Inclusive Practice Glossary for Facilitators

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This glossary is intended to be used by facilitators, particularly in the scientific arena when replying to queries or in designing equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI or D&I) workshops. Included are terms that come up regularly in our work; this is by no means an exhaustive list. Each project will likely generate additional terms that are relevant to its subject matter, location and/or relevant news that week. We see this glossary as a dynamic document which colleagues can use as a starting point in evolving our understanding of language relevant to inclusive practice.

This glossary is divided into four sections: Part I includes general terms used in every aspect of inclusive practice and covering all protected characteristics, Part II includes terms specifically relating to race, Part III describes ableism and provides examples, and Part IV defines terms used in gender-related conversations.

Part I. General Terms

Active listening – Active listening is mindful listening, giving the other person all our attention and hearing what they are trying to communicate, without judgement or bias. We often hear but do not listen to the other person. In practical terms, active listening asks us to take a breath together, focus on the other person, and really listen. Give them your attention; ask questions; provide feedback; and collaborate on identifying next steps. Active listening is about respect, learning and sharing space. More information is available at this link: https://www.mindtools.com/az4wxv7/active-listening

Deep listening provides an additional layer of empathy. Once you have actively listened to someone, you are better able to listen a little more deeply to gain an understanding of their motivations and intentions.

Allyship – An ally is someone who actively promotes inclusion for all. This might take the form of recognition of societal barriers, belief in others' experiences of marginalisation, advocacy, and self-reflection, though there will be other situation-specific ways that allyship can be offered. Other words that imply a more direct, active role are "accomplice" and "co-conspirator".

Bias – In the context of listening, bias is when we bring our beliefs, preconceived ideas, and judgements into the meeting with us. It is almost impossible to belong to a community without having some opinion about other communities, and the trick with EDI work is to raise awareness of these perceptions and arrive at meetings with an open mind. Losing bias means not categorising people into stereotypes before we meet them. Take Your Shoes Off First [1] is an excellent method for losing bias.

Unconscious bias and unintended bias are terms used for bias that is not something we are aware of without specifically thinking about it. We invite you to think about your biases before working with any community, sector, or demographic outside your own.

Collaboration – A process of working together with others through being open and willing to share information, learn, and develop solutions collectively around a specified common goal.

Collaborative research – Requires a mindset that recognises knowledge generation is dependent on inputs from equal partners at every level. The process is integrated from the start: project design to funding proposal, to implementation and completion of outputs. All contributions are valid. Insights and information is acknowledged, and contributors are given due credit in any and all outputs from the research.

Colourism – A form of discrimination based purely on skin colour. The term covers perceptions about skin colour gradients within the same race, such as in the Middle East, India and parts of the African continent. It could be a precursor to racism, and may be confused with racism in some contexts.[2]

Deep listening – see active listening on the left hand side

Diversity – The meaningful representation of people with varied opinions and experiences, different cultures and a mixture of protected characteristics.

Equity and equality – Equity is about creating equality by meeting the needs of disadvantaged groups - at any level. Equality is treating everyone the same, equity is giving each person what they need to become equal to others.

We invite you to explore these concepts with visualisations at the blog published by the International Women's Day 2023 available at this link: https://www.internationalwomensday.com/EquityEquality.

EDI – Equality, Diversity, Inclusivity. Often used as a term that seeks to capture a wide range of people and actions without specific focus on a particular group or need.

Flooding – This can occur when you are flooded with emotions in response to a threat. If you are thus triggered, then you might experience flooding. If this happens then you could take a break (ideally 20-30 minutes), and take slow, deep breaths. If someone you're with experiences flooding, then you could change the subject momentarily or/and set a future time to discuss.

Inclusion – Inclusive practice is about inviting traditionally marginalised voices as equals to the table at every stage of a project or conversation. Inclusion means bringing everyone in at the design phase, and including them in decision making, funding, implementation, and reporting of a project.

