



APA Florida Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee

Chapter EDI Strategy

Approved by the APA Florida Executive Committee on March 12, 2021.

Summary

The APA Florida Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee has developed a Chapter EDI Strategy to propose initiatives and strategies that implement the following mission:

APA Florida celebrates equity, diversity, and inclusiveness and believe we can accomplish more through a genuine and authentic partnership with others and promote a commitment to excellence in service to Florida's communities. We strive to make our commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion integral to our organizational structure, policies, practice, committees, staff, sponsors, goals, and vision. We want to engage people of all backgrounds and experiences and seek to foster a culture of respect, openness, learning, integrity, honesty and a sense of fun.

The EDI Committee began meeting in September 2019 on a monthly basis and has authored two Florida Planning articles on EDI topics and the Committee, developed an Executive Committee-approved "Lessons from Leaders" brief to initiate a project showcasing diverse management and leadership throughout Florida, presented two EDI Forum events for direct member input, and co-presented two additional Florida Planning Conference session on EDI topics.

To initiate the Chapter EDI Strategy, the EDI Committee developed a survey and has assessed the results, which indicate that EDI leadership and resources are much needed in our planning community. As a majority of responses received were from people who identified as white, the EDI Committee did EDI Forum events on August 5, 2020, and at the 2020 Florida Planning Conference to obtain input from diverse populations. All feedback from the survey and during outreach events is summarized and represented throughout this document and the appendix to provide additional insights.

This Chapter EDI Strategy is a dynamic document that will be revised based on member input obtained through ongoing outreach, individual and collective leadership on this important initiative from all APA Florida committees, and coordination with APA Divisions and other organizations. The EDI Committee has achieved some momentum that should be sustained to keep the Chapter's commitment to members, but the Strategy will need to be updated on a regular basis, as we continue to learn as individuals and as a Chapter how to build a community and a profession where every person feels like

Survey Highlights

- Chapter surveyed Florida planners, including members and non-members, and received 234 survey responses.
- Survey respondents self-identified as 73% white, 14% Black, 10% Latinx, and 5% Asian.
- Respondents also were 49% female, 15% LGBTQ, and 8% with a disability.
- A total of 38% of respondents feel they have to work harder to be perceived as talented due to their identity.
- A total of 26% feel their background/identity will hinder their promotion/advancement.
- Respondents felt the Chapter needs sensitivity training and discussions (60% strongly agree/agree), that diversity of co-workers and management should be improved (46% strongly agree/agree), and that they would like a mentor (34% strongly agree/agree).

they belong. This commitment extends beyond the community of professional planners to the communities that we serve.

Focus Areas

A. Leadership and Membership

*Acknowledge inequities, be real about the current state of our demographics, and have real action steps to address that. Have training available at conferences that are the main sessions that everyone attends, make it less optional. Broaden the topics to address things of concern to underrepresented communities. Address how to live out the aspirational AICP principles in our work -- **Survey Respondent Comment***

Summary:

APA Florida's goal is to celebrate equity, diversity and inclusiveness by reaching and welcoming people of all backgrounds and experiences to be part of and served by the planning profession. The EDI Committee's goal is to build on current efforts to increase the diversity and inclusiveness of the Chapter and leadership and ensure all communities can contribute and be valued. The EDI Committee can offer leadership opportunities to APA Florida members through subcommittees to further the Chapter's EDI commitments and projects.

The EDI Committee will create the following leadership roles to correspond with the Committee's focus areas:

- EDI Committee Chair
- Leadership and Membership Subcommittee Chair
- Professional Development and Workplace Subcommittee Chair
- Communities and Partnerships Subcommittee Chair
- Conference and Events Subcommittee Chair
- Website and Social Media Subcommittee Chair

Strategies:

1. Conduct a Chapter equity, diversity, and inclusion survey every 3 years and publish findings and recommendations for Chapter membership.
2. Review the composition of the APA Florida Executive Committee, its committees, and Section boards biannually to ensure diverse representation and leadership opportunities.
3. Offer EDI training to Executive Committee members, which may include APA Learn courses, racial equity impact assessment training, or other options.
4. Consider how the Chapter may encourage EDI training for Chapter members, planning managers/administrators, and elected officials.
5. Form partnerships with the Latinos in Planning Division, Planning and the Black Community Division, LGBTQ and Planning Division, Women and Planning Division, and the Private Practice Division to formally support appropriate initiatives in Florida, such as Women and Planning Division's efforts to encourage women to apply for FAICP and suggested efforts to increase the diversity of consultants in Florida.
6. Review APA Florida EDI Committee membership to ensure diverse representation and conduct corresponding outreach to address needs, including adding an Emerging Planners Group representative.

