

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Volunteer Strategy Guide

Resources to integrate diversity, equity and inclusion in your JA Area's volunteer recruitment and retention efforts.



Volunteer Strategy Guide



How do I get started and make progress with diversity, equity and inclusion in our volunteer program?

The boxes below are clickable links with more information on each strategy

1

**At Junior Achievement,
DEI is not “extra” work.
It’s mission central.**

2

Use your Data!

3

**Look for inclusion
opportunities
everyday.**

4

**Double-check your
recruitment
approach**

1

At Junior Achievement, DEI is not “extra” work. It’s Mission Central.



At JA we are committed to helping every young person feel inspired, skilled and ready for their economic futures. To do that well, we acknowledge the diversity of young people, their neighborhoods, perspectives, families and access to resources.

Addressing DEI means making sure that each child can see themselves through the volunteers they connect with, the JA curriculum, and the experiences they engage with. We also want every young person to see their talent and assets and potential. Using mission-centric language, metrics, values, and growth mindsets helps break down barriers and persist in this important work.

For example, before digging into engaging more diverse volunteers (or another action), ask yourselves the question - Why is understanding diversity important to the children JA serves? How might I adjust my approach to include every young person meaningfully.



Shoutout to JA Dallas and JA Memphis who demonstrated the power of this approach.

2

Use your data!

- ✓ **Look at your community data about young people in your region by race, ethnicity, language, economic-status.**

TIP: Find school data sharing this information or look at census data for people under 18.

- ✓ **Pull the data of the profile of students your JA Area serves.**

Who are the young people your JA Area serves? How are these populations represented in your community? Who might you be overlooking or undeserving?

- ✓ **Pull the demographic data of your Board, staff and volunteers.**

How does it compare to your community and the students JA is serving?

2

Use your data!



As a team, set some goals and actions for change.

For example: Is there one student audience where you want to focus? How do you modify your volunteer recruitment strategy to increase representation of your students?



Consider sharing the data once you've developed a plan to make improvements.



If you do not have this data. Put a plan in place to get it.



Shout out to JA of Dallas who inspired inclusion of this approach and has been highly transparent and successfully sharing this data in their community.

3

Look for inclusion opportunities everyday.



Work to think about inclusion in the development of your everyday activities.

For example, consider inclusion when you're making decisions about whose voice you're amplifying on your social media channels. Ask yourself who doesn't see themselves?



Each decision you make is an opportunity to practice inclusion. Think about how can you model inclusion during trainings.

For example, when you're making decisions about the time and place to hold volunteer training, consider if the location is accessible to a person who struggles with mobility. Could you use community buildings? Could you provide child care to make it easier to attend? Could you buy cookies for the meeting from a minority or women owned small business? How might you elevate volunteers who aren't well represented among your volunteer pool to welcome guests to the training or lead the session? Recruit volunteers by visiting First Friday events; business incubators; fraternities and sororities; Jack and Jill; Links; 100 Black Men and 100 Black Women.

3

Look for inclusion opportunities everyday.

Check our default settings for equitable impact.



Examining our default settings is a great way to impact equity.

For example, some organizations have default settings where donors influence where programs are offered. This default setting might create barriers for students who are not connected to these donor groups.



Other auto-pilot practices might create barriers for inclusion.

Company partners recruiting volunteers from organizational-ranks where BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) people are underrepresented, requirements for parent volunteers might make participation difficult for people who aren't able to leave work during the day, scheduling based on volunteer needs instead of fit with students, transportation requirements might make JA too expensive for some schools, or the absence of an intentional plan to engage students with learning disabilities.

Work with your team to examine who benefits and who is burdened by current practices.

4

Double-check your recruitment approach

Diverse representation in recruitment materials:

Assess recruitment material imagery and design to ensure people of diverse backgrounds are well represented and fairly characterized.

Assess current marketing messages:

Review, with diverse panels, how our messages accelerate and inhibit interest of BIPOC leaders and underrepresented volunteers.

Highlight new champions: Encourage and support BIPOC leaders to engage with other JA committees and the Board as brand champions.

Unconscious bias: Consider how our definitions of an “effective volunteer” may be constrained by implicit bias and limit the pool of volunteers who we actively recruit. For example, in what ways do we see people with disabilities? Are people with disabilities viewed as a market for exceptional volunteers?

Translate materials: Translate materials to support recruitment and training of volunteers who bring second language expertise to students. For example, Spanish language translation for volunteers who speak Spanish to engage Spanish speaking young people.

