



DEI

DIVERSITY, EQUITY
AND INCLUSION



LSC
CHAIR
MANUAL



DEI
DIVERSITY, EQUITY
AND INCLUSION

MISSION AND VALUES

USA SWIMMING VISION STATEMENT

To inspire and enable our members to achieve excellence in the sport of swimming and in life.

USA SWIMMING MISSION STATEMENT

USA Swimming is the National Governing Body for the sport of swimming. We administer competitive swimming in accordance with the Olympic & Amateur Sports Act. We provide programs and services for our members, supporters, affiliates, and the interested public. We value these members of the swimming community, and the staff and volunteers who serve them. We are committed to excellence and the improvement of our sport. We are committed to providing a safe and positive environment for all members.





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome	5
Job Description	6
Effective Guidelines	7
Duties and Responsibilities	8
Allies	9
Programming	10
Education	11
Online Resources	12
Appendix	13



DEI

DIVERSITY, EQUITY
AND INCLUSION



WELCOME



DEI

DIVERSITY, EQUITY
AND INCLUSION

WELCOME

WELCOME

Welcome to the USA Swimming Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) Team! This manual will provide you the information that you need to succeed in your position as DEI Chair for your Local Swimming Committee (LSC). If you have any feedback on the content of this manual, please fill out this [form](#).

CORE OBJECTIVES

USA Swimming Vision Statement

To inspire and enable our members to achieve excellence in the sport of swimming and in life.

USA Swimming Mission Statement

USA Swimming is the National Governing Body for the sport of swimming. We administer competitive swimming in accordance with the Olympic & Amateur Sports Act. We provide programs and services for our members, supporters, affiliates, and the interested public. We value these members of the swimming community, and the staff and volunteers who serve them. We are committed to excellence and the improvement of our sport. We are committed to providing a safe and positive environment for all members.

USA Swimming's National DEI Vision

The USA Swimming DEI Vision is:

- To become the USA leader in providing inclusion and access to water safety awareness and lessons for all via community engagement.
- To become one of the sports of choice for racially and socioeconomically diverse families.
- To instill inspiration and belief in the next generation of underrepresented athletes.
- To provide resources and education for creating more inclusive, equitable, and diverse opportunities to LSC DEI Chairs, Zone DEI Coordinators, clubs, coaches, and other membership who wish to serve this purpose.

USA Swimming's National DEI Vision

The DEI team aims to grow and retain a diverse community of coaches, swimmers and volunteers via grants, education, resource development, and community engagement.

USA Swimming's National DEI 2025-2028 Quad Strategic Plan: I4 (Increase, Improve, Impact, Impress)

- To Increase membership via programs, grants, and education.
- To Improve current programs, grants, and education.
- To Impact members and prospective members via programs, grants, and education.
- To Impress staff, members, and prospective members via programs, grants, and education.





JOB DESCRIPTION

POSITION DESCRIPTION:

Below is a list of initial tasks to help you, as a new Chair, become established and effective within your LSC.

Purpose:

- To enhance the membership experience by advocating for minority voices.
Including, but not limited to: race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, and culture.
- To create and amend legislation to be more inclusive and equitable.
- To evaluate current systems and programs through a DEI lens.
- To ensure varying experiences are represented and included in decision-making for your LSC.

Job Qualifications:

- Be a current USA Swimming Member in good standing.
- Possess an interest in DEI and the ability to represent ideas/situations specific to your local area.
- Communicate regularly and attend Board of Directors (BoD) and House of Delegates (HoD) meetings.
- Lead and delegate a committee of volunteers, create a mission statement and adhere to projects that reflect that mission statement.
- Meet time demands for LSC DEI Goals, with consistent follow-through with all duties and tasks.



NEW CHAIR CHECKLIST:

Below is a list of initial tasks to help you, as a new Chair, become established and effective within your LSC.

1. Understand the duties and responsibilities of an LSC Chair.
2. Update your information on the LSC website or via the Webmaster.
3. Form relationships with your fellow BoD members.
4. Get involved with Zone DEI meetings by contacting your Zone DEI Coordinator.
5. Review resources, policies, and laws relevant to your LSC.
6. Create a Committee.
7. Ensure current DEI resources and programs are accurate and up to date.
8. Create and execute a plan to help underserved membership.
 - a. Identify a target population that is underserved within your swimming community.
 - b. Form a relationship with members of that population to understand their needs and wants.
 - c. Work with your committee to develop a plan to engage, support and/or provide opportunities for that population.
 - d. Coordinate with BoD to allocate time, manpower, and funding.

