

Diversity and Inclusion Glossary

At the Manufacturing Institute, we know words matters. They can reveal bias, or confront it.

The below list is neither comprehensive nor final. As society and culture continue to evolve, so does language.

The glossary also explores the more commonly accepted terms, intentionally omitting words that are offensive or biased.

A

Ableism | The belief that disabled individuals are inferior to nondisabled individuals, leading to discrimination toward and oppression of individuals with disabilities and physical differences.

Accessibility | The extent to which a facility is readily approachable and usable by individuals with disabilities.

Adoptive Parent | A person who legally assumes parental rights/responsibilities for an adopted child.

Advocate | A person who speaks up for themselves and members of their identity group.

Affirmative Action | Terminology based on the legal concept introduced in the 1960s to factor “race, color, religion, sex or national origin” in employment, education and business to improve representation of underrepresented groups.

African American | A person of African descent living in the United States.

Ageism | Prejudiced thoughts and discriminatory actions based on differences in age.

Ally | A person of one social identity group who stands up in support of members of another group; typically a member of a dominant group standing beside member(s) of a targeted group.

American Indian | An indigenous person of the Americas, except the Eskimos, Aleuts and Inuits.

Androgynous | A person whose identity is both masculine and feminine, or who appears to be neither or both male and female.

Anglo-Saxon | A person of Germanic descent who reigned in Britain; often refers to white English-speaking persons of European descent in England or North America who are not of Hispanic or French origin.

Anti-Semitism | The fear or hatred of Jews, Judaism and related symbols.

Arab | A person who belongs to a heterogeneous ethnic group predominantly composed of

speakers of the Arabic language.

Asian | A person of Asian descent; can apply to people from the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia as well as East Asia.

Asian Indian | A person from India or of Indian descent.

Asian/Pacific Islander | A person from, or descending from, the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent or the Pacific Islands.

Assigned Sex | What a doctor determines a person's physical sex to be at birth, based on the appearance of the primary sex characteristics.

Assimilation | A process by which a minority group or culture comes to resemble a dominant group.

B

Bias | Prejudice; an inclination or preference.

Bigotry | An unreasonable or irrational attachment to negative stereotypes and prejudices.

BIPOC | Black, Indigenous and people of color; used specifically to acknowledge that not all people of color face the same levels of injustice.

Biracial | A person whose biological parents are of two different races.

Bisexual/Bi | A person who has romantic, sexual and/or emotional attraction toward people of both sexes, not necessarily equally.

Black | A person belonging to an ethnic or racial group descended from African peoples.

Blindspot | A lack of diversity awareness; prejudice or inaccurate preconceived notions about people.

Brown | Any person who has a brown skin color, with no clear match to a specific race or ethnicity

Buddhist | A person who follows the religion based on the teachings of Buddha.

C

Chicano/Chicana | A person of Mexican descent living in the United States.

Christian | A follower of the religion of Christianity.

CisGender | A person who identifies as the gender they were assigned at birth.

Classism | Prejudiced thoughts and discriminatory actions based on a difference in socioeconomic status, income or class.

Color-Blind | The belief in treating everyone "equally" by treating everyone the same.

Colorism | A form of prejudice or discrimination in which people are treated differently based on the

social meanings attached to skin color.

Conscious Bias (Explicit Bias) | Attitudes and beliefs about a person or group on a conscious level

Corporate Social Responsibility | Practice of going beyond profit maximization to make a positive impact on communities and societies.

Cultural Appropriation | The adoption or theft of icons, rituals, aesthetic standards and behavior from one culture or subculture by another.

Culture | The pattern of daily life learned consciously and unconsciously by a group of people. These patterns can be seen in language, governing practices, arts, customs, holiday celebrations, food, religion, dating rituals and clothing.

D

Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) | An American immigration policy that allows some individuals who were brought to the United States without inspection as children to receive a renewable two-year period of deferred action from deportation and become eligible for a work permit in the United States.

Disability | An impairment that may be cognitive, developmental, intellectual, mental, physical, sensory or some combination of these.

Discrimination | The denial of justice and fair treatment by both individuals and institutions in many areas, including employment, education, housing, banking and political rights.

Diversity | The wide variety of shared and different personal and group characteristics among human beings.

Domestic Partner | A person in an unmarried, cohabiting straight or same-sex couple who seeks benefits usually available only to spouses.

E

Emotional Tax | The painful effects of exclusion, discrimination and bias that can result in personal consequences and loss of workplace productivity.

Equal Employment Opportunity Plan (EEOC) | A government policy that requires that employers do not discriminate against employees and job applicants based on certain characteristics, such as age, race, color, creed, sex, religion and disability.

Equality | A state in which all people within a specific society or isolated group have the same status in certain respects, including civil rights, freedom of speech, property rights and equal access to certain social goods and services.

Equity | Takes into consideration the fact that the social identifiers do affect equality. In an equitable environment, an individual or a group would receive what was needed to give them equal advantage, but it would not necessarily be equal to what others were receiving.

Ethnicity | A social construct that divides individuals into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as a shared sense of group membership, values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history and ancestral geographical base.

Euro-Centric | The inclination to consider European culture as normative.

F

Feminism | The advocacy of women's rights on the basis of the equality of the sexes.

Foster Parent | A person who is granted the legal power to take care of a child as if it were their own without being the child's legal parent.

G

Gay | A person who is emotionally, romantically or sexually attracted to members of the same gender.

Gender | The socially constructed concepts of masculinity and femininity.

Gender Dysphoria (Gender Identity Disorder) | Significant, clinical distress caused when a person's assigned birth gender is not the same as the one with which they identify.

