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PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND DEIA PROMOTION

Telling America's Story to the World

A SPECIAL REPORT BY THE U.S. ADVISORY COMMISSION ON PUBLIC DIPLOMACY



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**A Special Report by the United States Advisory
Commission on Public Diplomacy**



Public Diplomacy and DEIA Promotion

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The views represented herein are those of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Commission's administrative home, the U.S. Department of State.

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

To the President, Congress, Secretary of State, and the American People:

The United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy (ACPD), authorized pursuant to Public Law 112-239 [Sec.] 1280(a)-(c), hereby submits the following special report, *Public Diplomacy and DEIA Promotion: Telling America's Story to the World*.

The ACPD is a bipartisan panel created by Congress in 1948 to formulate, assess, and recommend policies and programs to carry out the Public Diplomacy (PD) functions vested in U.S. government entities, to include the Department of State. This special report focuses on the integration of principles of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) into U.S. government (USG) public diplomacy outreach and program activities.

In fulfillment of Executive Order 13985, the Department of State has undertaken the comprehensive internal adoption of and adherence to principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility. As the lead foreign affairs agency and the face of the nation to the rest of the world, the Department of State also has a mandate to promote DEIA principles abroad.

Much of the responsibility for this external DEIA outreach and engagement lies with the Department's public diplomacy practitioners. The ACPD is pleased to offer this assessment of the current programmatic focus on DEIA and how it has shaped the practice of public diplomacy.

We are also proud to showcase the great work that public diplomacy professionals at home and aboard have done to put these principles into practice, producing significant, and in some cases remarkable, outcomes despite resource and capacity constraints.

Respectfully Submitted,



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We would also like to express our sincere thanks to the PD section leadership at these posts, who deepened our understanding of the context and impact of DEIA in PD at each mission, and who demonstrated an inspiring level of commitment to the improvement of PD practices in the field.

We sincerely appreciate the openness and collaboration of the DEIA advisor team supporting the Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs (R), particularly Dara Duncan, Courtney Roy, and Jacqueline Whitt of the Office of Policy, Planning,

and Resources (R/PPR), Shannon Wilson of the Bureau of Global Public Affairs (GPA), Katherine King of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), and Kamilah Martin-Proctor of the Global Engagement Center (GEC).

In addition, we thank thoughtful colleagues in the Department of State's regional public diplomacy bureaus, the Foreign Service Institute's PD Division (FSI/PD), and the Secretary's Office of Diversity and Inclusion, who broadened our perspectives.

We remain grateful to the Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, notably Under Secretary Elizabeth Allen, for her continued support of the Commission and our areas of inquiry. We also wish to thank R/PPR Director Paul Kruchoski for his advocacy on behalf of the ACPD.

Finally, profound thanks are due to ACPD Program Assistant Kristina Zarny for her substantive contribution to the research process as well as her meticulous administrative and logistical support.



METHODOLOGY

This report is based on video conference interviews with over 150 public diplomacy practitioners within the Department of State conducted by the ACPD in the spring of 2023. Three-quarters of our research participants were working abroad, serving in public diplomacy sections at U.S. embassies around the world. The remainder of our interviewees were based in Washington, DC.

To guarantee confidentiality, neither individual interviewees nor specific posts, bureaus, and offices are identified in the report. We should also note that the ACPD encouraged interviewees to express their own personal views and experiences of the impact that DEIA principles have had on the practice of public diplomacy.

From February to May 2023, ACPD Executive Director Vivian Walker and ACPD Senior Advisor Deneysel Kirkpatrick conducted 36 focus group discussions with 16 posts and two consulates at a total of 18 missions across all six geographic regions. This included two discrete one-hour meetings per post, one with American public diplomacy officers and one with locally employed staff.

To understand the views of Washington stakeholders on the integration of DEIA principles into PD practices, we also engaged in a series of conversations with senior PD and human resource professionals in eight Department of State bureaus and offices from April to May 2023: Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA), East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP), European and Eurasian Affairs (EUR),

Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), Global Public Affairs (GPA), the Global Talent Management's Office of Diversity and Inclusion (S/ODI), the Foreign Service Institute's PD Training Division (FSI/PD), and the Office of Policy, Planning, and Resources (R/PPR) for the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs (R).

Our questions to PD professionals at post focused on four issue sets: the modification of existing Washington-generated PD program formats to promote DEIA principles; the creation of new post-specific initiatives; the navigation of cultural or social sensitivities; and the costs associated with or additional resources required for the operationalization of DEIA core principles in the field. Our interviewees' responses to these questions, and their additional insights, make up the bulk of this report.

The report begins with a brief overview of public diplomacy approaches to the integration of the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility as defined by recent presidential documents. In this section, we also explain the landscape of DEIA initiatives and their linkages to PD activity in the field. The remainder of the report is based on field responses to the question sets described above.

The report also draws on the authors' observations and experience based on a combined 50 years of public diplomacy experience in the Foreign Service at U.S. missions overseas and in Washington, DC.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Post produced comic book in support of expanded education access, Western Hemisphere region, 2022.

In fulfillment of the June 2021 Executive Order 13985 (Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government), the Department of State has undertaken the comprehensive internal adoption of and adherence to principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA).¹ At the same time, as the lead foreign affairs agency and the face of the nation to the rest of the world, the Department of State has a mandate to promote DEIA principles abroad. Most of the responsibility for this external DEIA outreach and engagement lies with the Department's public diplomacy practitioners.

To better understand how the current emphasis on DEIA has shaped the practice of public diplomacy in the field, the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy engaged in a series of virtual focus group sessions with public diplomacy officers (PDO) and locally employed (LE) staff at embassies and/or consulates in 18 countries from six geographic regions, including a mix of small, medium, and large posts. These conversations, which took place in the February–May 2023 time frame, were intended to highlight how the intentional focus on DEIA principles has modified existing approaches to PD and created new best practices. We also hoped to highlight emerging resource challenges and policy implications. While our research focused on the integration of DEIA principles into public diplomacy programming and outreach at the field level, we also explored the impact of the operating environment on the implementation of these programs. In addition, we solicited Washington-based stakeholders for their views on what is working well, and what remains to be done.

We began by asking PDOs and LE staff to describe whether and how they used or modified existing PD programs at post to reflect, explain, and advocate for DEIA principles. Additionally, we wanted to know how posts were using or adapting Washington-produced program models and content such as heritage month playbooks. We then asked posts to talk about new approaches to DEIA program design and recruitment as well as original content development. Recognizing that each operating environment is unique to the host country, we inquired how post might have adapted the presentation of core DEIA principles to the local context, and how post navigated prevailing social, cultural, or religious sensitivities around these principles. We also encouraged LE staff to talk about their own experiences in the promotion of these principles.

In addition to questions about programming content and contexts, we requested posts to tell us about additional or unanticipated costs or resources required to operationalize DEIA-focused initiatives. We also invited posts to comment on their approaches to DEIA program impact and outcome assessments. Moreover, we asked PDOs to describe their experience with interagency and/or mission-wide DEIA activities as well as their efforts to engage LE staff on DEIA core principles. Finally, we inquired about their interactions with host country governments, NGOs, academic institutions, and the private sector to advance DEIA principles.

While this report focuses on the integration of DEIA principles into public diplomacy programming and outreach at the field level, we also invited Washington-based stakeholders to provide their perspectives on what is working well, and what remains to be done. However, it is important to note that our conversations with the regional public diplomacy bureaus, the Office of Policy, Planning, and Research (R/PPR), the

Global Public Affairs Bureau (GPA), the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), the office of the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer (CDIO), and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion (S/ODI) focused exclusively on the relationship between DEIA and public diplomacy program initiatives and so do not represent the full range of Washington DEIA engagement.

Overall, there is a very good story to tell about DEIA in the field. We found that public diplomacy officers and LE staff members have made significant efforts to put these principles into practice,

producing significant, and in some cases remarkable, outcomes despite resource and capacity constraints. Diversity and inclusion, as one post put it, have become “more present in our activities and thematic calendars and in people’s minds and how we work.” This effort, however, has not been without its challenges. Our report also details posts’ efforts to overcome social and institutional barriers to DEIA advocacy in the field, and some of the resource-driven choices and prices that posts must factor into the development and implementation of DEIA programming.

Diversity and inclusion, as one post put it, have become “more present in our activities and thematic calendars and in people’s minds and how we work.”

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on field input, we identified the following recommendations focused on resource and capacity building to enable posts to better support the promotion of DEIA principles.

RESOURCES AND CAPACITY BUILDING

EXPANDED IN-COUNTRY TRAVEL	Increase direct funding to enable PDO and LE staff to expand travel to geographically remote/underserved regions in country to support expanded outreach and audience recruitment activities.	Increase direct funding to provide additional support for program candidate/applicant travel from remote/underserved communities in country to regional centers/capital for interview and/or application process.
TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETATION	Provide additional funding for translation and subtitling services to expand geographically remote/underserved/underrepresented audience access to/participation in program events such as lectures, films, and cultural events.	Provide additional funding for interpretation services to expand and facilitate outreach and recruitment activities for remote/underserved/underrepresented audiences.
IMPROVED ACCESSIBILITY FOR AMERICAN SPACES	Allocate funding to posts to improve physical accessibility to established American Spaces for individuals with disabilities.	Allocate funding to posts to improve infrastructure at established American Spaces to improve access to resources and programming for individuals with disabilities.
EXPANDED ACCESS TO ENGLISH LANGUAGE TRAINING	Facilitate increased access to English language training for potential program applicants from geographically remote/underserved/underrepresented communities to improve their competitiveness for participation in U.S.-based educational or professional training programs.	Create opportunities for program participants selected from geographically remote/underserved/underrepresented communities to improve English language skills as part of the pre-departure orientation process.

