



Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion Policy

1. Policy Statement

At the Halifax Chamber of Commerce (the “Chamber”), we promote a culture that values, respects, and supports different perspectives, cultures, and experiences. The Chamber is committed to creating a diverse, equitable and inclusive environment at all levels of its organization, including its Board, Employees, Business Partners, Contractors, Members, and Volunteers. We believe when all members of our diverse community work together, we make Halifax a better place to do business.

2. Purpose

This purpose of this Policy is to set out the Chamber’s commitment to, and strategy for, cultivating an inclusive, equitable, diverse, and engaged professional community.

3. Definitions

- Accessibility refers to the concept of ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their abilities or different abilities, have equal access to services, facilities, and opportunities. It encompasses creating an inclusive environment where everyone can participate fully in society, without facing barriers related to physical, cognitive, sensory, or other limitations.
- “Business Partners” includes other organizations, individuals and/or associations with which the Chamber interacts for business purposes, including the employees of Business Partners.
- “Contractor” includes all individuals who are contracted by the Chamber, and who access the workplace for the purposes of providing services and supplies to, and on behalf of, the Chamber, including the employees of Contractors.
- “Diversity” means the inclusion of members from a variety of backgrounds, with particular attention to the representation of members from equality-seeking groups, including but not limited to women, LGBTQI2S+ communities, Indigenous peoples, racialized and ethno-cultural groups, and persons with disabilities.
- “Equity” means that everyone has access to the same opportunities. Equity recognizes that we don’t all start from the same place because advantages and barriers exist and seeks to correct the imbalance.
- “Employee” includes any individual paid salary or wages by the Chamber.
- “Inclusion means people with different identities feeling and/or being valued, leveraged, and welcomed within a given setting (whether a team, workplace or industry.) Being inclusive means making people feel welcome or valued and giving them opportunities to grow.
- “Member” includes a person or organization who is a member of the Chamber, including Members’ employees.
- “Stakeholders” include Business Partners, Contractors, Employees, Members and Volunteers.
- “Volunteer” refers to a person who is not paid by the Chamber but volunteers their time to the Chamber in service to the business community and/or on behalf of the services provided by the



Chamber. This includes those individuals serving on any Board or Committee established by the Chamber.

4. Guiding Principles

In fulfillment of its commitment to diversity and inclusion, the Chamber resolves to:

- Provide leadership, professional development, and accountability in the area of diversity.
- Recognize and support diversity as a critical component of a united business community.
- Build equitable, meaningful, and responsive relationships with all Stakeholders.
- Strive to achieve diversity throughout all aspects and levels of the organization. This includes but is not limited to Chamber policies and practices, recruitment and selection, organizational planning, budgeting, research, ethics, training, strategic planning, marketing, and communication.
- Strive to provide an environment that is supportive, accessible, welcoming, safe, and free of physical and mental barriers, stigma, harassment, and discrimination for all of our Stakeholders; particularly for those Stakeholders who identify as members of an equality-seeking group.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all Stakeholders of the Chamber to promote conduct that supports our principles of diversity and inclusion.

The Chamber Board of Directors is responsible for:

- Fostering an environment that is consistent with this Policy;
- Encouraging an offering of diversity and inclusion education or training to Chamber Employees and Members while also engaging in regularly schedule DEI&A training for Board Members;
- Proactively monitoring progress in meeting the standards outlined in this Policy, including an annual review of diversity events and initiatives;
- Considering diversity in the selection criteria of new Board members.

The Chamber Management is responsible for:

- Providing leadership and direction to support this Policy;
- Implementing this Policy and ensuring compliance through the “Respectful Workplace, Discrimination and Harassment Policy”. Recruiting and fostering a diverse and inclusive culture for all Stakeholders.
- Promoting awareness of the benefits of workforce diversity and the successful management of diversity;



- Promoting a work environment and united business community that provides protection and support while valuing and utilizing the contributions of people with a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives;
- Developing a process to appropriately track and evaluate all diversity-related initiatives to support planning and sustain its commitment to diversity and inclusion;
- Ensuring that a current version of this Policy is available to Stakeholders through the Chamber's website and other channels of communication;
- Reporting to the Board annually or as requested on the implementation of this Policy and levels of diversity that have been achieved among Chamber Stakeholders.

6. Communications

- All Chamber marketing and membership solicitation materials will be welcoming to diverse communities.
- All member onboarding and renewal communications will be welcoming to diverse communities and reaffirm our commitment to diversity and fostering an inclusive professional community for all members.
- The Chamber will annually explore additional membership campaigns designed to enhance membership diversity.
- The Chamber will regularly include in its publications, including *Business Voice* magazine, articles that have particular appeal to members of diverse communities.
- The Chamber will ensure its publications are accessible by members with visible and invisible disabilities.

7. Policy Review, Revision, and Amendment

- The Chamber reserves the right to review, revise, and amend this Policy from time to time.