



Office of Inspector General | United States Postal Service

# DIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN



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# Message from the Inspector General

As our organization celebrates its first 25 years in existence, it is appropriate that we reflect on and recognize what has made our organization successful over the years – our people. Our people include the many employees who helped build and grow our organization in its early days as well as those who have been a part of navigating the more recent historic challenges facing the U.S. Postal Service. This diversity of backgrounds and strengths, and the eagerness to tap into them, has defined our OIG from its inception. As we move forward, we are excited and committed to continue, and improve upon, that journey.

While there are many aspects of diversity, we define diversity in its broadest sense. It is everything that makes us unique and different from everyone else, and allows us to come together and celebrate our uniqueness. When we foster diversity across our organization, whether it's diversity of race, religion, gender identity, thought, ethnicity, background, or experiences, there are far greater opportunities to spark creative insights, develop better solutions, and maximize overall performance. At our OIG, we strive to create a work environment where we share our similarities and celebrate our differences.

Though diversity is a big piece of the puzzle, diversity without inclusion only reinforces systemic barriers where people feel excluded and held back. The power of diversity is greatly amplified when inclusive leaders tap into the strengths of all team members. Inclusion prizes the talents, backgrounds, and experiences of each unique employee so that together they maximize their talents, creativity, and innovation to deliver the best possible work product, processes, and services. This level of engagement naturally leads to greater employee satisfaction and higher productivity. That's why inclusion and innovation are core values that make our OIG a workplace where creative ideas are encouraged and pursued – a place where people want to work.

Finally, to grow diversity and inclusion across our OIG, we must ensure equity. Equity is about access and opportunity, with the understanding that we all start with different advantages and challenges. Equity is a process of continually evaluating our organization to make sure that all individuals within it are receiving the individualized support they need to thrive. To foster inclusion within our OIG, we must make certain everyone has an equitable seat at the table, by identifying and eliminating barriers that limit participation. Without equity, efforts to promote diversity and inclusion are laudable but not sustainable.

If we don't actively seek a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), we distance those we can and should connect with, and risk minimizing the value of the work we do. If we don't listen to, learn from, and act on diverse perspectives, we limit our opportunities to excel and continue to grow as individuals. DEI makes the OIG better at what we do, and a better place to be. As an organization, we are committed to championing all three and continue to look for ways to ensure we foster a workplace where our employees feel they belong!



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tammy Whitcomb". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

# Government Focus on DEI

*In 2016, the Office of Personnel Management provided guidance to all government agencies regarding DEI definitions and strategic goals. This guidance, summarized below and issued as a strategic diversity plan, provides a framework for all Federal agencies as they develop their individual plans and agency-specific goals.*

## OPM Definitions

Diversity is defined as “a collection of individual attributes that together help agencies pursue organizational objectives efficiently and effectively.”

Inclusion is defined as “a set of behaviors (culture) that encourages employees to feel valued for their unique qualities and experience a sense of belonging.”

## OPM Diversity Strategic Plan Goals:

### Goal 1: Diversify the federal workforce through active engagement of leadership

1. Emphasize the importance of inclusive diversity efforts by utilizing a wide range of communication strategies and tools that demonstrate their support for these initiatives.
2. Review the wide range of policies, programs, systems, and techniques currently in use and determine specific initiatives that should be enhanced and improved.
3. Develop and implement broad outreach strategies to attract leaders from diverse sources to the organization through strategic partnerships.

### Goal 2: Include and engage everyone in the workplace

1. Foster a culture of inclusion and engagement by employing culture change strategies. Provide training and education on cultural competency, implicit bias awareness, and inclusion learning for all employees.
2. Assess, redesign, and reengineer organizational structures and business processes to promote teamwork, collaboration, cross-functional operations, and transparency; and to deconstruct organizational siloes that lead to exclusive cultures and to flawed decision-making.

### Goal 3: Optimize inclusive diversity efforts using data- driven approaches

1. Create a diverse, high-performing workforce, using data-driven approaches to recruitment, including analyzing applicant flow data.
2. Foster a diverse, high-performing workforce by using data-driven approaches to promotion opportunities and career development.
3. Collect relevant performance data to establish a business case for diversity and inclusion for the agency.

# Recent Accomplishments at the OIG

*We here at the Postal Service OIG have already made significant progress in supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. The following list provides a sample of our organization's most recent accomplishments over the past two years:*

## **Conducted Targeted Efforts to Improve Hiring and Recruitment**

- Modernized vacancy announcements.
- Worked to maximize the awareness of OIG positions internally and externally to increase recruitment of/applications by underrepresented groups.
- Updated the hiring policy and developed mandatory training for hiring panel members and selecting officials

## **Began Building an Infrastructure for Fostering DEI**

- Established the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Awareness (IDEA) Council
- Established the AIG – Front Office to provide oversight of DEI initiatives.
- Developed and implemented supervisory professional performance elements related to diversity and inclusion.