Gender Expression | External manifestations of gender, expressed through a person's name, pronouns, clothing, haircut, behavior, voice and/or body characteristics.

Gender Fluid | A person who does not identify with a single fixed gender; of or relating to a person having or expressing a fluid or unfixed gender identity.

Gender Identity | An internal sense of self; how you relate to your gender(s).

Gender Non-Conforming | A person who does not behave in a way that conforms to the traditional expectations of their gender or whose gender expression does not fit into a category.

Guardian/Caregiver | A person who has the legal right and responsibility of taking care of someone who cannot take care of themselves.

H

Hate Crime | A crime motivated by the actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, disability or sexual orientation of any person.

Heterosexuality | An enduring romantic, emotional and/or sexual attraction toward people of the opposite sex.

Hindu | A person who follows the religion of Hinduism.

Hispano/Hispana | A person of the southwestern United States who is descended from colonial

Spaniards and with no Native American ancestry.

Homophobia | The fear or hatred of homosexuality and other non-heterosexual identities and of persons perceived to be gay or lesbian.

I

Impostor Syndrome | Feelings of not being as capable or adequate as others.

Inclusion | Authentically bringing excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities and decision/policy making in a way that shares power.

Intersectionality | An approach that states classifications, such as gender, race, class and others, cannot be examined in isolation from one another.

Intersex | A person born with reproductive or sexual anatomy and/or a chromosome pattern that cannot be classified as typically male or female.

J

Jew | A person of Hebrew descent; also a person who follows the religion of Judaism.

L

La Raza | A person of Latin American descent.

Latinx/Latino/Latina | A person with Latin American descent (non-gendered/male/female).

Lesbian | A woman who is attracted to other women.

LGBTQQIA+ | Acronym used to refer to all sexual minorities: “Lesbian, Gay/Gender Neutral/Gender Queer, Bisexual/Bigender, Transgender/Transvestite/Transsexual, Questioning/Queer, Intersex and Allies/Androgynous/Asexual.”

M

Mansplaining | The explanation of something by a man, typically to a woman, expressed in a manner regarded as condescending or patronizing that assumes the person has no knowledge of the topic.

Marginalized | Excluded, ignored or relegated to the outer edge of a group/society/community.

MENA | A person with Middle Eastern and/or Northern African ancestry.

Mestizo/Mestiza | A person of mixed ancestry in Latin America.

Micro-Aggressions | Commonplace daily verbal, behavioral or environmental indignities, whether

intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory racial slights.

Minority | Segment of the population not in the majority based on certain characteristics.

Muslim | A follower of the religion of Islam.

N

Native American | A person of Indigenous descent of North and/or South America.

Non-Binary/Gender Queer/Gender Variant | A person who experiences gender identity and/or gender expression as falling outside the categories of man and woman.

O

Of Spanish Origin | A person who can trace their descent from Mexico, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Central and South America and other Spanish-speaking countries.

Oppression | Use of institutional power and privilege where one person or group benefits at the expense of another.

P

Pansexual | A person who has sexual attractions or romantic love toward people of all gender identities and biological sexes.

Personal Identity | Identity as an individual including the personal characteristics, history, personality, name and other characteristics that make one person unique and different from other individuals.

Persons of Color (POC) | A collective term that includes all the various national, ethnic or cultural groups of the United States, including African Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans and Latino or Hispanic Americans.

Person with a Disability | A person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

Prejudice | A prejudgment or preconceived opinion, feeling or belief, usually negative, often based on stereotypes.

Privilege | Unearned access to resources only readily available to some individuals as a result of their social group.

Psychological Safety | The belief that one will not be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns or mistakes.

Q

Queer | A person who transgresses society's view of gender or sexuality.

R

Race | A social construct that artificially divides individuals into distinct groups based on characteristics such as physical appearance, ancestral heritage, cultural affiliation or history and/or ethnic classification.

Racial Profiling | The use of race or ethnicity as grounds for suspecting someone of having committed an offense.

Racism | Prejudiced thoughts and discriminatory actions based on a difference in race/ethnicity.

Religion | A system of beliefs and often expressed in terms of a formal, organized denomination.

S

Safe Space | An environment in which everyone feels comfortable expressing themselves and participating fully, without fear of attack, ridicule or denial of experience.

Sex | Biological classification of male, female or intersex; as opposed to gender.

Sexism | Prejudiced thoughts and discriminatory actions based on a difference in sex/gender.

Sexual Orientation | One's preference in sexual partners.

Sikh | A person who follows the religion of Sikhism.

Stereotype | Blanket beliefs and expectations about members of certain groups that present an oversimplified opinion, prejudiced attitude or uncritical judgment.

T

Tolerance | Acceptance of different practices, attitudes and cultures; does not necessarily mean agreement with the differences.

Transgender/Trans | A person whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth.

U

Unconscious Bias (Implicit Bias) | Social stereotypes about certain groups of people that

individuals form outside their own conscious awareness.

Undocumented | A foreign-born person living in the United States without legal citizenship status.

V

Veteran | A person who has served in a nation's armed forces (or other uniformed service).

W

White Privilege | Societal privilege that benefits white people over non-white people.

White Supremacy | Institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression of continents, nations and individuals of color by white individuals and nations of the European continent for the purpose of maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power and privilege.

X

Xenophobia | Hatred or fear of foreigners/strangers or of their politics or culture.

Source References:

- American Civil Liberties Union
- American Society of Association Executives
- Catalyst
- Cornell University
- Human Rights Council
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
- National Disability Authority
- National Diversity Council
- National Organization for Women
- Pacific Oregon University
- Scripps College
- Society for Diversity
- Society of Human Resources
- United Nations
- University of California
- University of Washington
- Yale University