

# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity—The Trident of Destiny

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The Association of Physicians of India (API) was established in 1944 in the state of Madras, under the enthusiastic leadership of nine founding members, who came from diverse backgrounds representing the far-flung corners of our great nation: A nation with 28 states and 8 union territories; a nation which has boasted over the decades of *Unity in Diversity*, a colorful collage of faiths, traditions, culture, and 22 scheduled languages.

Our organization, with its nearly 24,000 members, is a piece of our nation. And it manifests gloriously in a diversity of race, gender, age, ethnicity, experiences, and perspectives. What we need is a sense of belonging that will lead to greater involvement and ultimately more productivity.

The key to this lies in inclusivity, where everyone feels respected and empowered to express their voices, leading to newer ideas and better outcomes.

The very concept of Diversity and Inclusivity (D&I) in every walk of life is the practice of incorporating individuals from different geographical and sociodemographic backgrounds, offering them equitable opportunities and tapping into a vast talent pool.<sup>1</sup>

The early foundations of D&I were laid in the 1940s–1960s, when the civil rights movements against racial segregation and discrimination led to groundbreaking legal landmarks. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 in the United States was a pathbreaking law prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

By the 1990s, there was a gradual change of direction from merely complying with legal dictates to acknowledging the

value of a diverse workforce. The term “multiculturalism” was coined at this time, emphasizing incorporation and appreciation of different cultural backgrounds within organizations.

The decades following the 2000s saw globalization that uplifted the concept of inclusivity, pinpointing the immense significance of full participation and integration of diverse sociocultural groups into the basic weave of an organization.<sup>2</sup>

During the 2010s, the concept further expanded to include “equity” and “intersectionality,” addressing unconscious biases and systemic inequities leading to unequal opportunities and outcomes for different groups.

Diverse viewpoints enhance creativity and innovation, without which there is stagnation and discontent. Broader representation and feedback via regular communication ensure that the communities are served with fairness and equity.<sup>3</sup>

This is a global enterprise, and our organization is not far behind. The dynamic leadership has ensured that inclusivity and equity be the cornerstone of API’s future journey ahead.

A focused endeavor has been made for the following:

- Communication and interchange of ideas either physically, online, or through social media portals.
- Encouraging the celebration of cultural events and special days by state and city branches all over the nation simultaneously.
- Linking of all state websites with the mother website so that the whole nation is abreast of the activities of all the states.

- Creation of an updated member directory with corrected contact details, which will go a long way to smoothen journal/book delivery as well as creating a unified database of information.
- Making strategic changes in policies and standard operating procedures (SOPs) for better implementation of the principles of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI).

*Unity in Diversity* should not be an ornament or a figure of speech but an actual accomplishment of a great organization. Greatness comes from the involvement and dedication of a body of passionate people who believe in the betterment and upheaval of the existing system to lead the organization to the path of glory.

Long live API

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