

February 25, 2021 DEI Task Force Update

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Task Force

**An update from the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Task Force
February 25, 2021**

Since the formation of the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Task Force was announced in August 2020, we have been diligently reviewing the structure of the Chapter. Examining every aspect from the leadership team to chapter resources to volunteer opportunities, we took a deep dive into it all to see where gaps and opportunities lay. On behalf of the DE&I Task Force, I am pleased to share this update with you.

From July to September 2020, we identified the following initiatives as being critical to the future of the Chapter:

- Committee Guide for Virtual and F2F Events
- Diversity Awareness Calendar
- Communications Contributors' List
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion resources on MPI Toronto Chapter website
- Closed captioning (CC) for all videos and virtual/hybrid events
- Registrations to include accommodation ask (ex. Captioning at event)
- Land acknowledgement statement for virtual, hybrid and F2F events
- MPI Pride event
- Outreach to other MPI Chapters to learn/share best practices
- Outreach to other special interest groups (ex. Black in Events)
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In October 2020, we examined the Chapter's structure in order to understand how it has operated in terms of leadership and membership offerings – this included reviewing the:

- Board of Directors
- Leadership Team
- Leadership Selection Committee
- Chapter Administrator
- Committees and Special Projects
- Communications resources
- Chapter events
- Volunteer opportunities
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From there, we wanted to better understand how specific structures operated and we held separate discussions with a representative from the Leadership Selection Committee and our Committee Chairs where we heard their insights regarding volunteer recruitment processes/support and advancement opportunities.

In November 2020, the Task Force developed and received Board approval for a Land Acknowledgement Statement for Virtual Meetings. This statement is now included at the start of all our Chapter's virtual events.

After compiling the above findings, and presenting the recommendations listed below, I am pleased to share that, with the Board's support, the Task Force will remain a Task Force through June 30, 2022. This will allow the Task Force, the Board of Directors and the Leadership Selection Committee enough time to discuss the criteria – including vision, strategic goals and leadership – required for the formation of a permanent **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion entity to commence as of July 1, 2022.**

Here are the Task Force's recommendations:

[Recommendation #1:](#)

- Remain as a Task Force during fiscal 2021-22 to allow enough time to further develop the permanency of the DEI initiative within the Chapter.

[Recommendation #2:](#)

- Appoint a VP to continue to drive strategic conversations at Board level.

[Recommendation #3:](#)

- Appoint new Task Force co-lead by June 1, 2021 to ensure continuity.

[Recommendation #4:](#)

- Allocate funds in 2021-22 Fiscal Budget to allow for hiring of diversity & inclusion expert.

Call to Action - We Need YOU!

Your current task force members are:

- Ameera Azad
- Amrit Shrestha
- Annie Chen
- Dwayne Rutherford
- Emilia Kim
- Jennifer Moir
- Julie Danaylov
- Julie McMartin
- Kiran Balladin
- Larissa Ramiro
- Noreen Esson (Co-Lead)
- Wendy Derblich (Co-Lead)

We are actively recruiting for more volunteers to help us carry on the important work we've started! If you want to be involved in the Task Force's work, or simply find out more, please reach out to the Task Force's co-leads - Wendy Derblich (wendy.derblich@bayer.com) and Noreen Esson (noreen.esson@nextechar.com).

Finally, I would like to say THANK YOU to all past and present Task Force members. It's been an incredible privilege to be on this journey with you. I've been humbled by your personal stories and impressed by your dedication to make change happen. I know that, with your continued efforts, MPI Toronto will continue to lead the way forward.

Respectfully,

Wendy Derblich
Co-Lead, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Task Force
VP, Finance - 2020-21