

# Lindenwood University

## Employee Resource Group -By-Laws

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These guidelines are intended to provide general information and to assist faculty and staff who wish to form or participate in an Employee Resource Group ("ERG") at Lindenwood University. The Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion may alter or add to these guidelines at any time and without notice.

### I. Introduction

#### A. Definition and Purpose

An ERG is a collection of Lindenwood faculty and staff who voluntarily work together to build a more diverse and inclusive environment in partnership and with the oversight of the Center for Diversity and Inclusion. The primary focus is for its objectives and activities to align with the **DEI 4 Pillars of Success, Workforce, Culture, Students, and Community**. All the ERG's activities should also support and be representative of our university's mission, vision, and values. The ERGs can be an integral part of helping the University achieve its goals and objectives to build a more diverse and inclusive culture that creates a sense of belonging for all. *Each BRG is inclusive and open to any Lindenwood faculty or staff members only. Students can be invited as speakers, to be part of a focus group or participate in an event, but they are not to be considered as official members.*

Recommended areas of activity are listed below:

- **Enhance engagement in DEI focused efforts designed to implement the DEI 4 Pillars of Success**
- **Improve cross cultural competency and agility**
- **Contribute to individual networking and professional development**
- **Generate ideas to enhance the University's ability to identify, attract and retain a more diverse workforce and student body**
- **Educate to create a more common understanding of why building and inclusive environment is a business imperative for Lindenwood.**

#### B. Executive Sponsor

Each ERG should have an executive sponsor who is a Dean, Director or VP who serves as a mentor and or advisor. The executive sponsor may be recommended by the ERG or can be recruited by the Center for Diversity and Inclusion.

The executive sponsor will provide feedback, direction and clarification of the university's philosophy's, policies, and support communication between the Center for Diversity and Inclusion, other University leadership groups and the ERG. The executive sponsor will provide high level insights into current university key objectives, share advice and council on how the ERG can strategically stay aligned to our DEI 4 Pillars: Workforce, Culture, Students, and Community.

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**Time commitment:** Try to attend a meeting at least quarterly. Periodically connect with the Chairs of the ERG to ensure you are aware of the needs and strengths of the ERG.

## **C. Structure and Responsibilities**

The ERG leadership positions will consist of a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Communications Liaison and other needed positions identified by the group. To qualify for a Leadership Team position, a faculty or staff member must be in good standing on his or her most recent performance evaluation. In the case of the Chairperson, at least three years of tenure with Lindenwood will be required. Nominations for Leadership Team positions must be sent to the Center for Diversity and Inclusion for eligibility determinations in partnership with Human Resources.

The originating Chairperson for each ERG will submit an application for the ERG with the key focus and objectives of the ERG and will be approved or declined to move forward with establishing the ERG based on criteria designed to ensure inclusivity of all ERGs. The Vice Chairperson and the Communications Liaison or other leadership roles will be selected by majority vote of the members participating in the ERG. Persons acting in Leadership positions will serve for a term of two years, and will serve only one term unless no other faculty or staff are interested in the position.

The Chairperson will be responsible for general oversight and strategic leadership of the ERG and will work closely with and keep the CDO and Director for the Center for Diversity and Inclusion informed about BRG objectives, plans and activities.

The Vice Chairperson will lead operations and assist the Chairperson with ERG funding requests from the CDI.

The Communications Liaison will be the primary communications contact for the ERG and will be responsible for providing all relevant communication updates and meeting minutes to the ERG participants and the Center for Diversity and Inclusion to [Vjoyner@lindenwood.edu](mailto:Vjoyner@lindenwood.edu) and [Epitts@lindenwood.edu](mailto:Epitts@lindenwood.edu)

## **II. Operational Guidelines**

**A. Formation** ERGs exist and operate at the discretion of the CDI and the university. They are formed by a request to establish itself and approval from the Center for Diversity and Inclusion, using this form: <https://www.lindenwood.edu/files/resources/erg-application.pdf>

### **B. Co-ordination and Conduct**

The CDO and members of the PEIC will periodically review the ERG's activities and meeting agendas, and will attend meetings of a ERG, to confirm that it is following the firm's policies and focusing on the intended objectives. Participation in a BRG can count towards development hours, by attending ERG meetings and other DEI related events.

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ERGs will not ordinarily play a part in his or her performance evaluation. However, because each ERG participant is acting in the capacity of a university employee, he or she is expected to continue to act in accordance with the Universities policies, including these guidelines, and failure to do so may be considered in connection with evaluating his or her performance and in connection with taking disciplinary action.

The ERG will not focus on or attempt to address issues related to associate complaints, wages, rate of pay, hours of employment, conditions of work, and will not otherwise involve itself in such matters through other activities, such as by researching or gathering information on these subjects. Instead, when such matters are brought to its attention, the ERG will refer them to the CDO to be passed along to the appropriate division or department of the University for its consideration and/or handling.

Only after review and approval by the CDO and Advancement and Communication may a ERG use the University name or logo in conjunction with an internal or external event or activity.

### **C. Cost Application and Funding Requests**

The Chairperson or Vice Chairperson is the primary contact for budgeting and funding responsibilities. Annual funding applications should be forwarded to the Center for Diversity and Inclusion for approval. The Vice Chairperson will be responsible for managing the funding to support approved ERG activities. Approval, modification or denial of a ERG funding request is at the discretion of the Center for Diversity and Inclusion.

An ERG may be allowed the use of university facilities and equipment with approval from the area or department providing the resources. Resources that may be made available for use are as follows:

- Electronic communication
- Copiers/ Printers
- Telephones
- Computers/ software
- Mail/facsimile equipment
- Meeting rooms

### **D. Communications**

The Communications Liaison is the primary communications contact for the ERG and will provide the Center for Diversity and Inclusion with a copy of meeting agendas and meeting minutes.

Communication and promotions sent to the broader university audience should be reviewed by the Center for Diversity and Inclusion before posting or distributing.

All active ERGs will be added to the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion website under the Employee Resource Group link with supporting document on how to establish, lead, join and support and ERG.