
DIVERSITY, INCLUSION & BELONGING GLOSSARY OF TERMS



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Olla is a Diversity and Inclusion, Intercultural trainer and consultant. She was born in Moscow, grew up in New Zealand, studied and worked in Spain, South Korea and Australia and is currently based in Berlin, Germany with her Dutch family.

She lectures at several business schools in Germany and supports startups and multinational corporations with D&I strategy development, workshops and training sessions on the topics of discrimination, harassment, racism, unconscious bias, cultural sensitivity, inclusive leadership, inclusion by design, inclusive internal community building, anti-microaggression in the workplace and many other topics.

She is a passionate community leader who brings people together to co-create, collaborate and challenge the status quo. In addition to D&I, Olla is serious about Learning & Development and has founded BerLearn, a community that brings together L&D professionals from diverse backgrounds and expertise in order to foster knowledge exchange, innovation and professional development.

You can learn more about Olla and get in touch via <https://www.ollajongerius.com/>. You can learn more about BerLearn here <https://berlearn.com/> When Olla is not strategizing or training, you can find her sailing, playing cajon, bouldering, reading or enjoying a glass of red with her husband and friends.

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A



A-gender Not identifying with any gender, not feeling a belonging to any gender.

Ableism A belief that non-disabled individuals are superior to disabled individuals.

Accessibility The extent to which a facility is easily approachable and usable by individuals with disabilities.

Accommodations modifications or adjustments that enable an individual with disability to have an equal opportunity to perform the job on the same level as non-disable individuals. Can refer to physical, technology or policy modifications. E.g. Screen reader software, a ramp or inclusive restroom, adjustable lights, layout of the workplace etc.

Accomplice An individual who focuses on dismantling the structures that oppress that individual or group. It is often seen as 'putting allyship into action'. E.g. a male arguing for equal pay for women, a white person standing up for racial justice.

Acculturation A process of sharing and learning the cultural traits, nuances, norms or social patterns of another group, a merging of cultures as a result of prolonged contact.

ADHD (Attention deficit disorder) A neurobehavioral condition categorized by the challenges with attention, hyperactivity and impulsivity.

Affinity bias An unconscious tendency to favour or to get along with someone who is just like you.

Affirmative action A policy that is not colour/gender/religion blind and takes into account an individual's race, sex, gender identity or religion to increase opportunities provided to a underrepresented group with a goal to 'level the playing field'.

Ageism Discrimination against people based on differences in age, usually of younger persons against older.

Agnosticism A view that the existence of God, or the supernatural is unknown or unknowable, that it cannot either be a belief or disbelief in a God or divine being. A person who is agnostic claims that it's impossible for human beings to know anything about how the universe was created and if divine beings exist.

Albinism A genetic disorder that is defined by the absence of pigmentation and affects eyes and/or skin.

Allyship A continuous process in which someone with

privilege and power seeks to learn and listen about the experiences of a marginalized group of people, and then stands up to support it. E.g. a male identifying himself as a feminist, a heterosexual person supporting LGBTQIA community etc.

Androgynous A person whose identity is between two traditional genders.

Androgyny A state of being neither specifically feminine or masculine, exhibition of both male and female characteristics. It can be appearance biological condition and a form of gender expression.

Anti-racism An active and conscious form of action against multidimensional aspects of racism and systemic oppression of marginalized groups.

Antisemitism Hostility, discrimination or prejudice against Jewish people.

Asexuality A spectrum of low or absent sexual attraction towards anyone, which is considered to be a sexual orientation by some. Someone who is asexual may or may not experience romantic attraction.

Assigned sex Nominal sex or gender that has been assigned, assumed or decided upon an infant at birth based on the appearance of external reproductive organs. The assigned sex may or may not correspond to the actual chromosomal sex.

Assimilation The process of becoming a part, or making someone become a part of a society, culture, country etc.

Atheism A view that rejects the existence of God, the divine or supernatural.

Autistic spectrum A condition related to brain development characterized by rigid thinking, restrictive and repetitive patterns of behaviours, hypersensitivity and social communication challenges.

B



Belonging A sense of security, affinity, acceptance and comfort in an environment, group or specific place.

Bias A prejudice, a tendency to prefer one person/group or thing over another, and to favour that person or thing.

Bicultural A person who grew up between two or more cultures.

Bigotry An unreasonable or irrational attachment to negative stereotypes and prejudices, intolerance of the opinions of others.



(non-) binary A person whose gender does not fall under two traditional genders, someone who does not identify themselves as either male or female and sees third gender as a more appropriate gender to identify themselves with. A person uses and feels comfortable when others use the pronoun 'they/them/their' when talking/describing them. Often, the term non-binary might mean something different to different people.

BIPOC An umbrella term/ acronym that stands for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour.

Bisexual Sexual attraction to both men and women.

Blame culture A tendency to look for a person, group or organisation that can be held responsible for a bad state of affairs. A culture that often discourages the possibility of mistakes and failure leading to fear and killing creativity.

Brave space An environment that recognizes the differences in opinions, values and worldviews, encourages a dialogue and difficult, often uncomfortable conversations.



Caucasian A white person of European origin.

Chronic condition A long-term health condition or disease that is of long duration (more than three months) and has a generally slow progression.

Cis-gender A person who identifies as the gender they were assigned at birth. The opposite is transgender.

Closeted Keeping something secret, especially the fact of being homosexual. A person who hides their true sexual orientation from the public and those around them.

Code-switching An adjustment in the way one speaks/ behaves depending on the situation.

Colonization Establishing control by one power over the indigenous people of an area.

Colour-blindness A well-intentioned belief that there is no 'colour', 'gender' or sexual orientation and that we are all the same which fails to acknowledge the existence of biases, a system of injustice and the current narrative.

Coming out A public self-disclosure of someone's sexual orientation, gender identity or neurodiversity.

Cultural appropriation A situation that occurs when a dominant culture adapts certain aspects of a minority group and uses it as their own without recognizing

or respecting the meaning, history or importance of things used: dress, hair, images, rituals, artifacts, way of speaking, makeup etc.

Cultural competence/intelligence An ability and skill to understand and adapt to racial, social, and cultural differences.

Cultural relativism A view that does not judge other cultures based on their own. Could be absolute (a culture and its customs/values should not be questioned by outsiders) and critical (creates questions about certain cultural practices and whether to accept them or not).

Cultural sensitivity A willingness to understand, to be aware of and accept racial, social, and cultural differences without any judgment.

Cross-cultural Dealing with and comparing one culture against two or more other cultures.

Culture The collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others. This could include patterns such as language, norms, traditions, values, customs, artifacts, rituals and arts.



Diaspora A dispersion of people from their homeland or community formed by people who have exited or been removed from their homeland.

Disability A cognitive, developmental, intellectual, mental, physical, sensory impairment that may also be a combination of these.

Discrimination An unjust and prejudicial act of making a distinction between different groups of people on the grounds of race, age, or sex.

Diversity A reality created by individuals and groups from a broad spectrum of demographic and philosophical difference. The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance, tolerance and respect of the differences.

Dominant culture A culture of a particular organisation or a group that is dominant within a particular political, social or economic entity, in which multiple cultures are present.

Dyscalculia A condition affecting arithmetic calculations. Does not affect cognitive abilities.



Dyslexia A condition affecting literacy and language-related skills. Does not affect cognitive abilities.

Dyspraxia A condition affecting physical coordination. Does not affect cognitive abilities.

E



Emotional tax A state of feeling different from a group because of gender, race or ethnicity, which causes an inability to bring one whole unique self to work; instead, one has to be on guard to protect themselves against bias.

Employee Resource Group (ERG, or Diversity Groups) Voluntary, employee-led identity or experience-based groups that build community and foster a diverse, inclusive workplace aligned with organizational mission, values, goals, business practices, and objectives.

Equality The effect of treating others fairly as there is no difference, an assumption that everyone has the same opportunities and receives the same treatment and support.

Equity The effect of treating others fairly based on their respective needs and taking into account individual differences (e.g. physical).

Ethnicity The ethnic group(s) that people identify with or feel they belong to. Ethnicity is self-perceived and is a measure of cultural affiliation, as opposed to race, ancestry, nationality or citizenship.

Ethnocentrism A belief that one's own nationality, group or ethnicity is superior to others. Ethnocentric individuals draw biased and prejudiced conclusions about other cultural groups based on their own cultural values, norms, and traditions.

Exclusion The act or instance of not allowing or not accepting someone to take part in an activity or being part of a group, the opposite of inclusion.

F

Feminism An advocacy for women's rights on the ground of equality of sexes.

G

Gay An individual who is sexually, emotionally and romantically attracted to the members of the same sex.

