



Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan

Purpose

The IFO has been a leader in the communities we serve and in the State of Minnesota in advocating for social justice with regard to diversity, equity, and inclusion. It is imperative that we challenge systemic oppression to empower marginalized members through innovative and intentional equity and inclusion initiatives. Faculty must be empowered to lead efforts to foster learning communities that respect the inherent worth of all students, faculty, and staff based on values of justice, inclusion, and equity. We strive for equity within our union to ensure solidarity, and that our collective voice is an inclusive voice.

Historically, this work has long been done by staff and individual leaders in the union, whose labor we recognize and value. However, to date, the organization has failed to develop a strategic plan, or a comprehensive approach related to equity and inclusion. We express our commitment to these values in our mission and guiding principles, but statements without an actionable plan will not lead to more equitable and inclusive working or learning conditions. The strongest public sector unions recognize that to reach genuine unity and solidarity we must take action to achieve equitable inclusion for all members who have been marginalized in society and in our institutions.

As a union that represents faculty in higher education, we have an obligation to educate, emulate, and lead with actions towards becoming model stewards for equity and inclusion. This leadership not only benefits our membership, it is in the best interest of our universities and system. Minnesota's rapidly diversifying population and the resulting change in the demographics of our MinnState student body requires that we make equity and inclusion a priority within our work. The educational missions of our institutions demand we achieve success for current and future students. By embracing equity and inclusion as the primary tools to do so, the IFO will help lead the communities, regions, and the State in a much-needed cultural transformation. The fundamental ingredient for change at our universities and in our communities will be faculty. They will drive enrollments, set the cultural and intellectual standards at our institutions, and be the leaders of change.

We must be intentional in our approach to equity and inclusion. The organization will critically assess our internal structures and procedures and be conscientious in the changes we adopt. As the caucus model has illustrated, the need for change is unquestionable. In addition, each Faculty Association must examine its own structure and culture to develop a plan that best serves the union membership. In the eighty-year history of the IFO, we have conquered many challenges and embedding equity and inclusion into every aspect of our organization now will only make us stronger and more effective as a union and as university faculty, coaches, librarians, and counselors.

This document reflects the vision of IFO leadership, staff, and especially, representatives from marginalized groups whose experiences most importantly inform this work. We expect this living document to evolve in response to continued engagement with our union membership as we continue to develop a more inclusive collective voice.

Definition of Terms in this Document

Diversity

The presence of people from outside dominant identity formations, including race, gender identity, sexuality, and disability, as well as multiple intersections of these identity formations. The intentional creation of groups in which people have differences from one another.

Inclusion

The creation of environments in which individuals and groups with different identities and experiences - particularly those in marginalized identities - are welcomed, accepted, and respected as fully engaged participants. Created by practices which transform dominant cultures to address the experiences of all, rather than just dominant groups.

Equity

Processes that provide fair treatment and barrier-free inclusion into society to ensure opportunities to grow, contribute, and lead.

Solidarity

Unity based upon our common interest as workers – one for all and all for one. Mutual support in solid unity to reject social identity divisions that “divide and conquer.”

Marginalized

Those in oppressed positions with limited access to power. For this document, this could include people of color, LGBTQ folk, people with disabilities, contingent faculty, and women.

Solidarity through Equity & Inclusion

Our goals to achieve equity and inclusion recognizes that diversity does not necessarily lead to equity and inclusion, but that equity and inclusion will lead to greater diversity. We understand solidarity, unity among faculty, coaches, librarians, and counselors in our union, is defined by common interests across the diversity of our members. Our struggles for justice for all are shared by all of us and we work to build power in order to achieve justice for all. We recognize that we are only as strong as our weakest members and center those who are most impacted by injustices in our work places to direct this work. Our core values of equity and inclusion in a union context are the foundation upon which we build trust and genuine solidarity.

Organizational Vision and Mission around Equity & Inclusion

Vision: A union that has achieved total equity and inclusion, where every member feels respected and represented, and an equitably empowered membership is reflected throughout all levels of governance and in the activities of the IFO.

Mission: Continue to develop and advance a culture, environment and structures that promote diversity, equity and inclusion. Implement and embed strategies throughout the Union that promote equity and inclusion with the intention of creating greater solidarity within the IFO.

Goals and Action Steps

There are 25 equity and inclusion goals organized into the below nine action areas (in no particular priority order). Steps marked "Initiated" is an indication of whether or not the action step has been initiated within the IFO. "Lift" refers to a predication of how difficult it will be to complete each goal. Numbered action steps correspond to numbered leads and initiation status.

