



DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Employer Toolkit

This toolkit was designed to assist employers who recruit at Cal Poly in creating an environment where students from diverse backgrounds can thrive at their organizations. We hope to help you answer the question “*what does it take to **recruit** and **retain** individuals from diverse backgrounds to work at our company?*” Our goal is to meet you wherever your organization may be in creating a more diverse workforce **and** a more just working environment for all employees.

We’d like to begin by defining a few critical terms.

Diversity is a community of people who are made up of different social identities, including but not limited to: age, disability, gender, gender identity, national origin, race/ethnicity, religion/spiritual practice, sexual orientation, and veteran status.

Inclusion is giving individuals and groups, especially those who have been excluded in the past, a sense of belonging by recognizing their unique needs and strengths, and sense of agency by collaborating, when possible, on decisions and policies that affect their workplace experience.

Two other important terms that you may hear often are equity and equality. It’s often assumed that these are the same, but there are some distinct differences. This [graphic and article](#) illustrate these terms and concepts well. Equality means treating everyone the same regardless of their differing attributes. Equity is focused on fairness and equality of outcomes, not just supports and opportunity. Organizations may want to consider how they can shift toward a focus on equity as a means to achieve equality in the workplace.

Why a Diverse Workforce is Important



Diverse workforces are important for a variety of reasons, some of which are outlined below. It is important to point out, as Janice Gassam Asare does in her [Forbes article](#), that diverse workforces must also be inclusive. Representation is just one part of the bigger picture. This makes employers’ work more challenging, but it is also necessary to achieve true

equity. Research suggests that the more valued, empowered, and respected an employee feels, the better they perform.

This [TalentLyft article](#) and graphic below identify ten impactful reasons why a diverse workforce gives companies a competitive advantage.



Additionally, our world and our country are becoming increasingly more racially diverse. By 2045, the U.S Census Bureau anticipates that less than 50% of the country’s population make-up will be white. Cal Poly has placed a special emphasis on recruiting more racially diverse students to better represent the state population. Furthermore, business is becoming increasingly more global.

This [study](#) from McKinsey and Company notes the considerable increase in financial performance of companies with higher levels of gender and ethnic diversity on their executive teams. Furthermore, this study discusses why inclusion matters for companies, in addition to diversity.

Creating equitable and diverse workplaces is not about following a trend. Take, for instance, that it took until June 2020 for the Supreme Court to rule that firing employees based on their sexual orientation or transgender status is a violation of Title VII, or that only 1% of [Fortune 500 CEOs](#) are Black, even though African Americans make up 13.4% of the U.S. population. There are no Black female CEOs on this list. Furthermore, the



wage gap in America still persists, with [women making 82%](#) of what men earn annually.

This inequity is further impacted by race, location, age, disability status, etc. We still have a long way to go in reaching true work-place equality. Our hope is that this toolkit can help you in striving to meet that goal at your organization.

CAL POLY & CAREER SERVICES OVERVIEW OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION EFFORTS



Career Services

Cal Poly Career Services' staff is collectively committed to fostering diversity, equity, and inclusion through our work with students, employers, alumni, and the Cal Poly community. This [comprehensive annual report](#) outlines our efforts and impact through our Diversity Liaison Teams, Diversity Funding Committee, commitment to professional development, and much more.

Cal Poly Office of University Diversity & Inclusion

Cal Poly's [Office of Diversity & Inclusion](#) helps promote inclusion through a collective impact framework that connects with partners and aligns universitywide efforts in order to achieve inclusive excellence. Cal Poly aims to ensure all graduates leave more prepared to tackle future challenges and have the competencies needed to live and work in a diverse and global society.

To attain [Inclusive Excellence](#), the university is focusing on three core directives: to recruit and maintain a more diverse study body, faculty and staff; to foster a welcoming campus community; and to continue weaving diversity, equity and inclusion into the curriculum and co-curriculum.

Key Initiatives

- Offering financial aid to students with the highest need
- Providing mentoring programs for students from underserved populations
- Building a comprehensive network of diversity and inclusion leaders across campus
- Creating programs, clubs and organizations to foster inclusion and a sense of community
- Fostering universitywide engagement around diversity and inclusion
- Implementing additional training programs and learning opportunities across campus
- Conducting a campus climate assessment and developing associated action plan
- Removing barriers so students from underrepresented backgrounds accept Cal Poly's offer to attend at a higher rate

EMPLOYER BEST PRACTICES FOR EQUITY & INCLUSION

The information on this page is focused on the areas of recruitment, hiring, and retention and was compiled from research on best practices related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Sources are hyperlinked within the suggested action.

Recruitment

1. Reach out to Career Services about your interest in connecting with students and a staff member can help connect you to the best resources
2. Work to create meaningful and mutually beneficial partnerships with targeted student group(s)
 - a. Sponsor diverse student events
 - b. Partner with a center on campus to sponsor or offer career-related programs



Hiring

1. Broaden evaluation criteria (i.e. Reconsider evaluating candidates on things like **GPA** and cultural **“fit”**)
2. **Don't ask** applicants for their salary history as it perpetuates the wage gap
3. Ensure that **inclusive wording** is used in job descriptions
4. Demonstrate your company's commitment to DEI efforts on job postings, online, and on social media
5. Ask **diversity-related interview questions** and/or require a diversity statement as part of the application
6. Offer **accommodations** for people with disabilities during the interview process (i.e. more

time for testing; proactively communicate **to all applicants** how to request accommodations)

Retention

1. Demonstrate that your organization's commitment to diversity and inclusion **starts at the top**
 - a. Explicitly link diversity, equity, and inclusion to the organization's mission and values
2. Provide full staff trainings
 - a. Sample topics could include: implicit bias, inclusive language, web accessibility
 - b. Bring in guest speakers and trainers from diverse and various backgrounds
3. Offer **Employee Resource Groups**
4. Offer **workplace flexibility** (e.g. working from home, non-traditional hours, etc.)
5. Conduct regularly scheduled "**stay interviews**," as well as planned opportunities for more freedom, challenge, growth, and recognition
6. Collect data that determines why employees leave
 - a. **Exit interviews** by an outside firm could elicit more honest feedback

Additional Resources

National Association of Colleges & Employers

A breadth of articles, videos, and research regarding inclusive recruiting practices on college campuses

Society of Human Resource Management

Equity and inclusion-specific articles and expertise on the issues impacting today's evolving workplaces.

Mountain Pacific Association of Colleges & Employers

This links to the "Trends in the Profession" section, which includes DEI related articles.