
A set of behaviors (culture) that encourages Service members and civilian employees to feel valued for unique qualities and to experience a sense of belonging. Inclusive diversity is the process of valuing and integrating each individual's perspectives, ideas, and contributions into the way an organization functions and makes decisions; enabling diverse workforce members to contribute to their full potential in collaborative pursuit of organizational objectives.	<a href="#"><u>DoDI 1020.05, DoD Diversity and Inclusion Management Program (September 9, 2020)</u></a>





Inclusion	
Definitions / Descriptions	Source
The process of valuing and integrating each individual's perspectives, ideas, and contributions into the way an organization functions and makes decisions; enabling workforce members to achieve their full potential in focused pursuit of organizational objectives.	<u>The Army People Strategy</u> . DEI Annex (September 1, 2020)
Valuing and integrating each individual's perspectives, ideas, and contributions into the way an organization makes decisions.	<u>NAVADMIN 051/20</u> (February 27, 2022)
We are "The Few and the Proud," known across the globe as an elite force with elite standards for leadership, intelligence, and fitness. While we will never lower our high standards, once an individual earns the title "Marine," they have made the grade. Our culture will remain compelling to all segments of society when people see that others like them who earned the title are treated with dignity and respect.	<u>CMC 38 DEI Policy Statement; Talent Management 2030</u> (November 2021)
Inclusion is the process of creating a culture where all members of an organization are free to make their fullest contributions to the success of the group, and where there are no unnecessary barriers to success.	<u>Air Force Instruction 36-7001, Diversity and Inclusion</u> (February 19, 2019)
Valuing and leveraging individual differences for organizational success which includes the involvement and empowerment, where the inherent worth and dignity of each Guardsman and Guardswoman is recognized.	<u>CNGBI 9651.01A, National Guard Diversity and Inclusion</u> (August 20, 2018)
A dynamic state of operating in which diversity is leveraged to create a fair, healthy, and high-performing organization or community. An inclusive environment ensures equitable access to resources and opportunities for all. It also enables individuals and groups to feel safe, respected, engaged, motivated, and valued for who they are and for their contributions toward organizational goals.	<u>United States Coast Guard Diversity &amp; Inclusion Action Plan</u> (2019-2023)

### 3.2 Definitions of Inclusion Used by Other Federal Agencies / Industry / Academia

Inclusion	
Definitions / Description	Source
The invitation for someone to actively engage as their authentic self in their environment.	<u>Cornell University</u>
Active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity, including intentional policies and practices that promote the full participation and sense of belonging of every employee, customer, or client.	<u>Georgetown University</u>



Inclusion	
Definitions / Description	Source
Involvement and empowerment, where the inherent worth and dignity of all people is recognized.	<u>National Institutes of Health</u>
Focusing on the needs of every individual and ensuring the right conditions are in place for each person to achieve his or her full potential.	<u>United States Department of Housing and Urban Development</u>
An environment that offers affirmation, celebration, and appreciation of different approaches, styles, perspectives, and experiences, thus allowing all individuals to bring in their whole selves (and all of their identities) and to demonstrate their strengths and capacity.	<u>The American Psychological Association</u>
Inclusion is the intentional, proactive, and continuing efforts and practices in which all members respect, support, and value others.	<u>Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology</u>
Inclusion encompasses individuals with different identities feeling and/or being valued, leveraged, and welcomed within a given setting.	<u>The American Bar Association</u>
Refers to how the workforce experiences the workplace and the degree to which organizations embrace all employees and enable them to make meaningful contributions.	<u>McKinsey</u>
Inclusion is the act of ensuring that people's experiences within an organization are not impacted negatively as a result of their personal characteristics.	<u>Forbes</u>

## 4. Accessibility

### 4.1 Definitions of Accessibility Used by the DoD

Accessibility	
Definitions / Descriptions	Source
The design, construction, development, and maintenance of facilities, information and communication technology, programs, and services so that all people, including people with disabilities, can fully and independently use them. Accessibility includes the provision of accommodations and modifications to ensure equal access to employment and participation in activities for people with disabilities, the reduction or elimination of physical and attitudinal barriers to equitable opportunities, a commitment to ensuring that people with disabilities can independently access every outward-facing and internal activity or electronic space, and the pursuit of best practices such as universal design.	<u>E.O. 14035, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility in the Federal Workforce (June 25, 2021)</u>



4.2 Definitions of Accessibility Used by Other Federal Agencies / Industry / Academia

Accessibility	
Definitions / Description	Source
Ensuring that all students can equally access, use, and understand learning content.	<u>Cornell University</u>
Equitable acquisition of resources or benefits for people living with disabilities or historically marginalized peoples.	<u>Columbia University</u>
Accessibility can be defined briefly as the "ability to access." At the NIH, we believe strongly that everyone, no matter their disability, race, creed, gender, national orientation, and sexual orientation should have the "ability to access" everything within the confines of our digital and physical space within the NIH.	<u>National Institutes of Health</u>
The elimination of discrimination and other barriers that contribute to inequitable opportunities to join and be a part of a work group, organization, or community.	<u>The American Psychological Association</u>
Results in benefits like eliminating barriers to information and communications technology (ICT) and encouraging development of technologies and techniques.	<u>Department of Health and Human Services</u>
Accessibility is the design, construction, development, and maintenance of facilities, information and communication technology, programs, and services so that all people, including people with disabilities, can fully and independently use them.	<u>Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology</u>
Digital accessibility is the ability of a website, mobile application or electronic document to be easily navigated and understood by a wide range of users, including people with visual, auditory, speech, motor, neurological or cognitive disabilities. It's important to note that access doesn't only pertain to people who are living with permanent conditions. Limitations can be temporary or situational, and also encompass conditions of low bandwidth or no internet access.	<u>Forbes</u>