



A diverse, equitable and inclusive America represents our nation at its best. For every community not fully included at our country's founding, it is a core American value to demand fairness and recognition, so that our merits can speak for themselves. Today, those who fight for DEI are continuing the movement to ensure that all Americans have access to the American Dream, no matter who they are or where they come from.

As coordinated attacks from anti-DEI groups continue to weaken or eliminate the programmatic and ideological underpinnings of DEI policy, it is essential that pro-DEI groups have messaging that defines what's at stake, the importance of DEI, why it's under attack, and why audiences should care and join us in the fight to protect DEI.

The messaging below was created to do just that by providing simple and repeatable messages that make the case for the DEI Movement and why it is essential to ensuring that pathways to the American Dream are accessible for all.

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

No matter where we come from or what we look like, most of us want the same things – the opportunities that allow us to provide, support and care for our loved ones – the American Dream.

- We are fighting for pathways to the American Dream for all: access to education, the ability to start a small business or participate in the economy and the right to vote.
- If our communities don't have access to education, the ability to fully participate in our economy, or the right to vote, they won't have a real shot at improving their lives or the lives of their families.
- We need to stay engaged so we can all make our dreams of freedom and opportunities real.
- We deserve the products of the American Dream: equitable access to opportunity, prosperity and thriving communities.
- The function of DEI initiatives and laws, including affirmative action and the Voting Rights Act, is to counter historic, systemic and institutional denials of people of color, women and other marginalized groups – like policies at the



core of racial wealth gaps, voter suppression, disparate education outcomes and religious intolerance.

WHY IS DEI IMPORTANT?

1. DEI is not a new movement – it describes 240+ years of action that benefits all Americans by delivering equitable opportunities for all.

- From our nation's beginning, we have taken steps to guarantee that every American has the right and the freedom to succeed.
- Our core American values demand that we continue to take action to hold our systems accountable for the Constitution's promises.
- For more than 200 years, we have made changes to do better by our people: from Reconstruction to the Civil Rights Movement, from Suffrage and Women's Rights to the Labor Movement, from the LGBTQ+ to the Disability Movement.
- While each movement has had a different call to action, they are bound together because of our values: diversity, equity and inclusion.

2. DEI removes barriers to the American Dream.

- The DEI movement is not new: it has been at the center of progress in our nation – pushing for policies and initiatives that demand America to live up to its highest ideals including equality, opportunity, dignity and personal liberty.
- DEI is hope for the American Dream: it widens the pathways to success for all and provides equitable opportunity for communities that are too often left out and left behind.
- Diversity of thought and experience is America's strength — it is our superpower, where we know that by coming together, we can push our nation forward.



WHY IS DEI UNDER ATTACK?

1. DEI is working.

- Comprehensive education, full participation in the economy, and a robust democracy are the pathways to success and the American Dream; and never before has our nation seen so many benefiting from its promise.
 - Diversity education and an inclusive curriculum [leads to](#) positive changes in students' attitudes and values, improved critical thinking and higher achievement levels for students of all backgrounds.
 - A majority (56%) of workers say that [focusing](#) on DEI at work is a good thing and research has [shown](#) that three in four (75%) businesses say that DEI investments have a positive impact on business performance.
 - An enhanced ability to vote leads to [improved](#) economic status with critical policies like the Voting Rights Act [narrowing](#) the wage gap in our nation.

2. Some feel threatened by competition and change.

- Groups who want to limit access to opportunity for all are attacking the American Dream and restricting pathways to success.
 - Cynical and narrow-minded groups who despise equality want to restore barriers to the American Dream.
 - **Education:** They made it illegal to talk about race and difference in our schools, and they eliminated the use of affirmative action in college admissions. Now they are attacking our military academies, knowing that the first wave of desegregation started in the armed forces under President Harry Truman. Since 2023, at least 85 bills in 28 states have been [introduced](#) to prohibit DEI on college campuses.



- **Economy:** These same people have also turned their attention and resources to businesses who are dedicated to extending opportunity to underrepresented communities such as [Fearless Fund](#) and [Hello Alice](#), organizations that provide critical funding to businesses owned by people of color.
- **Elections:** They attacked democracy by gutting the Voting Rights Act and adding new restrictions to the right to vote, from making it harder for young people or creating penalties for registering people of color. Since the gutting of the Voting Rights Act in 2013, at least 29 states have [passed](#) 94 laws that make it more difficult to vote, particularly for voters of color.
- These groups won't rest until their narrow and exclusionary vision of America prevails.

WHY SHOULD WE CARE?

- **All Americans benefit** when we come together and use our collective power to uplift communities by giving them access to opportunity and a shot at the American Dream.
- With spikes in antisemitism, islamophobia and other forms of hate on the rise, we must do the **work to unlock new levels of understanding** among communities and push our nation forward.
- Those who seek to dismantle DEI understand its value and **know that it works** — that's why they are working tirelessly to end it.
 - DEI [strengthens](#) business and counters historic, systemic and institutional denials of people of color, women and other marginalized groups.
 - DEI breaks down systemic barriers and helps ensure that access to the American Dream remains within reach for people of all backgrounds.
- Together, we **can build an America that works for all of us** — a nation where we recognize that DEI is not about creating special privileges for some, but creating equitable opportunity for all.
- Visit www.aprnetwork.org for more information and support.