

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Accessibility Strategy

Our commitment

At the Calgary Chamber of Commerce, we know we are Better Together, and we commit to fostering an inclusive community that advances equity and accessibility, celebrates diversity and prioritizes relationships.

Our north star is to empower the business community to advance a prosperous Calgary. We know our Calgary community – and our business community – can only thrive if we make space for everyone, and actively invest in the success of diverse communities.

We commit to being a welcoming, inclusive and safe community for our staff, volunteers, partners and businesses. As the hub for business, we seek to bring members along on our journey, using our convening power to build bridges and share resources to advance equity and inclusion across our business community. We will also use our platform, as the leading voice of business, to amplify and celebrate diversity within Calgary business and advocate for systemic change that improves our society for generations. This strategy will work in tandem with the Chamber's economic reconciliation strategy.

We recognize that as the central node for business and commerce since 1891, with a long and storied history that parallels much of Calgary's history, we have access to power including through our networks, voice and influence. As such, we commit to intentionally advancing equity within our community. Further, as we continue to progress this work, community involvement, input and communication will be critical.

As we continue to learn, and as the needs of our community evolve, this strategy will evolve to reflect our current context and new understanding. As such, the strategy will be reviewed and updated to reflect the context, learnings and capacity.

Our process

This Strategy has been informed by several audiences, with our primary audience being membership. Through annual membership surveys and ongoing conversations with our membership team, the priorities of our membership are reflected here. We have also worked with other organizations to understand best practices, particularly in a Calgary context, a Chamber context, and a business context. The Strategy has been informed by the Staff Working Group, which includes one member from each department.

Several key groups have provided feedback and input, including the Chamber's Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility Sub-Committee of the Board of Directors, comprised of a group of subject matter experts, as well as the Governance and Human Resources Committee of the Board. It has been approved by the Calgary Chamber's Board of Directors.

The Strategy will be updated to reflect the changing needs of our members, as well as our evolving context, ongoing learning, and changes in capacity.

Definitions

Inclusion: Inclusion refers to the practice of creating environments in which any individual or group can be and feel welcomed, respected, supported and valued to fully participate. It involves removing barriers to participation and ensuring that everyone has equal access to opportunities and resources.

Diversity: Diversity refers to the presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes within a group, organization or society. These qualities and attributes may include but are not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs and political beliefs.

Equity: Equity involves ensuring fairness and justice in the distribution of opportunities, resources, and outcomes. It recognizes that individuals and groups may have different starting points and acknowledges the need to address these differences to achieve equality of opportunity and outcomes.

Accessibility: Accessibility aims to ensure everyone, regardless of their background or circumstances, can fully participate in and benefit from various aspects of society. It refers to the design of products, services, environments and information in a way that can be easily accessed by anyone, regardless of any barriers, including language barriers, physical disabilities, cultural differences, literacy levels, and technological proficiency.

Definitions

Equality: Equality involves ensuring all individuals or groups are treated fairly and have the same rights, opportunities, and access to resources and privileges. It aims to eliminate discrimination and promote fairness and justice for everyone.

Equity-deserving groups: This term recognizes that certain groups have historically faced systemic barriers and discrimination, resulting in unequal access to opportunities, resources, and power. Equity-deserving groups include marginalized communities such as racial and ethnic minorities, women, LGBTQ+ individuals, people with disabilities, and others who have been historically disadvantaged or marginalized. We use 'equity-deserving groups' instead of 'equity-seeking groups' to emphasize that these communities are inherently deserving of equitable treatment and resources, acknowledging their historical and systemic marginalization, rather than implying that they are seeking equity as a preference or choice.