Gender A physical and/or social condition of being male or female, the range of characteristics that refers to socially constructed differentiation between masculinity and femininity. Depending on the context,

these characteristics may include biological sex (male, female, or an intersex/non-binary), sex-based social structures or gender identity.

Gender expression External manifestations of gender which is expressed through a name, pronouns, behaviour, body characteristics, haircut etc.

Gender fluidity Having a fluid or unfixed gender identity, not identifying with a single fixed gender.

Gender identity An internal sense of self-identification with gender. The identity can either match or differ from sex assigned at birth.

Genderism The belief that gender is a binary, with two fixed categories (male and female), and that a person's gender is directly linked to their sex at birth.

Gender non-conforming An individual that does not behave or express themselves in a way that society expects to see in a traditional way, someone who does not fit into a category of gender norms that a society expects of them.

Genderqueer A person who rejects notions of static categories of gender, does not subscribe to conventional gender distinctions but identifies with neither, both, or a combination of male and female genders and embraces a fluidity of gender identity and often, though not always, sexual orientation.

H



Harassment A threatening, aggressive behavior towards members of a particular group (sexual, racial).

Hate crime A crime motivated by race, gender, religion, sexual identity or orientation, national origin, disability etc.

Heteronormativity A belief that heterosexuality is the only normal, default, preferred mode of sexual orientation. Other sexual identities are considered 'unnatural'.

Heterosexuality Sexual, emotional and romantic attraction to the members of the opposite sex.

Homophobia The fear of hatred of homosexuality (or any other non-heterosexual identities).

Homosexuality Sexual, emotional and romantic attraction to the members of the same sex.





Imposter syndrome A psychological pattern and chronic self-doubt in which an individual doubts their talents, achievements and capabilities and experiences an internalized fear of being exposed as a 'fraud'.

In-group A group with common interests, often with similar beliefs and characteristics that excludes outsiders.

Inclusion An act of bringing traditionally excluded individuals and groups into systems, spaces and activities that share power and promote safe and brave space for individual expression of the whole self.

Inclusive language A language that minimizes assumptions and avoids the use of certain words that may unintentionally exclude a particular group of people (e.g. gender-neutral language, proper pronouns, active voice, people-first language). A language that creates a safe space and invites a traditionally marginalized group into conversation.

Inequality Social or economic disparity, difference in status, rights and opportunities between individuals or particular groups.

Integration Incorporation of individuals of different groups into organisation by creating dedicated clusters for these people to co-exist in a society.

Intercultural Dealing with or comparing more than two different cultures. Intercultural communication focuses on the mutual exchange of ideas and cultural norms and the development of deep relationships.

Intersectionality Multiple forms of social identity that create a combination/overlap of inequality, discrimination and systemic oppression experienced by an individual (a black woman, a homosexual man, a disabled transgender person).

Intersex An individual with reproductive organs of both male and female that are active at once.



LGBTQIA+ An acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (and in some cases, "questioning"), intersex, asexual and '+' stands for other orientations and identities.



Marginalisation A treatment of a group, a person or concept as insignificant or inferior.

Masking Consciously or subconsciously hiding characteristics and behaviours that are on a spectrum of neurodiversity (e.g. autism). Putting a 'neurotypical' ('normal') mask with a goal to fit into society.

Micro-assault A form of microaggression that is commonly overt, explicit and intentional form of slurs with a goal to hurt the intended victim.

Micro-insult A form of microaggression that communicates that a demographic group is not respected, it conveys rudeness and insensitivity that demeans a person's identity (e.g. racial, gender) in an indirect and subtle way, verbal or non-verbal, often packaged as a compliment; implying that a person is a slight exception to the stereotype (can be both intentional or unintentional). ('You are so pretty for a black girl' 'You are so different from your nationality!' 'I don't even see you as black', 'You're very technical for a girl').

Micro-invalidation A form of microaggression that minimizes, diminishes negates or nullifies the feelings, experiences or thoughts of individual members of a particular marginalized group ('I don't see colour/gender', 'We are all the same', 'Don't be so sensitive, I didn't mean in that way').

Microaggression A subtle and indirect insensitive comments or behaviors, sometimes unintentional that lead to a sense of exclusion and discrimination against members of traditionally marginalized groups ('Your English is so good!' 'You look so exotic, where are you from?' 'You sound so white').

Misgendering Using an incorrect pronoun or label to address a person that does not reflect the gender which they identify themselves with.