PROGRAM CONTENT, PROCESS, AND EVALUATION

TIMING	Offer heritage month and related programmatic Washington products up to two months in advance to give posts enough time to incorporate materials into their planning.	Consider moving away from the U.S. commemorative calendar driven model of content development to offer materials on a rolling basis on the Content Commons internal media sharing platform.
AUDIENCE IDENTIFICATION AND RECRUITMENT	Develop and share templates and guidelines for posts to build DEIA terms and concepts into local audience identification and selection processes.	Develop and share templates and guidelines for implementing partners to build DEIA terms and concepts into local audience identification and recruitment processes.
DEIA MONITORING AND EVALUATION	Develop and share guidance for posts regarding monitoring and evaluation models and best practices.	Establish an online platform to share working examples or models for capturing inputs and outcomes of DEIA programming.

TRAINING AND MENTORING

INTERNAL	Hold PD-led training workshops for mission and interagency section colleagues to expand DEIA outreach and messaging efforts while assuring integration of DEIA into all mission-related activities.	Create regular opportunities for dialogue and discussion with LE staff to deepen understanding and implementation of DEIA principles into program activities.
EXTERNAL	Develop regional training and support for established USG implementing partners new to DEIA concepts. Include discussion of strategies to limit unconscious bias in audience identification and participant selection process.	Develop and standardize grant proposal development skills training programs for new implementing partners in hard-to-reach and underserved communities. Include discussion of strategies to limit unconscious bias in the grant proposal development process.

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND DEIA PROMOTION

TELLING AMERICA'S STORY TO THE WORLD



ORIGINS AND CURRENT MANDATE: TOWARDS “A BALANCED UNDERSTANDING”



Dizzy Gillespie in Karachi, Pakistan in October 1956 on a State Department-sponsored jazz tour.

Photo Credit: Malcolm Poindexter. Photo Courtesy of the Institute of Jazz Studies, Marshall Stearns Papers (JS.0030).

HISTORICAL ANTECEDENTS

From the early days of the Cold War to the present, USG public diplomacy programs have been charged with “telling America’s story to the world” to make a compelling case for its interests. In 1948, Congress first authorized the Department of State to engage in external information and influence activities “to promote a better understanding of the United States in other countries, and to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries.”²²

In keeping with its original legislative mandate to articulate “the free democratic principles and the established foreign policy of the United States,”²³ USG public diplomacy programming has consistently focused on promoting foundational democratic values, to include diversity, equality, and inclusion. Since 1948, many of

these public diplomacy programs mirrored profound social and political transformations in the United States such as the civil rights movement as well as national efforts to promote the rights of women, the disabled, and other underserved or marginalized communities, setting numerous precedents for the current focus on the integration of DEIA principles into public diplomacy programming.

A 1963 report by the United States Advisory Commission on International Educational and Cultural Affairs offers one of the first official assessments of DEIA-like elements in USG public diplomacy programs as carried out by the U.S. Information Agency (USIA). USIA’s mandate to project democratic values in the Cold War context while showcasing domestic social reforms resulted in heightened attention to the cultural and exchange program participant selection process.

Highlighting the importance of conveying “American character and achievement,”⁴ this report assessed the inclusivity of USIA’s public diplomacy programs at home and abroad. Noting, for example, the need for a better focus on individuals with disabilities, those with limited English language skills, emerging youth, and women, the report called for greater attention to underserved communities, which it described as the “have nots.” The report also explicitly linked democracy promotion to greater inclusivity through intentional outreach to the “have-nots”:

*We must seek to show these people that there is a democratic road to social reform and progress and assure that both the have-nots and the dissident may see the benefits of the “continuing revolution,” the rapid social and economic change taking place in the United States under a democratic system.*⁵

The report ultimately recommended that “the exchange program make a concerted effort to seek out and select more ‘have-nots’ with promise and talent so that, in keeping with this country’s tradition, an American exchange experience never becomes a privilege restricted to the elite.”⁶

A few months after the publication of the 1963 report on cultural and exchange programming, the U.S. Advisory Commission on Information produced a companion report that examined the application of the USIA’s mandate to “disseminate accurate information” and “counter and correct...distortions and lies about U.S. policies and intentions” in support of “American leadership in the world.”⁷ A key element of that mission, according to the report, included the promotion of a “balanced understanding of America’s racial problems and progress.”⁸ The report concluded that the acknowledgement of efforts to address racial and social inequities in the United States was essential to its credibility as a global leader.

Taken together, the Advisory Commission’s 1963 and 1964 reports produced recommendations that would eventually result in more inclusive and representative educational and cultural exchange initiatives, from audience identification to program design and participant selection. The Commission reports also reinforced the need for more nuanced messaging to shape foreign audience perceptions about the U.S., especially those related to racial justice and equality.

Finally, these reports established a benchmark for improved outreach to vulnerable or socially excluded audiences in support of universal human rights and democratic institution building. Today’s focus on the promotion of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility through USG public diplomacy programs should be seen as the continuation of a long-standing commitment to these principles.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 13985

The recent focus on the integration of DEIA principles into and promotion of equity⁹ through public diplomacy programming is part of a government-wide effort to further affirm and institutionalize the national commitment to diversity, equality, and inclusion. In January 2021, Executive Order 13985 established the Department of State’s role and responsibilities in assuring comprehensive internal adoption of and adherence to DEIA principles. At the same time, it provided a framework for the Department to better integrate DEIA principles into foreign policy objectives, including an intentional effort to expand the participation of marginalized groups in public diplomacy program and outreach activities.¹⁰

E.O. 13985 called on federal agencies to pursue a comprehensive approach to advancing equity for all, including people of color and others who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality. In the international context, synonymous phrases such as “marginalized populations” and “vulnerable populations” frequently encapsulate groups including, but not restricted to, women and girls, individuals with disabilities, indigenous peoples, minority racial and ethnic communities, refugees, and internally displaced individuals, religious minorities, LGBTQI+ persons, rural inhabitants, migrants, and those adversely impacted by enduring poverty or inequality.

Pursuant to E.O. 13985, in April 2022, the Secretary of State released the State Department’s first Equity Action Plan (EAP), which identified ways to integrate the E.O. into externally-facing efforts such as diplomatic engagements, high-level dialogues, multilateral efforts, foreign assistance, public diplomacy programs and messaging, and procurement and contracts. The Secretary also announced a plan to appoint the Department’s first Special Representative for Racial Equity and Justice.

“Today’s focus on the promotion of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility through USG public diplomacy programs should be seen as the continuation of a long-standing commitment to these principles.”

THE AGENCY EQUITY TEAM

On March 29, 2021, the Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources established an Agency Equity Team (AET), a department-wide effort to operationalize presidential E.O. 13985 and assess how the Department of State advances racial equity and support for underserved communities. Composed of civil service and foreign service employees, political appointees, and contractors, the AET was asked to identify how the Department could advance racial equity and support for underserved communities through U.S. foreign policy and assistance, public engagements and exchanges, grants, procurement, contracts, and consular services.

While not the first effort to embed diversity principles in U.S. foreign policy initiatives, the operationalization of E.O. 13985 generated a demonstrable increase in the level of the Department’s DEIA-focused engagement. Shortly after establishing this team, the Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources asked the AET to conduct a baseline

survey of the 275 overseas U.S. posts, hold listening sessions with Department bureaus and offices, and host external stakeholder engagements with domestic civil society organizations.

Additionally, the AET organized focus groups and reviewed strategic planning processes to evaluate the Department's foreign assistance, policies, and programs. This internal report included general conclusions on the Department's efficiency and effectiveness in integrating E.O. 13985 into all aspects of its mission. These conclusions continue to guide discussions on the integration of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility into public diplomacy programming and outreach initiatives.

THE OFFICE FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

The Office for Diversity and Inclusion (S/ODI), established in 2021, outlines a framework defining DEIA principles to which the Department should adhere and how such guidance should be implemented in internal operations. The Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer (CDIO) and the ODI team were required to (1) strengthen accountability mechanisms, (2) increase data transparency, and (3) identify barriers that impact career advancement and retention and propose solutions to remove them. They now lead all efforts to advance DEIA in the Department's workforce and processes, policies, and programs. These efforts include implementation of E.O. 14035 on DEIA in the Federal Workforce and facilitating the Department's support for underserved populations at home and abroad as stipulated by E.O. 13985. These two offices also play a key role in framing ways to consider DEIA in the planning or implementation of public diplomacy activities.

R/PPR AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DEIA IN PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

As the public diplomacy policy lead for the Department, the Office of Policy, Planning, and Resources (R/PPR) works with Washington and the field to incorporate DEIA principles into personnel and resource management as well as strategic planning processes. In addition to the focus on internal workforce and workplace issues, R/PPR supports the global promotion of DEIA principles to advance USG values and foreign policy interests. This effort includes the placement of DEIA senior advisor positions in each R bureau and outfitting PD platforms to capture inputs and outcomes of DEIA-focused PD programming. R/PPR also ensures that DEIA program objectives are embedded in policy documents such as the Joint Strategic Plan and the Public Diplomacy Implementation Plan (PDIP).

The PDIP, which maps a post's strategic goals as captured by its Integrated Country Strategy (ICS), establishes the mix of exchange programs, public outreach, and media and stakeholder engagements necessary to carry out U.S. foreign policy priorities. Now, DEIA-focused program and grant criteria involving or targeting underserved communities are built into the PDIP framework and help to assure that the needs of these communities are captured in program objectives and desired outcomes.

DEIA DEFINITIONS

Executive Order 14035 defines Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) as follows:

- **DIVERSITY** - The practice of including the many communities, identities, races, ethnicities, backgrounds, abilities, cultures, and beliefs of the community.
- **EQUITY** - 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.
- **INCLUSION** - The recognition, appreciation, and use of the talents and skills of individuals of all backgrounds.
- **ACCESSIBILITY** - The design, construction, development, and maintenance of facilities, information and communication technology, programs, and services so that all people, including individuals with disabilities, can fully and independently use them. Accessibility includes the provision of accommodations and modifications to ensure equal access within the community.

