

Hostelling International's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) Policy



"Diversity is having a seat at the table, inclusion is having a voice, and belonging is having that voice be heard."

Liz Fosslien

Fostering Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Hostelling International's Commitment

At Hostelling International, we believe that travel has the power to foster education, understanding, and appreciation among our people (Member Associations, staff, guests, volunteers, members, partners, and followers). That is why we are committed to promoting a strong, positive culture of diversity, equity, inclusion, and a sense of belonging (DEIB) in all aspects of our operations, including accommodations, services, interactions with staff, customers and members, Member Associations, and partners.

A Culture of Belonging

We strive to create an environment that values and respects the diverse attributes of our people, including their age, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, socioeconomic background, neurotype, and political opinions, ensuring that everyone feels valued, respected and welcomed. We know that diverse perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences enrich our organisation, drive innovation, and lead to better decision-making.

Building an Inclusive World

Our commitment to DEIB extends beyond our internal operations and is reflected in our marketing, partnerships, and community engagement. We actively promote DEIB in our communications and engage with diverse communities to create positive social impact. By promoting a culture of DEIB, we contribute to a better understanding and appreciation among all, especially young people of all nations, and we play our part in building a more inclusive and equitable world.

We recognise that embracing diverse perspectives, promoting equity, creating an inclusive environment, and fostering a sense of belonging are not only the right things to do but also essential for our success as an organisation. Through Hostelling International's DEIB policy, we hope to ensure our people feel safe, are heard, and represented.

To ensure a shared understanding of these concepts, we provide the following Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) definitions and principles. These principles serve as the foundation for our DEIB efforts at Hostelling International.



Hostelling International's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) definitions and principles

Diversity

Diversity refers to the presence of a wide range of distinctive characteristics, identities, and backgrounds within a group or community. This can include differences in race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, disability, socio-economic status, neurotype, nationality, and more. Embracing diversity means recognising and valuing these differences, and actively seeking to include and celebrate them.

Hostelling International has about 60 Member Associations worldwide and over 3,000 hostels in about 60 countries, which makes us a remarkably diverse organisation and network of hostelling operations. As a diverse organisation, we recognise and celebrate the uniqueness of individuals and the wealth of diversity they bring. We respect and appreciate differences in age, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability, socioeconomic background, and political opinions. We strive to create a diverse and inclusive community where everyone's perspectives, experiences, and identities are respected and valued. We value and embrace diversity as a source of innovation, creativity, and strength.

Equity

Equity is about fairness and ensuring that everyone has equal opportunities and access to resources, regardless of their differences or backgrounds. It involves identifying and addressing systemic barriers, biases, and inequalities that may prevent certain individuals or groups from fully participating or succeeding. Equity aims to level the playing field and create conditions where everyone can thrive.

Hostelling International is a diverse network with about 60 Member Associations, over 3,000 hostels worldwide and about 3,3 million individual members. We are committed to providing equal opportunities for our Member Associations, staff, guests, volunteers, members, and partners. We will ensure that our policies, practices, and services are fair, transparent, and unbiased, and that there are no discriminatory barriers based on any protected characteristics. We are committed to promoting fairness, impartiality, and justice in our policies, practices, and decision-making processes.



Hostelling International's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) definitions and principles

Inclusion

Inclusion is the practice of creating an environment where all individuals feel valued, respected, and included. It involves actively fostering a sense of belonging and ensuring that everyone's voice is heard and considered. Inclusion goes beyond just diversity in numbers, but also involves creating a culture that embraces diverse perspectives, encourages collaboration, and recognises the unique contributions of each individual.

Hostelling International is committed to facilitate and promote travel through the provision of a quality accommodation network which is available to all, is safe and affordable, and respects difference and diversity, reflecting the principles of freedom to travel and equity of travelers. We strive to create an environment where everyone feels welcomed, respected, and valued, and where their voices are heard. We promote inclusive behaviors such as active listening, mutual respect, and open-mindedness. We strive to create spaces where diverse perspectives are actively sought and valued, and where everyone feels encouraged to contribute and participate. We encourage collaboration, mutual respect, and active engagement, and we celebrate the unique strengths and talents that each individual brings to our community.

