



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy

Statement

At The Here and Now Project we recognize that each member of our community brings their own unique skills, experience and perspectives. Including all voices and opinions will shape and influence how to advance our mission to connect and empower the paralysis community in an increasingly intersectional world in innovative ways.

Purpose

At The Here and Now Project (H&NP) we are committed to creating a diverse, equitable and inclusive environment. Those in leadership, our members and their supporters, our partners, contractors, employees, and volunteers are welcomed, valued and respected, whatever their race, ethnicity, national origin, faith, gender, sexual orientation or identity, education, socio-economic status or disability.

Objectives:

The Here and Now Project aims to always:

- Treat all fairly and similarly
- Give all an opportunity to speak and contribute
- Embrace and accept all for their differences
- Foster the feeling of belonging
- Promote equal opportunity and inclusion

Strategies:

To champion equal opportunity and inclusion for all, The Here and Now Project commits to:

- Ensure all leadership, our paralysis community and their supporters, our partners, contractors, employees and volunteers to model behaviors and use language that fosters inclusivity, dignity and respect.
- Board members, employees, and volunteers to be given our DEI policy and procedure to enhance knowledge and be aware of expectations.
- Explore and address any communicated concerns regarding lack of diversity, equity or inclusion at the board level.
- Advocate for public and private-sector policy that promotes diversity, inclusion, and equity. Challenge systems and policies that create inequity, oppression and disparity.
- Pool resources and expand offerings for underrepresented constituents by connecting with other disability organizations committed to diversity and inclusion efforts as appropriate.
- Include a diversity, equity and inclusion statement on our website

Definitions of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Diversity

Diversity is the presence of difference within a given setting. In this case the board meetings, peer support groups and all HNP activities are the setting. The differences typically refer to identity like race and gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability etc. A person isn't 'diverse' They are unique. A person brings diversity to a group though.

Equity

Equity is an approach that ensures everyone has access to the same opportunities. Equity recognizes that we don't all start from the same place because advantages and barriers exist. It's a process that acknowledges uneven starting places and seeks to correct the imbalance. Diversity and inclusion are both outcomes. Equity is not. It refers to the process an organization engages in to ensure that people with marginalized identities have the opportunity to grow, contribute, and develop.

Inclusion

Inclusion has to do with when people with different identities feel and are valued, welcomed, respected within a given setting. Verna Myers said 'Diversity is being asked to the party, inclusion is being asked to dance.' Inclusion isn't a natural consequence of diversity. You can have a diverse team of talent, but that doesn't mean they feel welcomed or valued or are given opportunities to grow