7. Identify coordination and support activities to be conducted with the VP of Membership and Outreach Services for marketing and outreach.
8. Hold an EDI Forum call with membership two to four times per year to hear concerns, share resources, and report progress on recommendations.
9. Issue statements on EDI issues, as done with APA National's recent statement on racial inequality, and acknowledgements of EDI-related occasions (ex. Black History Month, Asian-American and Pacific Islander Month, Pride Month).
10. Ensure the Chapter's Legislative Platform and Standard Operating Procedures clearly promote and identify leaders responsible for speaking out in support of policies that recognize and advocate for marginalized and underserved populations.
11. Review APA National's EDI efforts and EDI practices in peer organizations, such as Urban Land Institute's events specifically organized and led by women, to inform Chapter efforts.
12. Involve APA Florida Section Chairs to help lead engagement and outreach efforts, such as creating Women and Planning and Planners of Color meetup groups.
13. Collect demographic data from APA Florida Chapter members to assist with EDI efforts and advocate that APA National collect this by default upon membership renewal.
14. Encourage all planners to pursue and prepare to seek AICP status and FAICP status.

Implementation:

Assigned to: Leadership and Membership Subcommittee

Resources needed will be determined through subsequent review of approved strategies relative to current Chapter programs and staffing that may support implementation, as well as the volunteer resources required.

B. Professional Development and Workplaces

*Whether you do not think you are not racist, sexist, homophobic, anti-Semitic/Islamophobic, etc. you probably still have biases that were ingrained in you from society. The media we have always consumed from the dawn of time has subtly enforced negative racial stereotypes. Teaching people that they have this bias unknowingly may help hiring managers come to terms and be aware of their own bias while hiring. You should offer diversity and inclusion training not only to everyone, but especially for AICP members and make this a mandatory CM requirement like ethics and law. You should also encourage reading materials such as The Color of Law so that planners can understand how our communities got to where they are now. While this may not relate to hiring and promotions, it can shed light on how systematic racial bias and oppression are and enlighten hiring managers to think critically about how they may have been complicit – **Survey Respondent Comment***

*Here are some reasons that I think are important: 1) Not enough exposure to planning as a career at the high school and college level (recruitment) 2) Lack of access to networking opportunities (recruitment) 2) Hispanics not feeling secure about their language skills or accent (retention/promotion) 3) Not enough role models/mentors within the profession (retention/promotion) 4) Not enough diverse people in supervisory roles or with decision making power, especially when it comes to hiring (recruiting/retention/promotion) 5) Lack of interest from white management to listen to ideas or point of view (retention) I think that APA Florida should develop a guide of best practices to creating and retaining a diverse office. The organization should also emphasize the need for a more diverse workforce because of the changing demographics within the state -- **Survey Respondent Comment***

*Train white planners about their role in changing the paradigm – **Survey Respondent Comment***

Summary:

The EDI Committee's goal is to promote a commitment to excellence in service to Florida's communities by striving to make equity, diversity and inclusion integral to our organizational structure, policies, and practice. The Committee will seek social justice by urging the alteration of policies, institutions and decisions that oppose equity, diversity and inclusion, consistent with the AICP Code of Ethics and the Chapter's EDI mission statement.

Strategies:

1. Create a "Lessons from Leaders" limited series of podcasts, short videos, feature articles, and blog posts to provide resources and strategies for planners to move into leadership and agency management positions.
2. Create a mentoring program open to planners at all career stages with a specific focus on EDI within the Chapter that is supported by leadership, supervisor, and project management training available at no cost to members and that includes salary negotiation and other skill-based topics. Allow members to have more than one mentor through the program to access many mentors who share identities, disciplines, and leadership interests.
3. Support creation of groups (within each section or between two smaller sections) that support women, BIPOC, and LGBTQ members, such as the Women and Planning groups currently in 3 sections and the Orlando Metro Section's new Planners of Color group, that provide "safe space" networking events, monthly lunches, or other settings where planners can share their situations at work and get advice by developing a resource "toolkit" (example is the Women in Architecture toolkit from AIA) and by increasing the Section Grant amount for sections with these groups to support their events.
4. Expand marketing and outreach for the APA Florida minority scholarships through outreach to universities, social media, and EDI content on website and review funding levels.
5. Organize a HBCU recruitment event annually or biannually that includes Florida's four HBCUs to raise awareness of the profession among freshmen and sophomores and to help identify paths and resources to attend graduate planning programs in Florida.
6. Conduct undergraduate recruitment into Public Policy and Public Administration programs statewide, as well as programs in Gender, Sexuality, African-American, and Latin-American Studies as feasible, to reach diverse students interested in serving the public and positively impacting people.
7. Provide incentives for members and teams to participate in the APA Ambassador program to recruit diverse high school students into the profession through an increased Section Grant, hosting of a special event or professional development opportunity, and/or Chapter recognition on the website and at the Florida Planning Conference.
8. Hold anti-racism training annually, including active listening training, and discussion groups for white planners to learn about the experiences of BIPOC, understand historic inequities and potential solutions, be better prepared to have meaningful conversations on diversity and equity issues, provide specific actions to enhance allyship, and enhance ability to be reflective practitioners.
9. Create employer/workplace-focused sensitivity training focused on improving diversity of co-workers/management, providing tools to retain and promote diverse planners, and helping managers and workplaces address conscious and unconscious bias that leads to lack of high-profile projects and promotions, the need to work harder to be perceived as talented,

emotional/unpaid labor expectations, microaggressions and bullying, and “spokesman”/token roles.

10. Add a Chapter award for best EDI workplace and award at the Florida Planning Conference.

Implementation:

Assigned to: Professional Development and Workplace Subcommittee

Resources needed will be determined through subsequent review of approved strategies relative to current Chapter programs and staffing that may support implementation, as well as the volunteer resources required.

C. Communities and Partnerships

*APA Florida can make the profession more welcoming by showing support to minority groups. For example, APA Florida could stand with Black Lives Matter to show it supports a group that has been marginalized since before the Civil War. As a southern state, it is crucial to show solidarity with a progressive movement to protect and empower a group that has endured more oppression and hate than any other group in our country's history. APA Florida can also create a welcoming environment by partaking in Pride and observing it in June; adding pronouns to email signatures; and calling attention to our queer community. Florida has many historic gayborhoods and the leading LGBTQ researcher (Dr. Petra Doan at Florida State University), but you would never know because APA Florida rarely, if ever, highlights these issues. APA Florida can also create a welcoming environment by offering Spanish translations to show you are embracing the state's large Latinx community – **Survey Respondent Comment***

*As a queer female planner, I have had the opportunity to bring attention the differing needs of communities based on sex, gender, and orientation that were never even thought of before. APA Florida needs to recognize the LGBTQ communities in Florida and how people in these communities need more support. Planning can help alleviate homelessness, violence, and health issues (like the HIV epidemic) by acknowledging and addressing their LGBTQ populations and needs. Cities like Tampa, Orlando, Miami, Miami Beach, Ft. Lauderdale, Wilton Manors, etc. need to understand this segment of their populations so they can include policies in comp plans or create ordinances that support not only their neighborhoods, but also their lives – **Survey Respondent Comment***

Summary:

The EDI Committee’s goal is to create genuine and authentic partnerships with other organizations to promote equity, diversity and inclusion within the planning profession.

Strategies:

1. Promote APA resources on working in diverse communities by developing Florida-specific case studies and recommendations or collecting APA National content, like APA Learn courses, to add to a resource page.
2. Ensure case studies include representation from Black, Latinx, and other non-white practitioners to highlight the achievements of people of various backgrounds and be a vehicle that tells positive stories.
3. Hold listening sessions with the Urban League, NAACP, Black Lives Matter, Equality Florida, Community Development Corporations, and other organizations and elected officials of multi-racial and underserved communities to learn about specific community needs, confirm best practices appropriate to community needs and values, and explore partnerships.