Belonging

Belonging refers to the feeling of being accepted, valued, and included as a part of a group or community. It is about creating an environment where individuals feel a sense of connection, comfort, and identity, and where they can be their authentic selves without fear of discrimination or exclusion. Belonging is crucial for creating an inclusive and supportive culture where everyone can thrive.

Hostelling International is committed to facilitating and supporting learning and understanding through experience of diverse cultures, people, and places, engaging individuals, and groups to achieve involvement and participation, operating as part of communities, and reflecting the principles of right to learn. We strive to create a sense of belonging, where everyone feels accepted, valued, and respected for who they are. We recognise and respect the unique identities, backgrounds, and experiences of each individual, and promote a sense of community and connectedness.



Hostelling International's commitments to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB)

At Hostelling International, we are unwavering in our commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. These values are integral to our organisational culture and operations. We are dedicated to creating an organisation that embraces diversity, promotes equity, fosters inclusion, and cultivates a sense of belonging by the following targets:

Comprehensive Trainings for an Inclusive Work Environment



We are committed to creating a welcoming, inclusive, and empowering work environment where everyone feels respected, valued, and supported. We promote a culture that encourages open communication, active listening, and mutual respect. We will strive to provide DEIB training and education for our staff and Board to ensure that we are equipped with the knowledge and skills to create an inclusive and welcoming environment.

Youth Panel Engagement



As part of our commitment to DEIB, we will establish a dedicated Youth Panel that actively contributes to our DEIB initiatives. The Youth Panel will provide valuable insights, perspectives, and recommendations on matters related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. We ensure that the Youth Panel is diverse and representative of diverse backgrounds, cultures, and identities, and that their voices are heard and respected.

Leadership Commitment



Our leadership team and Board are committed to promoting diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging as integral values of our organisation's culture and operations. We lead by example and strive to create an inclusive environment that embraces diversity and fosters equity and inclusion at all levels of our organisation. Our dedication to meaningful change aims to ensure everyone feels welcomed, respected, and empowered. We seek board composition that mirrors the diversity of the communities we serve, providing meaningful representation for our Member Associations.



Hostelling International's commitments to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB)

External Engagement



We actively advance DEIB in our interactions with stakeholders including Member Associations, guests, volunteers, members, and partners. Collaborating with like-minded external partners, including LGBTQIA+- owned businesses, helps us foster inclusivity and equity. Through engagement with diverse communities and partners, we build relationships that champion DEIB values in all external interactions, gaining valuable insights into the needs of the next generation, enabling us to better support youth and raise awareness of their needs.

Marketing and communication



We champion DEIB through our marketing and communications. Our materials and strategies will mirror these values, celebrating diversity and inclusivity. We aim to display diverse perspectives, cultures, and identities while avoiding harmful stereotypes and discrimination. Our goal is to project a welcoming and inclusive image that reflects our DEIB values

Fostering Cultural Understanding by meaningful programs



We actively encourage our Member Associations to engage with local communities and promote cultural understanding, appreciation, and respect among our travellers. We will strive to contribute positively by organising meaningful programs such as cultural exchange initiatives, sustainability practices, and community empowerment projects. We are dedicated to making a positive impact through these initiatives.

Accountability and Reporting



We hold ourselves accountable for our DEIB commitments by establishing metrics, setting goals, and reporting on our progress. We also actively seek feedback from staff, customers, members, and Member Associations to identify areas for improvement and take meaningful action to address them, ensuring that our DEIB commitments are translated into concrete outcomes and positive impact.



Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) Policy overview

Hostelling International's DEIB policy applies to all employees, including leadership, management, and staff at all levels of the organisation. It also applies to our interactions with guests and members, Member Associations, volunteers, and partners, as we strive to promote DEIB in all our relationships.

Our Youth Panel plays a crucial role in shaping our DEIB strategies and actions, and we are dedicated to incorporating their voices and perspectives into our decision-making processes. We recognise that DEIB is not a one-time effort, but a continuous journey that requires ongoing commitment, action, and accountability. We are committed to promoting DEIB in all aspects of our operations as we strive to create a better and more inclusive world for everyone but especially young people of all nations from all walks of life.

Together, we will work towards creating a better understanding and contributing to a more inclusive and equitable world.