- I) Organizing for a more equitable and inclusive union
- II) Directing and coordinating E/I efforts
- III) E/I focused policy
- IV) Support for marginalized faculty
- V) E/I learning opportunities and training
- VI) Funding support for E/I
- VII) E/I communications and messaging
- VIII) E/I curricular advocacy
- IX) Strategic support and partnership with system and campus administration on Equity 2030

I. Organizing for a More Equitable and Inclusive Union

A. Focus on organizing marginalized faculty for membership, engagement, and activism.

Action Steps:

1. Identify and empower leaders among marginalized faculty.
2. Build and maintain relationships with union and administrative leadership on campuses and statewide with the goal of furthering E/I agendas.
3. Create opportunities for engagement of membership.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
1. Director of Organizing and Training, E/I Coordinator, President	1. Yes	Heavy
2. Director of Organizing and Training, E/I Coordinator, President, Legal	2. Yes	
3. Director of Organizing and Training	3. No	

B. Diversify IFO Governing Bodies – Board, M&C committee.

Action Steps:

1. Identify and support leadership around E/I initiatives; recruit marginalized faculty for Board positions.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
E/I Coordinator, Director of Organizing and Training, President, Equity Caucuses and Committees, Exec/Board	Yes	Heavy

C. Provide equitable access to IFO leadership and governance to all members.

Action Steps:

1. Create and support equity caucuses.
2. Support marginalized faculty leadership and substantive allyship.
3. Develop new processes to remove barriers to access when marginalized members are not meaningfully represented.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
1. E&I Coordinator, Legal, Director of Public Affairs, Director of Organizing and Training	1. Yes 2. Yes 3. Yes	Heavy
2. E/I Coordinator, President, Board, Equity Caucuses and Committees		
3. E/I Coordinator, President, Board, Equity Caucuses and Committees		

D. Diversify Grievance Committees.

Action Steps:

1. Recruit, train, and support marginalized faculty for grievance committees.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
Legal, Director of Organizing and Training, Campus FAs	Yes	Heavy

E. Diversify Government Relations Committee.

Action Steps:

1. Recruit, train, and support marginalized faculty for the GRC.
2. Recruit, train, and support marginalized faculty to represent the IFO at Lobby Days.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
1. Director of Public Affairs, GRC, Director of Organizing and Training, Board Liaison, Exec/Board 2. Director of Public Affairs, Exec/Board, GRC	1. Yes 2. No	Medium

F. Diversify IFO Staff

Action steps:

1. Develop an Affirmative Action Plan for hiring IFO staff.
2. Periodic review and revision of Affirmative Action Plan.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
1. Ad hoc Affirmative Action Committee, President 2. Ad hoc Affirmative Action Committee, President	1. No 2. No	Light

II. Directing and Coordinating E/I Efforts

A. Create an IFO position of E/I Coordinator

Action Steps:

1. Draft / approve position description for E/I Coordinator.
2. Develop procedure for selection of faculty member to fill position.
3. Select /hire faculty member to fill position.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
1. E/I Coordinator, President, Board 2. E/I Coordinator, Board 3. Equity Committees, Board	1. Yes 2. Yes 3. No	Light

B. Lead, direct, coordinate, and advise E/I initiatives within the IFO.

Action Steps:

1. Define work assignments and priorities with an E/I lens for staff.
2. Define and communicate E/I priorities for faculty appointees to system level committees.
3. Advise IFO president, staff and equity committees on E/I matters and strategic planning.
4. Develop and disseminate E/I tactics and strategies to IFO Executive Committee and IFO Board: the "IFO E/I Playbook."
5. Develop policy initiatives around E/I goals within IFO, and with external stakeholders
6. Support equity committees and caucuses.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
1. President 2. E/I Coordinator, President, Equity Caucuses and Committees 3. E/I Coordinator, Legal, Director of Organizing and Training 4. President, E/I Coordinator, Director of Organizing and Training, Legal, Director of Public Affairs 5. President, E/I Coordinator, Legal 6. Legal, E/I Coordinator, Director of Public Affairs, Director of Organizing and Training	1. Yes 2. Yes 3. Yes 4. No 5. Yes 6. Yes	Medium

C. Direct and coordinate E/I focus at DA.

Action Steps:

1. Set E/I programming at DA.
2. Coordinate E/I oriented resolutions.
3. Ensure and encourage access to equity committees and equity caucus membership at DA.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
1. Board, President, E/I Coordinator, Legal, Director of Organizing and Training 2. E/I Coordinator, Director of Organizing and Training 3. E/I Coordinator, Legal, Director of Organizing and Training, Board	1. No 2. No 3. No	Medium

III. E/I Focused Policy

A. Revise mission and vision of the IFO to reflect the E/I goals of the IFO.

Action Steps:

1. Draft new mission and vision, make recommendation to Board.
2. Board to act on recommendations.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
1. FoC Caucus 2. Board	1. No 2. No	Light

