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DEI Tip Sheet: Inclusive marketing

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Imagine you are looking for a new job. While researching an exciting position you notice that nobody featured on the organization's social media accounts looks like you. How would this make you feel about the organization? Would you still apply for the job?

Scientific community managers are often tasked with creating promotional materials, newsletters, social media posts, and other content that encourages members to join, participate, and co-create. However, sometimes these materials can be biased or exclusionary. The content we create has implications for community recruitment, participation, retention, and compliance.[1,2,3]

How can we use inclusive marketing to ensure that the content we create is representative of our communities and builds trust?

Inclusive marketing is defined as "creating content that truly reflects the diverse communities that an organization serves. Inclusive marketing is powerful because it elevates diverse voices and role models, decreases cultural bias, and leads positive social change through thoughtful and respectful content".[4] Below are reflection questions and practical steps you can take to transform your current marketing and communications strategy to one that is inclusive.

Practical actions

- Schedule regular audits of your past content to determine if it is respectful, representative, and accessible.[5]
- Learn about inclusive language and implicit bias.[3]
- Familiarize yourself with laws, regulations, and guidelines such as the Americans with Disabilities Act and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

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Reflection questions

- What are the norms, beliefs, and values of your organization? Is your content reinforcing these norms, beliefs, and values?
- What policies, procedures, and/or guidelines does your organization have in place to ensure your content promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion? If there are none in place, can you build a team to create them?[4,6]
- Are the marketing materials you generate resonating with your community members? How do you know?
- Is your content reaching all members of your community? What could be potential barriers?
- Most marketing and communications content we create is intended for our internal communities, but sometimes it often reaches an external audience. How might your content be impacting your recruitment efforts?

References

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