4. Reach out to activists and professors throughout the state who can host webinars on issues like LGBTQ communities (Dr. Petra Doan) and black communities (Renita Holmes in Miami).
5. Establish partnerships with HBCU Schools of Planning and Architecture through the Faculty Liaison.
6. Explore partnerships that can help engage children in planning practice, such as mentoring programs or summer camps in marginalized communities and Teach In, for planners to connect with youth from a variety of backgrounds and so that the children can become knowledgeable and engaged with planning practice.
7. Start or join a resource network or other program to support citizen planners, especially those from marginalized communities, to arm them with planning knowledge, so that the expertise they already have about their communities could inform their advocacy and engagement in planning.
8. Provide a discounted rate for citizen planners to attend conferences and events and encourage them to guide panels and sessions.
9. Provide a resource template for planners to educate the community on the profession that allows customization to their community and its projects.
10. Promote awareness of the need be inclusive by not scheduling community meetings or input on non-Christian holidays, using tools like the Anti-Defamation League calendar of observances.
11. Pursue key partnership from the following potential partners suggested by survey respondents: Florida Redevelopment Association, Florida Main Street program, Historic Preservation groups, IEDC, CRE, NAR, Appraisal Institute, SIOR, ULI, Legal services supporting community housing, economic development organizations, local nonprofits, educational institutions, health institutions, DOH, AARP, Smart Growth America, COMTO, LULAC, My Brothers Keeper, Congressional Black Caucus, Haitian Chamber of Commerce, United Way, NOW, LWV, HRC Orlando, ICMA, AIA, Guardian ad Litem, New Vision for Independence, Florida Parks and Rec Association, Florida Brownfield Association, Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission, ACLU, GLAAD, NACo, GARE, Racial Equity Institute, Dream Defenders, Quantum Foundation (West Palm), ASLA, League of Cities, League of Counties.

Implementation:

Assigned to: Communities and Partnerships Subcommittee

Resources needed will be determined through subsequent review of approved strategies relative to current Chapter programs and staffing that may support implementation, as well as the volunteer resources required.

D. Conference and Events

*I've found it to be a majority white, middle to upper middle class, male profession. Having open and real conversations at APA events around this issue and how to change it is critical – **Survey Respondent Comment***

*APA Florida does a good job bringing diversity to the state conferences. Can they bring them to all Sections like the rural ones? Sometimes the programs are geared for the professional managerial class - can we have a more multiracial working class APA Florida some day? – **Survey Respondent Comment***

Your annual conferences are not welcoming to those who are African Americans. We do not love to go drinking and the events seems to always cater towards bar hopping drinking events. The location of your conferences are good old boy locations. Your leadership committees are not diverse – Survey Respondent Comment

Summary:

Clearly, based on the survey comments noted above, APA Florida has some work to do in reaching out to underserved and underrepresented members of the profession. The EDI Committee's goal is to foster a culture of respect, openness, learning, integrity, honesty and a sense of fun by actively engaging in event and conference planning.

FPC20 will have, for the first time, an EDI mini-track with an EDI forum as part of the conference. The 2020 Call for Presentations noted a preference for diverse panel speakers. Future Conference Session Committees should have additional tools to ensure sessions either have a diverse panel or focus a portion of their session on equity, diversity, and inclusion, modeled on APA National or other peer organizations, such as by asking every session organizer to answer a question about how their session centers on social equity and advances EDI in the profession/communities served. Sessions also could include opportunities to invite non-planner community advocates and organizers to share their expertise on the impacts of planning policies on their communities.

Strategies:

1. Adopt APA National's approach to Chapter calls for presentation to promote diverse representation in keynote/plenary speakers and on panels at webinars, workshops, and the Florida Planning Conference.
2. Use equity as part of selection criteria to avoid all-white and/or all-male panels and ensure diverse members are included in Florida Planning Conference panels.
3. Organize an accessible Zoom call held after the Florida Planning Conference call for presentations is issued and recorded that is designed to coach first-time submitters/presenters on developing presentation proposals.
4. Hold a half-day EDI summit on the day before the Public Policy workshop.
5. Hold an EDI pre-conference workshop for the Florida Planning Conference that brings in outside trainers of regional or national prominence.
6. Hold an EDI meetup session for diverse planners and allies at the Florida Planning Conference hosted by the EDI Committee.
7. Develop an EDI mini-track or track at each Florida Planning Conference that includes equity planning sessions.
8. Encourage each section to hold at least one EDI event annually, such as hosting a featured speaker, an antiracist book club, a webinar for CM ethics or law credit, or "career bootcamps" with resume/interviewing workshops and networking.
9. Support events with appropriate strategies for name badges, facilities, codes of conduct, reporting of inappropriate conduct, and post-event survey questions that address diversity and inclusion.
10. Ensure that the elected official training includes a significant section on equity and on the importance of inclusion and diversity in their planning agencies and the field.

11. Ensure the Florida Planning Conference has events that are welcoming to those who do not drink alcohol.
12. Consider how the Florida Planning Conference's chosen locations, vendors, mobile tours, and events can support EDI goals.

Implementation:

Assigned to: Conference and Events Subcommittee

Resources needed will be determined through subsequent review of approved strategies relative to current Chapter programs and staffing that may support implementation, as well as the volunteer resources required.