Intersectionality – A way to highlight the interconnected and often overlapping nature of groups and their identities, intersectionality is often used to identify common experiences of disadvantage or discrimination caused by systems of inequality based on, for example, gender or ethnicity. Facilitators should be mindful of the intersecting identities that might impact on their collaborators, audiences, and clients, and also of any potential biases that might arise either in themselves or in the conversations they are supporting.

Lived experience – Having direct and personal knowledge about particular issues because the person has lived through them. Bringing people who have actively experienced EDI issues in their lives into the conversations is an important component of EDI training. They can talk about what happened, how they handled the situation, and what they wished the other person could have done better. This encourages listeners to be more aware of their own actions, and informs how they work with others.

Marginalised people – Marginalisation, also referred to as social exclusion, occurs when certain groups of people get denied access to certain areas of society. The reasons for this exclusion could be historic (for example: based on race) or geographic (for example: rural versus urban), and may extend across several population types. It is important for facilitators to ascertain whether any part of the communities they are working with feel marginalised, and to be sensitive to this during their collaborative work.

Microaggression – An act or communication that demonstrates the presence of bias, be it intended or not. Microaggression can be passive-aggressive, and is often difficult to document or prove in the absence of witnesses and/or without recording conversations with people.

Neurodiverse or neurodivergent – An inclusive word to describe a person whose brain works in a different way to our own or to others from their community (that is, the difference is not due to culture). This can manifest in many different ways and neurodiversity (the idea that everyone's brains work differently) is often seen in the way people reach conclusions and make decisions, in their creative approach, or in the way they analyse the information that is presented to them. The concept of neurodiversity and neurodivergence originally comes from the autistic community as a more inclusive way of describing their brain differences as part of the spectrum of being human, rather than something being wrong or disordered. Those who are neurodivergent may have their own specific terminology they prefer to be used - it is acceptable to ask about preferred terms and respect individual preferences.

Privilege – The unearned advantages we have that are due to different aspects of our social and economic identity. Privilege is evident at every level of our lives, from the confidence to speak up for ourselves through to access to opportunity. The image (upper right) of different people trying to climb a hill (by Brenna Quinlan) illustrates how those with privilege are better equipped to overcome life challenges

Protected characteristics – These are personal characteristics or situations that by law (the UK Equality Act) cannot be used as a reason to discriminate against someone,. The nine protected characteristics in the UK are: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
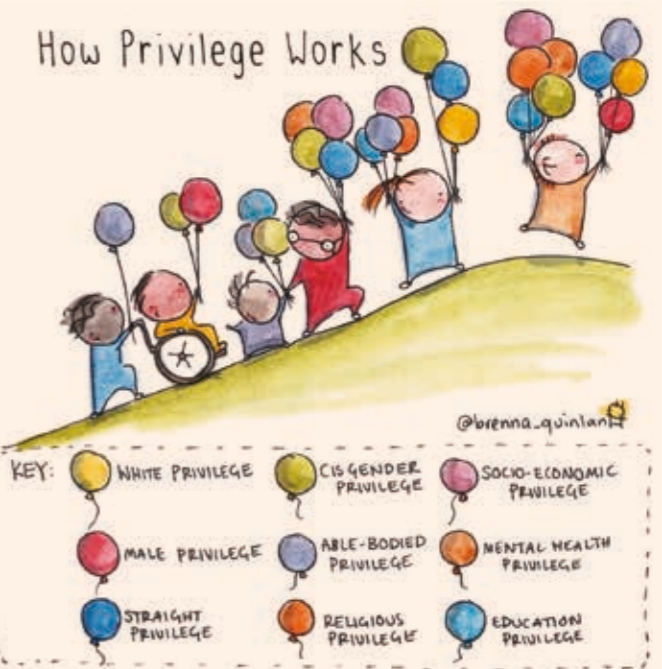
Relevant people – A term that is replacing the word stakeholder in people engagement. The terms relevant groups and relevant parties are also used outside of a legal context. How to identify who is relevant is the same process we used to use to identify stakeholders. This blog offers more information. https://www.fasttrackimpact.com/post/alternatives-to-the-word-stakeholder

Space – In the context of conversation, this is about providing the other person with the physical and mental space they need to feel valued and equal. Allow them to take up the same amount of space as you. The practice of active listening helps you share the space equally.

