



How Will You
Center
Diversity, Equity,
and Inclusion
in Research
Syntheses?



HOW TO USE THESE CARDS

Flip through the cards and ask yourself, which Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) consideration(s) can I implement in my next synthesis?

Select the relevant cards and do any of the following:

- **Place a checkmark** on the card(s) for reference.
- **Move the card(s)** to the front of the ring.
- **Jot notes on the card(s)** with immediate next steps you plan to take.



CARD FRONT Considerations

Highlights key DEI considerations for each research synthesis phase



CARD BACK Examples

Offers several examples of how the considerations look in practice

GO DEEPER

Download the full document: *Considerations for Centering Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Research Syntheses* by Joshua R. Polanin, Isabelle Edwards, and Sarah Peko-Spicer



1. DETERMINING RESEARCH QUESTIONS



Consideration

Develop research questions that center specific groups.



**WHAT THIS LOOKS
LIKE IN PRACTICE**



Not Centering DEI

- Concentrates on findings of overall average effects
- Determines research questions in isolation or in consultation only with other synthesis leaders
- **Example research question:**
What is the average treatment effect of family preservation services on out-of-home placement?

Centering DEI

- Centers specific groups that may (or may not) benefit from the research questions
- Vets research questions with members of applicable specific groups within and outside the synthesis team
- **Example research question:**
What is the treatment effect of family preservation services on out-of-home placement for mothers who are racialized as Asian, Black, Latin(x), mixed-race, or white?



2. 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 so everyone can participate fully.



WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE



Not Centering DEI

- Selects team members based on previous experiences working together
- Uses technical and methodological skill sets instead of lived experiences to determine who should be included on the team

Centering DEI

- Communicates staffing opportunity via broad announcement at organization, specifying staffing needs
- Views lived experience as equally important to technical and methodological expertise, and prioritizes recruitment of team members with lived experience over those who do not

3. FORMING AN ADVISORY BOARD



Consideration

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

Go Deeper



**WHAT THIS LOOKS
LIKE IN PRACTICE**



Not Centering DEI

- Invites community members to share opinions at the end of the project, but rarely or inconsistently involves them before the project is complete
- Specific accessibility features, such as sign language interpreters, are provided only if requested

Centering DEI

- Ensures that advisory board members play an active role in decision making throughout the research synthesis
- Accommodates individuals who require specific accessibility features (e.g., non-English or American Sign Language interpreters), using tools like Zoom's interpretation functionality

4. PLANNING THE BUDGET



Consideration

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

Go Deeper



**WHAT THIS LOOKS
LIKE IN PRACTICE**



Not Centering DEI

- Includes funding only for non-DEI-centered research synthesis process
- Compensates technical and methodological experts at rates higher than those for community members

Centering DEI

- Includes funding for traditional synthesis process plus monetary stipends for advisory board members, community members, and other participants with relevant lived experiences
- 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

5. DISCUSSING DEI-CENTERED SYNTHESSES WITH CLIENTS AND FUNDERS



Consideration

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

Go Deeper



**WHAT THIS LOOKS
LIKE IN PRACTICE**



Not Centering DEI

- Avoids initiating conversations about DEI values because of potential consequences for the timeline or budget
- Maintains the status quo with clients and funders to avoid conflicting opinions

Centering DEI

- Develops a strategic plan that includes conversations with the client about the value of DEI-centered syntheses
- Creates space and time for conversations about aspects of DEI-centered syntheses at regular check-in meetings

6. DRAFTING THE SYNTHESIS PROTOCOL AND ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION



Consideration

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

Go Deeper



WHAT THIS LOOKS
LIKE IN PRACTICE



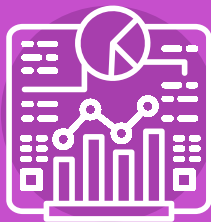
Not Centering DEI

- Writes documentation more easily understood by team members with research experience
- Trains team members on an ad hoc basis and does not include advisory board members in the training

