

# AIC Equity and Inclusion Committee Strategic Plan 2020-2025

## Background

The desire for diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) is implicit in the [AIC Vision Statement](#) and is one of the [core values of AIC](#). As we have discovered, however, implementing effective actions and achieving meaningful – and measureable – DEIA remains a tremendous challenge. As stated, the AIC is committed to creating “an inclusive and equitable environment in which all members of our community are valued and respected.”\* Nonetheless, some constituencies feel less welcome than others and are intimidated when confronted by a long-standing and non-diverse volunteer leadership at all levels.

In 2018, the AIC Board approved the Equity and Inclusion Working Group (EIWG) report *Recommendations for Advancing Equity and Inclusion in the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works*. The recommendations consisted of targets meant to increase racial and cultural diversity within the conservation profession, metrics for improvement, and opportunities for change. Upon closer scrutiny, however, it is clear that many of the Report’s goals, in fact, rely upon non-existent relationships within the organization or are beyond the jurisdiction of the newly formed [Equity and Inclusion Committee \(EIC\)](#).

To guide the work of the EIC, we have developed a strategic plan that focuses on actionable items that are feasible over the next five years. The goals of this plan are to lay out partnerships within AIC where the report’s recommendations can be introduced, and then objectively examine the structural and systemic barriers to their implementation. The EIC Strategic Plan also serves to outline broad areas of need, which will help to define and prioritize action items for the Committee. By and large, our efforts will focus on changing the AIC culture and building a strong foundation that will ensure that future DEIA efforts are not only successful, but also sustainable.

## Goals and Strategies

The goals below reflect priorities for the EIC. Their order in this strategic plan is not indicative of their relative importance to the Committee. They tie directly into goals 1, 2, 4 & 5, set forth in the [AIC strategic plan](#) for 2019-2021.

The goals and areas of focus identified by the EIC are:

- Goal I: Foster an Inclusive and Welcoming Organizational Culture
- Goal II: Increase DEIA Training and Resources for AIC Members
- Goal III: Improve Sustainability of DEIA Funding Sources
- Goal IV: Integrate DEIA into all AIC Programs

## I. Foster an Inclusive and Welcoming Organizational Culture

We will work to create a more welcoming, tolerant, and accessible community within AIC. We will actively engage in representation and accessibility by undertaking a pro-active campaign that welcomes every segment of the membership and encourages all members to serve.

- Ensure that DEIA efforts are included and considered in core AIC documents including the Code of Conduct and Standards of Practice and future strategic plans.
- Assess existing structures and practices and acknowledging efforts in the organization in the areas of DEIA.
- Support increased diversity on AIC and FAIC Boards, and the explicit inclusion of DEIA efforts in a permanent AIC/FAIC staff position.
- Explore the formation of affinity groups within the AIC membership.
- Establish mentorship opportunities for leadership and encourage person-to-person dialogue.

## II. Increase DEIA Training and Resources for AIC Members

We plan to work with the Education and Training Committee, Emerging Conservation Professionals Network, and allied organizations to provide training and resources on DEIA awareness, particularly racial, cultural, and accessibility issues.

- Create and support DEIA leadership training, focusing on mid-career conservators and empowering them to create change.
- Collaborate with AIC Committees, Specialty Groups, Networks, and the Board to establish a clearer volunteer leadership orientation process, including onboarding procedures, position descriptions, and information on how the committee/network functions within AIC, as well to assist with the incorporation of DEIA considerations in their guiding documents.
- Provide DEIA training for the annual Internal Advisory Group meeting and for the AIC Board.
- Work with outside organizations dedicated to advocating for people with disabilities to improve accessibility in the field and provide necessary information for all AIC members.
- Compile and post DEIA resources and guidelines on the EIC webpage.

## III. Improve Sustainability of DEIA Funding Sources

In order to provide consistent programming and allow the EIC to focus on programming and facilitation, several potential funding sources will be explored to support committee activities.

- Work with AIC staff and board to seek short-term funding from within the organization, including exploring collaborations with specialty groups and general operating funds.
- Investigate long-term funding options that will ensure the establishment of an annual operating budget for the Equity and Inclusion Committee.

- Seek support from the Foundation for Advancement in Conservation (FAIC) through a donation model for individual giving and staff-supported pursuit of grant and endowed funding.
- Work with the FAIC to explore possible uses of the Holly Maxson Fund in support of DEIA efforts within the AIC.

IV. Integrate DEIA into all AIC Programs

A holistic approach is necessary to integrate DEIA initiatives into AIC’s organizational culture to make meaningful progress and increase awareness among members. Concerted efforts within different areas of the organization will make AIC more welcoming to individuals from underrepresented groups and will expand the scope of our membership.

- Support and promote DEIA efforts to all volunteer leadership and annual meeting programming, such as striving to increase the diversity of speakers and content for the general session.
- Implement DEIA efforts into AIC publishing activities, such as including DEIA considerations during the abstract review process, increasing available translations of AIC professional literature, and encouraging DEIA related publication topics.
- Incorporate a DEIA rubric into the review of FAIC-supported scholarship/professional development applications and grant proposals and explore the creation of specifically targeted DEIA grants for members.

**\* AIC Core Value of Equity and Inclusion**

AIC is committed to the premise that the preservation of cultural heritage is inseparable from our belief that the creative achievements and histories of all peoples must be acknowledged and honored. Through our support of all conservation and heritage professionals, we actively strive to create an inclusive and equitable environment in which all members of our community are valued and respected.