It is important to note that this special report focuses primarily on the external aspects of DEIA PD programming, to include shifts in audience identification and recruitment practices, adaptation of content to the local context, and the development of targeted messaging and outreach campaigns in support of mission objectives. Nevertheless, as the "DEIA and Equity Strategic Development Areas" model indicates, the field-level integration of DEIA into public diplomacy initiatives and activities includes important internal considerations, such as the creation of a representative workforce, the promotion of an inclusive workplace environment, and the assurance of diversity in procurement practices. This report touches on some of these internal issues as they relate to public diplomacy initiatives.



EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS BUREAU

5 DEIA and Equity Strategic Development Areas: Examples for U.S. Embassies & Consulates



DEIA Policy Office, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, 2023.

A GUIDE TO R FAMILY DEIA RESOURCES AND TOOLS

REGIONAL PUBLIC DIPLOMACY BUREAUS

The regional public diplomacy bureaus play a critical role in enabling posts to integrate DEIA principles into PD programs. The Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, for example, has developed and implemented a Race, Ethnicity, and Social Inclusion (RESI) strategy that offers a comprehensive set of resources to support PD strategic planning around social inclusion issues. The RESI unit, established in 2005, seeks to eliminate barriers and create equal access and opportunities for members of marginalized and underserved communities. The WHA RESI Unit also tracks select activities to measure progress and works on a wider range of activities and additional opportunities with desks, posts, other bureaus, and special offices pertaining to specific populations. Finally, the RESI unit established four policy-oriented initiatives with Brazil, Uruguay, and Colombia to eliminate racism and advance socioeconomic outcomes for Indigenous and African descendant communities.

DEIA ADVISORS

Initially, the Agency Equity Team (AET) directed R family bureaus to collectively think about processes, targeting specific stakeholders and the outcomes of USG external engagement with a focus on representation and equity in participation. Prior to the AET rollout, the Bureau of Global Public Affairs (GPA) and The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) had already established DEIA senior advisors with distinct mandates. The GPA DEIA Advisor was asked to outline overarching goals to identify and mitigate barriers to DEIA, cultivate a thriving culture, and integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion into GPA's work. The ECA DEIA Advisor focused on identifying best practices, successes, and challenges to lower barriers for underrepresented and marginalized communities to participate in ECA inbound and outbound international exchanges and programs. Initially reliant on a volunteer advisory council, R/PPR has recently designated an Equity advisor to facilitate both internal and external DEIA coordination across R.

GPA CONTENT COMMONS

The Bureau of Global Public Affairs offers a range of resources to support PD practitioners in the field. These resources provide content and strategies for messaging on the Secretary's foreign policy priorities as well as technical tools to assist PD sections in getting U.S. messaging to foreign audiences. GPA's Content Commons offers a one-stop shop for content: press guidance, readouts, transcripts, statements, video and digital materials, and messaging playbooks. DEIA-specific playbooks cover heritage months (such as Black History or Hispanic Heritage months) or themes such as Pride or Women's History months. The playbook material is then embedded into PD activities abroad.

R/PPR GUIDANCE

R/PPR supports the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs by coordinating policies and resources that equip practitioners with knowledge, skills, and tools to achieve U.S. foreign policy goals. R/PPR's specific guidance on DEIA aims to ensure that PD practitioners (and others) have a baseline understanding of the concepts and high-level guidance underpinning DEIA principles related to public diplomacy work. R Family bureaus and offices continue to provide PD-specific guidance on DEIA priorities related to the PD Framework and the conduct of PD programs, initiatives, and activities. Until the official DEIA PD guidance was released by R/PPR, GPA and ODI content materials remained primary sources for PD practitioners. R/PPR is currently working on new guidance for PD practitioners to clarify the distinction between internal and external DEIA efforts and will launch an internal Sharepoint site to serve as a clearing house for DEIA and Equity resources and guidance.

PD TOOLS: PLANNING, REPORTING, BUDGETING

PD Tools is an electronic platform that enables post to track strategic policy planning and budgeting. It also provides guidance on standardizing DEIA terminology and tracking and monitoring DEIA-related PD activities. The inclusion of keywords within the PD Tools database ensures that a post's DEIA initiative or activity is captured in the global DEIA data call and other PD Tool reports. The following questions serve as a guide to post usage of DEIA terminology:

- Does it include, target, or seek to benefit individuals from diverse communities, identities, races, ethnicities, backgrounds, abilities, cultures, and beliefs?
- Does the planned initiative or activity address equity?
- Does it discuss or touch upon 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?

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The PDIP, which aligns with a post's Integrated Country Strategy (ICS), includes a mix of exchange programs, public outreach, and media and stakeholder engagements that serve as the Department's most visible expression of U.S. foreign policy priorities. DEIA objectives such as advancing human rights and fostering inclusive economic growth are embedded in every ICS. All public diplomacy funded programs must support each post's strategic goals captured in the ICS. Criteria established at the beginning of the program, built into a grant, or listed as part of the pre-determined monitoring and evaluation process determine the success of PD programs, particularly those involving or targeting underserved communities.

THE NEW DEIA FOCUS: “IT’S MORE INTENTIONAL NOW”

An overwhelming majority of our interlocutors agreed that while public diplomacy activities have always incorporated DEIA principles, the push following the 2020 period of racial reckoning and the implementation of E.O. 13985 and E.O. 14901 ushered in a new era of DEIA-focused programming. Reflecting a general sentiment expressed by most missions in our field survey, one large NEA post observed, “We have been doing DEIA programming all along, but it is more intentional now. The idea of inclusion and diversity is more present in our activities and thematic calendars. It’s more present in people’s minds and how we work.”¹¹ According to a mid-sized EUR post, “baking DEIA into our programming, outreach, and partner selection process” has become a mission priority.¹²

Posts surveyed also described concerted efforts to assure a more focused, contextually appropriate integration of DEIA principles into PD practices and programs in support of the Integrated Country Strategy. Indeed, several posts viewed the focus on DEIA principles as essential to the fulfillment of overall mission objectives. A small WHA post, for example, noted that the USG is trying to engage the host country on issues ranging from “economic development to security to migration...at the heart of it is socioeconomic exclusion. So, for us, promoting inclusion and bringing more voices to the table is not just about doing the right thing. It’s about achieving all our other goals.”¹³

“We have been doing DEIA programming all along, but it is more intentional now. The idea of inclusion and diversity is more present in our activities and thematic calendars. It’s more present in people’s minds and how we work.”

TARGET AUDIENCE IDENTIFICATION AND RECRUITMENT: CREATING A “DIVERSE COHORT”

Our conversations with American and LE staff members indicate the enhanced focus on the integration of DEIA principles has produced new, innovative, and in some cases transformative shifts in approaches to field-based PD programming, beginning with audience identification and recruitment practices. The updated DEIA-focused participant selection process now includes broader representation of underrepresented groups in programs and events, the deliberate inclusion of DEIA components in program descriptions and announcements, improved accessibility to events and program content, and the use of inclusive language at every point in the program cycle.

Many posts noted that the recently implemented Public Diplomacy Staffing Initiative (PDSI),¹⁴ with its focus on audience analysis and segmentation, helped them to redefine existing audiences or identify new, previously underserved communities. As one EAP constituent

post reported, instead of doing “one-off programs...we leveraged our PDSI transition to apply it to the PD Framework and pull out the DEIA principles... A recent example of a targeted audience... that [we would not have considered] before PDSI and the stronger focus on DEIA was human resource managers. By working with them, we encouraged more inclusive hiring practices and employment guidelines.”¹⁵ A mid-sized WHA post added, “We now take a big picture look because of audience-based PDSI. We incorporate DEIA in each goal. It’s not separate. We...develop a long-term institutional campaign to address challenges with each DEIA audience and adjust to assure a more malleable PD campaign.”¹⁶

At the same time, the new PDSI audience categories also presented some challenges. Several posts indicated that marginalized communities tend to be disproportionately correlated with “emerging voices” rather than “established opinion leaders,” which could result in the perpetuation of unconscious biases. For example, LE staff members at a large WHA post noted that “It seems like every person from an underrepresented group is considered emerging. But it’s not necessarily this way. We have established opinion leaders who are [members of an underrepresented group], for example. The segmentation of minorities in the emerging voices category [could be] dangerously limiting.”¹⁷

Overall posts reported that the DEIA-driven cultivation and expansion of program participant pools made them more conscious of broad patterns of social and racial exclusion in recruitment and selection practices, especially among underserved and underrepresented communities. As one LE staff member at a large WHA post put it: “[We have] observed that most finalist slates are not diverse...there are many biases incorporated into these criteria,” so [we must] revisit the process to make it more inclusive.”¹⁸

In addition to concerns about inherent bias in selection criteria, several posts recruiting from underrepresented groups noted that potential participants were not as competitive as those from established candidate pools owing to gaps in education and professional experience. A number of non-Anglophone posts in developing countries singled out the lack of English language skills as a potential barrier to program participation. Other factors limiting candidate diversity include the lack of job flexibility or childcare. As one large WHA post noted, “If a person has a child, it impacts their chances of being able to complete the program without special accommodations.”¹⁹

Posts have come up with several innovative approaches to make the recruitment process more inclusive for underrepresented, marginalized, or minority audiences, beginning with audience identification. For example, to recruit Afro-descendant students for a scholarship program, one post brought in Afro-descendant community leaders whose nuanced understanding of race in that country’s context facilitated the selection of the best and most appropriate candidates. According to the post’s PDO, “This was a way to gauge bona fides in a credible way given our lack of knowledge about the community and its membership.”²⁰ Going forward, the PDO noted, “Our takeaway was to involve Afro-descendant NGOs in the selection panels due to the sensitivities around self-identification.”²¹

Noting that the lack of English language skills had created a barrier to professional opportunities among the Afro-descendant population in the host country, the same post created an English language teaching program tailored specifically for female Afro-descendant law students and lawyers. “If they can get through law school, they can learn English, will likely be successful, and be able to make decisions in positions of authority.”²² Around that program, post created grant opportunities and used them to broaden recruitment within the larger Afro-descendant community, sending notice of funding opportunities to WhatsApp groups dedicated to NGOs that serve specifically underserved populations.²³



Public Diplomacy Staffing Initiative: Work Clusters and Portfolios.

