

USA<sup>TM</sup>  
LACROSSE



DIVERSITY, EQUITY  
AND INCLUSION

ASSESSMENT TOOLKIT FOR LEADERS



USA Lacrosse seeks to foster a national lacrosse community that encourages understanding, appreciation and acceptance of all within its membership, volunteer base, and staff. Further, USA Lacrosse believes that broad representation and participation add significant value to the lacrosse experience of each of us, and that these valued experiences are enhanced by embracing underrepresented and underserved communities.

-- USA Lacrosse Diversity and Inclusion Statement

## Assessment Toolkit Overview

This assessment tool is intended to support an organization throughout the diversity planning process. The action items in this document provide a standardized approach to measuring, reporting, and improving documentation for organizational diversity and inclusion. Information in this toolkit was assembled by members of the USA Lacrosse Diversity and Inclusion Task Force with special guidance and assistance from the US Olympic Sports Committee and US Swimming. Feel free to recreate or implement any of these initiatives in your program to help foster a more inclusive environment within your own lacrosse community.

## Diversity and Inclusion Awareness Assessment Quiz

This Diversity and Inclusion Awareness Assessment Quiz is designed to assess your program or organization's commitment to diversity and inclusion issues. The self-assessment process is used to develop organization-specific reflection that will help your group address any inclusion weaknesses and build upon diversity strengths. Diversity and inclusion competence is an ongoing developmental process, therefore the goal is to promote positive progression along the road. For that reason, this assessment should be viewed as an indication of areas in which the program or organization can enhance attitudes, practices, policies, and structures concerning diversity and inclusion efforts.

**Instructions:** Please circle or otherwise mark the response that most accurately reflects your program's efforts. If you have trouble understanding a question, answer to the best of your ability. Feel free to expand your responses or note concerns on the page for further reflection and dialogue with your leadership team.

### 1. Have you set aside funds allocated toward achieving your diversity goals?

Yes  No  Sometimes

### 2. Do you regularly monitor the racial and ethnic diversity of the participants in your program, chapter or league?

Yes  No  Sometimes

### 3. Does your program, organization or chapter communicate your commitment to inclusion and is it visible for all parents and players?

Yes  No  Sometimes

### 4. Do you monitor at least every three years the demographics of your community to track change in gender, racial and ethnic diversity?

Yes  No  Sometimes

### 5. Do you actively use this data for your strategic and outreach efforts?

Yes  No  Sometimes

### 6. Has someone from your program, organization or chapter met with community leaders to gauge their perceptions of lacrosse and seek their advice on how you can better provide opportunities for diverse participants in the community?

Yes  No  Sometimes

### 7. Have you done focus surveys or prompted feedback within the past year in your program to measure your coaches and players attitude towards diversity and cultural issues?

Yes  No  Sometimes

### 8. Are the individuals who represent your program or organization reflective of the diversity of the community and your group?

Yes  No  Sometimes

**9. Do you have a strategy in place to be certain you work with after-school programs and organizations that relate to the diversity of your community?**

Yes  No  Sometimes

**10. Are your written communications available in other languages that reflect the ethnic and cultural fabric of your community?**

Yes  No  Sometimes

**11. Based on the racial and ethnic diversity of the participants in your program, do you educate your coaches and volunteers on cultural and social issues important to your players and families?**

Yes  No  Sometimes

**12. Do your coaches and volunteers account for players and parents with physical and/or mental disabilities and prepare accordingly in order to speak and coach your participants?**

Yes  No  Sometimes

**13. Have you designated a member of your program leadership team to be responsible for championing and implementing your diversity strategy?**

Yes  No  Sometimes



## Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan

While the Diversity and Inclusion Awareness Assessment Quiz does not give you all the immediate answers, it allows you to start to assess the groundwork necessary for a successful diversity implementation plan in your own lacrosse community. If you answered a lot of questions with a 'No' or 'Sometimes' response, you can utilize the quiz assessment to identify areas for opportunity or development. You can also analyze the needs for your program and places that require improvement. It's important to establish an internal culture of inclusion, to further develop the leadership, policies, and procedures necessary to determine the short and long term diversity goals for your group and the timeline needed to get there. In this toolkit, you will find written samples and templates that you can use within your own program or organization, in order to implement a comprehensive inclusion plan. Take these next steps to create specific strategies for effectively incorporating inclusion activities and exercises into your programming efforts.

A Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan allows every organization to develop and implement a comprehensive strategic focus on diversity and inclusion as a key component of their programmatic operations. The plan provides a shared direction for your program or organization and creates alignment so each coach, volunteer and staff member can approach their outreach efforts in coordinated stride. This plan also outlines a clear path for successful integration in the office and on the field. This approach should include a continuous effort to identify and adopt strategic activities to promote diversity and inclusion and to identify and remove barriers to participation among underrepresented youth. A Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan shows your commitment to providing equal opportunities for all and should be shared with all of your coaches, directors and volunteers.

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### **SAMPLE: Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan**

*Please enter your organization's name and address here.*

#### **Organization Leader**

*(Program Administrator, League, CEO, Board of Directors etc.) Please enter your name here.*

#### **I. Background**

*Include a few sentences about your program or organization and your reason behind creating a Diversity Plan.*

#### **II. Vision for Diversity and Inclusion**

*What does Diversity and Inclusion mean to your organization and how do you envision it affecting your success? "Consider putting a quote from your CEO or senior leadership about the importance of diversity here."*

#### **III. Definition of Diversity and Inclusion**

*Please define how your organization defines Diversity and Inclusion. The example below is from the US Olympic Committees definitions of Diversity and Inclusion as set by the Diversity Working Group. Replace the text in this box with your own text. The USOC Diversity and Inclusion is below for your reference or inclusion:*

*"Diversity has many different definitions. The Diversity Working Group selected a definition for Diversity and Inclusion that reflects the aims of creating an inclusive culture, which benefits from all the differences among its constituents. Diversity is about differences among people, whether they work for, are served by or otherwise have a stake in the organization itself. These differences among stakeholders include but are not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, geographic location, national origin, religious beliefs, language, veteran status and physical abilities. Diversity is invaluable because it generates differing points of view, leads to innovation,*



*fosters an understanding and acceptance of individuals from different backgrounds, and recognizes the contributions that a variety of individuals and groups can make. Inclusion is about creating and maintaining an environment in which people are not excluded or marginalized because of their difference. It means promoting an environment in which contributions and strengths are recognized, optimized and valued in a way that generates opportunities for growth and adaptability.*

*You can also adapt and publicize on your media content the USA LACROSSE inclusion statement: USA Lacrosse seeks to foster a national lacrosse community that encourages understanding, appreciation and acceptance of all within its membership, volunteer base, and staff. Further, USA Lacrosse believes that broad representation and participation add significant value to the lacrosse experience of each of us, and that these valued experiences are enhanced by embracing underrepresented and underserved communities.*

**- Official USA Lacrosse Inclusion Statement**

**IV. Diversity and Inclusion Strategy**

**Objective:** *In a couple of sentences state your organizational goal for diversity and inclusion.*

**Initiatives:**

*Below you will find several categories of initiatives to implement as part of your D&I Plan. You do not need to have an initiative for every category and you can add or changes categories as needed. This should be a one or two sentence statement of the initiative followed by the outline of what steps to complete each initiative. The purpose of this section is to identify and list the programs and or projects to increase the diversity and inclusion of your board, staff, fan base, membership and athletes etc. Additionally, the initiatives should be attainable, realistic and measureable. Review the strategic plan for your organization as there should be areas of overlap. For example, your initiatives around the recruitment of athletes may only need to be changed to include efforts to target diverse groups.*

**A. Initiative A (Outreach)**

*Outline the steps you will take to fulfill each initiative here. Name each program, event, or action you will take, start and or completion date, person or individuals responsible followed by how you will measure success.*

**B. Initiative B (Retention)**

*Outline the steps you will take to fulfill each initiative here. Name each program, event, or action you will take, start and or completion date, person or individuals responsible followed by how you will measure success.*

**C. Initiative C (Revenue)**

*Outline the steps you will take to fulfill each initiative here. Name each program, event, or action you will take, start and or completion date, person or individuals responsible followed by how you will measure success.*

**D. Initiative D (Awareness)**

*Outline the steps you will take to fulfill each initiative here. Name each program, event, or action you will take, start and or completion date, person or individuals responsible followed by how you will measure success.*

**E. Initiative E (Business Planning)**

*Outline the steps you will take to fulfill each initiative here. Name each program, event, or action you will take, start and or completion date, person or individuals responsible followed by how you will measure success.*

**F. Initiative F (other)**

*Outline the steps you will take to fulfill each initiative here. Name each program, event, or action you will take, start and or completion date, person or individuals responsible followed by how you will measure success.*

## Inclusion and Outreach Action Steps

After you create and communicate your Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan, your leadership team should then develop a comprehensive action plan to encourage and implement a program-wide climate of inclusiveness. These action steps will enable you to establish a general timeline for the initiatives created in your strategic plan. Your goal, as part of the action steps, is to realize the potential of this diversity and to make it an integral part of your educational environment throughout the course of the year. Creating action steps for your program will articulate the vision of your diversity goals and fully integrate inclusion into your core operations. This action plan will also allow you to candidly look at your performance throughout the year and address the status of your activity (or inactivity) with complete accountability.

