

Considerations for Centering Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Research Syntheses

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Research synthesis findings help guide critical policy and practice decisions. Synthesists must therefore take a conscientious approach to uplifting and representing the diverse experiences, cultural insights, and values of the communities they aim to benefit (Pigott & Polanin, 2020; Welch et al., 2022). Since their inception, research syntheses have adopted the limitations and biases inherent in primary research: the frequent exclusion or superficial consideration of marginalized voices and individuals stemming from the use of methodologies based in white supremacy (Laland, 2020), ableism (Gilberg, 2020), and patriarchy (Cama et al., 2016). Addressing these issues, the *Considerations for Centering Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Research Syntheses* is a pioneering effort to operationalize diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) values within each phase of the synthesis process. This resource aims to enlighten synthesis teams and their audiences, and to transform research syntheses into tools of empowerment that resonate with and honor historically oppressed perspectives.

A comprehensive and thoughtful approach is essential to effectively embed DEI values within the research synthesis process; no panacea can address the complexities involved. Instead, the *Considerations* serve as a dynamic call to action, urging research synthesis teams to rigorously examine and deconstruct their existing assumptions, frameworks, and methodologies. We acknowledge the challenges that ongoing synthesis teams may face in this transformative journey, often constrained by limited resources or stringent timelines. We suggest, therefore, the gradual incorporation of DEI elements where feasible, aiming for a seamless and complete integration in subsequent projects. This phased approach allows for continuous learning and adaptation, ensuring that DEI principles become an intrinsic part of the research synthesis fabric over time.

Several intentional word choices bear explicit enumeration. In place of the misunderstood and overused “stakeholder” (MacDonald & McLees, 2021), we use the phrases “community member” or “individual with lived experience” to convey the person or people research synthesis teams seek to support or receive support from. We use the phrase “specific groups” in place of “subgroups” because “sub” implies that the specific group is less important or beneath the overall group.

The intended audience of the *Considerations* is synthesis leaders, team members, advisory boards, funders, clients, or other affiliated parties. We anticipate that these individuals will benefit most from the *Considerations* by viewing them as part of their own, larger, cultural and linguistic competency journey. One must first reckon with their own competencies before—and while—embarking on a DEI-centered research synthesis (Brown et al., 2019). We encourage readers to consult the resources in Appendix A to assist in their journey. Interested readers will find the positionality statements of the individuals who led and contributed to the *Considerations* in Appendix B.

Considerations by Research Synthesis Phase

Determining Research Questions

Consideration: Develop research questions that center specific groups.

Elaboration: Research syntheses traditionally have focused on the overall, population-average effects of an intervention or relationship (Tipton et al., 2019), which overlook potential variation among specific groups. Creating research questions (RQs) that center specific group-level effects encourages a focus on the composition of study samples and the variation among them and, in turn, less on overall average effects. Research synthesis teams should consider the full array of specific groups available to examine, for example: sex assigned at birth, gender identity, or sexual orientation; individual, municipal, county, state, regional, or country-level socioeconomic status; mobility or disability status; second language proficiency; level of acculturation or assimilation into the dominant culture; immigration status; spiritual beliefs or practices; rural, suburban, and urban locales; and racial, tribal, ethnic, or other identities. Research synthesis teams also might consider examining the intersectionality of identities. We urge teams to examine the systems that encourage and enable the status quo, recognizing that the individuals who constitute specific groups suffer as a result. Workshopping research questions with members of the specific groups being examined increases the likelihood that the questions appropriately represent the issue being faced.

Examples of non-DEI values-centered practice	Examples of DEI values-centered practice
<p>Concentrates on findings of overall average effects</p> <p>Determines research questions in isolation or in consultation only with other synthesis leaders</p> <p>Example research question: What is the average effect of family preservation services on out-of-home placement?</p>	<p>Centers specific groups that may (or may not) benefit from the research questions</p> <p>Vets research questions with members of applicable specific groups within and outside the synthesis team</p> <p>Example research question: What is the effect of family preservation services on out-of-home placement for mothers who are racialized as Asian, Black, Latin(x), mixed-race, or white?</p>

Recruiting and Training the Research Synthesis Team

Consideration: Create a research synthesis team of individuals who reflect the samples or specific groups in the studies included in the research synthesis. Train team members as needed so everyone can participate fully.

