

1 **NAFSA DEI Statement Version 2 - DRAFT**
2 **August 31, 2023**
3 **NAFSA’s Statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**
4

5 NAFSA: The Association of International Educators, believes that diversity, equity, and inclusion
6 are not just words, but essential principles that drive our mission and define our global identity.
7

8 NAFSA fosters understanding and respect among people of diverse backgrounds and
9 perspectives and aspires to uphold the principles of social justice in every endeavor. In the work
10 of our association, we affirm the value of including and learning from diverse lived experiences
11 and perspectives.
12

13 International education is perhaps the greatest driver of global peace. It builds understanding
14 across global communities through exchange, which allows us to recognize humanity in others.
15

16 **Our Commitment:**
17 NAFSA is dedicated to fostering a culture of respect, empathy, and understanding. We commit
18 to actively address and dismantle systems of oppression and discrimination that exist within our
19 organization and the wider international community.
20

21 We encourage the international education community to commit to forms of action as a guide for
22 ongoing efforts and changes within the organization or community including the following:

- 23 • The practice of inclusivity in association policy and practice, and maintain an
24 environment that respects principles of equity and justice;
- 25 • A pledge to review and enhance policies, practices, and processes to identify and
26 eliminate biases and barriers that might hinder the advancement of any individual or
27 group;
- 28 • The increase of representation of historically marginalized communities across staff,
29 volunteer leadership, and board positions; and
- 30 • Clear metrics and goals to measure progress toward diversity, equity, and inclusion.
31

32 Our core values call on international educators to include people from different cultures and
33 identities and actively challenge systems and structures that perpetuate discrimination and
34 oppression. As a membership association, we expect international educators, institutions, and
35 organizations to embrace these principles as well. It is only by fostering and promoting diversity
36 and inclusion that we as a community will achieve excellence in advancing international
37 education.
38

39 By working together, we can create a more equitable and just world for all.
40

41 (subheading) A Note About Terminology:
42 *Language reflects societal changes, advancements in understanding, and shifts in how people*
43 *think about and address various issues. This evolution can encompass terminology related to*

44 *diversity, equity, inclusion, belonging, access, and accessibility. Click here for more information*
45 *and definitions.* [see following page with definitions]

46
47 ##End of Webpage

48
49 [click here]

50 **Terminology: Social Justice in International Education, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion,** 51 **Belonging, Access, and Accessibility**

52
53 As society becomes more aware of different identities, experiences, and challenges, new
54 terminology may emerge to better capture these nuances. Terms that were once widely used
55 might become outdated or even offensive, prompting the need for updated and more respectful
56 language. Below are definitions for social justice in international education, diversity, equity,
57 inclusion, belonging, access, and accessibility.

58
59 **Social Justice in International Education:** Social justice in international education is a
60 redistribution of resources that is designed to foster critical consciousness, develop critical
61 interculturality, and work toward equitable impacts on individuals and their communities.*

62
63 **Diversity:** Diversity refers to the presence of a wide range of backgrounds, characteristics, or
64 identities within a community, group, or organization. These identities can include (but are not
65 limited to) ability, age, ethnicity, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic
66 status.

67
68 **Equity:** Equity is the concept of ensuring that everyone has fair and just opportunities to
69 succeed, regardless of their background or identities, and fair distribution of power and
70 resources. It involves identifying and addressing systemic and structural barriers that can
71 prevent certain individuals or groups from reaching their full potential.

72
73 **Inclusion:** Inclusion involves creating an environment in which all individuals, regardless of their
74 diverse backgrounds, identities, or characteristics, feel valued, respected, and empowered to
75 fully contribute. It goes beyond mere representation and seeks to foster a sense of belonging for
76 all.

77
78 **Belonging:** Belonging refers to the feeling of being accepted, valued, and included within a
79 group or community. It's not just about being physically present, but also about feeling a sense
80 of connection and genuine engagement.

81
82 **Access:** Access relates to the availability and opportunity for individuals to participate in various
83 activities, programs, and resources. This can include access to education, employment,
84 healthcare, technology, and other aspects of society.

85
86 **Accessibility:** Accessibility is about designing environments, products, services, and digital
87 content in a way that ensures people with disabilities can fully participate and access them

88 without barriers. This can involve making physical spaces wheelchair accessible, using readable
89 fonts for people with visual impairments, providing closed captions for videos, and more.

90
91 These terms often intersect and are used in the context of promoting diversity, equity, and
92 inclusion (DEI) efforts. The goal is to create a society, organization, or community that not only
93 embraces diversity but actively works to dismantle systemic barriers and biases, while fostering
94 an inclusive environment where all individuals feel a sense of belonging and have equal
95 opportunities to thrive.

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97 * Wick, David, and Tasha Willis. "How International Education Can Help Advance Social
98 Justice." *International Educator*, October 5, 2020. [https://www.nafsa.org/ie-](https://www.nafsa.org/ie-magazine/2020/10/5/how-international-education-can-help-advance-social-justice)
99 [magazine/2020/10/5/how-international-education-can-help-advance-social-justice](https://www.nafsa.org/ie-magazine/2020/10/5/how-international-education-can-help-advance-social-justice)

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