### SAMPLE: Annual Action Plan

#### Off-season

**Step #1:** Have your coaches, volunteers and program administrators complete the awareness assessment quiz. Compare the results, and then conduct a meeting specifically devoted toward diversity and inclusion initiatives.

**Step #2:** Create an inclusion or outreach policy for your program or organization that showcases your commitment to diversity and inclusion. Make sure that diversity is part of your program's mission/values statement if it is not already.

**Step #3:** Have your leadership team discuss the demographics of your community and create a diversity and inclusion action plan for the year. Make sure diversity goals are also included in your program's strategic plan.

**Step #4:** Select or nominate a diversity and inclusion volunteer or representative to serve on your leadership team to help develop and implement strategies, policies and programs that will create a diverse and inclusive environment for the local lacrosse community.

#### Pre-season

**Step #5:** Conduct a pre-season inclusion and culture sensitivity training for all coaches, staff and volunteers. Emphasize diversity-sensitive ways of communication and alternative coaching methods for participants with limitations. Plan to have candid conversations with your leaders to discuss their observations and concerns about diversity throughout your program or organization.

**Step #6:** Allocate budget funds specifically for your organization's outreach efforts and develop new initiatives to increase access to the sport.

**Step #7:** Plan to meet with community leaders of diverse schools and organizations to plan out how you can reach their local youth to provide lacrosse participation opportunities. Use social media and other diverse communications to spread the word about opportunities in your program.

#### Post-season

**Step #8:** Put together an internal task force with your diversity and inclusion representative to measure and review the diversity and inclusion plan results. Based on the results, create a new plan and recommend next steps for the program or organization.

**Step #9:** Conduct player and parent end of season surveys and evaluations to help you to assess your program's diversity and inclusivity efforts throughout the year.

**Step #10:** Review your results and recommendations with your board or leadership team as well as your coaches and volunteers. Get their feedback and suggestions to assist you in creating a long-term strategy to create a more diverse organization at all levels.



## Diversity and Inclusion Representative Position

A diversity and inclusion representative's role is to ensure that a program or organization's diversity agenda is a continual priority interwoven with in the daily procedures and operations of your group. The focus of this role differs from that of other members of your program. While most directors and coaches are concerned with the daily logistics and challenges associated with sustaining a lacrosse program, the diversity representative champions your program's inclusion and outreach efforts and it is their responsibility to monitor the progress of the diversity plan and suggest ways for constant strategic activity. The diversity representative should be committed to holding your program accountable for increasing opportunities and support for participants and coaches of diverse backgrounds.

### **SAMPLE: Diversity and Inclusion Representative Position**

#### Job Summary:

The diversity and inclusion representative shall help develop and implement strategies, policies and programs that will create a diverse and inclusive environment for the local lacrosse community and build on the population of underrepresented coaches, athletes, administrators and sports officials. The Representative will serve as a voice for the local underrepresented populations including but not limited to race, gender, age, or disability as well as those participants from challenging socio-economic backgrounds

#### Position Specifications:

- Supported by the program or league and guidelines set by the organization's goals and objectives listed below
- Two 2 year volunteer terms, with option for continued service.
- Voting Member of the program or league.

#### Reports to:

- Program Administrator, Director or Head Coach.

#### Position Requirements:

- Prior knowledge of the mission and goals of the league or program.
- Must have a passion for increasing opportunities and support for students and coaches of diverse backgrounds.

#### Duties/Responsibilities:

- Attend all Board Meetings and calls.
- Assist with the creation and implementation of an annual comprehensive diversity and inclusion plan.
- Create and coordinate community-related activities that help to promote lacrosse in the community at large (Diversity events, forums, mentorship and camps.)
- Annually report diversity annual plan results to your director or program administrator.
- Develop short and long term projects specifically to diverse community areas of need in your region.
- Help select and mentor a diverse volunteer staff to serve in leadership roles.
- Support and assist with the program or organization's diversity and inclusion goals and objectives.
- Research and develop opportunities for underrepresented participants in the sport to receive grant and scholarship awards.
- Develop local mentoring contacts and relationships.
- Conduct follow-up with programs and teams that target diversity/inclusion in your area.
- Track results.
- Communicate information about programs and activities that support diversity in lacrosse and inclusion.
- Communicate diversity best practices.
- Support the establishment of an outreach diversity budget.