RETURNING CHAIR IDEAS:

As a returning Chair, these are some starting points for you to continue seeking ways to benefit your swimming community.

1. Identify ways LSC funding can be used to advance DEI goals.
2. Update and add educational resources as often as needed (camps and summits, safety days, cultural celebration events)
3. Improve the use of social media to communicate DEI campaigns and events.
4. Review/Familiarize yourself with local and state laws that pertain to LGBTQ+ athletes and members and form relationships with members of the local legislature.
5. Utilize social media (Twitter, Facebook, etc.) to communicate DEI campaigns and events.
6. Form relationships with community groups you are not already working with (eg. Sigma Gamma Rho – Swim1922, Latin American Association(s), Jack & Jill, HBCU's, Boys & Girls Club, Urban League, etc)
7. Review at Outreach Membership criteria and measure its success compared to other years. Advocate for necessary changes with your BoD.
8. Assess previous DEI events for participation and outcome and iterate upon their event design and philosophy.



DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

BELOW IS AN EXPANDED LOOK AT SOME OF THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES LISTED ABOVE.

COORDINATE

Educate, facilitate, and lobby for DEI initiatives and practices within the LSC

Facilitating quality education for your LSC will allow you to broaden the network of support for DEI, promote initiatives, and build a more equitable LSC culture.

Develop short and long-term projects that benefit the LSC's DEI mission and goals

Whenever creating or facilitating a program, make sure you're tying it back to your LSC's mission statement, your DEI committee mission statement, and goals you outlined at the beginning of the year.

Create and coordinate community related activities that help promote equitable DEI in your LSC

Community events (eg. water safety festivals, swim clinics, celebratory meets, etc.) should cater to and connect with a specific target audience within your community.

Develop, coordinate, and implement strategies, policies, and programs that support prospective, new, and current LSC membership

Start by asking your intended audience questions and get to know their wants/needs/interests. Some ideas include: attendance at TYR Pro Series, partnering with neighboring LSCs for camps, community swim lessons, etc.

COLLABORATE

Work with the LSC Treasurer and LSC BoD to approve and maintain a budget for DEI initiatives

It's important to create a budget line item for your DEI committee that can accommodate project needs for the year. Make sure to do plenty of research and outline specific needs if asking for more funds.

Collaborate with your LSC BoD to create goals that are measurable and achievable

Collaborating with your board will help you create goals that are realistic, within budget, and have BoD buy-in. It's good to consistently communicate progress of your goals with your BoD so that all parties are held accountable, that responsibilities are tracked, and in case you need support if problems arise.

Develop a network of contacts and relationships

Form and maintain relationships with members of your LSC and Zone Boards that will enable you to achieve DEI goals within your swimming community. These relationships are expanded upon in the Advocates section.

Embed DEI into existing LSC structure and programming

Evaluate current LSC initiatives through a DEI lens and ensure that DEI is reflected throughout the LSC, in its projects, committees, and mission statement.

Create and maintain a DEI Committee

As Chair, maintain and run meetings for a Committee of diverse individuals within your LSC, including 20% athlete representation, responsible for the planning and execution of your stated DEI projects and goals.

COMMUNICATE

Be an active and consistent participant in BoD

Updates should be given at each BoD and include current DEI issues and initiatives, as well as an overview of DEI goals, challenges, and events.

Deliver regular reports to your General Chair, BoD, and HoD

Regular communication will help garner support for DEI programming that you seek to create. It's important to track and share your progress. This includes the forming of a DEI plan which contains information regarding budget, events, travel, outreach, and educational events.

Communicate information about DEI programs and activities

Sending monthly emails and posting to social media highlighting DEI programming will keep membership abreast of ways they can participate in your projects and goals.

PARTICIPATE

Develop and maintain DEI voice by obtaining voting status and creating influence

Work with the governance committee and your board to obtain voting status at board meetings. An effective way of garnering influence with LSC Board members is to be as active as possible in meetings, and provide consistent updates on what is happening within DEI.

Attend Professional Development sessions

Throughout the year there are several DEI development opportunities (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Workshops, Annual Business Meeting, Women in Governance, etc).

Understand USA Swimming's existing policies and suggestions

USA Swimming has policies, specifically regarding the LGBTQ+ space (herein referring to all gender nonconforming and sexually nonnormative members of the USA Swimming community). It is important to review this information, understand it, and be able to speak on it as situations regarding it arise within your LSC. If you find a situation has arisen and you are not comfortable handling it, please bring it to your Zone DEI Coordinator.