Many posts are creating their own candidate selection and review process templates for educational, professional exchange programs and scholarships. Using the U.S.-protected classes definitions as a guide for classifying participants allows some posts to give certain groups extra weight in their application. For example, the PD team at an SCA consulate developed a point system for the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) in which candidate data was entered to make it as neutral as possible, and diversity was included in the scoring sheet. “If you were from a particular background, you received an extra point. If you identified with a particular gender classification, you’d have different points. So, all in all, we combined all these factors that came to influence the outcome more formally.”²⁴ According to post, institutionalizing this process “promoted fairness across groups.”²⁵

To assure the participation of candidates in countries where it is difficult for citizens to obtain official documentation, especially in remote regions, posts have built additional flexibility into the recruitment processes. For example, one SCA post noted that otherwise fully qualified candidates were unable to participate in their program because they could not produce their medical records and other necessary paperwork on time. So, post “expanded the application period to ensure students had enough time to gather their required documents for the program. We did that at the beginning of the process to ensure transparency and fairness. Because of that change, we selected the most diverse cohort for all our programs this year.”²⁶

Finally, noting that local perceptions about racism in the United States may discourage potential applicants, some posts have chosen to address their concerns directly during the recruitment process. According to a large post in WHA, “Our programming has evolved... to take into consideration feedback from the Youth Ambassadors program... Afro-descendant alumni [of USG programs] talk about issues and negative experiences [in the United States] related to race because they understand the concerns of the communities from which they come.”²⁷ Post has also supported “the creation of an advisory council for Afro-descendant communities to facilitate these conversations.”²⁸

WORKING WITH IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS: “ENSURING DIVERSITY”

The focus on the integration of DEIA principles into PD programming is altering how posts manage relationships with implementing partners, opening new doors for improved collaboration, capacity building, and knowledge sharing. While still working with established implementing partners on traditional policy and thematic issues, posts now intentionally seek out local organizations new to the contracting pool to highlight DEIA issues.

DEIA programming has also created opportunities for implementer capacity building. For example, an SCA post connected like-minded partners to complement each other’s strengths. “We reached out to a local university with the largest incubation facility [in the country], but we were aware they may not have access to vulnerable communities at the grassroots level. With this in mind, we partnered with a local NGO [that was able to link] these vulnerable communities and the [university] partner. The Institute will provide training and facilities while the local NGO will acquire experience working with a consortium of partners.”²⁹

However, in the effort to expand grant opportunities to underrepresented communities, some challenges have emerged. For example, posts in non-Anglophone countries where affordable English learning opportunities are not widely available indicate that the English language requirements for grant proposals have become increasingly problematic. According to one post, “We flagged for The Office of the Procurement Executive (OPE) that the English requirement for grant proposals is exclusionary. We hear it from contacts and alumni. If we can’t accept basic proposals, then that already limits our pool. It’s a big barrier to diversifying grantees.”³⁰ Posts also lamented the difficulty of identifying new NGO partners from remote or underserved communities who have enough experience in proposal development and implementation to compete successfully for grants.³¹ Such limitations shrink opportunities to work with communities critical to advancing U.S. goals and objectives.

Additionally, a few posts noted that their implementing partners were unfamiliar with DEIA concepts and therefore required constant oversight to assure their integration into the recruitment process. One AF embassy told us that “For the media journalism training program, we encouraged our partners...to ensure that diversity and inclusion are applied to their selection process [but] just the mere fact of including women [became] a big issue. We had to explicitly say if you’re going to have 100 participants, for example, 50 should be women.”³²

THE LANGUAGE OF DEIA: “MAKING IT RELEVANT”

Not surprisingly, the successful integration of DEIA principles into field-based PD programming depended a great deal on posts’ ability to make the terms and associated concepts accessible and meaningful in the local language and culture. Noting that DEIA is a distinctly “American” way of articulating and framing the issues, one regional public diplomacy bureau official observed, “Some posts struggle to translate these terms for themselves, their implementing partners, and then more broadly in the communities they are trying to reach. The challenge around terminology is something that we need to discuss.”³³

Many posts chose descriptive terms or phrases that would be more understandable and relatable to specific audiences. For example, several posts opted to avoid potentially sensitive terms such as “transgender,” preferring to use a less controversial word instead. Other posts took steps to explain DEIA concepts to local grantees. A PDO at an African post noted that mission partners often expressed confusion about the meaning of terms such as “inclusivity.” “We had to be direct with implementers and tell them to include persons with disabilities [and minority group representation] in their recruitment.”³⁴

Other posts discovered the need to reframe the way they discussed accessibility issues in the local language, turning initial failures into valuable lessons learned. An LE staff member at an NEA post said, “In working with someone with a disability issue, I learned... that how I was describing them in French and Arabic was offensive.”³⁵ Frustrated with their inability to effectively engage on disability issues, one EUR post set out to learn from the host country how the U.S. embassy could more appropriately talk about a person with disabilities in the local languages without creating offense. “We realized that we needed a trainer to help with the terminology...so we asked a disability rights activist to train project staff and teachers on dealing and working with people with disabilities.”³⁶

A non-Anglophone EUR post found its initial campaign to raise awareness about gender-based violence failed owing to its translation of the term “domestic violence” in the local language. PDOs “discovered that ‘domestic’ means ‘it’s my home,’” so their use of the term implied that the USG was trying to “dictate” how people behaved in the “sanctity of their personal space.” Instead, post began to use the term “violence against women and children,” which resonated much more effectively with target audiences.³⁷

American and locally employed staff occasionally had different perspectives on the relevance of DEIA principles and their applicability to the host country. As one regional bureau official described it, there is a “tension between telling a society what its values should be versus communicating what our values are and what we expect.”³⁸ For example, the LE staff at a small EUR post felt strongly that “We don’t have a history of racial problems, so talking about race with DEIA language doesn’t really work here,” adding “Our society has a long history of cohesion and equality.”³⁹

However, PDOs at the same post noted that while some local audiences believe “there is no racism” in their country, their engagement with local minorities in this country elicited a different response: “When we Americans talked to our contacts in more marginalized communities, they say they see discrimination every day. We are working to address the issue through the convening power of the embassy.”⁴⁰

“Some posts struggle to translate these terms for themselves, their implementing partners, and then more broadly in the communities they are trying to reach. The challenge around terminology is something that we need to discuss.”

DEIA: A CROSS CUTTING APPROACH + FOCUS AREAS



- TARGETS AND ONGOING EFFORTS TO IMPROVE INTERNAL PROCESSES, PROGRAM DESIGN, AND DELIVERY**
- ◆ Intentional recruitment efforts for greater representation of underrepresented groups in programs and events
 - ◆ DEIA mandates/criteria for grant selection
 - ◆ DEIA talking points and inquiries
 - ◆ Program accessibility
 - ◆ Inclusive language

Post-produced graphic, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs.

WASHINGTON PRODUCED DEIA CONTENT: TOP LINES, PLAYBOOKS, AND TIMING

The Bureau of Global Public Affairs (GPA) offers a range of resources to support PD practitioners in the field. These resources provide content, tactics, and messaging on the Secretary’s principal foreign policy priorities. These tools, available online and sent periodically to post, include press guidance, readouts, transcripts, messaging content, graphics, and videos. In the last two years, GPA has significantly expanded its DEIA-themed content in the form of “playbooks” and other supporting materials.

In general, posts view GPA as a reliable resource for straight policy language on DEIA issues. For example, LE staff at a medium-sized SCA consulate said that post “picks the top lines from the GPA content for remarks and use it often.”⁴¹ Additionally, most posts find GPA’s DEIA content to be “user friendly,” especially the “plug and play” components that can be easily integrated into or serve as thematic building blocks for social media outreach efforts. An AF post noted, “For the anniversary of George Floyd’s killing and Juneteenth, we used GPA content because those were occasions where we wanted to make sure the messages landed right with our audience. It was helpful to have those building blocks to draw from.”⁴²

Most posts indicated that timing often determines whether they can use GPA-produced DEIA content. For example, a large EUR post said “We find that, especially around thematic months, GPA material comes too late for us to use in our programming. We often get content for Black History Month or Women’s History Month at the beginning of February or March, but we need to coordinate across multiple consulates, an embassy, and several American spaces, so we must plan at least two or three months in advance.”⁴³

Posts also noted that the GPA-driven impetus to celebrate heritage months on the U.S. calendar is out of sync with many countries whose national celebrations of gender or racial equality or diversity occur at a different time. A regional public diplomacy bureau official observed that posts “end up with a lot of content for the US-based heritage months and nothing for the host country heritage months.”⁴⁴ As one post elaborated, “GPA material often ends up not being very strategic for our audience engagement due to mismatched cultural calendars. Black History Month in the U.S. is February, but the host country celebrates its Black heritage in [the fall].”⁴⁵

POST ADAPTATION OF DEIA CONTENT: “TAILORING MESSAGES FOR LOCAL AUDIENCES”

Overall, posts echoed an SCA PDO’s observation that while “GPA playbooks are very valuable...we tweak them to local audiences in a way that makes sense... For instance, we used some GPA Black History Month material for an exhibition about famous African Americans with ties to [the host country].”⁴⁶ A mid-sized AF post said that it “selects from Washington-created toolkits the things that we think will resonate with the host country and then, on occasion, tailor messages for local audiences.”⁴⁷

A large SCA post noted that it is “trying to address the discrimination and racism that [host country citizens] experience but link it to the U.S. experience.”⁴⁸ To do that, post curated an exhibit highlighting how the U.S. has dealt with discrimination, allowing the audience to make connections to what is happening in their own country. Another SCA post said, “[GPA] content showed women from other parts of the world [that] did not resonate with our audience. It made more sense to create content featuring women from our country.”⁴⁹

Noting that some audiences don’t fully understand why the USG’s attention to issues of diversity and equity is relevant to their own experience, PDOs at a large EUR post are focused on raising awareness outside of the country’s sizeable Black and immigrant communities. “When the Black Lives Matter movement really hit, [many white] locals said that it was an American movement and asked, ‘Why is our country taking it on?’” However, the PDO added, “The names shouted out in the protest marches sparked by the BLM were not American names. They were the names of people of color from this country [who have been victims of police violence].” Post PDOs concluded, “We don’t want to import our problems. We want to increase awareness about the existing inequities and discuss how both sides can address them.”⁵⁰

A few PDOs noted that the messaging embedded in GPA material featuring certain U.S. ethnic communities does not always resonate effectively with foreign audiences, a factor that can influence impact. An EAP post said, “Washington wanted us to highlight the diaspora that had immigrated to the United States using images and language GPA curated.” This content included “symbols representing this diaspora community” that are “highly offensive to our [local] audience.”⁵¹ Post relayed concerns to Washington that “the imagery and language were inappropriate” but also emphasized that that GPA “can’t be blamed” because “they don’t understand the cleavages and history.”⁵² It is post’s responsibility to provide that nuance, the PDO concluded.