B. Coordinate and track E/I progress in the IFO.

Action Steps:

1. Develop and execute a progress tracking plan with respect to E/I initiatives.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
1. E/I Coordinator, President, Academic Affairs Coordinator, IFO Board, FA Presidents	1. No	Heavy

C. Champion E/I initiatives externally to stakeholders.

Action Steps:

1. Set agendas with an E/I focus with MinnState chancellor and at the Board of Trustees (BOT).
2. Represent IFO marginalized faculty perspectives to the MinnState System and state government.
3. Build relationships with influencers on E/I at the system level: participate in MinnState committees, actively engage the BOT, the chancellor and MinnState leadership group.
4. Represent IFO E/I perspectives in legal actions and lawsuits.
5. Advocate for the separation of equity and diversity advocates and those in enforcement/investigative positions.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
1. President 2. E/I Coordinator, President, Board, Director of Public Affairs, Legal 3. E/I Coordinator, President, Board, Legal 4. Legal 5. President, FoC Caucus, E/I Coordinator, Legal, FA Presidents	1. Yes 2. Yes 3. Yes 4. Yes 5. No	Medium-Heavy

D. Develop campus E/I plans.

Action Steps:

1. Draft, vet and approve E/I plans in consultation with equity caucuses for every FA
2. Support FAs in E/I plans and work.
3. Create language in FA governing documents that supports and encourages E/I work.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
1. FA Presidents, E/I Coordinator, President, Equity Caucuses, IFO Board 2. Legal, Director of Organizing and Training, E/I Coordinator, President 3. FA Presidents, Equity Caucuses	1. Yes 2. No 3. Yes	Heavy

E. Create informal conflict resolution system.

Action Steps:

1. Collaborate with system office, campus administrations, and faculty leaders (including equity caucuses) in development, approval, and funding of informal resolution policies and procedures (or other alternatives to formal complaints) that support equity and inclusion.
2. Support and advocate for marginalized faculty involved in complaint procedures to act proactively towards conflict resolution.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
1. E/I Coordinator, Legal 2. Legal	1. Yes 2. Yes	Medium

F. Pursue legislative initiatives that impact/focus on E/I.

Action Steps:

1. Identify/initiate/interpret legislative action to further E/I goals.
2. Advocate for/against legislative initiatives which impact IFO and/or MinnState efforts aimed at supporting equity and inclusion initiatives.
3. Update GRC, Board, President and members on legislation which impacts E/I.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
1. Director of Public Affairs, GRC, Equity Committees, Legal 2. Director of Public Affairs, GRC, E/I Coordinator 3. Director of Public Affairs	1. Yes 2. Yes 3. Yes	Medium

G. Ensure retirement and other benefits are equitable and inclusive of all members.

Action Steps:

1. Monitor proposed changes in retirement funds and benefits through an E/I lens.
2. Promote E/I initiatives related to retirement benefits.
3. Participate in Health Insurance Coalition bargaining and Joint Labor Management Committee work on insurance (health, dental, life, short term/ long term disability insurances) to advocate for E/I health insurance goals.
4. Review data relative to the Salary Review Process through an equity lens.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
1. Legal, Director of Public Affairs 2. Legal 3. Legal 4. SEC, Legal	1. Yes 2. No 3. Yes 4. No	Medium

IV. Support for Marginalized Faculty

A. Support and advocate for marginalized faculty in tenure and promotion, and/or evaluation, and regarding work climate/discrimination and hostile environment.

Action Steps:

1. Review and improve contractual benefits using an equity lens.
2. Advocate for/ represent/ advise faculty experiencing discrimination.
3. Develop strategies to address systemic discrimination and hostile environment.
4. Organizing around discrimination and work environment issues.
5. Develop plans to engage the specific needs of faculty with contingent appointments and increase representation of contingent faculty within IFO governance.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
1. Legal/Negotiations Team 2. Legal 3. Legal, E/I Coordinator 4. Director of Organizing and Training 5. Legal, Director of Organizing and training, CAC	1. No 2. Yes 3. Yes 4. Yes 5. Yes	Heavy

B. Develop a plan to retain and recruit faculty of color.

Action Steps:

1. Develop a cross-campus mentoring program for faculty of color
2. Assemble best practices for retention and recruitment of faculty of color.
3. Draft and recommend plan.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
1. E/I Coordinator, FoC Caucus 2. E/I Coordinator, FoC Caucus 3. Statewide FoC Caucus, MIC	1. No 2. No 3. No	Heavy

C. Obtain and track statistics on hiring and retention of marginalized faculty.

Action Steps:

1. Develop a plan to acquire these data from administration and analyze these data.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
1. E/I Coordinator, Caucuses, FA Presidents	1. No	Medium

