

DFA DEI Advancement Committee  
**Team Agreement: Group Norms for Dialogue**

*Note: This is a living document that workgroup members may continue to update as needed.*

**True dialogue is achieved when its participants have a certain mindset. The following norms will help us develop that mindset as a group:**

- We recognize that our primary commitment is to learn from each other and from our experience. We acknowledge differences amongst us in skills, interests, values, scholarly orientations, and experience.
- We acknowledge that racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, and other forms of discrimination (based on religion, age, disability, language, education, etc.) exist and may surface.
- We will do our best to not blame people for the misinformation we have learned, but with a lens of education and growth, we hold each other responsible for repeating misinformation or offensive behavior after we have learned otherwise.
- We will practice trust that people are always doing the best they can, both to learn from others and to behave in productive ways.

**Dialogue also calls for certain actions from its participants. These norms describe the actions that make dialogue possible:**

- We will listen actively to one another. We acknowledge that everyone has an equal, valid voice in our dialogue.
- We will actively pursue opportunities to learn about our own groups and those of others, yet not enter or invade others' privacy when unwanted.
- We will all strive to create a braver atmosphere for open dialogue. We will honor the confidentiality of others in the group and be conscious of our non-verbal communication.
- We will challenge the idea and not the person.
- We recognize that dialogue is not always comfortable. We will challenge ourselves to be vulnerable, speak our discomfort, and allow space for others to do the same.
- When meeting remotely online, we will keep our cameras on as much as possible to aid in non-verbal communication and our written comments will comply with our shared standards for in-person dialogue. We will not record online meetings to preserve a space where people are comfortable sharing ideas.

**Dialogue allows us to reach consensus in the decisions we make as a group. These are ways we agree to come together to make decisions:**

- We provide space for everyone to contribute ideas, whether verbally or in writing, and we strive to offer questions and volunteer opportunities in writing to allow members time for consideration before responding.
- We share relevant information and explain our reasoning and intent.
- We challenge and validate assumptions.
- We use a “parking lot” to capture recommendations and ideas for future discussion and action.
- We collaborate and decide on next steps together, seeking consensus as much as possible.

*Adapted from Dr. Ruby Beal, University of Michigan*