



Office of Research and Evaluation
Research Grantee Study Summary

Arizona State University

Assessing Diversity and Equity in Volunteer Inclusion (ADEVI)

What is the background for this study?

This study examines how culture and policies influence how welcoming community organizations are to volunteers of diverse backgrounds and identities. It surveys a sample of certified volunteer administrators (CVAs) and investigates their practices, policies, characteristics, and attitudes regarding diversity and inclusion. It also uses focus groups to understand the key issues and barriers to enhancing inclusion in their organizations.

What are the research questions?

The study aims to provide guidance on volunteer management and how to improve equitable access for volunteers. Research questions include:

1. What are the baseline demographics, engagement practices, and hiring policies regarding diversity, equity, and inclusion for community organizations and those that lead them?
2. What do volunteer administrators see as the key issues, promises, and barriers to enhancing inclusion in their organizations?

What data and methods are used in this study?

The study includes data from two sources: (1) a survey of professional volunteer administrators with formal and active Certification in Volunteer Administration and (2) targeted focus groups with a subset of survey respondents.

The survey aims to identify the baseline leadership demographics, engagement practices, and hiring policies regarding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) for organizations that employ volunteers. The survey includes a series of questions about policies and procedures regarding equity and inclusion in the organizations in which the CVAs work. CVAs are identified in collaboration with the Council for Certification in Volunteer Administration, which also advertises the study to CVAs through its emails and social media channels. The researchers invite CVAs to participate in the survey via email, following up for three weeks after the initial invitation to maximize the response rate. The survey is hosted on Qualtrics.

The second phase of the study includes targeted focus groups of CVAs. The researchers recruit focus group participants from the survey administration in the first phase of this study. Focus groups comprise three to six participants and seek to identify what CVAs see as the key issues, promises, and barriers to enhancing inclusion

Study At-A-Glance

Study Title

Assessing Diversity and Equity in Volunteer Inclusion

Researchers

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Grant Cohort 2022

Timeline 2022-2025

Study Location Phoenix, Arizona

Study Topic Area(s)

Social Equity

Volunteering, Nonprofit Studies, and National Service

in their organizations. Focus groups meet virtually for part of an hour via Zoom. The researchers record the guided discussion sessions, transcribe session data, and sort the information from participants for themes.

What are potential opportunities to apply study findings and/or build on this research?

The study includes a field participation element where researchers recruit interested CVAs to lead peer work groups. These groups are building a toolkit to enhance inclusion in community organizations. The toolkit will be publicly available, housed at VolunteerMatch.org beginning in Fall 2024.

The study's findings enhance the existing knowledge base and can guide the development of the field of volunteer management. Study findings also offer information for organizations on the necessary steps to improve equity and inclusion among their volunteer bases. This study also sheds light on how volunteer management practices regarding DEI might impinge on the experience of individual volunteers.

Findings from the study also have implications for AmeriCorps members and grantees. All individuals, organizations, and communities can benefit from practices and policies that improve the inclusiveness of civic engagement. This research illuminates the condition of this inclusiveness, which is an important step toward positive social change. The research speaks directly to the conditions of AmeriCorps grantees that engage volunteers.

For more information on the study:

Study Website	Assessing Diversity and Equity in Volunteer Inclusion (ADEVI) (cvacert.org)			
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About AmeriCorps Office of Research and Evaluation Research Grants

AmeriCorps Office of Research and Evaluation holds grant competitions to foster scholarly research on civic health, address knowledge gaps in civic engagement and volunteerism, and identify new ideas and methodological approaches to service.

- Learn more about [AmeriCorps Office of Research and Evaluation Research Grants](#).
- See a [Snapshot of Research Grantee Activities and Insights](#).
- Explore the [AmeriCorps Open Data Research Grantee Dataset](#).

About the Office of Research and Evaluation

The [AmeriCorps Office of Research and Evaluation](#) assists AmeriCorps and its partners in collecting, analyzing, and disseminating data and insights about AmeriCorps programs and civic life in America. For more information on this study and other studies funded by AmeriCorps Office of Research and Evaluation, please contact evaluation@americorps.gov.

About AmeriCorps

AmeriCorps, the federal agency for national service and volunteerism, provides opportunities for Americans to serve their country domestically, address the nation's most pressing challenges, improve lives and communities, and strengthen civic engagement. Each year, the agency places more than 200,000 AmeriCorps members and AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers in intensive service roles; and empowers millions more to serve as long-term, short-term, or one-time volunteers. **Learn more at [AmeriCorps.gov](https://americorps.gov).**