



IPMA's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee

IPMA's Board of Directors recently voted unanimous approval to change the name of the Diversity & Inclusion ("D&I") Committee to the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion ("DEI") Committee. You may ask why was this change necessary and why should this be important to me as a member of the International Practice Management Association? In short, diversity and inclusion simply do not work without equity. Why is equity important? Equity means identifying inequitable systems, course-correcting, and building equitable systems that are designed to work equally for everyone. The tools and resources needed to build an equitable system must also be identified and utilized so that the same opportunities are provided for everyone, regardless of identity. Equity is a necessary component to ensure measurable success in diversity and inclusion initiatives.

The DEI Committee was created in response to the racial social justice movement that emanated from the murder of George Floyd in the spring of 2020. At that time, the IPMA Board of Directors felt compelled to establish a Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Board to focus on building IPMA into a more diverse and inclusive organization. The D&I Advisory Board was tasked with making recommendations to the Board on how to frame this important conversation within our organization. The DEI Committee was formed after months of dialogue and research on diversity and inclusion in practice and within IPMA, and the Board approved the following Diversity Statement:

"We celebrate our diversity and understand that to be silent is to be complicit. We are an organization who puts people first. We will continue to come together - to listen, learn and act in support of our communities against racism and for human rights."

As members of IPMA, we are connected to an international population of legal professionals from a myriad of races, ethnicities, religions, cultures, social identities, generations, gender identities, and differently abled status. Our goal is to create an equitable and inclusive environment where everyone is afforded the same educational and leadership opportunities to develop professionally, and to

volunteer for leadership roles with support from our peers. It is important that everyone feels welcome to share their ideas, impressions, and viewpoints when volunteering, attending or chairing chapter meetings and other events, or seeking a seat on the Board.

To date, the DEI Committee has been instrumental in adding language to the nominations questionnaire to ensure incoming Board members stand in agreement with the IPMA's position on diversity, equity and inclusion, and more recently, collaborated with the Nominations Committee to present a town hall that provided an open discussion on the requirements for getting nominated to fill a Board position.

The DEI Committee will continue to collaborate with the Board and other IPMA committees to provide DEI education and resources, as well as plan and implement DEI initiatives for IPMA that can also assist with DEI organizational objectives. We are preparing thought-provoking DEI content and speakers for the annual conference to be held in Montreal, Quebec October 19-21, 2022.

If you're interested in joining the DEI committee, please contact headquarters, join via the IPMA website, or reach out to either of the co-chairs. The DEI Committee meets the first Thursday of each month.

Cheryl D. Garner and Sybil Taylor Aytch
Co-Chairs, IPMA Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee