

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) Strategic Plan 2022

Implementation and Collaboration

DEIA Implementation Team

The SBA DEIA Implementation Team is led by the Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Civil Rights (ODICR) headed by its Assistant Administrator. The Office of Human Resources Solutions (OHRS) plays an integral role in human capital functions that include hiring, retention, promotion, and pay. The Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) leads efforts around digital accessibility related to 508 compliance. The Office of Performance, Planning, and the Chief Financial Officer (OPPCFO) manages funding and assists with the creation and tracking of DEIA measures. The program offices, led by Associate Administrators, implement and champion the DEIA strategies and actions that impact their programs and staff.

Chief Diversity Officer (CDO)

Identify and recruit a Chief Diversity Officer. SBA's inaugural CDO was hired April 2022.

Collaboration

An overview of the collaboration between Agency DEIA Teams and Component DEIA Teams, including cross-functional processes, was used to develop this plan.

The SBA assembled a cross-functional team from the Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Civil Rights (ODICR), the Office of Human Resource Solutions (OHRS), the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO), and the Office of Performance, Planning, and the Chief Financial Officer (OPPCFO). Through this collaboration, the SBA developed the DEIA Plan framework, determined the Agency's priorities and activities to improve DEIA implementation, developed data action plans to determine data currently collected and

to be collected, and determined the path forward to implement diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility principles and processes at the SBA, and support for the Government-Wide DEIA Strategic Plan.

State of the Agency

Agency Mission

Maintain and strengthen the nation's economy by enabling the establishment and vitality of small businesses and by assisting in the economic recovery of communities after disasters.

DEIA Vision

At the SBA, diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility are key values that shape policy and operations. The SBA's commitment to these values is unwavering across all levels of our organization and central to our mission. Having varied perspectives helps generate better ideas to solve complex problems, and provide outstanding customer service to entrepreneurs, small businesses, and disaster survivors.

Successes

DEIA initiatives are implemented across the Agency within each program office and OHRS, managed by ODICR, and supported by senior leadership, which includes the Chief of Staff and Assistant Administrator for ODICR, both of whom report to the Administrator, and the Associate General Counsel for General Law, who reports to the General Counsel.

The SBA has been proactive in eliminating barriers to entry and opportunities, and it has made positive impacts on workforce composition and culture in this area by training and by conducting climate assessments. Compared to the Civilian Labor Force (CLF), the Agency's workforce is at or above the CLF in multiple categories. Demographics at the Senior Executive Service (SES) level also shows that the SBA is above the CLF in multiple categories.

The results of the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) have indicated significant improvement over the last five years in these areas. The Agency's FEVS scores show that diversity and inclusion is valued throughout the Agency and shows that employees believe that their supervisor is committed to a workforce representative of all segments of society, that their supervisor treats them with respect and listens to them, and that employees feel encouraged to recommend new and better ways of working more efficiently and effectively.



The SBA established an Equity and DEIA Steering Committee to drive the Agency's agenda, and members of the Committee helped develop the SBA's FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan and Enterprise Learning Agenda. The Assistant Administrator of ODICR regularly participated in the planning process with program offices, and ensured that these values were integrated, where appropriate. The SBA established Strategic Objective 3.2 within Strategic Goal 3, "Build an Inclusive and High Performing Workforce." This objective demonstrates the commitment of senior leadership to strengthen and broaden the workforce through a broad range of hiring, outreach, and recruitment efforts and activities. Additionally, the SBA's actions and results will be tracked and reported through the Annual Performance Report (the performance section that accompanies the Congressional Budget Justification) and will be added to senior executive and supervisor individual performance plans to ensure execution, accountability, and sustainability. These actions will be tracked, monitored, and reported on beginning in FY23 and continuing through FY25.

Challenges

Barriers to implementation include limited resources for a smaller CFO Act agency. While relatively flat funding in salary appropriations has accounted for fewer staff, the SBA will explore opportunities to increase staffing resources. Additionally, the Agency seeks to improve the quality of, and access to, self-reported data and explore other potential data sources. ODICR and OHRS have collaborated to assess data and have worked with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to learn how other agencies have been addressing data concerns.

