



SDI: Employee Values Proposition

Strategic Diversity Initiatives (SDI) is a certified LGBTQIA+ and Woman-owned consulting firm providing authentic expertise in education and consultation in diversity, equity, inclusion, and access (DEIA). We are a team with over 350 years of combined experience, including some of the best and brightest leaders in the field of justice work. We are a feminist and collaborative organization striving to be antiracist.

SDI helps organizations address bias, create inclusion, and promote development in DEIA. Working across industries, including corporate, government, healthcare, K-12 and higher education, law, and non-profit sectors, SDI empowers our clients to effectively translate DEIA needs, barriers, and opportunities into individualized, pragmatic, and effective practices that shape ongoing growth and systemic change. Our partnership allows clients to attract and retain the best talent, drive measurable return on investments (ROIs), improve the relational skills of their leaders, and increase participation and productivity by expanding inclusion, belonging, and access for all employees.

As the work of DEIA is continuous, complex, and nuanced, SDI believes that effective and iterative change starts with building truthful and collaborative relationships. Our team members are expert relationship builders, simultaneous holders of adversity and hope, and seasoned practitioners in the complexity of collaboration amidst various stages of justice work and change. These essential and fluid skills support relational effectiveness toward change in the services we provide.

SDI's Culture

At SDI, we embrace the lived experiences and unique skills of each team member. We recognize that our differences give us strength. We honor how each team member approaches their justice work, and we ensure each team member's voice is encouraged and valued. We embrace the individuality of our team members, as well as the collective movement that we create together as SDI.

With a long history in justice work, SDI believes that real change happens over time by meeting clients where they are. Our approach to DEIA work focuses on relationship building, self-awareness, and emotional intelligence, building capacity within organizations for sustainable change. Whether our clients are new to their DEIA journey or far along their path, we develop allies and leaders by preparing them to manage pushback, address systemic barriers, and build an equitable community within their organizations.

As social justice practitioners living with marginalized identities, we are aware of the trauma inherent in systems of oppression that work to “other” particular groups because of certain social identities. At SDI, instead of denigrating difference, we celebrate and embrace the differences between us because, as Audre Lorde points out, difference is the catalyst for creativity and innovation. As such, we work to cultivate and enhance the unique gifts and perspectives of each member of the team. Who you are and what you do are of equal importance at SDI.

At SDI, we know that conflict and tension are necessary ingredients for personal, professional, and collective growth. The emotional intelligence we bring to our client work, we also bring to our team. We believe that trust is not built in perfection but in repair. We know all team members will make mistakes, unintentionally causing harm. We hold every team member accountable for their words and behavior. And we create the space and understanding necessary to repair and move towards increased accountability and trust.

Finally, while power typically flows vertically in one direction regarding management, SDI works to minimize hierarchy by operationalizing a circular organizational structure. We make decisions collaboratively and equitably, as much as possible, by seeking the input of all our team members. We prioritize the perspectives of those most affected and/or those who could be most negatively impacted by a decision. While we are all impacted by a new policy or practice, we are also impacted differently depending on the social identities and/or positions we hold.

Statement of Welcome

SDI is committed to equity and values the perspectives and lived experiences of team members who contribute to our vision and mission. We actively commit to mirroring the diversity of the communities with whom we partner in all aspects of our work, including our leadership and larger team. We welcome team members who represent a diversity of identities across race, ethnicity, culture, nationality, age, body size, religious/spiritual identities, abilities, social class, gender, and sexual orientation. We strongly encourage applications from Indigenous people, people of color, immigrants, refugees, women, people with disabilities, members of the LGBTQIA+ community and those with unique perspectives and experiences within the DEIA landscape.

Work/Life Balance

Work/life balance is an integral part of the value-driven work to which SDI is committed. SDI knows that justice work can be consuming. As part of professional development, SDI offers an open paid time off (OPT) structure.

SDI professionals create and participate at the highest level of DEIA practices. Team members of this caliber know best what is needed to complete job objectives and goals by managing flexibility and time off. SDI team members are mindful of how absence affects the rest of the team. Communicating directly and accordingly so that job responsibilities are met and team members have what is needed allows for this type of trust-based time off structure.

Hybrid Location

SDI utilizes a hybrid work model. Travel and in-person work may be required when requested by clients, providing training or consultation, and/or attending SDI in-service training. Long-distance travel fees are covered by SDI. The remaining work is conducted from home offices, providing team members with greater flexibility and autonomy.

Equitable Pay and Profit Sharing

SDI strives to ensure that our full-time employees are paid equitably through competitive salaries and a 401k contribution. No one earns less than a livable wage at the company. Starting salaries are determined by a mix of current market rates and candidate contributions of education and experience. Committed work and dedication are rewarded with annual performance review salary increases. Long distance travel expenses necessary for job function are covered upfront by SDI so that no financial burden is accrued by the employee.

Equitable pay at SDI also means this: when SDI does well, team members do well. In other words, when the company is profitable, the wealth is spread to our most valuable assets—you, our employees—through profit-sharing and bonuses.

Continuing Education and Professional Development

As leaders in this field, we commit to ongoing learning and development in order to provide our clients and one another with best practices when engaging in DEIA work. SDI invests in our employees by a) supporting professional development opportunities, b) hosting an annual retreat where we come together to support and learn from each other, and c) providing virtual consultation lunches to troubleshoot challenges we encounter, as well as celebrate our wins together.