E. Website and Social Media

As a multiracial person who has benefitted from privilege of different types (white privilege included), I keep thinking about what I can do to take some of this work off people of color, LGBTQ individuals, and planners with disabilities already in the profession. I think calls for diversifying boards, leadership, and conference sessions are good start and we need to do that, but I'm wondering what we can do to encourage white planners and other more benefitted groups in general to learn and be allies and to be brave and do the work and not just ask the few minority planners to do the work. Ultimately, we need to work toward making sure planners are trained, confident, and brave enough to use their critical consciousness in public, as well as ensure that they are educated and enlightened and can take on the work and that they will speak out on what needs to be done. – Reviewer Comment

Summary:

The EDI Committee's goal is to inform, engage and educate planning professionals about equity, diversity and inclusion through various social media platforms and website. The EDI Committee understands the importance of social media in the 21st Century and will actively monitor Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn accounts for opportunities to post relevant, factual information for educational purposes. Instagram and other platforms may be better to reach younger planners and communities may also be considered.

Strategies:

1. Develop EDI resource lists by topic that include APA resources, APA Learn classes, books/articles, videos and TED talks, Florida Planning articles, and other resources.
2. Consider whether an EDI-focused social media account or listserv that offers weekly tips, jobs, and resources would promote EDI goals and could be appropriately maintained by the Chapter or EDI Committee members.
3. Designate a Website and Social Media Subcommittee Chair of the EDI Committee to expand activities in coordination with Chapter and Executive Committee.
4. Assign an EDI Committee email address through the Chapter's domain.

Implementation:

Assigned to: Website and Social Media Subcommittee

Resources needed will be determined through subsequent review of approved strategies relative to current Chapter programs and staffing that may support implementation, as well as the volunteer resources required.

Appendix

Responses – Female

Black planner with 15 + years of experience

Largely good experiences internally. Issues come from external forces. Largely the same as greater societal problems where development industry is led to older, white, males who believe other white men are better representatives for their projects and see others as appropriate to assist but not to lead. Required to work twice as hard to be seen and considered. APA Florida can assist by having the uncomfortable conversations that bring these issues to light so individuals are not required to shine a light on this problem alone. The latter approach typically results in that individual being treated as if they are overly sensitive and they are not taken seriously making it less likely that individual speaks up in the future.

Latina planner with 15 years of experience

When I was a junior planner and had a community workshop in a mostly white community, the residents interacted with other white staff and totally disregarded me as if I was not there. However, after I had the opportunity to make a presentation a couple of white residents approached me and talked to me as if I was another member of staff. I had to prove I was smart, professional, and capable to be where I was. APA Florida could help by educating the community that planning professionals come in all colors and have diverse backgrounds.

White planner with 10 + years of experience

I've found it to be a majority white, middle to upper middle class, male profession. Having open and real conversations at APA events around this issue and how to change it is critical.

- 49% of survey respondents
- 63% of respondents are AICP (AICP, AICP-C, FAICP) certified.
- 72% of respondents identified as white/Caucasian, and 83% identified as straight.
- 75% of respondents are at a public sector agency and 41% at a private-sector firm.
- 47% report encountering bias, harassment or discrimination based on their gender inside the workplace or the planning field, and 59% reported this experience outside the planning field.
- A number of the respondents expressed that the planning profession (especially at private firms) is heavily dominated by older white males of privileged means, which creates biases against women because of age, gender, and socio-economic background.
- Respondents recommended providing forums for a frank discussion about diversity issues, surveying minority groups, integrating culturally competent approaches, encouraging diversity in planning schools and reaching out to students, offering networking and leadership training, providing conference sessions and webinars that discuss equity and inclusion issues, offering salary negotiation training, and developing partnerships with traditional (ULI, AIA) and non-traditional organizations, among others.
- Respondents provided a litany of suggestions on how to create a more welcoming environment for women and minorities interested in the planning professions, including outreach and mentorship to students and young professionals, the Chapter creating a diversity representative position for the Board, encouraging fee waivers for joining Women in Planning and similar APA groups, shifting the conversation regarding what is planning based on a diverse set of experiences, surveying membership to understand the current state of diversity in the Florida planning profession and where improvements are needed, and ensuring Florida Planning Conference panels are not lead mainly by while males over 50.
- Respondents stressed the need to increase diversity in planning programs, promote diverse experiences and thought processes about what planning is to make clear to citizens what planners do and their importance, make planners aware of the thoughts/behaviors/practices that lead to discrimination including in hiring practices, achieve diversity in local boards (Planning Boards, Board of County Commissioners/Councils), and increase the number of Black planners in the private sector.

