



## **PASSPORT TO LANGUAGES INC.**



### **STRATEGIC PLAN TO ADDRESS EQUITY AND INCLUSION**

The goal of our Strategic Plan is to establish an organizational structure within our company that is committed to recognizing diversity, equity, and inclusion; and developing opportunities in our industry, by developing practices that endear us to the communities that we service downstream. Our diversity plan is aimed at being good stewards in the wider industry that we operate in, and it reflects that our staff and interpreters alike have been equipped with cultural consulting that enhances their work experiences and provides for social equity.

For the purposes of our plan, diversity is defined as individual, group, and social differences that can be engaged to achieve excellence in training, learning, administrative and support services. We acknowledge that the term "diversity" can be fluid, in that the status and representation of groups shifts over time.

Every individual is a necessary asset, and we demonstrate this every day in our policies, practices, and operating procedures. By the very nature of our industry, we provide outreach to communities in over 180 different languages; all with diverse cultural customs and backgrounds. It would be an understatement to say: "we celebrate diversity!"

Other than just the obvious language component, our diversity initiatives additionally pertain to, but are not limited to:

- Life experiences
- Race and ethnicity
- Personality type
- Socio-economic status
- Learning and working styles
- Class
- Age
- Veterans status
- Gender and gender expression



- Sexual orientation
- Country of origin
- Ability
- Pedagogy
- Intellectual traditions and perspectives
- Culture
- Political affiliations
- Religious affiliation
- Education

Furthermore, Passport To Languages Inc. identifies these as groups that are potentially underrepresented in the market space that we operate within:

- Racial/Ethnic populations (African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and Latino) as well as populations from Southeast Asia (Indonesia, East Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines, East Timor, Brunei, Christmas Island, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar (Burma), Thailand, Vietnam, and West Malaysia).
- We have also recognized underrepresented groups based on gender-identity, sexual orientation, disability and veteran status, as well as religious affiliation.

We describe Inclusion as the active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity – both in the workplace and in the market space; as well as within communities in which individuals might connect. We specially advise that our staff and interpreters engage with the community in ways that fosters a sense of belonging, increases awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and empathic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and institutions.

We define equity as the creation of opportunities for historically underrepresented populations to have equal access to and participate in programs that are capable of closing the gaps in access to healthcare, housing, legal, and all other related necessary human services.

#### IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

To ensure full engagement from staff and contracted interpreters, we dedicate resources to educate our team on the benefits of a diverse and inclusive community, as well as on the laws governing affirmative action and non-discrimination. The training includes the development of a framework to enable staff to understand their responsibilities and how they can help achieve the objectives of our overall plan. To monitor and manage these efforts, specific role managers will engage with staff and contractors, and will be responsible for overall execution of the strategic plans for equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives.

Leadership will partner with management, and they will participate in annual sessions to review the plan, and will develop action-oriented steps to further meet specific goals.

We will dedicate resources annually for the recruitment and retention of staff and contractors from groups historically underrepresented and will identify additional resources (both internal and



external) to support the related initiatives. We have established an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee to advise and give further oversight to the implementation of the Strategic Plan and to the assessment of its progress. In addition, we will seek input and advice from stakeholders in our industry, both local and national, on strategies for effective implementation of the plan.

Our strategy for recruitment and retention of staff contributes to our diversity goals. We work to ensure that the applicant pool includes a diverse range of candidates. Our retention efforts are equally important to the success of the Strategic Plan, and this is supported through mentorship, development opportunities, and social interactions. A diverse staff enables diverse sets of ideas and the ability to broadly support interpreters and the communities that we serve.

**STRATEGIES:**

- Assignment of a Diversity Director.
  - Assists in training for best practices regarding cultural competence to staff and providers. as it pertains to working with interpreters.
  - Develop an interactive training for staff on facilitating critical conversations on diversity, equity, and inclusion in service and practice settings.
  - Develop conceptual models that guide teaching and learning of individuals from diverse backgrounds for evaluation of all learning opportunities. Synthesize & disseminate strategies to guide staff in incorporating equity, diversity, & inclusion in the workplace. Synthesize & disseminate strategies to guide staff in partnering with diverse populations. Develop training for staff on facilitating critical conversations on issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion in service and practice settings. Use service-learning opportunities to enhance experiences with equity, diversity, and inclusion.
  - Collect, collate, analyze, and disseminate data to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion.
    - Data will be kept in each staff member’s binder
    - Data will also be stored on public hard drive and accessible to all staff
  - Assists in working with interpreters and educating best practices of specific cultures and how to work with the providers, and non-medical clients in various settings.
  - Heads the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee, and conducts quarterly meetings.
  - Monitors staff to make sure we are consistent in fostering inclusion, and constantly staying mindful of cultural differences that can (on the surface level) appear different than our own, and how to be respectful while still maintaining core business objectives.
  - Cultivate a climate that promotes diversity by monitoring via surveys, showcasing personal and professional achievements, disseminating diversity strategic plan, and creating an active arena to document experiences occurring that do not reflect equity, diversity, and inclusion.
  - Modify employment to include evaluation of conduct and participation in equity, diversity & inclusion for staff and interpreters.



- Develop a staff and interpreter mentoring program that fosters workforce diversity and uses a holistic approach to promote professional behavior and productivity.
- Allocate an annual budget for activities to support diversity, and equity
  - Have staff engage in at least one volunteer opportunity a year that directly benefits inclusion of someone in need, or to attend a cultural event with an interpreter.
  - Have one special qualified speaker come to the office per year for continuing education.
  - Develop and coordinate annual seminars/workshops or community-engagement activities on equity, diversity, and inclusion for staff, interpreters, and community partners.
  - Provide support to attend external professional development opportunities that focus on increasing workforce diversity for staff and interpreters. Funding will be allocated to support staff, who are interested in gaining additional knowledge and skills to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion.
  - The Diversity Committee will lead these efforts and will seek input and collaboration from staff regarding specific topics of interest. This strategy will leverage partnerships with clients and other community stakeholders.
- Identify and address barriers within the application and hiring process for persons from underrepresented groups. Work in conjunction with the Human Resources Director and leverage partnerships with recruiting groups that can assist in the necessary capacity.
- Establish fundraising initiatives for research pilot funds, scholarships, and apprenticeships. The Diversity Director will increase advocacy efforts at local, state, and federal levels to increase funding for underrepresented groups in the marketplace.
- Submit institutional training grant applications to promote workforce diversity; securing federal and other funding to support increasing workforce diversity. Grant mechanisms could also provide funding for scholarships, stipends, and tuition support for interpreter training to become healthcare qualified or certified.