

**Association of Legal Writing Directors**  
**2018 – 2019 Diversity Strategic Action Plan**  
*Adopted January 3, 2019*  
*Amended February 15, 2019*

ALWD is an organization committed to developing leaders and we know that strong leaders are going to recognize the need to bring all voices to the table, to be inclusive, and to be competent in cross-cultural communication. Thus, to better serve our organizational mission, we have updated our 2017 – 2018 Diversity Strategic Action Plan, identifying four areas of priority—increasing cultural competency, increasing diversity in the organization, bias proofing ALWD’s systems, and creating an inclusive organization with a welcoming atmosphere—and revising and updating the action items in that original plan.

**Priority: Cultural Competency**

ALWD recognizes that cultural competence is indispensable to effective teaching, leadership, and communication. Thus, ALWD will equip our members with tools and training to enhance their cultural competence and also provide support for members in navigating issues of cultural competence.

**Short-Term (1 year) Action Steps**

- Develop a plan for evaluating and tracking implementation of the action steps identified for this priority.
- Create, maintain, and publicize resource list(s) that would help members navigate issues of diversity and inclusion.
- Provide continued training around cultural competency to the Board.

**Mid- to Long-Term (3 - 5 years) Action Steps**

- Develop a vision for training/workshops/conference tracks around diversity and cultural competency in the context of both teaching and legal communication. Ideally this would be done in partnership with LWI and would be executed by the Diversity Committee.
- Hold “Toolbox Conversations,” which would be conversations on diversity held on a Zoom type forum.
- Ask JALWD to solicit/look for articles, essays, and book reviews focused on cultural competency in legal communication, read broadly to include articles focused on interrupting/overcoming implicit bias in legal communication.

**Priority: Increase Diversity in the Organization**

ALWD will strive to increase the diversity of its membership and to ensure that the organization's committees, Board of Directors, and Officers will, at a minimum, reflect the diversity of the membership

**Short-Term (1 year) Action Steps**

- Develop a plan for evaluating and tracking implementation of the action steps identified for this priority.
- Launch leadership academy.
- Provide scholarships to and plan the conference for a time that maximizes the ability of all legal writing faculty to attend.

**Mid- to Long-Term (3 - 5 years) Action Steps**

- Develop practices designed to recruit a diverse pool of volunteers for committee membership and to increase the number of nominees for officers.

### **Priority: Bias Proofing ALWD's Systems**

ALWD will ensure (1) that all Committees reflect a diversity of membership and of viewpoints, to the greatest extent possible, and (2) that each Committee practices fairness and transparency in all of its selection processes, including communicating the criteria for its decisions clearly and promptly to the membership.

### **Short-Term (1 year) Action Steps**

- Develop a plan for evaluating and tracking implementation of the action steps identified for this priority.
- Draft a diversity statement for ALWD that acknowledges different kinds of diversity and emphasizes ALWD's commitment to equity and inclusion. Consider the importance of the diversity statement emphasizing equal treatment and fair process and being linked to the diversity plan.
- Ask any committee whose task involves any kind of selection process to develop a written selection policy and review its Call for Applications or Proposals to ensure that it is encouraging a wide range of applicants. Ensure that the policies include timelines and are included in the committee's handbook. Share these written policies with the membership.
- Ask the J.ALWD Board to review and revise its Editorial Board policies to ensure that those policies are drafted and followed in a way that ensures diversity both on the Editorial Board and with the selection of articles. Share the revised policies with the membership.
- The ALWD President will ensure that, in choosing members to serve on the various committees, to the greatest extent possible, each Committee reflects a diversity of members and viewpoints.
- Distribute the Committee Handbook to committee chairs each year.
- Post the final version of the Committee Handbook on the website and update it as amendments are made.
- Review term limits for Board and Officers.

### **Mid- to Long-Term (3 - 5 years) Action Steps**

- Regularly review, or ask committees to review, the Committee Handbook with an explicit focus on diversity and inclusion language and initiatives.

**Priority: Creating an Inclusive Organization/Welcoming Atmosphere**

ALWD will intentionally and thoughtfully create structures and programs that consistently promote a welcoming and inclusive environment and relationships across affinity groups.

**Short-Term (1 year) Action Steps**

- Develop a plan for evaluating and tracking implementation of the action steps identified for this priority.
- Hold small-circle book clubs or conversations, writing circles, or other social type activities.
- Create some way to identify new members at our conferences, such as with new member name tags. Find ways to facilitate interaction between new members and more experienced members.

**Mid- to Long-Term (3 - 5 years) Action Steps**

- Identify and train persons who could serve as ALWD Ambassadors from the membership to host or attend smaller social events. Ambassadors could also contact members to determine if there are other members of their LW faculty who would be interested in ALWD membership, contact those persons, and set up subsequent small group meeting(s) at upcoming LWI or ALWD events smaller LWI regional, i.e., One-Day-Workshops, events as appropriate.  
Offer in-person networking training at ALWD Conferences as part of leadership. This training should include instruction involving best practices in communicating effectively with a diverse population. Have some kind of event afterwards where we get to use what we just learned.
- Before conferences, send out email to community encouraging people to build and strengthen their networks, and provide quick tips on how to do so.