Responses - Black

Female planner with 5 years of experience

More than statements but tangible efforts to improve communities within the context of their own communities, not simply applying outside solutions. While many people boast about having this number of people from a certain group, other than a number there is no attempt to foster an environment where their identity is celebrated and welcomed.

Male planner with 10 years of experience

Systemic racism is the main barrier. Help to eradicate it by providing a support system for minorities. How to advance career and negotiate salary.

Female planner with 25 years of experience

Status quo and how this country does business are barriers. I've experienced numerous situation where people with little to no education (let alone planning education) are given opportunities to serve in roles in planning organizations and are allowed to let their experience and relationships push them ahead.

- 14% of survey respondents self-identified as African, African-American, and as from the Caribbean (excluding Indo-Caribbean).
- 61% of Black respondents are AICP (AICP, AICP-C, FAICP) certified.
- 64% of Black respondents identified as female.
- 43% of Black respondents were the first to attend college in their family.
- 89% of Black respondents report encountering some type of bias, harassment or discrimination outside of the workplace.
- 68% report encountering bias, harassment or discrimination based on their race inside the workplace or inside the planning field.
- Black respondents identified a number of concerns—systemic racism, lack of knowledge of the planning field as a real career option for diverse persons, many White planners not being aware of U.S. racial history and racist policies, individuals trying to address EDI issues and being treated if they are overly sensitive and not taken seriously, being required to work twice as hard to be seen and considered, the perception that older White men believe that group is the best representatives for their projects while others assist, Black planners being under- represented in the private sector, and that their accomplishments and intelligence (ex. higher education, multi-lingual) are not enough to access mentoring and promotions.
- Black respondents also expressed that some goals should be specific to them due to Black Americans facing unmatched discrimination and injustice, as well as a concern that APA Florida failed to post a Black Lives Matter statement on their social media.
- Black respondents recommended interacting with diverse groups at the high school level to ensure the planning profession is represented to all communities, providing a support system for minorities on how to advance career and negotiate salary, providing additional resources to find and secure gainful employment, creating online and in-person networking and mentorship opportunities, and creating training materials, webinars, online forums, and conference sessions.

Responses – Hispanic/Latino/Latinx

Male planner who did not give years of experience

Stop making me feel as if I do not belong, by always assuming i'm so different due to my background heritage. I was born and raised here and most likely like the same foods and things as most other that were born here. I am not the expert in everything Latino. I am not the person to always send out to the minority communities. Yes I enjoy all that and love the planning community and love making a difference and am super proud of my heritage. I am not a token!

Female planner with 9 years of experience

Still in 2020, I'm usually the only female and Latina at a table. More grants and mentorship to students from low income families.

Male planner with 15+ years of experience

Here are some reasons that I think are important: 1) Not enough exposure to planning as a career at the high school and college level (recruitment) 2) Lack of access to networking opportunities (recruitment) 2) Hispanics not feeling secure about their language skills or accent (retention/promotion) 3) Not enough role models/mentors within the profession (retention/promotion) 4) Not enough diverse people in supervisory roles or with decision making power, especially when it comes to hiring (recruiting/retention/promotion) 5) Lack of interest from white management to listen to ideas or point of view (retention) I think that APA Florida should develop a guide of best practices to creating and retaining a diverse office. The organization should also emphasize the need for a more diverse workforce because of the changing demographics within the state.

- 10% of survey respondents
- 33% of Hispanic/Latino/Latinx respondents identified as female.
- 43% are AICP (AICP, AICP-C, FAICP) certified.
- 48% were born outside the United States, and 48% have English as their second language.
- 33% of respondents were the first to attend college in their family.
- 71% of respondents report often or sometimes experiencing bias, harassment or discrimination outside of the workplace based on their race/ethnicity, while 53% experience based on gender and 57% based on nationality.
- 43% of respondents feel that their background would hinder opportunities for promotion and advancement.
- 29% of respondents strongly agree and 24% agree that they have to work harder than others to be perceived as talented and experienced because of their identity.
- Hispanic/Latino/Latinx respondents identified barriers as staff getting promoted because of who they know, a lack of confidence in minority employees, and the lack of retention and promotions inside an organization.
- Hispanic/Latino/Latinx respondents recommended improving recruitment (from elementary school to high school students) among underserved communities, increasing access to networking opportunities, empower non-native speakers of English with speaking opportunities, offer a mentorship program and EDI training at all professional and governmental levels to retain and promote diverse planners, build support systems (ex. online focus groups hosted by APA Florida) for diverse planners to share issues and ideas and create recruitment outreach programs for underrepresented communities, and offer free online training/resources/education.