Some posts prefer to create all their own DEIA outreach content. “We might look at GPA content for ideas or inspiration, but almost all the social media content we produce locally. That’s not to say that the GPA toolkit is not useful but we have a firm commitment to localization and a very strong commitment to providing content in local language.”⁵³ Post added that their ability to adapt content to the local context gave them a distinct “advantage” over their “regional strategic competitors” such as China or Russia, “who are either unwilling or unable to do so.”⁵⁴

“We might look at GPA content for ideas or inspiration, but almost all the social media content we produce locally. That’s not to say that the GPA toolkit is not useful but we have a firm commitment to localization and a very strong commitment to providing content in local language.”

Posts provided numerous examples of creative and consequential post-produced DEIA programs that elevated routine commemorative months or themes into thoughtful and far-reaching local engagements. For example, an EUR PD section used an International Women’s Day panel to launch a discussion about approaches to inclusivity in the host country’s financial infrastructure policy. The PDO explained that during a previous event, female leaders expressed concern about “gender and equal investments because, in [the country], only 1% of women-owned businesses get venture capital funding. We wanted to address this issue while recognizing that [the host country] already has a solid reputation worldwide for equal opportunities for women.”⁵⁵

To counter resurgent anti-Semitism in the host country, a mid-sized EUR post convinced Washington to support a program that resulted in a change to the national high school curriculum. The PDO noted that “With the support of the Ministry of Education, post constructed an International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) focused on countering antisemitic disinformation narratives. Out of this, we worked with the host country to create a Holocaust Human Rights awareness curriculum for primary and secondary students.”⁵⁶ Students now cannot graduate high school without this six-week capsule.

Most posts found that host country officials and civil society organizations were quite amenable to programs that promote accessibility and the rights of differently-abled communities. In some cases, posts were able to leverage relatively non-controversial accessibility issues to underscore some important bilateral objectives. For example, one EAP post focused on the rights of the disabled through a candid discussion of the U.S. wartime use of a toxin in that country, which resulted in significant injury to the local population. As the PDO noted, “the United States’ direct [responsibility] has created a kind of moral obligation to help people here. It’s part of our war legacy, a form of reconciliation.”⁵⁷

“There are a lot of conservative societies where we want something else from the government, and so then it becomes this tension between whether we push what we believe is a value-driven inclusive behavior or ask if we want the arms deal.”

LEVERAGING THE U.S. EXPERIENCE: “DEALING WITH THOSE REALITIES”

Several PDOs reported that ongoing U.S. efforts to address and overcome racial injustice at home can serve as fertile ground for DEIA programming abroad. A PDO at a consulate in SCA said, “A lot of people we interact with, especially young students, are fairly cognizant about our own issues of diversity...and some of the challenges we face. We get very intelligent and thought-provoking questions about what’s happening in the United States. [Everyone benefits when] we also share our experience and our challenges.”⁵⁸ An AF PDO agreed, saying that, “DEIA hit us exactly when we were dealing with social justice issues on the ground...I think the nexus of the political and social realities in [the host country] and having the policies in place in Washington to support them gave us a platform for discussion.”⁵⁹

Several posts noted that countries with their own historical experiences of racial injustice have proven to be effective partners in creating mutually like-minded programming. For example, a theatrical company in a sub-Saharan African country approached post to produce a piece featuring a conversation between Malcolm X and Steve Biko. Post immediately adapted existing program resources to support the initiative. “We had a program component for the grant that had to focus more on Black history but [we modified it] to include social inclusion and social justice to make it broader, linking it to post’s goals.”⁶⁰

Some PDOs called for more racial and ethnic diversity among participants in professional and education program and training initiatives. A few specifically highlighted the need to have more Americans of color travel to their posts for programs and exchanges. For example, a PDO at a large WHA post noted that greater diversity among U.S. program participants would make the case for U.S. inclusivity while reinforcing “the diversity present in the host country.”⁶¹

Posts also expressed concern about the diversification of U.S.-bound program participants. A PDO at a large European post observed that “The cohorts of our professional development programs for [host country] government officials are very homogeneous. We have gone through a revolution in the past five years in [the host country] ... Marginalized communities have greater visibility” and the parliament and staffers are more diverse. “I would love to see the same level of diversity reflected in our programs for host country participants.”⁶²

Noting that U.S. actions can serve as inspiration to audiences looking for best practices, many posts found creative ways to showcase diversity and inclusivity through a focus on mission personnel. For example, an EAP post has leveraged the presence of women and minority officers in leadership positions within the Embassy to underscore the USG commitment to racial and gender equality. “We recently did a video honoring what [host country] and American women are doing to advance the relationship. It’s great to showcase the United States as a leader in terms of gender issues or race... we’ll continue to do that because it resonates.”⁶³

Finally, several PD officers argued for greater diversity in DEIA advocacy at post, noting that every American officer, regardless of race, gender, or sexual orientation, should be involved in the effort to promote DEIA principles. As one officer at a large SCA post told us, “When Black History Month arrives, all we think about is trotting Black people out to talk. Black history is American history. It’s not just Black people’s history. It is also impactful to have a Caucasian officer talk about Black History. Then people will not just associate Black History as a Black issue. It’s an American issue, and all Americans should be able to speak on this topic.”⁶⁴

NAVIGATING LOCAL SENSITIVITIES—“QUIET ENGAGEMENT”

Many posts face the challenge of negotiating deep local sensitivities around certain political, social, or religious issues to pursue DEIA program objectives. For these posts, effective DEIA programming has become a delicate dance, requiring discreet and indirect approaches that address ongoing concerns about equity, diversity, and inclusion without adversely impacting the bilateral relationship and, perhaps, compromising on or closing the door to the achievement of key mission objectives. As one regional public diplomacy bureau official put it, “There are a lot of conservative societies where we want something else from the government, and so then it becomes this tension between whether we push what we believe is a value-driven inclusive behavior or ask if we want the arms deal.”⁶⁵

Posts play a critical role in the effort to navigate such tensions. One post reported that “Certain topics are sensitive [here], so deciding what engagement level is part of the process. Sometimes it’s quiet engagement that’s done with various groups behind the scenes to not put them in any danger or at risk, and that is something that we’ve always done quite well for decades.”⁶⁶

Posts at missions in socially and religiously conservative countries say that programming around LGBTQI+ themes can be exceptionally challenging when public discussion of these issues has the potential to exacerbate existing social tensions or bring unwanted attention to certain communities or individuals. Most posts operating in such environments organize LGBTQI+ events discretely, with minimal publicity.

For example, LE staff at a large NEA post said that while the promotion of LGBTQI+ rights is still a strategic priority for the mission, post is “judicious” in how it approaches the issue set in this predominantly Muslim country. “We push certain limits on LGBTQI+ [programming] each year, doing more in increments because our audiences still do not accept the topic well. If we pushed using Washington’s strength, it wouldn’t necessarily serve our purposes because what we’re doing is trying to change minds. Shocking is not necessarily the best way to go.”⁶⁷

Nor can posts afford to put local activists and vulnerable audiences at risk or compromise their hard-won gains. A large SCA post cancelled a planned program on LGBTQI+ rights to protect their local partners: “We visited this transgender organization to talk about their operating environment and the work that they do...No sooner than we got there [we learned] that the security forces had already...interrogated them. After the incident, they followed up, saying ‘it’s not worth partnering with the U.S. embassy’ because they were putting themselves at risk and any attention puts a target on their back.”⁶⁸

Posts in a few countries with strong religious and cultural opposition to LGBTQI+ rights simply chose not to engage in any public outreach on these issues, opting instead for internal programs with carefully curated guest lists. Other embassies have elected not to engage on LGBTQI+ issues during particularly tense moments in the bilateral relationship. For example, a constituent post in SCA turned down requests from local LGBTQI+ communities to do a joint program during Pride month “because this issue is highly sensitive...and would exacerbate the ongoing political drama between the U.S. and the host country. We wanted to make sure to stay away from controversy.”⁶⁹

*“Black history is American history.
It’s not just Black people’s history.”*

A mid-sized post in a sub-Saharan African country reported that the host government has turned the promotion of LGBTQI+ rights into a bilateral irritant by characterizing U.S. engagement on this issue as part of a “Western” conspiracy to “impose” homosexuality on the citizens of that country. According to the PDO, the government treats “any discussion from the U.S. about LGBTQI+” as “an attack on its values.”⁷⁰ Therefore, “we have chosen to address the issue behind closed doors...Putting anything out publicly will be too contentious.”⁷¹