There are many voices and allies within your LSC and Zone structure with whom it is important to develop and maintain relationships, so that they may assist in the coordination and execution of DEI programming. Communication and mutual respect is needed to maximize your ability to contribute and lead within these structures, and being able to spread the workload will enable you to maintain a more sustainable model.

LSC

DEI Committee

This Committee should be made up of individuals from various backgrounds (e.g. coaches, officials, volunteers, athletes, et al.) and talents (finance, event planning, social media, etc.) in order to lend a wider perspective on the DEI programs and goals you wish to develop.

General Chair

The General Chair is the most important advocate you will have while developing a culture of DEI within your LSC. Through regular contact you will keep your General Chair abreast of all DEI programming you and your committee seek to develop. You may also be required to assist the General Chair in the completion of LEAP.

Safe Sport Chair

The LSC Safe Sport Chair is an important ally. Through regular contact you will keep DEI issues in the forefront of Safe Sport objectives. Anti-Bullying policies should be directly applied to DEI issues for all LSC members. Infractions of this policy can be co-mediated with Safe Sport. Similar to the Anti-Bullying policy, there is significant overlap between Safe Sport and DEI.

Age Group Chair

The LSC Age Group Chair is another important ally within the LSC. Your programming and events as the DEI Chair will, in some capacity, align with the goals and objectives of these committees. Their support will be beneficial to you and vice versa.

Webmaster

As the website is the first point of information for newcomers, it is important you keep the Webmaster abreast of any educational resources, events, and points of contact that need to be available to the wider public on the site. Evaluate if the website is representative and inclusive of your membership by updating images and languages.

Collaborate with, or serve as, Disability Chair

If your LSC has a Disability Chair, working with them and mutually cooperating on projects will help make a more diverse swim community for the populations that fall under DEI as well as a more inclusive environment for differently abled athletes.

If your LSC does not have a Disability Chair, the roles and responsibilities thereof as outlined in the Disability Chair handbook fall unto you.

ZONE

DEI Coordinators

The Zone Coordinator is the liaison between the National Committee and the LSCs. Maintaining accurate and thorough communication, including attendance and reporting at zone meetings, is crucial to keep you aware of national initiatives and goals. The Zone coordinator is available for communication outside these meetings as well to help as possible with your organization and planning.

NATIONAL

DEI Committee

The USA Swimming National DEI Committee consists of volunteers of various backgrounds whose sole purpose is to increase opportunities in swimming for people of diverse backgrounds. The committee holds monthly conference calls and meets in-person at the USA Swimming Workshop when able. For more information about the committee contact inclusion@usaswimming.org.

DEI Staff

USA Swimming has a dedicated group of individuals who develop programs aimed at supporting current and future membership as well as creating more equitable opportunities to increase diversity and inclusion throughout USA Swimming as a whole. The USA Swimming DEI Team can be contacted via email at inclusion@usaswimming.org.



Diversity Camp Programs

USA Swimming offers a variety of camp opportunities to help its athlete members across the nation to reach their full potential.

- **LSC DEI Themed Camp:** a starting place for swimmers seeking a local camp experience. This camp is hosted and run by the LSC with some USA Swimming support.
- **Zone Diversity Select Camps:** These camps are hosted by each Zone during alternating years with increased involvement from USA Swimming.
- **National Diversity Select Camp:** USA Swimming's premier diversity camp that is operated and ran by USA Swimming and aimed towards underrepresented athletes. Swimmers will train and participate in educational sessions at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, CO.

Community Swim Teams

USA Swimming's Community Swim Team Partnership Program aims to provide competitive opportunities and services to outreach athletes, their coaches, and their teams. By forming meaningful partnerships with city departments, elected local representatives or officials, and/or LSCs, this program helps facilitate the creation of multi-level swim programs in diverse areas. USA Swimming looks to identify existing competitive swimming teams or leagues that are not affiliated with USA Swimming, with the purpose of bringing them under USA Swimming membership.

The Community Swim Team Program exposes diverse populations to the sport and gives more kids the opportunity to swim in USA Swimming meets. Parks and recreation teams gain access to USA Swimming's coach education resources and the partnership often gains local and state support. For more information about current Community Swim Teams, visit usaswimming.org/diversity.

Outreach Membership

USA Swimming outreach membership offers qualified individuals the opportunity to become a USA Swimming year-round athlete member at a reduced fee. Each LSC is required by USA Swimming to offer outreach memberships to qualified candidates, but is responsible for setting its own qualia for eligibility. For information regarding Outreach membership, go to usaswimming.org/outreach.

As of 2025, the National DEI Committee will be reaching out to LSCs to educate and collect feedback on current Outreach programs. If you have feedback, please email Annie Norris (2025 DEI National Committee Chair) at anniepnorris@gmail.com.