Responses - Asian

Male planner with 5+ years of experience

Microaggressions. Character assassinations. Stereotyping. Lack of initiative to appreciate nuances. Failing to comprehensively and empathically understand all sides of an issue. Tolerance of racism. Eliminate them using policies and back them up with consequences. Educate children and adults on the benefits of inclusion and diversity.

Female planner with less than 5 years of experience

My experience has been positive for the most part. However, there is an obvious problem where planners, especially in the private sector, are more likely to hire and promote individuals who are from privileged means- both monetarily and based on race.

Female planner with 8 years of experience

I feel that the barriers placed on diverse planners are the lack of experience and lack or little mentorship. I think APA Florida can best overcome these issues by expanding or developing and/or improve mentorship programs for planners as they advance through the profession.

- 5% of survey respondents self-identified as Asian/Pacific Islander, Southeast Asian, South Asian, and East Asian.
- Respondents stressed the importance of helping recognize bias in hiring practices and offering training on how to fix it, partner with local organizations for continuing education, and providing resources that help planners be more understanding of races, cultures, and identities that differ from their own.
- Asian respondents identified challenges with planners, especially in the private sector, being more likely to hire and promote individuals who have privilege (due to race or resources), and in Florida, people who don't look "American" constantly being asked "where they are really from?" in a manner that questions one's citizenship and creditability as a planner.
- Asian respondents recommended addressing hiring practices, forming strong relationships with university planning programs that uplift underrepresented planners, expanding or developing improve mentorship programs for planners as they advance through the profession, providing networking and leadership training, creating open forum opportunities, and educating children and adults on the benefits of inclusion and diversity.
- Asian respondents suggested APA Florida promote a welcoming community by diversifying leadership, creating a position to achieve EDI goals, and dedicating a day/week/ month each year to continue the dialogue and take steps to resolve ongoing issues.

Responses - LGBTQ

Female planner with 5+ years of experience

Racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ageism, ableism. Shift the conversations, discuss lessons learned, provide a platform for diverse voices from planning, provide a platform for the community to speak with us, encourage planners to get out into their communities more (no more planning from behind the desk all the time).

Female planner with 25+ years of experience

Yes (as in all of it) -- I think everyone likes to see people represented that they can identify with. No one likes to think they are the only (fill in the blank).

Female planner with 5 years of experience

APA Florida can make the profession more welcoming by showing support to minority groups. For example, APA Florida could stand with Black Lives Matter to show it supports a group that has been marginalized since before the Civil War. As a southern state, it is crucial to show solidarity with a progressive movement to protect and empower a group that has endured more oppression and hate than any other group in our country's history. APA Florida can also create a welcoming environment by partaking in Pride and observing it in June; adding pronouns to email signatures; and calling attention to our queer community. Florida has many historic gayborhoods and the leading LGBTQ researcher (Dr. Petra Doan at Florida State University), but you would never know because APA Florida rarely, if ever, highlights these issues. APA Florida can also create a welcoming environment by offering Spanish translations to show you are embracing the state's large Latinx community.

- 15% of survey respondents from participants self-identifying as African-American/Black, White/Caucasian, Southeast Asian, Middle Eastern/North African, Jewish, Hispanic/Latino/Latinx, Asian/Pacific Islander, East Asian, and American Indian/Alaskan Native/Native American.
- LGBTQ respondents recommended bias, diversity, and inclusion training specifically for hiring managers and supervisors; more EDI programs to raise awareness of the issues people face; partnering with local organizations for education opportunities; collecting data on LGBTQ populations to understand how to improve planning of the public realm and address harassment and homelessness; recognizing the LGBTQ communities in Florida and how people and neighborhoods in these communities need more support; mentoring to increase retention and promotion; reading books like *The Color of Law* to understand how systemic racism and oppression got communities to where they are now; active recruitment at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) undergraduate programs; salary negotiation for women and minorities; monthly lunches; a listserv with jobs, resources, trainings, and tips; seminars and workshops; and webinars with activists and professors throughout the state.
- LGBTQ respondents also expressed intersectional concerns about age discrimination experienced in the workplace; the need for employers not to schedule meetings on Jewish holidays; and the need to address racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ageism, and ableism.