Several American and local PD professionals at the same post noted that the U.S. promotion of LGBTQI+ rights has bled into other work areas, impacting the lens through which local audiences view U.S. public diplomacy initiatives. “Whatever we work on is easily misinterpreted as something to promote homosexuality. It’s hard to communicate on these issues.”⁷² Similarly, LE staff in a small NEA country with restrictive policies on LGBTQI+ rights reported that the host country government canceled a post program on the promotion of women’s leadership development because it was interpreted in the academic community as “promoting lesbianism.”⁷³

Finally, several LE staff members in religiously conservative countries expressed concern that they may be personally vulnerable to political or social backlash owing to their association with post driven LGBTQI+ rights promotion. At one NEA post, the American staff recounted their success at launching “an ongoing national conversation” about same sex rights in the face of considerable controversy and pushback.⁷⁴ However, LE staff members at the same post felt profoundly stressed by their work on LGBTQI+ programming, describing experiences of harassment from contacts and family members who criticized them for being associated in public with values that are contrary to their religious beliefs.⁷⁵

DEIA PROGRAM RESOURCE AND CAPACITY CONSIDERATIONS: “BRUTAL PRIORITIZATION”

To better understand how the focus on DEIA has impacted post budget and personnel resources, we asked PDOs to describe any additional or unanticipated program costs or capacity constraints associated with DEIA programming and outreach activities. More than half of the posts reported that supporting enhanced DEIA initiatives strained their limited financial and personnel resources to the point that they were forced to make difficult decisions about DEIA program prioritization and scale. This was especially true of small and medium-sized posts with multiple competing demands on flatlined budgets. Increased translation and interpretation requirements, the need for improved accessibility to program venues, and an ever-expanding mission workload presented the greatest challenges to DEIA program implementation.

Translation/Interpretation: Expanded program participant recruitment efforts create a significant increase in demand for translation and interpretation services to accommodate multiple local languages or improve accessibility for the visually and hearing impaired. Increased translation/interpretation costs for lectures, presentations, video materials, social media content, and audience recruitment have proven to be exceptionally burdensome for small-to-medium-sized posts in non-Anglophone countries, especially when attempting to reach underserved communities or cultivate new audiences in remote regions of the country.

One single-officer post in a non-Anglophone country with two working languages made the difficult decision not to expand its “Woman-to-Woman” outreach program, noting that “to travel to several cities, visit schools, find qualified English-speaking participants and then follow up with interviews [was] already costly in terms of time and funding.” Post chose instead to divert funding to database training for the new American Center.⁷⁶

A small SCA post noted that “Having an interpreter at every in-person and virtual event is an additional expense... There have been multiple programs requiring interpretation for which we had to choose between two languages or, in some instances, balance multiple interpreters, which is an additional expense. It’s a difficult decision [as to] which language to prioritize.”⁷⁷

A large EUR post faced a similar choices and prices dilemma: “Sign language in [the host country] is different from American Sign Language (ASL). So, if a film from ECA comes with ASL, it can’t be understood by the deaf community in the country. Therefore, we must pay for a specialized translator, which is difficult and costly. It comes down to a brutal prioritization of two thousand dollars for a sign interpreter for one or two people or doing a program that will impact U.S. foreign policy. You can support somebody on a year-long exchange program to the United States with two thousand dollars.”⁷⁸

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Physical Accessibility: Several posts cited the lack of funding to improve physical access to program spaces as a significant challenge to the “A” in DEIA. American Spaces housed in older USG facilities or locations operated by local partners, for example, often require costly upgrades to accommodate visitors who use wheelchairs. Unfortunately, as one AF post observed, funding for such renovations is “not something we can get from the American Spaces Office in ECA.”⁷⁹

In other cases, limitations to host country physical infrastructure discourage accessibility. One SCA post noted that not only is the main library of their flagship American Space in the capital city inaccessible to wheelchair users, but most of their external program venues must be located on the second floor of a building owing to local infrastructure challenges. That has had a negative impact on post’s ability to accommodate an important DEIA audience. Without additional funding from Washington, and in the absence of local facilities that meet Americans with Disabilities Act standards, this and other posts are sometimes forced to make difficult decisions about whom to invite to their events.⁸⁰

Workload Demands: Public diplomacy officers tend to be on the front lines of mission efforts to promote DEIA principles, which, as quite a few posts reported, can add considerably to their workload. A PDO at a large AF post noted that the PAS team is “taking on a lot more work to achieve [DEIA] ideals, but we’re not being given the time and financial resources we need to implement [them].” “To be truly DEIA compliant,” the AF PDO added, “there should be greater consideration for the fact that practitioners will need more time to implement these programs.” That time includes, “thinking about programs, having DEIA conversations, recruiting the right way, and traveling places several days away, which requires more money.”⁸¹

“To be truly DEIA compliant, there should be greater consideration for the fact that practitioners will need more time to implement these programs.”

Several PDOs also warned that each new DEIA funding opportunity from Washington that requires grant management and oversight can quickly become an administrative burden for already overextended post personnel. As one AF PDO noted, either “add to the PD budget and staff us better, [or] cut some of the unnecessary paperwork, [or] tell leadership they need to be able to function at a public event with fewer BCLs (briefing checklists). Then we can do the meaningful work of PD and focus on DEIA in our work environment and sections.”⁸²

Even where the posts are well staffed, the workload is often so high that PDOs and LE staff are unable to keep up with the volume of in-person engagements.⁸³ Another post noted that the burden of paperwork decreases opportunities to deliver on DEIA objectives. “I’ve traveled [outside the capital city] twice in the past eight months...I’m never going to go see those [DEIA] communities we talk about because I don’t have the time.”⁸⁴

Division of Labor: Regional public diplomacy bureau officials expressed concern that some public diplomacy sections in the field are being asked to take the lead on integrating DEIA principles into the mission’s recruitment, hiring, and retention of mission personnel. One regional bureau official noted, “The internal DEIA conversations need to be management-led overseas, and it occasionally falls to PD to take care of, and it shouldn’t. We find that even domestically, we (PD staff) will often be asked to do something around hiring, recruitment, and retention. We care so much about [these issues], but it’s not for PD to lead on.”⁸⁵

DEIA PROGRAM MONITORING AND EVALUATION: “HOW DO YOU KNOW?”

Effective monitoring and evaluation of post activities remains a perennial challenge. Fast moving events or crises, multifaceted program initiatives, numerous high-level visits, and the administrative tasks associated with exchange program and grants management leave little time and capacity to measure program effectiveness. Posts report that analyzing impacts and outcomes of DEIA-related activities is especially difficult given the lack of consensus about and guidance on what to measure. Beyond tracking the volume of social media interactions, basic program participant demographics, and event attendance, posts do not feel equipped to define success.

As one SCA PDO said, “How does one know if a society is integrating or adopting the DEIA principles? Yes, our audiences may be responsive, and the message resonates, but does it change behavior? The dilemma

is whether we know exactly what we are measuring. We see a lot of output, but I don’t know if that necessarily impacts.”⁸⁶ Additionally, host country restrictions on the collection of personally identifiable information can present a challenge to impact assessment.

Consequently, many posts we talked to have developed performance metrics and collection models appropriate to their internal expertise and capacities as well as data accessibility. For example, a constituent post in SCA noted that to assess an online arts program, they are looking at “how many people we have reached directly [and] through social media... the amount of money [spent on travel, grants, and representational events].... We are breaking that down according to our budget and trying to analyze that.”⁸⁷ Most of the posts we interviewed agreed on the need for additional guidance from Washington to move beyond post-generated assessments of DEIA program impacts.

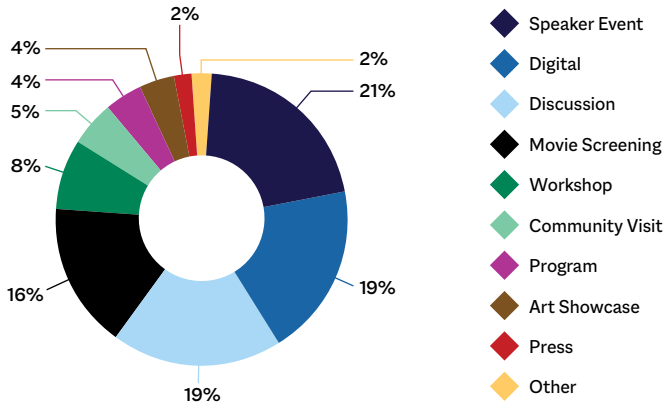
While R/PPR is currently working with the field to capture DEIA-related activities through the PDIP and PD Tools, regional public diplomacy bureaus are concerned they do not have sufficient “visibility” on the full range of ongoing DEIA activities in their regions at any given time. As one official noted, such visibility is essential to impact assessment.⁸⁸ The regional bureaus also emphasized the need for more efficient tracking of DEIA field activity and accounting for PD’s DEIA involvement across the department or interagency. “There are thousands of streams of money across the department, and everybody responsible for reporting on them has their own separate system.”⁸⁹

Some important steps have already been taken to consolidate DEIA activity monitoring and evaluation efforts. For example, all bureaus are now required to use a newly established budget code to track DEIA-related activities. One regional public diplomacy bureau, an early adopter of this new budget code, said that it has improved their ability to monitor spending requests for DEIA-related activities. The new budget code has also allowed the bureau to track some program costs in addition to training and travel-related expenditures.⁹⁰ R/PPR is also cataloguing all cables related to advancing DEIA principles, organizing them by objectives to allow posts to see what others are doing to advance similar goals. These findings will be made available on the new U.S. Department of State internal Equity Sharepoint Site.

