

PMI & DEI: A Commitment to Creating an Inclusive Culture of Belonging¹

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At the recent PMI Great Lakes Chapter's 2025 Symposium, Jonathon Falcon challenged me to suggest a good topic for the lunch time discussion portion of the program. My reply was met with skepticism and trepidation. I noted to Jon that while I was on the PMI Board of Directors some 15 years ago, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion [DEI] was a hot topic. "*Why not DEI within PMI?*" was my suggestion.

Intrigued by my own crass impertinence, I researched this topic on the PMI website. To my surprise, DEI is alive and well with PMI. This article reviews my findings. [Everything contained in this essay is found at <https://www.pmi.org/about/diversity-equity-and-inclusion>]

PMI Culture & Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

PMI is committed to creating an inclusive culture of belonging. Because that's what drives innovation, and ultimately, impact. The four key areas in this essay are:

- Culture
- DE&I
- Community Engagement
- DE&I Academic Scholarships

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PMI Culture

At PMI, it's not just *WHAT* we do that matters. Our culture and *HOW* we achieve our goals is just as important. Our culture is a community-wide agreement of how we collaborate and the mindsets and behaviors we choose.

Culture doesn't happen to you—it happens because of you. It belongs to all of us. Every individual, team or group—including employees, members, volunteers, and certification holders—has a stake in creating and maintaining a culture that recognizes everyone's contributions and interests.

Our Culture Values

Our five PMI Culture Values & Behaviors were created by our community for our community. These are not just words on a page. They are principles to guide how we work and volunteer together. If every member of our community embodies these values and behaviors, we will create a sense of unity and purpose.

1. Make It Easy

- We are easy to deal with.
- When things slow us down, we find a better way.
- We prioritize the impact that matters most and take the most direct route to it.

2. Aim Higher

- We set the standard in top quality work to create the greatest impact for the PMI community.
- We lead the way by thinking long-term and acting in the short term.
- We fearlessly take ownership of what we do, knowing every action counts.

3. Be Welcoming

- We create genuine belonging for all because our differences make us stronger.
- We act with humanity, showing care, empathy and respect for other's needs.
- We assume good intent and seek to understand, not judge.

4. Embrace Curiosity

- We are always seeking ways to better serve the PMI community.
- We see challenges as opportunities to innovate and take them.
- We feel able to fail fast in order to get it right.

5. *Together We Can*

- We build deep, trusting relationships that help us work towards our mission together.
- We use our shared purpose to unite us as a community and drive us forward to create impact.
- We act in alignment with our global goals while being empowered to deliver locally.

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DE&I)

PMI defines Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DE&I) as:

- **Diversity:** How an individual or group differs from another. An extensive range of variations in identity, viewpoints, skills and approaches.
- **Equity:** Treating an individual or group fairly according to their respective needs. Implementing fair, transparent and consistent practices and policies.
- **Inclusion:** The practice or policy of providing an environment with equal access to opportunities and resources for people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized.

In late 2019, the PMI Board of Directors saw the need to reaffirm our commitment to DE&I. All of us at PMI know and believe that diversity brings value to our community and the profession, and it is embedded in our Culture Values, but our work shouldn't stop there. That's why PMI shows the value of our differences by building on our diverse backgrounds and perspectives to:

- Support a positive environment
- Promote personal and professional development
- Empower all people to reach their full potential
- Advance and advocate for the project management profession globally.



PMI's Statement on DE&I

PMI is committed to cultivating a culture of inclusion and belonging and is working to make that a reality within our community and beyond. As our DE&I work advances, PMI recognizes that this is a journey, and part of that journey is providing spaces for our community to learn and grow.

How you can help

As PMI continues this journey towards a culture of inclusion, our people are the reason PMI does this work. It starts with our people; it is driven by our people, and we only see success in this space with the support of our people.

This space is a dedicated place for our PMI community to have open and constructive Culture & DE&I conversations, as well as get access to programmatic updates and resources to continue driving change and social good work throughout our communities. PMI encourages you to actively participate in conversations, volunteer work and activism that will help contribute to lasting societal change. This is not an easy issue to tackle; it may lead to some challenging conversations. However, this work starts with and is driven by **YOU**.

State of DE&I at PMI Reports

2023 Report Download: <https://www.pmi.org/-/media/pmi/headless-images/about-pmi/culture-dei/gdr-1372pmistateofdei13102023v7.pdf?rev=7e7477135abe4823951bac4b0b3ff13b>

[2022 Report Download: https://www.pmi.org/-/media/pmi/headless-images/about-pmi/culture-dei/pmi-state-of-de-eng.pdf?rev=f40c2d2d12634689adac5fe717a27349](https://www.pmi.org/-/media/pmi/headless-images/about-pmi/culture-dei/pmi-state-of-de-eng.pdf?rev=f40c2d2d12634689adac5fe717a27349)

The PMI® Practitioner Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Playbook

The PMI® Practitioner Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Playbook aims to support any professional in the Project Management field, regardless of title, background, or industry. Given the diversity of thought and lived experiences our profession represents, this document is underscored by the belief that we all belong in the field. This playbook provides an introductory framework for Project Professionals seeking to understand and improve their adoption of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

[Download Playbook: https://www.pmi.org/-/media/pmi/documents/public/pdf/about/pmi-practitioner-dei-playbook.pdf?rev=2684720069ad43559c3a66aedfd8baeb](https://www.pmi.org/-/media/pmi/documents/public/pdf/about/pmi-practitioner-dei-playbook.pdf?rev=2684720069ad43559c3a66aedfd8baeb)

Community Engagement

Culture and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DE&I) at PMI is driven by our people, including volunteers, members, certification holders and employees.