## Diversity and Inclusion Volunteer and Staff Outreach Protocol

Prior to a leadership position becoming available in your program, chapter or organization, you should have already prepared a volunteer and staff outreach protocol. The process should be consistent and clearly outlined so that you can ensure to have diverse representation among your volunteers, coaches and staff. The protocol should include all actions needed to conduct the search successfully and should be used consistently when a volunteer or staff position becomes available in your program. Your plan should include how long each action will take, and who is specifically responsible for each action, so that it becomes natural for your leadership team to use this outreach procedure to address open vacancies.

### SAMPLE: Diversity and Inclusion Leadership Outreach Protocol

#### I. Goals and Objectives

**Example:** When a position becomes available, the following protocol will be activated to increase the diversity of the pool. This will increase the likelihood that a diverse candidate will be considered for staffing.

**Objective:** Recruit highly qualified, diverse talent to sustain the organization's mission to ensure that all qualified internal and external candidates have an equal opportunity to compete for open volunteer and/or staff positions.

**Goal:** Our organization will recruit from a diverse group of potential applicants to secure a qualified staff drawn from all parts of society.

#### II. General Guidelines for Search Committee Requirements and Specifying Qualifications

##### **Example: Pre-interview responsibilities**

At the time a staff, volunteer or coach position is open, the search chair will notify the organization's Diversity Representative of the position's opening. With perspective from the Diversity Representative, we will create a search committee within our leadership circle. The search committee will consist of five members with representation from at least one minority group (required). The search committee will be trained on recognizing and avoiding unconscious bias in the recruitment, interviewing and selection process. The search committee will also determine what the primary responsibilities and other expectations will be required for the person to fill the position. Where applicable, the committee will create broad or more general description of the responsibilities of the position to increase the likelihood of obtaining a diverse pool of qualified candidates. The search committee will be advised about individual, group and organizational patterns and trends of staffing, retention, and promotion of diverse candidates and progress on meeting the performance goals.

When any volunteer, staff or coach position becomes available in our organization we will send the position announcement and targeted phone calls to the following groups and individuals:

- Regional Diversity Directors at local colleges and universities.
- Regional and national diversity related organizations via LinkedIn – Human Resources
- USA Lacrosse Diversity and Inclusion Task Force members.
- Key D&I contacts
- Local HBCU and all-women colleges.
  - EAGLE American Indian Faculty & Staff Association
  - Guidance Counselors and Schools in local diverse areas.
  - Local Latino Associations

The Diversity Representative will determine if the approved outreach plan was implemented and if the diverse pool of candidates has been attained. When diverse pools have been attained, the Diversity Representative will approve initiation of the interview process.

### III. Interview Process Protocol

#### **Example: Strategic Diversity Focus in the Interview Process.**

The search committee shall provide the mission statement with value on diversity to each candidate. Make sure to emphasize the organizational priority of inclusion and discuss specific efforts with each candidate. The search committee

- Please describe how you would work to create an office environment that is welcoming, inclusive and increasingly diverse.
- Describe how you, as a coach or administrator, function and communicate effectively and respectfully within the context of varying beliefs, behaviors, and backgrounds.
- What opportunities have you had working and collaborating in diverse, multicultural and inclusive settings?
- How do you challenge stereotypes and promote sensitivity and inclusion?
- Describe your experience in serving or teaching underrepresented communities.
- Describe a situation in which you encountered a conflict with a person from a different cultural background than yours. How did you handle the situation?
- What ideas do you have for educating students about diversity?
- When interacting with a person from a different culture than your own, how do you ensure that communication is effective?

### IV. Ongoing Protocol Initiatives

#### **Example: Our ongoing projects in Baltimore and the surrounding communities are as follows:**

1. HR career fair initiative: a minimum of one member of the search committee will attend a diversity focused career fair annually.
2. Identify, develop and cultivate relationships with the following diversity focused groups and organizations such as:
  - a. Minority Opportunities Athletic Association (MOAA)
  - b. The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU)
  - c. The Baltimore Organization on Disability (BOD)
  - d. Senior lacrosse players at Howard University and Morgan State.
  - e. Urban guidance counselors and physical education teachers in west Baltimore.
  - f. Women in Sports and Events (WISE)