DEIA Strategic Plan Governance Structure & Team

Leadership involved to champion and advance DEIA (*Agency and component level*)

Equity Team Steering Committee

- Chief of Staff and Chair of the Steering Committee
- Assistant Administrator, Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Civil Rights
- Chief Diversity Officer, Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Civil Rights
- Senior Advisor for Delivery, Office of the Administrator
- Director, Office of Program Performance, Evidence, and Evaluation
- Special Counsel for Enterprise Risk in the Office of the Administrator
- Acting General Counsel
- Program Office Leads, Associate Administrator/Deputy Associate Administrators
- Chief Human Capital Officer
- Acting Chief Information Officer
- Executive Director, Office of Executive Management, Installations, and Support Services



Racial Equity Working Group

- Assistant Administrator, Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Civil Rights
- Assistant Administrator, Office of Women's Business Ownership
- Special Advisor to the Administrator
- Associate General Counsel
- Senior Advisor for Capital Access
- Special Advisor for Entrepreneurial Development

DEIA Working Group

- Assistant Administrator, Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Civil Rights
- Chief Diversity Officer, Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Civil Rights
- Affirmative Action/Special Emphasis Program Manager
- Chief Learning Officer
- Chief Human Capital Officer
- Deputy Chief Human Capital Officer
- Special Advisor for Entrepreneurial Development
- Associate Administrator, Office of Investment and Innovation
- Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Investment and Innovation
- Director, Office of Disaster Personnel
- Action Planning Committee
- IT Specialist (Section 508 Program Manager)

Cadence of Leadership Engagement

The DEIA team meets quarterly with Agency leadership, including the Administrator and Chief Operating Officer. This leadership team also meets with program office leadership on a regular basis to discuss DEIA issues that impact the workforce.

Mechanism of Quarterly Review by Agency Head

Monthly briefing to the Administrator

Plan for Integration of DEIA into Decision-Making, Governance, Mission, and Goals

The principles of DEIA are integrated into Agency culture, language, and expectations in program offices and in the SBA FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. The SBA has begun reviewing standard operating procedures, performance plans, program office purpose statements, accessibility of opportunities and programs, and data collection documentation across the entire Agency.

The ODICR team engages with senior leadership across the Agency and works with each program office to identify areas that need further attention to ensure that principles of equity and accessibility are addressed in programs that offer services to small businesses, entrepreneurs, disaster survivors, and SBA employees. The SBA ensures that DEIA is an integral part of the SBA's decision making, governance, mission, and goals by embedding DEIA throughout the SBA. This includes employee and senior leadership programs and performance plans, systems and processes, and action plans to improve diversity and removing barriers. Senior leaders are overseeing these efforts.

Governance: How the Team Will Work Together

The Equity Steering Committee will provide oversight and direction to the DEIA working groups. The DEIA working groups, comprised of leaders from across the Agency, will work with each program office equity team to advise on programs, initiatives, assessments, and action strategies that can be developed and implemented by each program office. Program office progress is measured and reported to the DEIA working groups, and the Equity Steering Committee is briefed on a quarterly basis.

DEIA Budget

The SBA allocated funds to recruit a CDO and has focused attention on raising awareness of DEIA activities across the Agency.

DEIA and Interagency Initiatives

Equity is an integral part of the SBA's FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, as a core value to improve the Agency's public-facing programs, products, and services, and to ensure that the SBA's people, processes, and systems improve equity throughout the Agency's workforce. Through the Strategic



Plan, the Agency has committed to increasing equitable participation in accordance with Executive Order 13985, January 20, 2021, and has assessed its programs to determine where and how the SBA can address inequities in service delivery and remove barriers for underserved communities. The Strategic Plan also includes internal goals to improve and increase the diversity, equity, and inclusion within the SBA. Where appropriate, the Agency has included equity measures to gauge progress toward those goals. Similarly, the Agency's Enterprise Learning Agenda includes equity and DEIA principles at its core, both for internal equity research and external-facing programs.

The SBA has aligned its priorities with the President's Management Agenda and is committed to implementing strategies to achieve them. To support Priority 1, the SBA is improving its competitive hiring practices to meet the talent needs of tomorrow, attracting the most qualified employees, including through engagement with organizations and candidates from historically underrepresented communities. To support Priority 2, the Agency is refining its service design and delivery to become a more customer service-oriented organization. By streamlining processes, tailoring materials to small business communities, and meeting customers where they are, the goal to address inequities for underserved entrepreneurs and disaster survivors is woven throughout the Agency's initiatives. To support Priority 3, the Agency is reviewing its programs to address inequities in service delivery.

To develop this Plan, the Agency reviewed its current practices and procedures, and aligned them with the Maturity Scorecard; developed a comprehensive list of potential priorities and actions to take to improve its DEIA maturity; determined its initial steps based on value to the Agency's workforce; reviewed its data and data gaps to determine data strategies; and determined risks and dependencies to each potential priority.

With the oversight of the SBA Equity Steering Committee, program offices established their own Equity Task Forces that included leadership and employees delivering services and programs directly to small businesses and entrepreneurs. The Equity Task Force conducted program office assessments to identify barriers to access and opportunities for relief and developed strategies to remove these barriers. ODICR assisted in the efforts to identify barriers and develop the initiatives towards removing barriers.