Model minority A myth about a minority demographic, whose members are stereotypically seen to achieve a higher degree of socioeconomic success than the population average, thus serving as an example of 'model' to outgroups. (e.g. East and South Asians in USA, Vietnamese in Germany etc) It leads to generalisation, stereotypes and erases the differences among individuals. ('You must be good at math!' 'Do you practice piano every day?' 'Your people are so smart and hard-working, you'll be rich when you grow up').

Multi-cultural A society/organisation that consists of/relates to people of many different nationalities or culture.



N



Neurodivergence A state of being neurodivergent, genetic or innate.

Neurodivergent An individual that has neurodiverse characteristics and behaviours, the term used for those with a neurodivergent condition/processing difference such as dyslexia, dyspraxia etc.

Neurodiverse A group of people where one or more members differ from others in terms of their neurocognitive functioning, this refers to all of us e.g. a neurodiverse workforce will include those with and without a neurodivergent condition such as dyslexia.

Neurodiversity A neurological differences in how people process information; a range of differences in individual brain function and behavioural traits and characteristics, regarded as part of normal variation in the human population.

Neurodiversity paradigm A specific perspective on neurodiversity that sees neurodiversity as a natural approach of human diversity and not as a 'disorder or disability'; it rejects the belief that there is only one 'normal' type of brain functioning that is accepted by a society.

Neurominority A population of neurodivergent people that share one of multiple similar forms of neurodivergence.

Neurotypical An individual who thinks, perceives, and behaves in ways that are considered to be "normal" by the general population, a person not displaying or characterized by autistic or other neurologically atypical patterns of thought or behaviour. The opposite of neurodivergent.

Non-racism A passive rejection and opposition from behaviors, actions that are considered racist by a society as whole. A belief that one is not a racist.

Non-white A person whose origin is not predominantly European.

Normalisation Acceptance and inclusion of people with disabilities into the mainstream society, and enabling and empowering them to experience normal patterns of everyday life, without any obstacles, similar to the rest of society.



O

Oppression An act of unfair and unjust exercise of power, where a particular group of people is treated in an unfair and cruel way that prevents them from accessing opportunities and freedom in the society.

Out-group Persons excluded from in-group.

P

Pan-Sexual Sexual, romantic or emotional attraction regardless of their sex or gender identity.

Person of colour A person whose origin is not predominantly European.

Phobia An extreme, excessive fear of something, a type of anxiety disorder.

Pigeonholing A tendency to assign an individual or a group into a particular category, typically overly simplified and restricted.

Polarization A sharp division of two highly contrasted opinions and beliefs.

Positive discrimination Special or positive measures that have intention to elevate the underrepresented group to foster great equality and provide them with easier access to opportunities that were previously beyond reach.

Privilege An advantage, a special right not enjoyed by everyone, but given to a particular group of people.

Pronoun A word that uses to address an individual who is being discussed. A gender-neutral pronoun does not associate a gender with an individual (they,their/them).

Q

Queer An umbrella term for people who do not identify themselves as heterosexual or/and cisgender.



R



Racial profiling The act of suspecting someone of having committed a crime or intending to commit an offense on a basis of their skin colour or ethnic origin.

Racism Discrimination, prejudice against a group of people on the basis of their skin colour or belonging to a particular ethnic group.

Racism (institutional) A type of racism that is embedded as a normal practice in the society. It could exist in education, criminal justice system, healthcare and other areas or organisation.

Racism (interpersonal) A type of racism that occurs between individuals.

Racism (internalised or individual) A type of racism that exists within individuals. It could be a negative view or even rejection of an individual's own culture, especially when a person is trying to assimilate or integrate into a new culture.

Racism (structural) A system in which public policies, practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate racial group inequity.

Racism (systemic) A type of racism that is embedded as a normal practice in the society. It could exist in education, criminal justice system, healthcare and other areas or organisation.

Relativism The view that the truth, knowledge, right or wrong is not universe or absolute but unique and relative to a particular culture or society.

Romani people A member of a traditionally itinerant people who originated in northern India and traditionally having a nomadic way of life, living widely dispersed across Europe and North and South America and speaking a language that is related to Hindi.

S



Safe space An environment where the expression of identity or experience can exist without fear of repercussion or judgement and without the pressure to educate. While learning may occur in these spaces, the ultimate goal is to provide support.

Scapegoat A person or a group of individuals who are blamed for mistakes, failures and wrongdoings of others for no valid reason.