Safe space – Everyone in the meeting has to feel comfortable to speak, that they are being heard, their experiences are valid, and that together you will commit to actions that will ensure their experiences are not repeated when they are working with you. It does not matter who they are and who you are, what matters is that the conversation is authentic, confidential, and productive.

Stakeholder – A term we no longer use that denotes a person relevant to a project or a conversation (see relevant people above). The reason we no longer use it is because one of its original usages came when colonial attitudes were such that if you placed a wooden stake around a piece of land, you became the holder, the owner of that land, regardless of whether that land was yours to take or not.

Trigger – A word, an image or an action that causes a negative emotional response in a person with actual lived experience of that issue. Triggers can include mentioning violence, racism, addiction, eating disorders, or suicide. For example, for someone with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) from having lived in a war zone, a loud bang, images of war or mention of fighter jets could be a trigger.

Trigger warning – A duty of facilitators to alert the group when activities, images or a discussion might be triggering or distressing. It can be a simple sentence, such as "This discussion might be triggering to those with lived experience of these issues." An offer of allowing them to leave the room if

they need to, and reassurance that this is a safe space for discussions generally helps.

Tokenism – A practice when a person from a minority of any description (gender, race, religion, profession, discipline, geography) is invited to join a group of people who all share the same protected characteristics simply in order for them to be able to say they work with that demographic type. For example, when a woman from an ethnic minority is invited to join a committee or a Board where everyone else is white and/or predominantly male. Diversity is about providing equal space to all.

Unconscious bias – See bias on page 14

Unintended bias – See bias on page 14

Part II. Terms Related to Race

Anti-racism – A mindset of action against behaviours and policies that are perceived to be racist. It is not enough to think something might be racist: being anti-racist means finding out more and then doing something about it. This comprises a crucial shift from a base of being non-racist to actively working against or calling out racism. The image below is by Andrew M. Ibrahim and reflects his journey toward becoming Anti-Racist.

www.SurgeryRedesign.com

Decolonising – In research and education, this is the process of undoing still-existing colonial ways of working, such as
- use of language (for example, stakeholder, see on page 15);
- choice of names used in examples (for example, only using English names such as Mary or Tom);
- using evidence that was arrived at in studies where only a white population was sampled (which is common in the life sciences);
- only referencing literature that was published in UK- or US-based institutions when other valid literature on that topic is also available.

Being aware of decolonising practice in research and education means that as facilitators we encourage the use of a more diverse set of examples when building scenarios, promote a deeper search for literature that is not published in English, and we ensure inclusive practice in guiding action-based outputs and outcomes. [3, 4]

Diaspora – A population of people living remote from their place of origin while also identifying (at least partly) with that place. Diaspora often have complex relations with issues of cultural identity and nationhood.

Indigenous Peoples – Definitions of this term vary between countries. The criterion that is internationally recognised is how Indigenous Peoples each self-identify. For example, some use land-based geographical terms, others use cultural norms such as tradition, language, or religion. Facilitators should ask the communities they are working with for their preferred definition.

Part III. Ableist Terms

Ableist – Discrimination towards people with disabilities, which can manifest in space design, language and other interactions. Facilitators must always ensure their spaces and activities are fully accessible to all who wish to participate. For example, ensure there are lifts to upper levels of buildings, use text, visuals and colours that are compatible with participants who are dyslexic or colour blind, bring in a sign language expert if needed, and so on.

Everyday language is filled with references to "normal" and metaphors that reference disability. These reveal unconscious bias or ignorance around this bias. We found the references below helpful in providing examples of what to listen out for while facilitating, and how to explain the need for using more inclusive language. [5, 6]

People with disabilities – It is best to refer to people with disabilities using the person first, rather than the disability first. For example, say people or person with disability rather than "disabled person".

