
Best Practices for IDEA for AFP Chapters

The most successful chapters designate Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (IDEA) as a chapter-wide priority. They seek to identify the barriers to participating in IDEA and the methods to remove them. They also dedicate resources for implementation and set measurable goals to monitor progress.

Below are examples of different activities and practices that AFP chapters have implemented, are in the process of implementing, or plan to implement in the near future to increase Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (IDEA) in their chapters. These examples are divided into four main areas of focus: engage at the leadership level, increase diversity of membership, focus on professional development, improve inclusion, equity, and access, and build community.

ENGAGE AT THE LEADERSHIP LEVEL

- Define “diversity” then adopt a board resolution on diversity and/or create a chapter statement on IDEA – be sure to communicate this to the chapter membership.
- Be willing to take the temperature of your chapter: What are your defaults of comfort and why?
- Recruit board members who reflect the community that the chapter serves.
- Make implementation of IDEA the responsibility of the board, designating IDEA a chapter priority, updating the strategic plan to reflect it, and ensuring all committee chairs are integrating IDEA in all their activities and programs.
- Create a formal board position, e.g. Equity and Inclusion Officer, Director of Diversity, VP of Diversity and Ethics, Chair of IDEA.
- Provide formal IDEA training for the board and committee members.
- Form a Diversity and Inclusion Committee that oversees programming and/or implements the chapter’s Diversity and Inclusion plan and/or serves as “consultants” to all standing committees of the chapter.
- Require a board member to serve as diversity committee chair and have the same person also serve on nominating committee.
- Qualify for and receive the Friends of Diversity designation.
- Have chapter representative serve on the IDEA committee of AFP Global.
- Strategically develop relationships with organizations to help identify additional fundraisers to engage in the chapter, in leadership positions and otherwise.
- Collaborate with other organizations’ diversity events/programs.

INCREASE DIVERSITY OF MEMBERSHIP

- Conduct membership demographics survey, report results in e-newsletter, and use data to inform membership about strategic goals.
- Intentionally reach out to underrepresented groups, e.g. young professionals, male fundraisers, people of color, participants from organizations with budgets under \$500K, and other partners who may not be primarily focused on fundraising or members in geographically isolated regions.
- Start or engage collegiate chapters.
- Offer membership benefits information session free of charge to target organizations.
- Offer diversity scholarships for membership.

FOCUS ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Host diversity-focused education sessions and events to equip members with skills to challenge inequality and discrimination in fundraising and the work environment.
- Provide mentoring opportunities that facilitate one-to-one relationships.
- Connect nonprofit employers to fundraisers to promote diversity in hiring.
- Collaborate on unique topics not regularly explored.
- Select speakers from diverse communities.
- Hold diversity trainings annually.
- Offer low- or no-cost training for fund development staff at organizations from underrepresented communities.

IMPROVE INCLUSION, EQUITY, AND ACCESS AND BUILD COMMUNITY

- Include information on diversity in chapter materials.
- Meet in different geographic areas to make AFP events more accessible, e.g. example provided of offering fundraising basics training to Native American communities at the reservation.
- Foster coalitions among diverse communities.
- Publicly recognize fundraisers, donors and groups from diverse backgrounds, e.g. through National Philanthropy Day awards.
- Co-host annual diversity and inclusion event with National Philanthropy Day Summit.
- Include diversity article or factoid in the chapter's e-newsletter on a regular basis.
- Be explicit about volunteering opportunities available through the Diversity Committee.
- Include topics related to inclusion or case studies at monthly meetings.
- On the events sign-up page, ask attendees if they have special needs with a specific list of potential needs.
- Provide resources to increase access for participants living with different abilities including, but not limited to, interpretation services and utilization of ADA accessible spaces.
- Use gender neutral language when possible.
- Celebrate a variety of holidays (LGBT Pride Month, Black History Month, etc.).
- Ensure chapter events are not scheduled on major religious holidays (e.g. Yom Kippur, Ramadan).
- Identify barriers that marginalized and underrepresented groups commonly face when engaging with the chapter and/or the fundraising profession more generally.