4

Double-check your recruitment approach

Engage Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) to Support Cultural Heritage Month Initiatives: When looking for ways to increase the diversity of your volunteer network consider coordinating with Employee Resource Groups or Affinity Groups within your partner companies. Partnering with these groups not only engages additional JA volunteers but it offers an opportunity to work together to celebrate cultural heritage months. Engaging ERGs with Heritage Month celebrations can:

- Connect ERG members with communities where they want to serve – perhaps those with similar heritage backgrounds
- Expose students to volunteers who both look like them and look different than them
- Celebrate the ERG and their culture of interest and increase student awareness
- Promote the company and ERG

For example: September begins National Hispanic Heritage Month. Connect with your current or prospective company partners to see if they have any Hispanic ERGs. If so, ask to be connected with the group(s) with a goal of recruiting these ERG members to volunteer for JA during National Hispanic Heritage Month. Their volunteer engagement can be coordinated to a particular school and/or student population of their choosing or to fill a need you currently have.

Resources:

Check out [JA USA's Brand Calendar](#) for associated brand and social media content supporting various specialized months and initiatives. Heritage Month PR

This [office holidays list](#) includes the various heritage months scheduled throughout the year.

CANVA RESOURCES


Need a shortcut?

[Check out our
templates on Canva!](#)

Take Our Pledge:

Help us serve and include all kids by joining us in our pledge.

- I WILL check my own biases and take meaningful action to understand and mitigate them.
- I WILL ask myself, "Do my actions and words reflect the value of equity and inclusion?"
- I WILL move outside my comfort zone to learn about the experiences and perspectives of others.
- I WILL share my insights related to what I have learned.



X%
of our students
are Hispanic

X%
of our volunteers
are Hispanic

Students **Volunteers**

A SNAPSHOT OF OUR DEMOGRAPHICS

	Students	Volunteers
Asian	X	X
Black	X	X
Hispanic	X	X
Native American	X	X
Pacific Islander	X	X
White	X	X



Our Commitment

We remain focused on our pursuit of equitable and inclusive experiences for all of our participants. We understand that this work requires intentionality, learning and growth. We will continue to educate our team about the importance of removing barriers.



- Consistency**
Every young person has an exceptional JA LE every time.
- Results**
Every young person benefits from JA's best practices for impact.
- Accountability**
Every young person's JA LE is verified for our stakeholders.
- Equity**
Every young person who enters their background or location reaches their potential.



“The students love when an adult from the community comes in and teachers them about their lived experiences. The students find it valuable and relate it to concepts that are being taught and learned in school”

JA Educator



COMMUNICATION RESOURCES

Need a shortcut?

Check out our on-ramps for effective communication about DEI and volunteer recruitment on the [JA Intranet](#).



Junior
Achievement
USA

Invite others to Commit to your Common Goal.

Establish the objective of a diverse volunteer pool as the common goal you are working towards as a means of providing the best experience for your students as possible. A focus on the positive outcomes of diversity is very difficult to challenge. JA of Dallas has used this strategy very effectively and we appreciate the contribution of their examples.

Example: "We aim to create an environment where all of our participants are represented, valued and celebrated. In order to achieve this, we are seeking volunteers who reflect the students we serve. (Share data about your students, for example % who speak Spanish, % who identify as Black, etc.)"

Example from JA Dallas: "JA of DALLAS is committed to providing inclusive, equitable programs, and experiences to help students navigate through the business of life."

Example: "We want every student we serve to feel included and comfortable in our programming. JA serves XX classrooms where students speak Spanish. We're looking for volunteers who are ready to support these students using Spanish, English, and of course your knowledge and life experience. Every student deserves JA in their life."

Show the benefits.

So many people in our community want to make a difference. Volunteering with JA meets that need. Help people see themselves as a JA volunteer by valuing life experiences and noting the support that is available.

Example from JA of Dallas: "JA curriculum teaches students how money, careers, and business ownership work. With the help of volunteers like YOU, evidence shows that role models teaching JA programs can help create a simple shift in a young person's mind. JA needs you! Your enthusiasm, life experience, and willingness to teach children about how you took chances and shot for the stars can create a positive attitude and help students dream bigger."

Example from JA of Tampa Bay: "JA students come from diverse communities, ethnicities, cultures and backgrounds. Studies show that students resonate with volunteers of their own racial or ethnic background, and reinforce positive associations with those role models. We encourage our business partners to consider diversity during volunteer recruitment to help inspire all students!"