Our priorities

OUR 'WHY'

We know our people are at their best when they feel included, respected and have equitable access to opportunities

Our mandate is to support businesses – including in their work to advance IDEA in their own organizations

We know our voice carries weight and our platform is far-reaching. Sharing the stage can be transformational

OUR PRIORITY

Develop an **internal** culture and organizational processes that reflect our commitment to IDEA

Connect **members** with resources as they seek to advance their own IDEA-related work

Use our **voice** and platform to amplify others and advocate for an inclusive economy

Priority 1

Develop an internal culture and organizational processes that reflect our commitment to IDEA

- Providing access to educational opportunities for staff and volunteers
- Updating our hiring and employment practices
- Ensuring the ways we interact with members are inclusive
- Gathering data to better understand our membership and our gaps
- Aligning our brand with our values

Priority 2

**Connect members with resources
as they seek to advance their own
IDEA-related work**

- Sharing resources with our membership and the business community
- Convening our business community to share best practices
- Communicating the Chamber's progress to serve as an example for others
- Ensuring community responsiveness by providing opportunities for member input

Priority 3

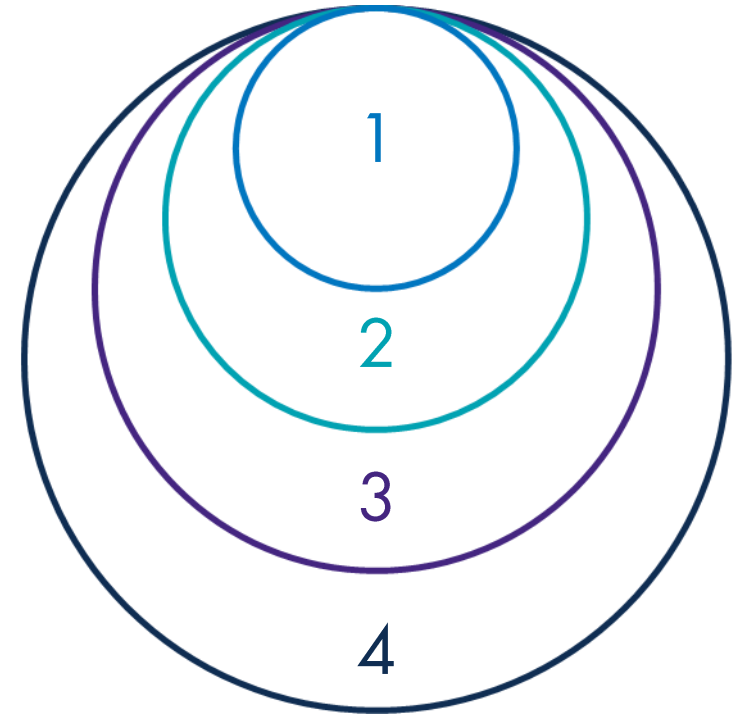
Use our voice and platform to amplify others and advocate for an inclusive economy

- Amplifying and championing diverse voices within our community
- Building and strengthening relationships with diverse communities
- Advocating for systemic change through our public policy work

Spheres of engagement

The Chamber has four key spheres of engagement. Each of these requires consultation, partnership and influence with different audiences. Operating within all these spheres will allow us to advance our key priorities collaboratively and effectively.

1. The Chamber's internal processes, systems and culture.
2. The Chamber's relationships with equity-deserving businesses and professionals, including partners and members.
3. The Chamber's role in bringing together our membership broadly with equity-deserving businesses and professionals.
4. The Chamber's role in advocating to government on behalf of members, in effort to achieve a more inclusive economy.



Our scope

In scope

- Each of our activities must **connect to the Chamber's strategic plan**, and one of the three IDEA priorities outlined above.
- We will **focus on the business community** and issues related to an inclusive economy.
- We will **do what we are best positioned to do**, partnering or providing referrals elsewhere.
- We will **connect our members with resources and each other** to support their IDEA-related efforts.
- We will be **mindful of our capacity and constraints**, including time, resources and voice, prioritizing areas where we can have the most meaningful impact.

Out of scope

- We will not engage when there is **no direct impact to business community**.
- We will not take positions that are **misaligned with** a significant portion of **our membership**.
- We will not pursue activities that are likely to increase **polarization** within our business community.
- We will not directly **provide services** to the business community or our members.
- We will not engage where we do not have the **capacity** to do so meaningfully.

About the Calgary Chamber

The Calgary Chamber of Commerce exists to help businesses reach their potential.

As the convenor and catalyst for a vibrant, inclusive and prosperous business community, the Chamber works to build strength and resilience among its members and position Calgary as a magnet for talent, diversification and opportunity.

As an independent, non-profit, non-partisan organization founded in 1891, we build on our history to serve and advocate for businesses of all sizes, in all sectors across the city.