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)

ERGs are employee-led groups that play a vital role in transforming our cultural landscape and promoting our DE&I initiatives. In 2020, PMI launched our four ERGs — African Heritage, LGBTQIA+, Neurodivergent and Disability and Women’s. Each offers essential connections, educational opportunities and unique perspectives to guide our goals and commitments.

Global Volunteers

Global Volunteers have played a crucial role in advancing DE&I at PMI. Our Board of Directors encouraged us to build a DE&I program in 2019, which led to us creating the first DE&I Working Group. The efforts of Global Volunteers continue to drive change within our organization and community, evolving to meet our community’s needs.

DE&I Focused Volunteer Teams

The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DE&I) Insight Team supports our commitment to an inclusive culture that values our community’s diversity. They offer guidance and feedback on DE&I best practices, shaping PMI’s DE&I strategy on global and local levels.

Women in Project Management Affinity Group

The Women in Project Management Affinity Group is a project team that unites women project professionals to create inclusive workplaces, develop women leaders and retain top talent. They aim to build pathways for women to enter the profession and inspire girls to join and succeed and offer feedback and insights to the PMI internal team. Ultimately, the affinity group helps mobilize women in our community to position PMI as a leader in creating an equitable profession for women project professionals.

Volunteer at PMI: <https://www.pmi.org/volunteer>

Chapters

Many of PMI's over 300 chapters worldwide have been active in DE&I efforts for decades. PMI is grateful for their steadfast leadership and collaborate with them to amplify their work and provide strategic insight and support. Each year, chapter leaders receive DE&I training to deepen their understanding and help them integrate DE&I into their chapters. This training supports our goal of creating a more inclusive culture where everyone feels they welcome.

Learn More: <https://www.pmi.org/membership/chapters>

DE&I Academic Scholarships

As PMI continues our journey in Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DE&I), PMI offers merit-based scholarships aligned with our Employee Resource Groups (ERGs). These scholarships help increase the pipeline of diverse project professionals and close the equity gap for marginalized and underrepresented communities. PMI's goal is to support these individuals in achieving higher education degrees and advancing their careers.

PMI has four ERGs — African Heritage, LGBTQIA+, Neurodivergent and Disability, and Women's — and will award four US\$5,000 scholarships to individuals attending accredited schools within the [Global Accreditation Center](#). Apply using the scholarship application below.

Who is eligible?

Scholarships are available to individuals who are attending schools accredited by the Global Accreditation Center. The student is not required to be a PMI member, but applicants are required to be:

- Currently enrolled or will be enrolled by Fall 2024 in a Bachelor's, Master's or PhD program in project management or a project management-related field of study with a graduation date on or after December the year of application. Undergraduate students must be enrolled and classified by the university as full-time students. Graduate students must be enrolled and classified by the university as at least half-time students.
- Eligible to receive scholarship funds exclusively through the enrolled academic institution and not as a direct disbursement from PMI to the individual.
- In good standing according to the enrolled academic institution's policies and procedures.
- In compliance with PMI policies and procedures, including but not limited to [PMI Culture Values and Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct](#).

Application process

Individuals must apply through the PMI General Application, indicating they would like to be considered for a DE&I ERG Scholarship. In addition to the application, candidates must include an essay focused on how members of the represented ERG Community can thrive in the project profession, barriers they face and steps they will take to support the community in reducing those barriers. A successful essay includes what you have already done to make a difference in this area, as well as what you will do moving forward and the steps you have taken to work towards that.

Applications for DE&I Sponsored Scholarships open annually in March. The 2025 cycle will open in March 2025.

Academic Scholarships: <https://www.pmi.org/learning/academic-programs/academic-scholarships>

As always, your questions, comments and criticisms are welcome. Feel free to contact me in care of email: William.moylan@emich.edu

Best regards,

Dr. Bill

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The “Culture Values” infographic can be downloaded at : https://www.pmi.org/-/media/pmi/headless-images/about-pmi/culture-dei/pmiculturevaluesbehaviors-infographic.png?rev=5779ddb12f814710b0c314a4f2634d55&sc_lang=en

Project Management Institute **Culture Values**

Make It Easy

- We are easy to deal with.
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Aim Higher

- We set the standard in top quality work to create the greatest impact for the PMI community.
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About the Author



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William A. Moylan, PhD, PMP, FESD, DTM, is a Professor Emeritus with Eastern Michigan University - College of Engineering & Technology. He has extensive professional experience in all aspects of program and project management, including over eleven years internationally with the Saudi Arabian American Oil Co, and since 1983, has been involved in implementing information technology. He has degrees from Lawrence Technological University, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and Capella University.

He is active in a variety of professional societies and civic activities including American Society of Civil Engineers, Engineering Society of Detroit, Project Management Institute, Habitat for Humanity, Rotary International and Toastmasters International. He can be contacted at

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