Segregation An action of setting someone apart from others based on race, sex or religion.

Sex Biological differences between males and females.

Sexism A prejudice, stereotyping, or discrimination on the basis of sex, typically against women.

Sexual orientation An individual's romantic, emotional and sexual attraction to persons of the same, opposite, both, more than one gender or regardless of gender.

Stereotype A widely believed, fixed and oversimplified idea about a particular group of people that does not have a solid ground.

Stigmatization A discrimination, disapproval of a person or a group of individuals due to behaviours or characteristics that are distinguish them from the rest of society (culture, gender, race, health, social status).

Straight An individual who is sexually, emotionally and romantically attracted to the members of the opposite sex.

T

They A third-person plural personal pronoun. It is also used with singular meaning, sometimes to avoid specifying the gender and achieve gender neutrality in inclusive language.

Third culture kid (TCK) An individual who was raised in a culture other than their parents'. Third culture refers to the mixed identity and sometimes, confusion when it comes to national identity.

Tokenism An action of pretending or making a symbolic effort of dealing with a lack of diversity in an organisation. This is done by recruiting, or visibly showcasing a small number of people from marginalised groups to public (job ads, commercials) with a goal to appear more diverse and progressive than it is in reality.



Tourette Syndrome A disorder that involves repetitive movements or unwanted sounds (tics) that can't be easily controlled.

Transgender A person whose gender identity does not correspond to the sex they were assigned at birth.

Transsexual A person whose gender identity does not correspond to the sex they were assigned at birth. A person often undergoes medical assistance to be referred to as their gender identity.



White fragility Discomfort and defensiveness of a white person when discussing racial inequality and injustice.

White saviorism An action or help by white person to non-white people in a self-serving and often condescending manner.

White shame/guilt A guilt by some white individuals who recognize the legacy of racism, the benefits of white privilege and how they benefited from it and shame for harm and damages caused by racial inequality and injustice.

White supremacy A racist belief that white people are superior to other races.



Xenophobia A fear, hatred, prejudice or dislike of people from other cultures/countries.



BONUS MATERIAL - RECOMMENDED BOOKS

Blindspot: Hidden Biases of Good People by Mahzarin R. Banaji

Building For Everyone: Expand Your Market With Design by Annie Jean-Baptiste

Cross-Cultural Management by Mai Nguyen-Phuong-Mai

Deutschland Schwarz Weiss by Noah Sow

Divergent Mind by Jenara Nerenberg

Eure Heimat ist unser Albtraum by Fatma Aydemir

Everyone Can Thrive by Jennifer Brown

exit RACISM: Rassismuskritisch denken lernen by Tupoka Ogette

Face Value by Alexander Todorov

Farbe bekennen by Katharina Oguntoye

Good immigrant by Nikesh Shukla

Inclusion by Jennifer Brown

Inclusive Leadership by Charlotte Sweeny & Fleur Bothwick

Invisible Women by Caroline Criado Perez

How To Be An Antiracist by Ibram Kendi

How To Be An Inclusive Leader by Jennifer Brown

Me And White Supremacy by Layla Saad and Robin DiAngelo

Neurotribes by Steve Silberman

Quiet by Susan Cain

So You Want to Talk About Race by Ijeoma Oluo

Subtle Acts of Exclusion by Tiffany Jana and Michael Baran

The Autistic Brain by Temple Grandin

The Culture Map by Erin Meyer

The Diversity Bonus by Scott Page

The End Of Average by Todd Rose

The Gendered Brain by Gina Rippon

The Geography of Thought: How Asians and Westerners Think Differently... Richard Nisbett

The Inclusion Nudges Guidebook by Lisa Kepinski

The Power of Disability by Al Etmanski

Third Culture Kids: The Experience of Growing

Up Among Worlds by David C. Pollock

This Chair Rocks: A Manifesto Against Ageism by Ashton Applewhite

Tribal Leadership by Dave Logan, John King, Halee Fischer-Wright

Use Your Difference To Make A Difference by Tayo Rockson

We Cant Talk About That At Work! by Mary-Frances Winters

What If by Steve L. Robbins

What Works: Gender Equality by Design by Iris Bohnet

White Fragility by Robin DiAngelo

Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? by Beverly Daniel Tatum

Why I'm No Longer Talking To White People

About Race by Reni Eddo-Lodge

Yalla, Feminismus by Reyhan Şahin