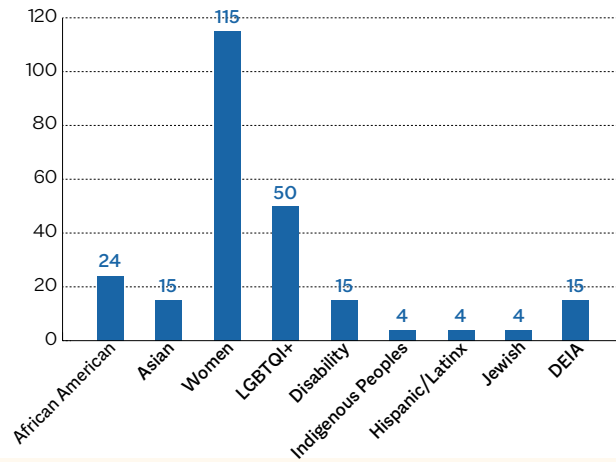
Regional public diplomacy bureaus have also generated a range of informal approaches to capturing post DEIA activities. For example, an internal EAP report analyzing 211 newsletters produced by public affairs sections at EAP posts over a 12 month period between 2021-2022⁹¹ provides a snapshot of region-wide DEIA-related events, programs, and messaging. As the graphics below indicate, nearly half of all activities focused on women and girls (gender equality, entrepreneurship, STEM education), followed by programming on LGBTQI+ issues. Events such as panel discussions, speaker programs, and movie screenings served as the primary platforms for in-person engagement. The report also reflected a high concentration of DEIA programming around Women’s History and Pride Months, confirming posts’ observations about the predominant influence of the USG commemorative calendar on overseas DEIA activities. The spike in women’s programming in late November into December also coincides with the observation of 16 Days against Gender-Based Violence in addition to the bigger spike in March during Women’s History Month.

“How does one know if a society is integrating or adopting the DEIA principles? The dilemma is whether we know exactly what we are measuring.”

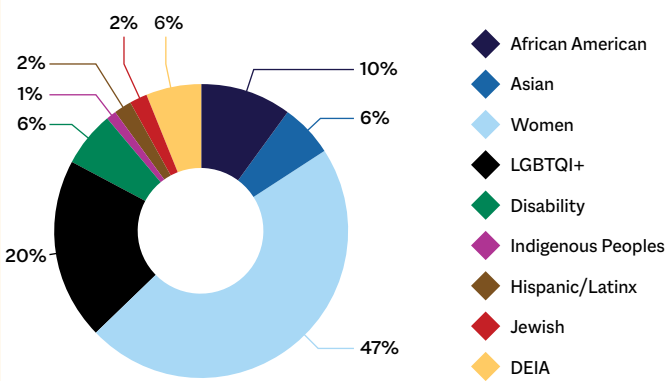
Type of Program



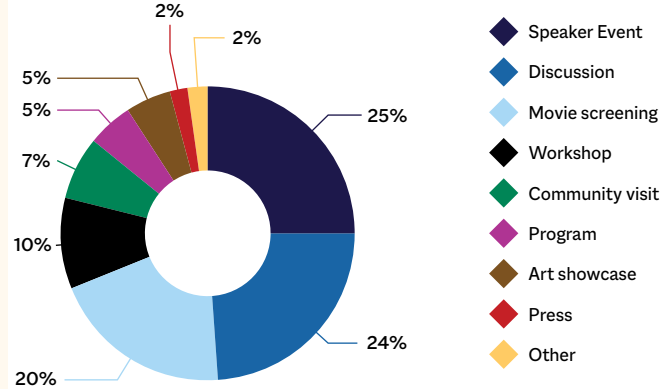
Number of Events Per Theme



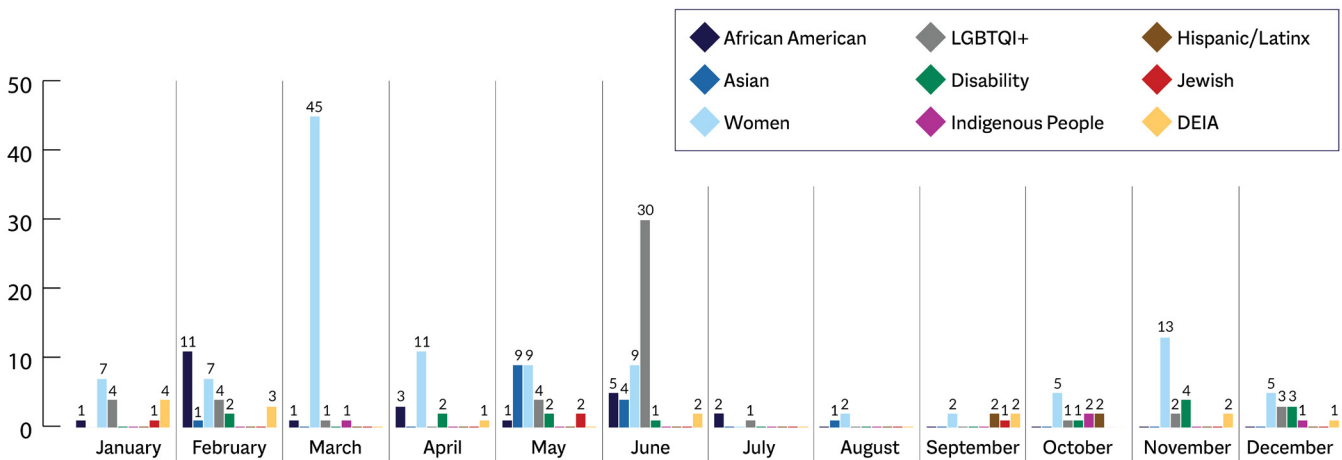
Program Type Including Social Media Activity



Program Type Excluding Social Media Activity



Number of Programs per Program Theme over Time



All graphics depict the number and type of DEIA-focused programs in the EAP region over a 12 month period between 2021-2022.

ADDITIONAL FIELD OBSERVATIONS

Training: In general, posts called for more and better training in DEIA precepts and their integration into PD programming. Noting that “a lot of us are working in areas where we may not personally have experience,” a PDO at an EAP post called for additional “sensitivity training” to “raise awareness” about underserved communities and to “know where our blind spots are in addressing some of those concerns.”⁹² LE staff across all regions agreed they need better preparation to responsibly conduct DEIA outreach. For example, PD LE staff members at a mid-sized AF post worried that they “don’t know how to talk about DEIA,” nor do they have “appropriate techniques for transmitting this message to [their] audiences.”⁹³ LE staff at a large SCA post reported that they struggle to explain core DEIA concepts to implementers. “Using these [DEIA] acronyms or abbreviations with our local partners is tricky because they often don’t understand.”⁹⁴

Nevertheless, some post-driven DEIA training best practices have emerged. For example, the PDOs at a large AF post have initiated a range of internal activities to include targeted presentations and curated discussions to facilitate a deeper understanding of the issues and how they can be integrated into PD programming. In the aftermath of the George Floyd murder, for example, the LE staff at this AF post launched a bimonthly “social cohesion discussion” with local staff members from across the Mission because “we felt that before we go outside to talk about... social cohesion, we need to be able to have [a] discussion from within.”⁹⁵

Posts are also conducting DEIA familiarization training and developing targeted outreach content for implementing partners to reinforce consistency and accountability across the recruitment process. Noting that their local partners would ask “somewhat biased” or “aggressive” questions during candidate interviews, a large post in SCA developed “unconscious bias training for implementers to ensure they have standardized questions and inclusive selection process techniques.”⁹⁶ Meanwhile, a small WHA post ensured “that grantees received DEIA training and included DEIA perspectives in their [own] work.”⁹⁷

Diversity Within the Mission—LE Staff: Building diversity into LE staff recruitment and hiring underscores the commitment to the promotion of DEIA principles and facilitates the expansion of outreach to underserved or marginalized communities, but the effort is not without its challenges. A PDO at a large EUR post reported that assuring “LE staff is representative of society... is hard because we have not yet completely figured out how to recruit for diversity.” Doing so will “make the embassy a safer space...When people see the embassy reflects their community, they will feel comfortable talking to [us].”⁹⁸

A mid-sized WHA mission elaborated on its effort to “make the composition of its staff more inclusive.” “After overcoming systemic barriers in the Department’s HR system, we eventually hired an indigenous-speaking PD staff member.” Post added that the search was difficult because “while there are a lot of people in rural areas who speak [the indigenous language], they don’t have the level of [the host country language] we need...We’ve since adapted our language usage in outreach to show that if you come from this community, you matter to us.”⁹⁹

Collaboration Across the Mission: Most PDOs affirmed that “Public diplomacy officers are definitely leading the DEIA agenda across the mission.” However, as a PDO at a large EUR post remarked, while “DOS colleagues are supportive, [DEIA] is not something they focus on, and we constantly have to remind them.”¹⁰⁰ The same post reported that they had to remain vigilant to assure diversity in outreach across the mission. A large WHA post noted that commercial engagement through American companies abroad offers an opportunity to advance principles of diversity and inclusion. “We have a large FCS (Foreign Commercial Service) presence...Whenever we clear any paper [related to commercial initiatives], we include a DEIA talking point...We are not looking to do sensitivity training...[but] to see where we can [make change by partnering] with American companies to support them in implementing corporate social responsibility initiatives.”¹⁰¹

“Public diplomacy officers are definitely leading the DEIA agenda across the mission.”

S/ODI and the Field: In conversations with posts and the bureaus, we found that S/ODI is generally considered as a valuable resource in the effort to engage foreign audiences on DEIA principles. The S/ODI team takes this responsibility seriously. Building on the natural “overlap” between public diplomacy outreach initiatives and the CDIO mandate to engage external as well as internal audiences, S/ODI works with posts to plan CDIO and other high-level visits: “Visits make things real. The message they send both internally and externally are hugely valuable.”¹⁰²

S/ODI also plays an important role in DEIA messaging to foreign audiences. For example, as necessary S/ODI works with the field to assure that mission personnel avoid the use of culturally or racially inappropriate messaging or content—or, in a few cases, works with a post to mitigate the effects of a DEIA-related messaging misstep. S/ODI frequently provides input on the format and content of DEIA outreach materials although they are not involved in the clearance of guidance on heritage months and other DEIA-related occasions.

