

Statement on Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Pursuing justice, equity, diversity and inclusion is a moral imperative for the American Humanist Association (AHA), and integral to our work as advocates. Humanist values require the affirmation of the inherent dignity of every human being, as well as the related need to create a society where all can flourish and become one's best self. We must dismantle systems of white supremacy and as humanists make it known that one of most significant organizational goals is to fight for the rights of all marginalized communities. We acknowledge that many of our organizational founders and leaders, past and present, perpetuate and benefit from current systems of oppression. While we may be seen as "progressive" in some areas, we take responsibility for often being on the wrong side of justice. That history cannot be un-lived, but facing these difficult truths allows us to do our best work going forward.

We are aware that cis-white heteronormative patriarchal institutions, power structures, and social attitudes harm Indigenous, Black, Brown, LGBTQ+, disabled individuals, women and other communities—especially those at the intersections of marginalized identities. We recognize these injustices are rooted in long standing overt and covert systemic inequalities. We acknowledge that our organizational structures were created from and continue to perpetuate these injustices and inequalities.

The AHA commits to holding ourselves accountable to ensure that equity is embedded in every aspect of our organization. We will work with communities that experience disproportionate harm to ensure that their lived experiences and our collaborative advocacy can enhance responses to such harm. Our goal is to create an environment that is inclusive, respectful, and equitable. We will employ and retain the talents of people with different backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives to accomplish the mission of the AHA. We also are committed to the lifelong learning that is required for effective diversity and inclusion work, including honest examination of the assumptions at work in our organizational structures and operations that may contribute to harm. Further, we are committed to working toward earning the trust of and building relationships with people within marginalized communities to develop a more inclusive membership.

We seek to be humble yet bold in this endeavor and open without defensiveness. We will move collectively, following the lead of frontline activists and leaders from marginalized communities. We will make mistakes and missteps as we grow, but we will always make the effort to learn from them. We will rally our communities—our members and supporters, partners, and the general public – to forge ahead with us so that together we can better advance the principles of justice, equity, diversity and inclusion.

By incorporating and prioritizing these principles, we will position ourselves to most effectively and thoughtfully help protect and strengthen the rights and liberties of all people, and thereby best embody our core humanist values.