



From the Master Brewers DEI Committee

DEFINING DEI

In October 2020, the Master Brewers Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity (DEI) Task Force sent out a survey to members asking questions about their thoughts and needs regarding DEI. Even though 75% of respondents did not identify as women, LGBTQ+, BIPOC, or disabled, the majority thought that DEI will be important to their business in the coming years. We also found that a majority of employees currently receives little to no training concerning DEI, and few are aware of any tracking their company does in terms of employee satisfaction or demographic comparison to the surrounding community. This indicates a gap between the need for and available training resources. This paper provides introductory definitions to the terms utilized in DEI work (also known as JEDI).

A basic question is, does the brewing industry fall short on diversity? Data from a 2018 Brewers Association (BA) benchmarking survey shows the demographic makeup of the industry, revealing that the majority of brewery workers identify as white and male (Fig. 1). This indicates there is an opportunity to recruit, hire, and retain a much more diverse brewery workforce (1).

Many people have considered diversity in terms of their work within the brewing industry and even day-to-day life, but the concepts behind JEDI go further in challenging and refining principles for working toward greater, more equitable work communities: justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (definitions are provided below [Source: [Merriam-Webster.com](https://www.merriam-webster.com) 2021]). Conversations about these topics can be difficult; however, with concerted efforts, organizations can emerge better and brighter than before.

justice noun

jus-tice

- 1a: the maintenance or administration of what is just, especially by the impartial adjustment of conflicting claims or the assignment of merited rewards or punishments
- 2a: the quality of being just, impartial, or fair
 - b(1): the principle or ideal of just dealing or right action
 - (2): conformity to this principle or ideal: **RIGHTEOUSNESS**
- 3: conformity to truth, fact, or reason

equity noun

eq-ui-ty

- 1a: justice according to natural law or right
 - specifically: freedom from bias or favoritism
- b: something that is equitable

diversity noun

di-ver-si-ty

- 1: the condition of having or being composed of differing elements: **VARIETY**
 - especially: the inclusion of people of different races, cultures, etc. in a group or organization
- 2: an instance of being composed of differing elements or qualities: an instance of being diverse

inclusion noun

in-clu-sion

- 1: the act of including: the state of being included
- 4: the act or practice of including and accommodating people who have historically been excluded (as because of their race, gender, sexuality, or ability)

Brewery Worker Race and Ethnicity

Position	American Indian or Alaskan Native (%)	Asian (%)	Black or African American (%)	Hispanic or Latino (%)	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (%)	White (%)	Other (%)
Owner(s)	3.7	1.9	1	2.4	0	88.4	0.6
Production staff (Brewers)	3	0.6	0.6	4	0	89	0.3
Production Staff (Non-brewers)	3.7	0.5	4.7	7.8	0.3	79.4	0.6
Production Staff (Managers)	2	1.5	0.4	4.9	0	87.9	0
Production Staff (Non-managers)	7	0.3	3.5	7.4	0	76.2	0.3

Brewery Worker Gender

Position	Male (%)	Female (%)
Owner(s)	77.4	22.6
Production Staff (Brewers)	92.5	7.5
Production Staff (Managers)	91.1	8.9
Production Staff (Non-managers)	86.7	13.3
Production Staff (Non-brewers)	86	13.9

Figure 1. Data from a 2018 Brewers Association benchmarking survey showing the demographic makeup of the industry. Source: Excerpted from [Brewers Association Brewery Owner and Employee Diversity 2018 Benchmarking Survey](#).

intersectionality noun

in-ter-sec-tion-al-i-ty

1: the complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect, especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups

In the context of JEDI work, diversity is everything that makes up an individual. It comprises internal dimensions such as gender, gender identity, race, and age, as well as external dimensions such as geographic status, relationship status, and tenure (3). There are many different dimensions of diversity: culture, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, religion, cognitive function, education, socioeconomic status, communication style and language, disability, mental health, and neurodiversity.

Diversity describes these elements as they relate to each other. No one characteristic is “diverse” in and of itself unless it adds that element to an existing group. Diversity is the outcome of just, equitable, and inclusive actions, giving fair treatment, and “inviting everyone to the table.”

There is also a business case for diversity: the more diverse a company is, the more successful it tends to be (4). According to the BA publication “[Diversity Best Practices: Laying the Groundwork](#),” the advantages of a diverse company include, but are not limited to, tapping into new and diverse customer markets for company growth, a diverse workforce with a wider variety of skills and perspectives, stronger community connections between the business and those it serves, and a more unified, accountable company (2).

Justice is when everyone is on an even playing field; equity is when everyone has equal resources and opportunities; and inclusion is when everyone gets to contribute. Justice, equity, and inclusion are key elements in growing diversity. Desiring a diverse environment doesn’t guarantee an equitable, inclusive, or just work environment. If biases can be eliminated and efforts are made to include others, diversity may be an outcome, but the environment will also be better for all.

Intersectionality is another concept to consider when working on JEDI. One must take all hurdles that people may encounter into account—otherwise your efforts may be for naught. The experiences of an individual’s life shape every aspect of their life, including their work environment.

The following are potential tactics for JEDI efforts in your organization:

- Taking time to routinely examine the organization’s culture to lead to positive change.
- Addressing implicit bias.

- Ending discriminatory processes and practices.
- Expanding opportunities to greater populations.
- Eliminating barriers to entry.
- Looking at potentially discriminatory language.
- Ensuring compensation is fair and equitable across similar jobs.
- Mirroring the population of your community.
- Providing a safe space for workplace issues to be addressed.
- Ensuring safe reporting processes.
- Creating space for dialogue.

A diverse workplace will evolve through consistent, intentional changes that are understood and supported by all stakeholders. These changes will not always be easy but working toward these changes will allow for the learning and growth necessary to achieve an overall better place to work.

Citations

1. Brewers Association. (2018). Brewery Operations Benchmarking Survey. Available online at www.brewersassociation.org/statistics-and-data/brewery-operations-benchmarking-survey. BA, Boulder, CO.
2. Brewers Association. (2021). Diversity best practices: Laying the groundwork. Available online at www.brewersassociation.org/educational-publications/diversity-and-inclusion-for-small-and-independent-craft-breweries-laying-the-groundwork. BA, Boulder, CO.
3. Gardenswartz, L., and Rowe, A. (2003). *Diverse Teams at Work: Capitalizing on the Power of Diversity*. Society for Human Resource Management, Alexandria, VA.
4. McKinsey & Company (2020). Diversity wins: How inclusion matters. McKinsey & Company, New York.

Resources

[Beer. Diversity.](#)
[Beer Culture](#)
[Crafted For All](#)
[Michael James Jackson Foundation for Brewing & Distilling](#)

Recommended Reading

[Let’s Talk about Diversity: Why It Should Matter to Everyone](#) (MBAA Webinar)
[The Time Is Now, Part 1—Understanding the Origins of Beer’s Inequity](#) (GoodBeerHunting.com)
[The Time Is Now, Part 2—Why Beer’s Culture and Workplace Practices Must Change](#) (GoodBeerHunting.com)
[The Time Is Now, Part 3—Why Inclusion, Equity and Justice Could Determine Whether Breweries Flourish or Fail](#) (GoodBeerHunting.com)