CONCLUSION

In an institution known for its aversion to risk, public diplomacy practitioners are to be congratulated for embracing innovation and modeling a commitment to continuous, incremental integration of DEIA principles into program and outreach activities. We found a significant increase in the number of programs now explicitly dedicated to helping overseas audiences better understand DEIA. We also observed a marked expansion in audience participation to include previously underserved or marginalized communities. DEIA-focused public diplomacy programs are unquestionably modeling best practices of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Of course, there's always more to be done. Additional resources are required to permit more travel to benefit remote or underserved audiences, increased translation/interpretation services to expand outreach, improved accessibility to venues and resources, and greater access to English language skills training. Posts need more guidance on audience analysis and segmentation as well as program outcome and impact assessment. It is also important to acknowledge that some posts must weigh the USG's commitment to the promotion of DEIA principles against policy priorities.

Expanding training opportunities and continuous education on DEIA cultural competency development and program recruitment will be necessary to ensure success in effectively connecting with audiences and presenting the United States as a credible voice. Finally, the regional and the R family bureaus must remain vigilant in the effort to streamline communications between the Department and the field, and coordinate on the identification of DEIA programming priorities.

The Commission conceived of this report as a preliminary appraisal of how U.S. missions adapt existing programs to DEIA principles and how they approach DEIA issues in public diplomacy practices. The functional and structural shifts generated by an intentional focus on DEIA will continue to evolve in all aspects of the Department's policymaking as well as efforts to address barriers to opportunity for individuals historically and currently burdened by inequality and systemic discrimination. Periodic assessments of the practice of DEIA in PD will be necessary as inter-bureau collaboration and Washington-field coordination improves.

In the meantime, we hope that the ACPD's findings and recommendations will bolster the transformation taking place in the field by pointing out some possible course corrections and modifications to the integration of DEIA principles into PD program content, recruitment, and assessment strategies. Finally, we would like to salute the commitment to, expertise in, and passion for the practice of public diplomacy displayed by everyone we interviewed for this report. The success of effectively advancing DEIA principles through external-facing PD engagement rests with them.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

Vivian S. Walker

Vivian S. Walker is the Executive Director of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy at the Department of State, Chair of the *Foreign Service Journal* Editorial Board, a Faculty Fellow at the USC Center on Public Diplomacy, and an Adjunct Professor in Georgetown University's MSFS degree program. Previously, she has taught at the Central European University's School of Public Policy, the National War College in Washington, D.C., and the National Defense College of the UAE.

As a career Foreign Service Officer with the Department of State, she rose to the senior rank of Minister Counselor. She twice served as a Deputy Chief of Mission (Croatia and Armenia), twice as an Office Director (Southeastern European Affairs and the Office of Press and Public Diplomacy for Europe), a Public Affairs Officer (Kazakhstan, with coverage of Tajikistan and Turkmenistan), a Cultural Affairs officer (Tunisia) and an Information Officer (Haiti). Other assignments include a two-year professorship in strategic studies at the National War College, a yearlong assignment as the State Department's Regional Border Coordinator in Afghanistan, and a fellowship on the US Atlantic Council. She has a PhD from the University of Chicago and a BSFS from Georgetown University.

Deneyse A. Kirkpatrick

Deneyse A. Kirkpatrick is a career Foreign Service Officer at the U.S. Department of State and a public diplomacy professional, having served in multiple overseas and domestic assignments in PD roles, most recently as the Senior Advisor at the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy. Her previous PD assignments have included Public Affairs Officer at the U.S. Embassy Luanda, Angola; Public Affairs Officer at the U.S. Embassy Niamey, Niger; Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer at the U.S. Embassy Baghdad, Iraq; Strategic Communications Officer in the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs; and public diplomacy advisor for the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, where she is credited for increasing the State Department's focus on African and Indigenous communities.

A native of Texas, Ms. Kirkpatrick graduated in Communications from Howard University and earned a Masters in Latin American Studies from Georgetown University. She was awarded a Public Diplomacy Association of America Award for Achievement in Public Diplomacy and recognized with the AFRICOM Civilian Army Award for her contributions leading USG interagency strategic communications in the aftermath of the 2017 ambush against U.S. service members. Deneyse holds a Certificate in Public Diplomacy from The University of Southern California.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Agency Equity Team (AET)

Agency Priority Goal (APG)

Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom (AAL)

Bureau of African Affairs (AF)

Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs (EAP)

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA)

Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs (EUR)

Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL)

Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs (NEA)

Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs (SCA)

Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA)

Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs' Race, Ethnicity, and Social Inclusion Strategy (RESI)

Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer (CDIO)

Cultural Affairs Officer (CAO)

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA)

Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM)

Emerging Voices (EV)

Established Opinion Leaders (EOL)

Foreign Service Institute (FSI)

Foreign Service Institute's Public Diplomacy Training Division (FSI/PD)

Foreign Service Officer (FSO)

Front Office (FO)

Global Engagement Center (GEC)

Global Public Affairs (GPA)

Global Talent Management (GTM)

Human Resources (HR)

Information Officer (IO)

Integrated Country Strategy (ICS)

Joint Strategic Plan (JSP)

Locally Employed Staff (LE staff)

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

Office of Policy, Planning, and Resources (R/PPR)

Public Affairs Officer (PAO)

Public Diplomacy (PD)

Public Diplomacy Implementation Plan (PDIP)

Public Diplomacy Officer (PDO)

Public Diplomacy Staffing Initiative (PDSI)

Public Diplomacy Tools (PD Tools)

The United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy (ACPD)

Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs (R)

ENDNOTES

¹State Department DEIA activities are also driven by Executive Orders 13985 (Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government) and 14091 (Further Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government), which advance equity for all, including people of color and others who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality.

²*The U.S. Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948* (Public Law 80-402 – Smith-Mundt legislation).

³Ibid.

⁴*1963 First Annual Report Recommendations, United States Advisory Commission on International Educational and Cultural Affairs*: <https://www.state.gov/1963-usac-on-international-educational-and-cultural-affairs/>, p. 3.

⁵Ibid, p. 26.

⁶Ibid, p. 3.

⁷*January 1964 - Nineteenth Report of the United States Advisory Commission on Information*: <https://2009-2017.state.gov/pdcommission/reports/175432.htm>, p. 3.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Per Executive Order 13985, “equity” is defined as “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, such as Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; 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.”

¹⁰The promotion of DEIA principles abroad through external outreach and engagement is now known as the Equity Agenda. In October 2023 the Department of State formally acknowledged that “The Department’s DEIA work, led by the Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer and the Secretary’s Office of Diversity and Inclusion, is focused on further integrating DEIA into the Department’s internal workforce and work culture. The Department’s Equity Principals lead external efforts to advance equity in U.S. foreign policy, foreign assistance, and diplomatic engagement to support members of marginalized and underserved communities globally. These two missions mutually reinforce each other.” Department of State Cable, “Internal DEIA Work and External Equity Work - How Are They Different,” October 3, 2023, 23 State 107786.

¹¹ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/15/23.

¹²ACPD Focus group Discussion, 4/26/23.

¹³ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/6/23.

¹⁴See the ACPD Special Report on *Putting Policy and Audience First: A Public Diplomacy Paradigm Shift* (2021): <https://www.state.gov/putting-policy-audience-first-a-public-diplomacy-paradigm-shift-2021/>.

¹⁵ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/29/23.

¹⁶ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 2/25/23.

¹⁷ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 5/3/23.

¹⁸ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 5/3/23.

¹⁹ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 5/3/23.

²⁰ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 2/15/23.

²¹ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 2/15/23.

²²ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 2/15/23.

²³ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 2/15/23.

²⁴ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/16/23.

²⁵ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/16/23.

²⁶ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/13/23.

²⁷ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 2/15/23.

²⁸ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 2/15/23.

²⁹ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 4/17/23.

³⁰ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 5/8/23.

³¹ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 5/3/23.

³²ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/9/23.

³³ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/15/23.

³⁴ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/9/23.

³⁵ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/15/23.

³⁶ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 2/15/23.

³⁷ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 4/26/23.

³⁸ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/15/23.

³⁹ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/9/23.

⁴⁰ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/8/23.

⁴¹ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 4/17/23.

⁴²ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/6/23.

⁴³ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/16/23.

⁴⁴ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/27/23.

⁴⁵ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 5/3/23.

⁴⁶ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/16/23.

⁴⁷ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/6/23.

⁴⁸ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 4/17/23.

⁴⁹ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/15/23.

⁵⁰ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/16/23.

⁵¹ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 4/3/23.

⁵²ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 4/3/23.

⁵³ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 2/22/23.

⁵⁴ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 2/22/23.

⁵⁵ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/8/23.

⁵⁶ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 4/26/23.

⁵⁷ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 4/3/23.

⁵⁸ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/16/23.

⁵⁹ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/23/23.

⁶⁰ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/23/23.

⁶¹ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 2/15/23.

⁶²ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/16/23.

⁶³ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 4/3/23.

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⁷²ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/9/23.

⁷³ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 2/13/23.

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⁸⁷ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/15/23.

⁸⁸ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/15/23.

⁸⁹ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/15/23.

⁹⁰ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/29/23.

⁹¹*PD Programming Focused on DEIA: Analysis and Findings*, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Summer 2022.

⁹²ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/29/23.

⁹³ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 4/6/23.

⁹⁴ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 4/17/23.

⁹⁵ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/23/23.

⁹⁶ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/13/23.

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⁹⁸ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/16/23.

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¹⁰⁰ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 3/16/23.

¹⁰¹ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 2/15/23.

¹⁰²ACPD Focus Group Discussion, 4/26/23.



Graphic based on DEIA keywords in the PD Tools Database.

Public diplomacy officers are definitely leading the DEIA agenda across the mission.

As the lead foreign affairs agency and the face of the nation to the rest of the world, the State Department is on the front lines of advancing DEIA principles abroad. Most of the responsibility for this external DEIA outreach and engagement lies with the Department's public diplomacy practitioners.

Today's focus on the promotion of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility through USG public diplomacy programs should be seen as the continuation of a long-standing commitment to these principles.

From the early days of the Cold War to the present, USG public diplomacy programs have been charged with "telling America's story to the world" to make a compelling case for its interests.

We have been doing DEIA programming all along but it is more intentional now. The idea of inclusion and diversity is more present in our activities and thematic calendars. It's more present in people's minds and how we work.



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