Responses - Disability

Female planner with 5 years of experience

APA Florida can put more focus on going above and beyond the minimum to truly promote equitable access to opportunity- not just for planners but for the community. Particularly for differently-abled individuals, such as people with developmental disabilities (inclusion in community participation processes) and physical disabilities (e.g., universal design vs ADA- what does it mean to go above and beyond and create truly inclusive environments?). This could include conference sessions, a webinar, guidebooks, etc.

Female planner with less than 5 years of experience

We need more diversity in our planning schools. Being a recent grad, I was in utter shock by how white & male dominated my program was. Without diversity in a program, often the status quo wasn't challenged without a fight. Training needs to start from the beginning of the career and continue throughout. Continued education for AICP accreditation needs to require at least 2+ courses on cultural competency a year. Include more equity & diversity sessions into the FL conferences (& at good times).

Female planner with 30+ years of experience

Hire them. Promote them. Pay them fairly. Mentor them. Give them equal access to growth opportunities. Go to people outside of your informal network of friends to hire and promote. Be willing to listen, learn, and admit your own shortcomings.

- 8% of survey respondents self-identifying as differently abled - hearing and/or speech, differently abled - mental health and/or neuro-atypical, and as differently abled – mobility/sight.
- 56% of respondents with a disability are AICP (AICP, AICP-C, FAICP) certified.
- 56% of respondents with a disability identified as female.
- A review of this group's responses revealed several themes for encouraging equity, inclusion, and diversity within the planning profession. The major issues identified involved the insufficient promotion of the planning profession within communities of color; inadequate access to leadership training; lack of opportunities for minority and differently abled planners to participate in high-profile projects; and the failure to consider differently abled individuals during the public participation process.
- Most respondents highlighted the importance of creating targeted outreach efforts to introduce the planning profession to minority middle and high schools students; offering leadership opportunities; promoting a mentor program at the APA chapter level; refocusing efforts to ensure practicing planners understand the impact past planning practices had on creating inequitable communities; instituting targeted recruitment at HBCUs; and partnering with organizations that can help further APA Florida's goal of promoting equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Respondents in this category suggested APA Florida can provide EDI resources that go "above and beyond the minimum to truly promote equitable access to opportunity- not just for planners but for the community. Particularly for differently-abled individuals, such as people with developmental disabilities (inclusion in community participation processes) and physical disabilities (e.g., universal design vs ADA- what does it mean to go above and beyond and create truly inclusive environments?). This could include conference sessions, a webinar, guidebooks, etc."
- Respondents also suggested more focus on youth-friendly engagement and strategies (not just "social media") can be implemented that truly attract and engage younger adults, including success stories, in-person workshop/event, and a conference session and/or webinar.

Attendee Comments – EDI Forum, September 9, 2020

- *I see a lot of people that get appointed to planning positions in south Florida, particularly in Miami, without even having a planning degree or background.*
- *How can we help predominately male and/or white planning firms get in contact with more planners of color? From what I understand, they have trouble finding, contacting, and recruiting diverse candidates. How can we bridge these connections? Of course, women in planning are needed as well.*
- *I find that I only get called when there is an affordable housing project or there is an MWBE requirement. There needs to be more transparency in the way that governments select or approve consultants and then disseminate the project descriptions for RFP/RFQ.*
- *If we're talking about how to build a diverse planner workforce for the future - I think a lot of it has to do with visibility. Kids, teens, and even adults don't know planners and what they do and why it's fun, much less Black, Latinx, LGBTQ, etc. planners that look like them. A lack of public engagement is a big part of that.*
- *As a young-looking front of desk planner right out of school, I was treated like a receptionist by residents and coworkers. Probably should be expected when the female town manager was called "girl."*
- *We need to take care not to automatically equate someone's cultural heritage with their nationality-American.*

Acronyms

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| AARP | American Association of Retired Persons |
| ACLU | American Civil Liberties Union |
| AIA | The American Institute of Architects |
| ASLA | American Society of Landscape Architects |
| COMTO | Conference of Minority Transportation Officials |
| CRE | Counselors of Real Estate |
| DOH | Department of Health |
| GARE | Government Alliance on Race and Equity |
| GLAAD | Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation |
| HRC Orlando | Human Rights Campaign Orlando |
| ICMA | International City/County Management Association |
| IEDC | International Economic Development Council |
| LULAC | League of United Latin American Citizens |
| LWV | League of Women Voters |
| NACo | National Association of Counties |
| NAR | National Association of Realtors |
| NOW | National Organization for Women |
| SIOR | Society of Industrial and Office Realtors |
| ULI | Urban Land Institute |