## **Focused on Improving Organizational Insights Using Data and Analytics**

- Deployed annual Leadership Surveys for all managers and above.
- Updated FEVS Survey to include 15 questions focused on inclusion and engagement.
- Incorporated an assessment of EVS data into the NLDP Program.
- Engaged a contractor to provide a DEI baseline assessment for the OIG.
- Developed dashboards / analytics to analyze diversity and on-boarding processes.

## **Improved DEI-Focused Communications**

- Deployed an internal diversity website.
- Instituted monthly awareness campaigns.
- Began sponsoring DEI-related events.

# OIG Goals for the Future

## Goal 1: Grow Leadership Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- Develop and demonstrate accountability, commitment, and involvement with regard to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the workplace.
  - Ensure alignment between the OIG's DEI efforts and its strategic goals and objectives.
  - Create a communications strategy that highlights DEI as a key strategic priority.
  - Support the IDEA Council and other working groups in developing and monitoring progress on DEI initiatives.
- Identify and address opportunities for improving collaboration and inclusion in the OIG.
  - Evaluate and update organizational structures and processes to promote teamwork, collaboration, cross-component operations, and transparency.
  - Reduce organizational siloes that lead to exclusive cultures, reduced information sharing, and flawed decision-making.
  - Benchmark with other agencies to identify best practices and use those insights to evolve and enhance DEI activities.
- Hold leaders accountable for promoting and supporting DEI programs and objectives.
  - Ensure all leaders have timely and recurring DEI training, including training on conscious or unconscious bias in the workplace, inclusive leadership, and understanding and implementing sustainable DEI strategies.
  - Clearly communicate expectations across the organization, including how diversity and inclusion performance impacts evaluation results.

## Goal 2: Cultivate and Support an Inclusive Culture

- Cultivate an inclusive and fair work environment that maximizes the talents, skills, and experiences of those within the OIG.
  - Provide all employees with equal access to developmental opportunities.
    - Improve communications to employees about accessing developmental and advancement opportunities within the OIG.
    - Develop and deploy a mentoring program and encourage participation.
    - Expand access to internal and external leadership development training.
  - Collect and analyze data to identify opportunities for improvement in DEI areas.
    - Utilize OIG diversity data and employee viewpoint survey (EVS) results to develop program initiatives and support OIG-wide activities.
    - Engage with and collect input from employees on DEI issues and sponsor working groups to identify opportunities for improvement.
    - Continuously evaluate programs and processes to identify barriers that reduce inclusivity, participation, and employee development.
- Ensure the equitable distribution of recognition, assignments, and awards in the OIG
  - Provide leaders with data and tools to effectively monitor performance and consistently recognize achievements.
  - Annually analyze organizational data to identify disparities in the distribution of recognition, assignments, or awards.

### Goal #3 – Attract and Develop a Diverse Workforce

- Increase the awareness and understanding of DEI throughout the workplace
  - Promote continuous learning and discussion on DEI issues
    - Maintain a robust diversity website to share training and resources and to serve as a platform for discussions about DEI issues.
    - Offer opportunities for agency-wide and targeted discussions (Town Halls, roundtables, and small group discussions) on issues related to DEI.
  - Provide leaders with tools to effectively lead diverse and distributed teams.
    - Continue to develop and implement initiatives designed to prevent discrimination, harassment, adverse bias, and other actions that undermine DEI.
    - Implement processes and deploy training to assist leaders in mitigating and resolving workplace conflict.
- Develop outreach and recruitment strategies to maximize the OIG’s ability to attract a diverse pool of potential applicants.
  - Increase outreach efforts to various organizations and institutions with a goal of raising the visibility of employment opportunities to high-potential candidates.
    - Engage in strategic outreach with a variety of professional organizations in order to attract highly qualified and experienced applicants.
    - Increase participation at career fairs and recruitment events at colleges and universities to attract diverse entry-level applicants.
  - Effectively utilize technology to broadly market employment and promotion opportunities to highly competitive, external candidates.
    - Increase the use of social media (i.e., Twitter, LinkedIn) for recruitment of and outreach to qualified applicants.
    - Update website and recruitment materials to more effectively communicate the OIG’s DEI-focused work environment to attract talent.
- Evaluate on-board employee demographic and professional data to ascertain where there may be gaps in representation and create strategies to address those gaps.
  - Utilize dashboards and analytics of OIG data to increase management awareness of the current workforce.
    - Collect and analyze applicant flow data to track and monitor employment trends and inform recruitment strategies.
    - Create diversity reports on new hires to inform recruitment strategies.
  - Establish a goal for enhancing and maintaining diversity among OIG’s senior leaders and executives
    - Leverage metrics from other federal agencies and the private sector as benchmarks to measure progress.

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