



## EMPIRE STATE UNIVERSITY

### Guidelines for SUNY Empire Employee Affinity Groups (EAGs)

Recruiting and retaining a highly engaged, diverse workforce is central to SUNY Empire's mission. Employee affinity groups (EAGs) are employee-led and facilitated groups formed around interests, backgrounds, identities, and common bonds. The primary goal of EAGs is to promote diversity, openness, understanding, and inclusiveness. Through participation in the groups, employees foster a positive work environment at SUNY Empire by actively contributing to its mission, values, and efforts specific to diversity and inclusion.

The intention of the EAGs is to create a safe space for individuals and their allies or advocates to share their ideals, experiences, and information. These groups are one example of a variety of institutionally supported activities to cultivate and foster an inclusive community.

Please be advised that affinity groups are formed voluntarily, are not dictated by leadership, individual employee membership and participation are voluntary, and have a minimum membership requirement of five employees.

#### EAG Management Information

- EAGs must be open to all non-student employees. As required by state, federal law, and institutional policy, EAGs may not discriminate based on race or ethnicity, creed, color, national origin, citizenship, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, religion, disability, genetic information, or veteran status.
- EAGs are bound by institutional policies and procedures.
- Roles within EAGs are voluntary and decided upon by the group.
- Employees may use work time to prepare meeting agendas and/or other materials with supervisor approval.
- Participation in EAG activities will not interfere with the performance of the employee's regularly assigned duties.
- EAGs may be dissolved when: 1) the group chooses to dissolve itself (dissolution should be reported to ODEI), 2) SUNY Empire concludes that the group has become insufficiently accountable for its activities, 3) the group's membership falls below the minimum required, or 4) the group presents a legal or ethical liability to the institution as deemed/determined by [SUNY Empire's Ethics Officer](#).

#### Forming an EAG

Affinity groups that seek to be recognized and sponsored by SUNY Empire must apply with an application. EAGs receive:

- Recognition as an official organization of SUNY Empire and sponsorship through the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (ODEI).
- A university webpage under the Affinity Groups section of the ODEI website. The group's leadership will work directly with ODEI to establish their pages.

- The ability to create an email list serve for their group.

Requirements to Form a New Employee Affinity Group:

- A designated leader or leaders who commit to an initial term of at least two years.
- A mission statement, which must align with SUNY Empire's institutional mission and ongoing commitment to fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment for all.
- Completion of the EAGs Application to form a new employee affinity group.

Applications will be reviewed in a timely fashion by HR and the Chief Diversity Officer.

Have a great idea for a new group? Let us know by emailing [odei@sunyempire.edu](mailto:odei@sunyempire.edu).