DEI

DIVERSITY, EQUITY
AND INCLUSION

EDUCATION

Throughout the year USA Swimming offers educational opportunities for LSC Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Chairs. USA Swimming encourages you to take advantage of these opportunities and attend as many as possible.



Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Regional Select Camps

The Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Regional Select Camps bring USA Swimming's underrepresented athlete membership together to discuss best practices for fostering growth from the regional to national level. The goal of these camps is to provide ignition, motivation, and information for athletes to continue to set goals, work hard, and excel in swimming. Athletes will return home embodying positive leadership qualities that will help them become role models for others who come from underrepresented backgrounds.



National DEI Business Meetings

The National DEI Committee holds their annual business meeting once a year at a pre-determined location. This meeting is open to all, including non-DEI affiliated persons, and provides an amazing opportunity for networking and learning about diverse educational programming.



USA Swimming Workshops

Throughout the year USA Swimming offers several different workshops spanning many different areas of interest including DEI. At these workshops DEI Chairs will get the opportunity to learn about new DEI topics and/or initiatives happening at the national level as well as getting the opportunity to network and connect with other DEI Chairs.



Women's Leadership Opportunities

The women's leadership summits are weekend retreats designed for women to convene, connect, and grow their network. The structure of the summit or conference changes from event to event. For more information about leadership opportunities for women go to usaswimming.org/leadership.





DEI DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

ONLINE RESOURCES

USA Swimming Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Webpage .

The USA Swimming DEI [webpage](#) is the place to find educational information that you will need to become a successful LSC DEI Chair. Highlights include:

- Calendar of Educational Opportunities for LSC Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Chairs
- Multicultural Swim Meets and Events Calendar
- The latest Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion News and topics

Cultural Inclusion Resource Guides.

The Cultural Inclusion Resource Guides identify different ethnic oriented information, pillars of the sport, and programming that can be used to reach out to various multi-cultural and underrepresented groups. If you are trying to connect with a diverse audience in your LSC these guides can be used to educate members about different cultural groups and underrepresented communities. View the following current cultural inclusion resource guides: [Native American](#) & [African American](#).

Online Clinic Series – Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion.

The DEI series features presentations from USA Swimming staff, guest presenters, and other prominent individuals, designed to highlight the latest DEI topics and events. To view past and upcoming webinars visit [here](#).

Gender Diverse Athlete Policy and Processes

Located under the LGBTQ+ Resources on the USA Swimming website, you will find information pertaining to USA Swimming's policy on athletes who identify as transgender, gender non-binary, and gender non-conforming. LSC DEI Chairs are responsible for ensuring that they, their committee and the LSC BoD follow this document and any guidelines relating. To view the recommended practices, please visit Section II.19.0 of the [Operating Policy Manual](#). For the policy to obtain a swimsuit exemption, visit [here](#).





APPENDIX - USA SWIMMING NATIONAL DEI COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

NAME	POSITION	MEMBERSHIP	EMAIL
Leland Brown	USA-S	Staff	lbrown@usaswimming.org
Hilary Perez	USA-S	Staff	hperez@usaswimming.org
Annie Norris	DEI National Committee Chair	Coach	anniepnorris@gmail.com
Susan Mechler	Disability Sub-Committee Chair	Official	susan.mechler@gmail.com
Anne Knapp	Central Zone DEI Coordinator	Official	afknapp@icloud.com
Martha Chiwanza	Southern Zone DEI Coordinator	Other	martha.chiwanza@gmail.com
Susan Huckleby	Western Zone DEI Coordinator	Coach	shuckleby@msn.com
Nadine Jesionek	Eastern Zone DEI Coordinator	Other	ezdiversityandinclusion@gmail.com

BELOW ARE DEI EXCERPTS FROM THE 2025-2028 QUAD BUSINESS PLAN.

Quad Business Plan Overview

Increased investment in the future of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion.

USA Swimming Cultural Values

Promote the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion.

Trends that will Impact Build

Societal and sport advances in diversity, equity, & inclusion, especially in the LGBTQ+ community.

Promote Overview

USA Swimming will position the sport as the most inclusive and welcoming sport to all cultures.

USA Swimming's National DEI 2025-2028 Quad Framework: E4

1. **Engage** – Increase engagement and collect needs-based data.
2. **Educate** – Increase comprehension of diversity, inclusion, and equity.
3. **Empower** – Give tools to members in need to increase opportunity in the sport.
4. **Elevate** – Increase member satisfaction, competition, and membership experience.