

Community Outreach Resource Guide

Defining outreach and engagement. Although often used interchangeably, outreach and engagement are two distinctly different means of connecting your organization with the community. Outreach is defined as one-way communication and implies that those on the receiving end are outsiders. Engagement, on the other hand, is driven by the specific purpose of doing something “with” rather than for someone. Engagement is a shared and mutually beneficial strategy.

So, what is community outreach and engagement as it relates to diversity, equity, and inclusion? It’s not much different from your current strategy other than the intentionality of your decisions – who is your audience, how can you authentically interact with them, and how can you create a space of welcome and equitable opportunities.

Effective strategies must be consistent (this is a marathon, not a sprint), continuous (this is really more of an ultra-marathon ..), and multi-faceted. There is no “one size fits all” approach to outreach and engagement. Often the first thing we think of when developing our outreach and engagement plan is how to expand services into new communities or engage more diverse voices, but those only scratch the surface.

Key goals for your community outreach strategies include:

- Engage stakeholders (organization, employees, and clients or customers) genuinely and sincerely with diverse audiences
- Provide multiple opportunities for diverse audiences to share input and actively participate in and guide your work
- Be flexible and fluid, this is not a set-it-and-forget-it strategy

Tips to Engage Diverse Communities

- [What is the difference between ‘engagement’ and ‘outreach?’](#) webinar (26:41m)
- [A Point of View: Strategies for Engaging the Community in DEI](#)
- [8 Tips to Get Started for Engaging Diverse Communities](#)
- [10 Tips to Encourage Community Engagement in Diverse Communities](#)

A quick note about social identities. While we use many identities to identify ourselves, there are eight primary socially constructed identities known as the “Big 8”. These include ability, age, class/socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion/spirituality, and immigration. The resources below attempt to include opportunities to engage with these various social identities.

- [What are Social Identities?](#)
- [Social Identity Theory](#)

Below you will find local ICR resources to reflect, learn, and involve your organization and its stakeholders in creating an inclusive organizational culture and a welcoming community of belonging for your clients and customers through targeted engagement.

Educate – these community-based resources include educational programs that provide opportunities to learn about diverse communities, how to be an advocate for social change, and how to engage with organizations that prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion.

- Civil Rights Commissions – [Cedar Rapids](#), [Iowa City](#), [Marion](#)
 - [Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging Resources](#)
 - [Cedar Rapids education & training opportunities](#)
- [Humanize My Hoodie](#) ally workshops
- [Inclusive ICR](#) education meetings, newsletter, diversity guides
- United Way network
 - [Iowa Equity Challenge](#) (United Ways of Iowa)
 - [Board Orientation & Leadership Development Program](#) (United Way of East Central Iowa)
 - [Civic Circle Discussion Series](#) (United Way of East Central Iowa)

Explore – check out these organizations that engage, support, and connect people from culturally and socially diverse backgrounds.

- [African American Professionals of the Iowa Corridor](#)
- [Claiming Disability LLC](#)
- [Consultation of Religious Communities of Iowa City](#)
- [Friends of India Association \(FOICR\)](#)
- [Hindu Temple Association of Eastern Iowa](#)
- [Inter-Religious Council of Linn County](#)
- [Intercultural Center of Iowa](#)
- [Iowa City Area Chinese Association](#)
- [League of United Latin American Citizens \(LULAC\)](#)
- [Meskwaki Nation, Sac & Fox Tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa](#)
- [Multicultural Development Center of Iowa](#)
- [NAACP Cedar Rapids](#)
- [PFLAG Cedar Rapids](#)
- [Sankofa Outreach Connection](#)
- [Temple Judah](#)
- [The Mother Mosque of America](#)
- [University of Iowa Health Care Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities](#)
- [University of Iowa Diversity Councils](#)
- [University of Iowa Multicultural & International Student Support & Engagement](#)

Embrace – experience these opportunities to foster and strengthen relationships with diverse communities and build a culture of acceptance.

Cultural Events – publicly support these opportunities to immerse stakeholders in local cultural experiences. Consider financially sponsoring, hosting, or actively participating in an event.

- [Cultural Festivals to Attend in Iowa](#)
- [University of Iowa Division of Student Life](#)
- [AsianFest](#)
- Festival Latino
 - [Cedar Rapids](#)
 - [Iowa City](#)
- [Juneteenth](#)
- Pride Events
 - [Cedar Rapids Pride](#)
 - [Coralville Pride Festival](#)
 - [Iowa City Pride](#)
- [Welcoming Week](#)

Volunteer – share your time with communities and organizations that provide culturally or socially specific direct service. Encourage your stakeholders to use their volunteer or paid time off to support organizations working to reduce barriers and inequities.

- [Access 2 Independence of the Eastern Iowa Corridor](#)
- [Aging Services UnityPoint Health](#)
- [Amani Community Services](#)
- [African American Museum of Iowa](#)
- [Big Brothers Big Sisters of Cedar Rapids & East Central Iowa](#)
- [Boys & Girls Club of the Corridor](#)
- [Catherine McAuley Center](#)
- [Center for Worker Justice of Eastern Iowa](#)
- [Dream City](#)
- [Eastern Iowa Honor Flight](#)
- [Freedom Foundation](#)
- [Heritage Area Agency on Aging](#)
- [Jane Boyd Achievement Academy](#)
- [Monsoon Asians & Pacific Islanders in Solidarity](#)
- [NISAA African Family Services](#)
- [Refugee & Immigrant Association](#)
- [Tanager Place LGBTQ Youth Center](#)
- [The Academy for Scholastic and Personal Success](#)
- [The Arc of East Central Iowa & The Arc of Southeast Iowa](#)
- [Thrive Together](#)
- [United Action for Youth](#)
- [United We March Forward](#)
- [Urban Dreams](#)
- [YPN](#)