V. E/I Learning Opportunities and Training

A. Provide member training/learning opportunities for E/I goals.

Action Steps:

1. Train faculty for survival and success per the IFO contract using E/I lens.
2. Train faculty to be effective advocates for marginalized faculty, including grievance officers and chairs.
3. Develop training/learning opportunities around E/I in organizing.
4. Develop workshops on race and whiteness, or other issues impacting marginalized faculty.
5. Educate Negotiating Team on E/I Issues and impact of contractual provisions on marginalized faculty.
6. Educate GRC and Lobby Days attendees on E/I messaging.
7. Develop organizing training with E/I lens that emphasizes 100% union literacy and engagement, solidarity and co-liberation.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
1. Legal	1. Yes	Medium / Heavy
2. Legal, Director of Organizing and Training	2. Yes	
3. Director of Organizing and Training	3. Yes	
4. Legal, Director of Organizing and Training, E/I Coordinator, MIC	4. No	
5. Legal, E/I Coordinator, Director of Organizing and Training	5. Yes	
6. Director of Public Affairs, E/I Coordinator	6. No	
7. Director of Organizing and Training	7. No	

VI. Funding Support for E/I

A. Prioritize E/I funding initiatives.

Action Steps:

1. Advocate for/approve E/I budgetary needs within everyday operations, and with IFO Board, MinnState, and other stakeholders.
2. Develop budget recommendations to support E/I initiatives.
3. Support E/I funding initiatives.
4. Advocate for E/I prioritization funding throughout the MinnState system and on every campus.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
1. President 2. TAC 3. Board 4. President, E/I Coordinator, FA Presidents	1. Yes 2. Yes 3. Yes 4. No	Medium

VII. E/I Communications and Messaging

A. Maintain E/I focus in IFO communications.

Action Steps:

1. Ensure all IFO statewide communications reflect the E/I values and mission of the IFO.
2. Develop communications to the broader membership about E/I efforts/victories.
3. Keep equity committee and caucus webpages up-to-date.
4. Develop IFO Presidential statements on relevant events.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
1. Director of Public Affairs, President, E/I Coordinator, Legal 2. Director of Public Affairs 3. Director of Public Affairs 4. Director of Public Affairs, President, E/I Coordinator	1. Yes 2. Yes 3. Yes 4. Yes	Light

VIII. Curricular Advocacy

A. Advocate for E/I in curriculum.

Action Steps:

1. Advocate for ethnic studies programs.
2. Advocate for and protect race and ethnic studies content in diversity requirements for general education fulfillment.
3. Advocate for disability studies.
4. Advocate for women's/gender/sexuality studies.
5. Advocate for additional pedagogical shifts to support students of color, immigrant students, first generation university students, low income students and other marginalized students, including but not limited to the infusion of E/I across the curriculum.
6. Advocate for funding for these curricular initiatives to administration.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
1. E/I Coordinator, President, Director of Organizing and Training, FoC Caucus	1. Yes 2. No 3. No	Heavy
2. E/I Coordinator, President, Academic Affairs Coordinator, Director of Organizing and Training, FoC Caucus	4. No 5. No 6. No	
3. E/I Coordinator, President, Director of Organizing and Training, Faculty with Disabilities Caucus		
4. E/I Coordinator, President, Academic Affairs Coordinator, Director of Organizing and Training, Women's Caucus		
5. E/I Coordinator, President, Director of Organizing and Training, all caucuses		
6. E/I Coordinator, President, all caucuses, FA Presidents		

**IX. Strategic Support and Partnership with System
and Campus Administration Equity 2030 or Other E/I Initiatives**

A. Engage System Office and Campus Administrators on Equity 2030

Action Steps:

1. Develop relationships with system administrators responsible for the design and execution of the Equity 2030 initiative with the goal of establishing mutually beneficial objectives around equity and inclusion.
2. Develop relationships with campus administrators responsible for the design and execution of the Equity 2030 initiative with the goal of establishing mutually beneficial objectives around equity and inclusion.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
1. President, E/I Coordinator, Legal 2. FA Presidents, Equity Caucuses	1. Yes 2. Yes	Medium

B. Lead and inform Equity 2030 initiatives, using the IFO Equity Inclusion Strategic Plan as a guide

Action Steps:

1. Strategically share IFO E/I plans to inform partnered or parallel plans within the Equity 2030 initiative.
2. Offer leadership to the Equity 2030 initiative when initiative goals are consistent with the IFO equity and inclusion goals.

Lead	Initiated?	Lift
1. President, E/I Coordinator, FA Presidents 2. President, E/I Coordinator, Equity Caucuses	1. Yes 2. No	Heavy