Centering DEI

- Uses language accessible to all team members and defines any specific research terms in a separate glossary
- Trains all team members and provides full team with documentation so they understand the decisions made before and during the synthesis process

7. SEARCHING, SCREENING, AND EXTRACTING DATA



Consideration

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



**WHAT THIS LOOKS
LIKE IN PRACTICE**



Not Centering DEI

- Searches primarily online databases that require a financial subscription
- Prioritizes ease of use over accessibility when making decisions about software

Centering DEI

- Prioritizes, unless otherwise impossible or impractical, free online databases and uses non-paywalled publications
- Identifies opportunities for integrating freely available software into methodology (e.g., ASReview, MetaReviewer)

8. EXTRACTING DATA OF SPECIFIC GROUP CHARACTERISTICS AND ANALYSES



Consideration

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



**WHAT THIS LOOKS
LIKE IN PRACTICE**



Not Centering DEI

- Uses rigid language adapted only when necessary for specific groups
- Sends author queries for specific groups only when missing specific group information, if at all

Centering DEI

- Includes codebook items that are flexible enough to capture various ways that primary authors could capture specific group information
- Asks authors for missing specific group information in addition to the usual general information, even when the authors do not mention specific group analyses

9. CONDUCTING QUANTITATIVE, QUALITATIVE, OR MIXED SYNTHESSES



Consideration

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

Go Deeper



**WHAT THIS LOOKS
LIKE IN PRACTICE**



Not Centering DEI

- Focuses on overall meta-analytic averages in the abstract
- Suggests policies and practices based on overall averages

Centering DEI

- Highlights specific group findings in the abstract and briefing documents
- Suggests targeted policies and practices based on specific group findings

10. SENSE-MAKING WITH ADVISORY BOARD AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS



Consideration

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

Go Deeper



**WHAT THIS LOOKS
LIKE IN PRACTICE**



Not Centering DEI

- Uses a top-down approach instead of discussion to transmit results to advisory board members
- 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

Centering DEI

- Ensures that analyses, especially moderator analysis decisions, align with the priorities of impacted communities
- Provides non-researcher translations so that anyone can participate in sense-making conversations

11. 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.



**WHAT THIS LOOKS
LIKE IN PRACTICE**



Not Centering DEI

- Places senior synthesis leadership as the only members who can present synthesis findings
- Publishes findings in restricted-access and subscription-based journals

Centering DEI

- Creates opportunities for all team members to present findings and to the audiences of their choice
- Publishes findings in technical and nontechnical journals or periodicals, ensuring that readers without subscriptions can access findings

12. 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.



**WHAT THIS LOOKS
LIKE IN PRACTICE**



Not Centering DEI

- Keeps all documents and datasets on an internal server or saves them to a synthesis team leader's personal storage system
- Writes statistical scripts that will not be usable or readable by future teams

Centering DEI

- Creates and updates a project web page, which includes all datasets and documentation, on a platform that anyone can access at no cost
- Limits the embargo of synthesis files to the minimum amount of time necessary to publish findings



GO DEEPER

Visit the MOSAIC Website



We are committed to conducting high quality research synthesis, improving methods, and promoting the use and uptake of reviews and meta-analysis

Sign-Up for Announcements



We periodically share announcements when AIR releases new methodology-focused tools and resources. Sign-up to receive these mailings in your inbox.



Bonus Information: **INTERACTIVE DATA TOOLS**

Did you know MOSAIC offers access to **seven different interactive data tools** for researchers? MOSAIC's tools can help with everything from collection of evidence synthesis information to exploration of data from completed meta-analyses to answer desired research questions. Examples include:



MetaReviewer

Free, easy-to-use, collaborative software program designed for evidence synthesis by evidence synthesists.



Evidence Gap Map Builder

Upload your own dataset and create a structured visual framework to identify gaps in the research.