Diversity

Priorities	DEIA Program(s) Structure and Management
Goal	Increase the use of diversity resources across the Agency
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project hiring requirements for SBA needs and create hiring and retention plans to attract a broad range of talent • Train selection panels and hiring officials in merit system principles • Increase transparency of hiring and retention data to leadership, hiring managers and other supervisors
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire the Chief Diversity Officer • Create data strategy to collect information on recruitment materials and hiring • Develop hiring plan in alignment with the Human Capital Plan • Develop and distribute briefing materials to selection panels and hiring officials
Operational measurements of quarterly progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of leadership and supervisors who have access to DEIA data and materials • Change in number of staff dedicated to DEIA • Percent of SES with DEIA outcomes in performance agreements
Outcome measures to assess progress annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FEVS Question: My supervisor is committed to a workforce representative of all segments of society • FEVS Question: Supervisors in my work unit support employee development
Responsible individuals/teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OHRS and ODICR Leadership
Dedicated Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding resources for Chief Diversity Officer

Equity

Priorities	Pay and Compensation, Recruiting, Hiring, Promotion, and Retention
Goal	Increase professional development and leadership opportunities across the SBA workforce
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate leadership and career development programs, including participation of employees from underserved communities Increase use of paid internships and other entry-level or alternative hiring authority to create pipeline of potential leaders
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current leadership development training programs for potential barriers to participation Create plans and materials to increase participation in leadership development programs, especially for employees from underserved communities Review current recruitment materials for potential barriers to applicants Review recruitment materials to determine the extent of use of prior salary history to set pay Develop training materials for hiring managers and supervisors in the use of alternative hiring authority and paid internships
Operational measurements of quarterly progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percent of employees who have applied for leadership training programs Percent of employees who participated in leadership training programs Percent of managers who participate as mentors Percent of employees who participate in mentorship programs
Outcome measures to assess progress annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FEVS Question: I am given a real opportunity to improve my skills in my organization FEVS Question: Supervisors in my work unit support employee development
Responsible individuals/teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OHRS and ODICR Leadership
Dedicated Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SBA dedicated funding to support the hiring of the Chief Diversity Officer and building the diversity and inclusion program.

Inclusion

Priorities	Professional Development, DEIA Training, and Inclusive Workplace Culture
Goal	Increase DEIA knowledge and use across SBA
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand DEIA trainings, especially to supervisors and managers • Promote participation in Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) • Promote participation in Work-Life programs • Explore inclusion of DEIA principles in performance plans
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner with ERGs in design and development of DEIA trainings • Develop additional DEIA trainings • Roll out DEIA trainings on a regular basis • Review leadership performance plans to determine the extent of the use of DEIA principles • Develop promotion materials for ERGs and Work-Life programs
Operational measurements of quarterly progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percent of employees who participate in ERGs • Percent of managers and supervisors who have completed DEIA training in the last 12 months • Number of DEIA training courses offered
Outcome measures to assess progress annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FEVS Question: My supervisor listens to what I have to say • FEVS Question: My supervisor treats me with respect • FEVS Question: I recommend my organization as a good place to work
Responsible individuals/teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OHRS and ODICR leadership • Agency and Program leadership
Dedicated resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OHRS has dedicated training funds to ensure that diversity & inclusion training is offered across the Agency.

Accessibility

Priorities	Reasonable Accommodation (Disability and Religion), Physical Accessibility, Culture of Accessibility, Safe Workplaces, and Sexual Harassment
Goal	Increase accessibility and safety in SBA's physical and digital spaces
Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase Section 508 knowledge, training, and compliance • Develop Workplace Safety Plan • Determine potential improvements to physical and digital space to increase accessibility for SBA employees and contractors
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review best practices and benchmarks for accessibility in Information Technology and facilities • Baseline SBA's resolution time for reasonable accommodation requests • Baseline SBA's resolution time for religious accommodation requests • Baseline SBA's resolution time for disability accommodation requests • Develop and roll-out remote work SOP • Develop additional Section 508 training to enable users to create accessible documents
Operational measurement of quarterly progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average number of days to resolve accessibility requests • Number of employees who have received Section 508 training
Outcome measures to assess progress annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FEVS Question: Employees are protected from health and safety hazards on the job • FEVS Question: I know what is expected of me on the job
Responsible individuals or teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OCIO leadership • OEMISS leadership • ODICR leadership
Dedicated resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SBA has a centralized fund to support requests for reasonable accommodations.