Elaboration: Research synthesis teams should aim to reflect the population that the synthesis results seek to serve. Not all team members need to match the studies' participant characteristics, but teams should strive to include a nonzero proportion of team members who match those characteristics. Research synthesis leaders should approach recruitment by first seeking individuals with relevant lived experiences, and subsequently recruit individuals who have appropriate skills or expertise. If the team plans to include studies published in a language other than English, the teams also should include members whose first language is other than English and align with the languages of the studies' documents. Once research synthesis leaders have formed a team, the leaders should create a training curriculum that establishes a knowledge base and allows plenty of time for research synthesis skillset growth. Team leaders should resist the urge to start the synthesis process quickly and instead aim for adequate comfort with the content as a starting place. After training ends and during the research synthesis process, team members should regularly discuss what perspectives might be missing from the team and how those perspectives might be included. Staff members added to the team should participate in the same curriculum used at the beginning.

Examples of non-DEI values-centered practice	Examples of DEI values-centered practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Selects team members based on previous experiences working togetherUses technical and methodological skill sets instead of lived experiences to determine who should be included on the teamIncludes only English-speaking team members; does not include non-English-written studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Communicates staffing opportunity via broad announcement at organization, specifying staffing needsViews lived experience as equally important to technical and methodological expertise, and prioritizes recruitment of team members with lived experience over those who do notSeeks non-English-speaking team members; searches for and includes non-English studies

Forming an Advisory Board

Consideration: Seek individuals with relevant lived experiences to constitute the majority of the advisory board or technical working group.

Elaboration: Research synthesis teams should select advisory board members who represent the primary constituency they seek to serve. Surveys of research synthesis teams have indicated they currently do not (Concannon et al., 2019). Research synthesis leaders and advisory board members should work together to write an engagement plan in which all members state their intended roles and participation status. Ideally, the engagement plan specifies that advisory board members take an active role in all stages of the synthesis process, from developing research questions to sense-making. All advisory board members, therefore, must be given the necessary tools and training to ensure they feel adequately prepared to participate fully. Advisory boards should continue to include technical and methodological experts, but these individuals should constitute a limited group to ensure a diversity of perspectives and support power-sharing on the board. Compensation should be equal across the advisory board, regardless of skill set or expertise.

Examples of non-DEI values-centered practice	Examples of DEI values-centered practice
<p>Consists primarily of technical experts and synthesis methodologists, without regard for relevant lived experience</p> <p>Invites community members to share opinions at the end of the project, but rarely or inconsistently involves them before the project is complete</p> <p>Specific accessibility features, such as sign language interpreters, are only provided if requested</p>	<p>Consists mainly of community members and/or individuals with lived experiences (who may be technical or methodological experts), with a smaller proportion of technical experts and/or synthesis methodologists who do not have relevant lived experience</p> <p>Ensures that advisory board members play an active role in decision making throughout the research synthesis</p> <p>Accommodates individuals who require specific accessibility features (e.g., non-English or American Sign Language interpreters), using tools like Zoom's interpretation functionality</p>

Planning the Budget

Consideration: Include time and financial resources for processes and procedures that fall outside the traditional research synthesis framework.

Elaboration: Resources for all research—especially research syntheses—are limited and must be carefully planned. The considerations in this document may increase a research synthesis budget relative to one that does not center DEI. Research synthesis teams centering DEI likely will need more time to (a) examine documents and extract data on a broader, more comprehensive set of variables pertaining to specific groups or the research context; (b) query authors for missing specific group data; (c) engage community members, including during sense-making meetings; (d) provide accessibility services such as interpreters; (e) translate findings into different languages or for different audiences; (f) create publicly available datasets, or (g) produce open access documentation and journal articles (including open access processing fees). In addition, considering an individual’s lived experience part of their expertise will result in more equitable compensation across all synthesis team and advisory board members.

Examples of non-DEI values-centered practice	Examples of DEI values-centered practice
<p>Includes funding only for non-DEI-centered research synthesis process</p> <p>Compensates technical and methodological experts at rates higher than those for community members</p> <p>Does not budget for journal processing fees</p>	<p>Includes funding for traditional synthesis process plus monetary stipends for advisory board members, community members, and other participants with relevant lived experiences</p> <p>Includes time (i.e., additional labor hours and extended timeline) for integrated reflection on synthesis processes, consideration of cultural perspectives, and adaptation of materials for all audiences</p> <p>Publishes synthesis findings as an open access manuscript and budgets for applicable journal processing fees</p>

Discussing DEI-Centered Syntheses With Clients and Funders

Consideration: Inform clients and funders of the benefits of a DEI-centered research synthesis.

Elaboration: A DEI-centered research synthesis will require additional resources to support processes typically not included in non-DEI-centered syntheses. As a result, some clients and funders may need help recognizing the value of creating a DEI-centered research synthesis. Using the resources listed in Appendix A will help research synthesis teams build understanding among clients or funders who seek additional guidance. Research synthesis leadership also should recognize that some clients or funders might need space to increase their understanding of how the additional time or labor investments create more accurate, robust, and applicable findings. Moreover, dedicating space and time during regular check-ins to reflect on the benefits of a DEI-centered approach to research synthesis will show the team’s commitment to high-quality syntheses. Teams also should avoid an all-or-nothing style conversation around implementing a DEI-centered synthesis. Executing any number of the Considerations will start a dialogue about DEI-centered synthesis and help foster greater recognition of their value.

Examples of non-DEI values-centered practice	Examples of DEI values-centered practice
<p>Discusses DEI values only when the client asks specifically</p> <p>Avoids initiating conversations about DEI values because of potential consequences for the timeline or budget</p> <p>Maintains the status quo with clients and funders to avoid conflicting opinions</p>	<p>Presents opportunities to the client to center DEI in the synthesis project</p> <p>Develops a strategic plan that includes conversations with the client about the value of DEI-centered syntheses</p> <p>Creates space and time for conversations about aspects of DEI-centered syntheses at regular check-in meetings</p> <p>Recognizes that small changes can amount to bigger shifts in the future, while advocating for big changes at every opportunity</p>

Drafting the Synthesis Protocol and Additional Documentation

Consideration: Write language in all documentation that every team member understands in a similar way.

Elaboration: A DEI-centered research synthesis team will include staff and advisory board members of varying research experience, lived experience, and educational background. To enable all members to participate fully, team leadership should use plain language, limit jargon, and explain all terms and acronyms throughout any documentation by creating a glossary with key words, phrases, and acronyms. All team members should assess the language or phrasing used throughout the synthesis, especially in the development and use of the synthesis protocol and screening documentation, paying particular attention to concepts that require technical or methodological expertise. All team members should participate in training on the synthesis topic and the synthesis process. Such training enables each participant’s understanding to evolve and reduces the power of individuals who may have more educational expertise or synthesis experience.

Examples of non-DEI values-centered practice	Examples of DEI values-centered practice
<p>Writes documentation more easily understood by team members with research experience</p> <p>Undertakes no or limited examination of language</p> <p>Trains team members on an ad hoc basis and does not include advisory board members in the training</p>	<p>Uses language accessible to all team members and defines any specific research terms in a separate glossary</p> <p>Creates space for each member of the team to provide feedback about the synthesis protocol before it is implemented</p> <p>Trains all team members and provides full team with documentation so they understand the decisions made before and during the synthesis process</p>

Searching the Literature, Screening for Eligibility, and Extracting Data From Studies

Consideration: Use literature search, eligibility screening, and data extraction databases and tools that are freely available and enable reproducibility.

Elaboration: At the literature search stage, research synthesis teams should prioritize the use of publicly supported databases, such as ERIC (Education Resource Information Center) or MEDLINE/PubMed, in addition to publicly available gray literature databases (see National Institutes of Health, n.d.). To include as many sources as possible, teams also should search databases that warehouse studies written in languages other than English. At the eligibility screening and data extraction phases, teams should use browser-based software that allows teams from any location or time zone access to ongoing synthesis materials and efforts (e.g., [ASReview](#), [MetaReviewer](#)). Using these tools allows all team members access to screening and data extracting efforts so that they are involved in decision making and have a complete understanding of the synthesis process. Using these tools also helps future teams replicate or update previous synthesis efforts, because a record of each decision can easily be made available after concluding the synthesis. Cost-free translation tools are now also widely available, though professional translation is preferable to preserve any unique terminology or meanings.

Examples of non-DEI values-centered practice	Examples of DEI values-centered practice
<p>Searches primarily online databases that require a financial subscription</p> <p>Prioritizes ease of use over accessibility when making decisions about software</p> <p>Discounts usability of data and infrastructure in the long term</p> <p>Excludes studies written in languages other than English</p>	<p>Prioritizes, unless otherwise impossible or impractical, free online databases and uses non-paywalled publications</p> <p>Identifies opportunities for integrating freely available software into methodology (e.g., ASReview, MetaReviewer)</p> <p>Allows all team members equal access to datasets and documentation via a file sharing system (e.g., Google Drive, Open Science Framework)</p> <p>Includes studies written in languages other than English</p>

Extracting Data of Specific Group Characteristics and Analyses

Consideration: Extract any variable included in the codebook for all relevant specific groups.

Elaboration: Research synthesis teams must consider two related but distinct aspects pertaining to specific group analyses: the descriptive characteristics of the groups, such as demographic and contextual variables; and quantitative information that can be used to estimate effect sizes, such as summary statistics. When capturing demographic information, teams should write extraction questions that permit flexibility in the multiple ways primary study authors capture sample data. Writing flexible extraction questions enables synthesis team members to extract exactly what the primary study authors captured, thus decreasing misinterpretation or manipulation of the sample’s representation. For example, the codebook should allow for any combination of racial identities to be reported by the primary authors so that teams do not use an “other” category, unless the primary author’s report used such language. Teams should attempt to capture effect size information for any specific groups in the synthesis protocol, and the teams should send queries to primary authors for any missing specific group information, alongside traditional overall group queries.

Examples of non-DEI values-centered practice	Examples of DEI values-centered practice
<p>Uses rigid language adapted only when necessary for specific groups</p> <p>Pilots codebook with small group of staff or only with the synthesis team leader</p> <p>Sends author queries for specific groups only when missing specific group information, if at all</p>	<p>Includes codebook items that are flexible enough to capture various ways that primary authors could capture specific group information</p> <p>Engages a diverse team to pilot the codebook (Helpful reference: the We All Count philosophy codes the following three questions regarding identity: (1) <i>Who made the identity selection?</i> (2) <i>What categories or framework was the identity selected from?</i> (3) <i>Who determined those categories and defined their contents?</i>)</p> <p>Asks authors for missing specific group information in addition to the usual general information, even when the authors do not mention specific group analyses</p>

Conducting Quantitative, Qualitative, or Mixed Syntheses

Consideration: Synthesize findings by specific groups in addition to overall findings. For quantitative meta-analyses, synthesists also should investigate effect variation, via descriptive or moderator analyses, within specific groups.

Elaboration: Traditional syntheses—quantitative, qualitative, or mixed—focus on overall findings. These syntheses are important and should continue to be conducted and reported on; however, a sole focus on overall findings obscures underlying differential effects that can shape targeted, impactful policies for specific groups. Worse, focusing solely on overall findings may mean that treatments may be harmful to some specific groups. Quantitative meta-analyses with enough available data should disaggregate findings by specific groups, estimating intervention effects or relationships for those specific group members only. If enough data are available, analysts also might consider including specific group indicators as covariates in the moderator or meta-regression models, ideally including interactions with substantive covariates so that differential impacts can be tested. Meta-analysts also can conduct moderator analyses within specific groups, thus examining the relationship between moderator and effects for specific groups. Qualitative syntheses should conduct analyses within and among specific groups, paying careful attention to unique themes or issues that arise.

Examples of non-DEI values-centered practice	Examples of DEI values-centered practice
<p>Focuses on overall, meta-analytic averages in the abstract</p> <p>Suggests policy and practice based on overall averages</p> <p>Reports the overall, meta-analytic average in the abstract and main discussion topic</p> <p>Conducts moderator analyses for overall findings, ignoring specific groups</p>	<p>Highlights specific group findings in the abstract and briefing documents</p> <p>Suggests targeted policy and practice based on specific group findings</p> <p>Comments on data availability for specific groups, thereby normalizing the need to provide this information</p> <p>Conducts moderator analyses for each specific group with relevant data</p> <p>Analyzes qualitative data within and among specific groups</p>

Sense-Making With Advisory Board and Community Members

Consideration: Interpret findings with all research synthesis team members and additional community members.

Elaboration: How one reads and understands research synthesis findings can vary widely, depending on an audience member’s experiences, understanding of syntheses, and prior knowledge of the field. For this reason, all members of the research synthesis team, as well as additional community members, should participate in the interpretation of research synthesis findings. Synthesis leaders should present and discuss findings in a manner that conveys the meaning without scientific, statistical, or technical jargon. Graphics are preferable to describe descriptive or inferential results, especially when the underlying meaning can be conveyed with simple bar charts or line graphs. Synthesis leaders also might consider a thorough descriptive analysis that conveys not only what was found but also with and for whom. Creating and translating findings into policy recommendations also might help clarify the importance of some findings over others. Teams should treat sense-making meetings as opportunities to understand how community members will interpret findings and apply them in their own contexts. Synthesis leaders should ask all participating sense-making members to sign off on the interpretations of findings before they are published.

Examples of non-DEI values-centered practice	Examples of DEI values-centered practice
<p>Rarely engages advisory board and community members in sense making</p> <p>Uses a top-down approach instead of discussion to transmit results to advisory board members</p> <p>Fails to reflect on how audience members may interpret—or misinterpret—results based on language choices or scientific jargon in the presentation of the findings</p>	<p>Engages advisory board and community members throughout the sense-making process</p> <p>Ensures that analyses, especially moderator analysis decisions, align with the priorities of impacted communities</p> <p>Provides non-researcher translations so that anyone can participate in sense-making conversations</p> <p>Iterates the presentation of findings until all participants sign off on the interpretation</p> <p>Discusses findings in spaces accessible to all members of the community</p>

Presenting Results for and by Multiple Audiences

Consideration: Invite synthesis team members and advisory board members to translate findings in their own voices and present results alongside synthesis leaders.

Elaboration: Research synthesis leadership sometimes does not identify with the individuals or community members whom synthesis findings will affect. As a result, synthesis leaders’ language choices may not reflect synthesis findings in a way that resonates with intended audiences. Therefore, to ensure broad acceptance and understanding, research synthesis team members and community members should have the opportunity to translate findings in their own voices, using language and examples that resonate with them and their constituents. Teams also should consider distributing findings via a range of nontraditional methods, such as in short videos, X (formerly known as Twitter) or Facebook posts, other social media outlets, community gatherings, or nontechnical publications. Materials should be translated into languages spoken by community members. Making these dissemination choices will likely result in a better uptake of findings.

Examples of non-DEI values-centered practice	Examples of DEI values-centered practice
<p>Places senior synthesis leadership as the only members who can present synthesis findings</p> <p>Publishes findings in restricted-access and subscription-based journals</p> <p>Writes findings only in English</p> <p>Publishes and presents findings only at researcher-oriented conferences or workshops</p>	<p>Creates opportunities for all team members to present findings and to the audiences of their choice</p> <p>Publishes findings in technical and nontechnical journals or periodicals, ensuring that readers without subscriptions can access findings</p> <p>Translates findings to languages and examples that resonate with intended audiences</p>

Providing Public Access to Datasets, Coding Manuals, and Materials

Consideration: Provide free and public access to datasets, coding manuals, and other synthesis materials after disseminating the results.

Elaboration: Despite relying on publicly available information, research synthesis teams rarely make available all research synthesis datasets and documents (Polanin et al., 2020). Future teams may be interested in conducting or updating the synthesis yet lack the resources to start from the beginning. Scarce resources should not be used to repeat previously conducted research; therefore, teams should consider making all coding materials, supporting materials, statistical analysis software scripts, and synthesis datasets publicly available on a stable, lasting, and free access project repository such as Open Science Framework. Reports or other synthesis findings could be published as preprints or open access on digital archives including [arXiv](#) or [Preprints](#). Teams also should limit the embargo of synthesis files only to what is necessary to publish the resulting product, so that other teams can use the work that has been done.

Examples of non-DEI values-centered practice	Examples of DEI values-centered practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Keeps all documents and datasets on an internal server or saves them to a synthesis team leader’s personal storage systemIgnores the possibility of future teams using previously collected informationWrites statistical scripts that will not be usable or readable by future teamsDoes not publish publicly available scripts or datasets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Creates and updates a project web page, which includes all datasets and documentation, on a platform that anyone can access at no costPublishes a Read Me file that includes instructions for future teams using dataLimits the embargo of synthesis files to the minimum amount of time necessary to publish findingsEmbraces collaboration among future researchers who seek to update past research syntheses

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<https://training.cochrane.org/handbook/current/chapter-16>

Appendix A—Resources for Individual Growth in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion/Cultural and Linguistic Competence

Antiracism

Kendi, I. X. (2017). *Stamped from the beginning: The definitive history of racist ideas in America*. Bold Type Books.

Kendi, I. X. (2019). *How to be an antiracist*. One World.

Oluo, I. (2019). *So you want to talk about race*. Seal Press.

Tatum, B. D. (2017). *“Why are all the Black kids sitting together in the cafeteria?”: And other conversations about race* (3rd paperback ed.). Basic Books.

TED. (2016, December 7). *The urgency of intersectionality | Kimberlé Crenshaw* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=akOe5-UsQ2o&t=199s>

University of Minnesota Libraries. (n.d.). *Conducting research through an anti-racism lens*. <https://libguides.umn.edu/antiracism/lens>

Disability and Ableism

Brown, L. X. Z. (n.d.). Ableism/language: Glossary of ableist phrases. Autistic Hoya. <https://www.autistichoya.com/p/ableist-words-and-terms-to-avoid.html>

Brown, L. X. Z. (2014, February 11). Violence in language: Circling back to linguistic ableism. Autistic Hoya. <https://www.autistichoya.com/2014/02/violence-linguistic-ableism.html>

Brown, N., & Leigh, J. (2020). *Ableism in academia: Theorising experiences of disabilities and chronic illnesses in higher education*. UCL Press. <https://doi.org/10.14324/111.9781787354975>

University of the Fraser Valley Library. (n.d.). Ableism: Language and microaggressions. <https://libguides.ufv.ca/c.php?g=705905&p=5193383>

Alternative Research Approaches

Tuck, E. (2009). Suspending damage: A letter to communities. *Harvard Educational Review*, 79(3), 409–427.

Tuck, E., & Yang, K. W. (2014). Unbecoming claims: Pedagogies of refusal in qualitative research. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 20(6), 811–818. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800414530265>

Appendix B—Positionality Statements of Contributors

More than a dozen individuals across educational backgrounds and interests, racial identities, sexual orientations, ages, and synthesis experiences contributed to *Considerations for Centering Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Research Syntheses* (the *Considerations*). The language and word choices in this document reflect the lived experiences of those contributors. Below, we include the positionality statements of the three individuals who stewarded this project.

Isabelle R. Edwards identifies as a white, nondisabled, cisgender woman. She has undergraduate training in educational equity and critical race theory and realized the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) work through her upbringing in Prince Edward County, Virginia, where the effects of Massive Resistance are still deeply intertwined with the lived experiences of local students, teachers, and other county residents. Edwards’s research interests focus on innovative methods of operationalizing social justice principles in K–12 education and research. She holds a BEd in Youth & Social Innovation from the University of Virginia.

Sarah Peko-Spicer, PhD, is a researcher in AIR’s Human Services Division. She is a Black–white biracial cisgender woman with a PhD in statistics and has spent her life navigating predominantly white (and male) spaces where she is made to feel both invisible and hypervisible. She believes that research is no different from these spaces, in that it often scrutinizes but fails to recognize/humanize/see marginalized people. It is through this lens, among others, that she provided feedback on these *Considerations*.

Joshua R. Polanin, PhD, identifies as a white, nondisabled, heterosexual, cisgender man. Dr. Polanin received his PhD in research methodology and specializes in quantitative meta-analysis. As a result, the *Considerations* lean toward his epistemological stance. He has contributed to more than 40 research syntheses, many of which he led. Before the *Considerations* were conceived, he rarely attempted to consciously center DEI principles within the synthesis process. This work has created an opportunity for Dr. Polanin to recognize his privilege and, consequently, change his practices.

We could not have accomplished this project without the contributions and support of several specific people and groups. We found considerate feedback and encouragement in the MOSAIC leadership team: Martyna Citkowicz, Laura Michaelson, David Miller, and Ryan Williams. We are also thankful to Kenneth J. Martinez, Karen B. Francis, and Monica L. Villalta, for their creation of AIR’s Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Standards for Projects, Research, and Operations (CLAS PRO), from which we began our exploration of implementing DEI principles in this work. Dr. Francis, in particular, provided considerable guidance and encouragement throughout the *Considerations*’ lifecycle. We are grateful, too, for thoughtful comments from AIR’s leadership, particularly Larry Friedman and David Myers. Finally, the *Considerations* were supported by the Methods of Synthesis and Integration Center ([MOSAIC](#)) and AIR’s [Equity Initiative](#).

With immense gratitude, we thank the following individuals for their contributions:

- **Maliha Ali, DrPH, MBBS**, is a mixed methods researcher in AIR's Health Division. Dr. Ali has more than 15 years of experience studying the interplay of social determinants of health and health outcomes. She is a strong proponent of multisector and cross-disciplinary partnership as approaches to achieving health equity, recognizing that equitable outcomes are a product of equitable processes and practices. Dr. Ali currently serves as co-project director on the Health Equity for Afghan Refugees (HEAR) project.
- **Eve Arif, BS**, is a research assistant in AIR's Human Services Division and is involved in projects that pertain to adult education, postsecondary pathways, and social network analysis. Before AIR, Eve supported the development of DEI-led policies for an organization and worked on other research projects with a focus on economic mobility for underrepresented groups. She has conducted a range of evidence syntheses, such as literature reviews and meta-analyses, and is passionate about centering DEI in every aspect of the research process.
- **Graciela Castillo, MPH**, is a senior English- and Spanish-language qualitative researcher in AIR's Health Division as part of formative research, health communication research, program evaluation, and technical assistance studies. She has extensive experience in engaging patients and stakeholders as key participants in research through focus groups, structured in-depth interviews, meetings, community engagement, and survey development. Ms. Castillo is interested in applying AIR's CLAS-PRO standards in all aspects of qualitative research, such as research participant engagement, literature reviews, and the design and implementation of research studies.
- **Andi Coombes, MSc**, is a senior qualitative researcher in AIR's International Development Division. She recently led the qualitative component of two large evidence syntheses, one on early literacy in Latin America and the other on approaches to refugee education globally. She specializes in research in humanitarian and developing contexts.
- **Tameka Porter, PhD**, is the Executive Director of Assessment, Accountability, and Performance Reporting for the Maryland State Department of Education. At the time of the initial draft, Dr. Porter was a senior researcher in AIR's Human Services Division. She has extensive experience providing research and policy guidance to local, state, and national education audiences. Her research and expertise are in examining equitable postsecondary access and opportunities, building research-practitioner partnerships, and developing frameworks and approaches for culturally responsive and sustaining teaching and learning.
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- **Terris Ross, PhD**, is managing director of the AIR Equity Initiative. In this role, Dr. Ross works to refine the long-term, substantive agenda of the Equity Initiative’s work in education and its intersections with work, community, and health. She provides intellectual and technical leadership to improve educational and economic opportunity, with deep appreciation for the challenges faced by communities segregated by race or place. Dr. Ross earned her PhD in Research, Measurement, and Statistics from the Educational Policy Studies department at Georgia State University.
- **Jada Watson, MEd, BPS**, is a research associate in AIR’s Human Services Division and a passionate advocate for education, access and equity, and community development. Jada has experience in the K–12 school system, charter schools, and postsecondary work through data collection, qualitative research, mixed methods research, survey, and interview analysis. She has worked with nonprofits and the Tennessee state capital to promote DEI initiatives through service and research. Jada received her MEd in Higher Education from the University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education, and a Federal Postsecondary Data Analytics Certificate from Postsecondary National Policy Institute’s data camp. She received her BPS in Organizational Leadership from the University of Memphis.
- **Tom Workman, PhD**, is a principal researcher in AIR’s Health Division overseeing the translation of original studies and systematic reviews that compare the benefits and harms of one or more treatment options for clinicians and patients/families. Ensuring that such research reflects the needs and interests of all patients and families is critical as health care strives to remove long-standing health disparities and inequalities. Dr. Workman is proud to work for an organization that values and embraces equity in its research and practice.



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