For example, better to say, a person who is blind, rather than say a blind person. This places the emphasis on the person, rather than on their disability. This is true for all disabilities, such as a person who is deaf, or a person who uses a wheelchair. [7, 8]
- Fell on deaf ears – Say instead "my advice was ignored"
- I'm so OCD – Say instead "I can be a bit pedantic"
- Take a shot – Any reference to war, guns and shooting can be triggering to people with PTSD.

A more comprehensive glossary of ableist terms has been compiled by staff at Augsburg University, USA., and is available from https://web.augsburg.edu/english/writinglab/Avoiding_Ableist_Language.pdf

Part IV. Terms Related to Gender

Aromantic – A person does not feel romantically attracted to and do not seek emotional interactions with persons of any gender, but may be sexually attracted to any gender.

Asexual – A person who lacks sexual interest or attraction, but may be interested in forming romantic relations.

Binary – Historically the majority of people have identified as either male or female based on the gender assigned at birth. Non-binary individuals may define themselves as neither, as a combination of male and female, or as another gender entirely.

Bisexual – A term that refers to individuals who are romantically or sexually attracted to both males and females or to more than one gender. It may also refer to romantic or

sexual attraction to people irrespective of their sex or gender identity (also called pansexuality).

Cis – Cis, in the context of EDI, is an abbreviation of cisgender which means that a person's gender identity is that of their gender assigned at birth.

Gay – Historically synonymous with "homosexual", that is someone who is sexually or romantically attracted to people of the same gender and not attracted to people of a different gender.

Gender pronouns – He/him may be used by individuals who identify as male. She/her may be used by individuals who identify as female. They/them may be used by individuals who either identify as non-binary or who would rather not be referred to by gendered pronouns. No other information regarding the individual's gender may be gleaned by the use of they/them. It should be noted that they/them with reference to a single individual has been used in English since the middle ages.

Referring to the use of an individual's gender pronouns as a "preference" could be seen as offensive as some individuals may feel that this is not a matter of choosing but part of their identity. Not using the word "preferred" when asking someone what their pronouns are shows that you understand someone's identity as real and valid and that you are actively avoiding causing them harm.

There are other pronouns used by the non-binary community (for example ze, fae) and their precise meanings are still evolving.

Homosexual – Individuals who had sexual or romantic partners of the same sex. As it was felt to sometimes have negative connotations, especially in the United States, it is now almost exclusively used in scientific contexts.

Intersex – Intersex individuals are those born with any of several sex characteristics including chromosomal patterns, gonads or genitals that according to The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights "do not fit typical binary notions of male or female bodies". Sex assignment at birth is often driven by the child's anatomical sex so intersex individuals may identify as another sex later in life. Intersex individuals may be homosexual or heterosexual.

Intersex individuals should not be equated to transgender individuals. Transgender individuals may feel their gender identity does not match their assigned sex. The inclusion of Intersex into the LGBTQIA+ community is not viewed universally as positive. Some believe that inclusion in this very wide grouping may result in intersex-specific issues not being addressed and that LGBTQIA+ legal protections may not apply to them as not all intersex individuals are LGBT – see below for LGBTQIA+ definition.

Lesbian – A term specifically referring to homosexual women or girls.

LGBTQIA+ – An abbreviation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, and more individuals. The abbreviation has expanded from the "LGB" abbreviation that started to replace "gay" in the 1980's and was used to refer to the broader LGB community. Since then it has expanded to include a much wider range of sexualities. In its broadest term it may refer to anyone who is non-heterosexual or non-cisgender. It should be noted that the abbreviation is not necessarily accepted by everyone whom it is supposed to include.

Queer – A term used to describe people who are cisgender and not heterosexual. It has in the past been used pejoratively but has been reclaimed as a deliberately provocative and politically radical alternative used by some people of the LGBTQIA+ community. The term is not without critics in the LGBTQIA+ community.

Questioning – In the context of EDI, this is a term describing individuals who have yet to define their sexuality, or are unsure of their sexuality or who are concerned about applying a social label to themselves.

Transgender – A person who has taken medical steps to transition from the gender they were assigned at birth to another gender. ∎

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