



L'Arche USA
Board Webinar – Diversity
January 2020



Agenda

- **Centering**
- **Introductions**
- **Some key notes about diversifying board**
- **Q and A with Guests**
- **Sharing of our own experiences**
- **Takeaway**



Link to [Preparation Materials](#)

Notice what you care about. Assume that many others share your dreams.

Be brave enough to start a conversation that matters.

Talk to people you know. Talk to people you don't know. Talk to people you never talk to.

Be intrigued by the differences you hear. Expect to be surprised.

Treasure curiosity more than certainty.

Invite in everybody who cares to work on what's possible.

Acknowledge that everyone is an expert about something.

Know that creative solutions come from new connections.

Trust that meaningful conversations can change your world.



Name
Community
Role

How long you've been with L'Arche

One reason diversity in L'Arche matters to you



Key Notes: Why Diversify

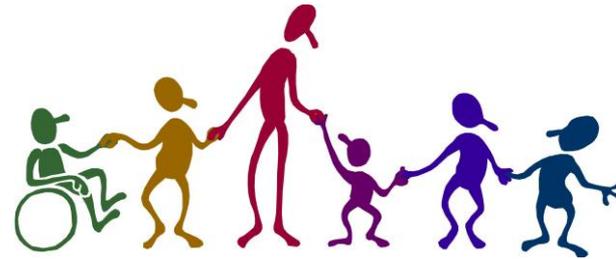
- **From AAIDD Statement in Support of Diversity and Inclusion:** We recognize that our advocacy for full human rights of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and increased recognition of their contributions to our communities and societies must go hand in hand with honoring the same rights and contributions of diverse people of all racial and cultural backgrounds. There cannot be one without the other, for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities are represented in every racial, cultural, ethnic, and religious group in this country and around the world.
- **From Luther Smith, Jr., PhD:** Diversity and inclusion are significant values and goals that deserve and require communal time, energy, discernment, and tenacity. Matters of disability, race, ethnicity, economic status, sexual orientation, religion, and gender identity are worthy of communal discernment. They are fundamental indicators of a community's vision of being a sign of hope.
- **From Laura Giddings, L'Arche Tahoma Hope:** Early L'Arche history reflects a movement toward diversity in the founding of the second, third and fourth communities in different cultures (England, Canada, India) and out of different faith communities (Anglican, Muslim, Hindu). It's in our DNA.



Key Notes: Why Diversify Your Board

From BoardSource: Beyond Political Correctness: [Building a Diverse Board](#)

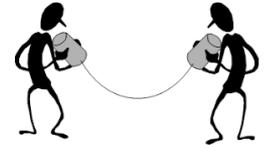
- Representation related to our mission is important. Having the voice of people with ID/DD around leadership table.
- Homogeneity can perpetuate a narrow view, discourage new paths and limit our pool of supports and potential new members.



- Heterogeneity – **diversity** of backgrounds, cultures, experience
 - **Promotes creativity** and broadens circles of engagement
 - Offers differing voices, offers **new ways of understanding needs** and meeting mission
 - Fuller scope of perspectives on risks and opportunities – so **better decisions!**
 - **Fundraising:** Diversifies donor-base, attracts funders and foundations

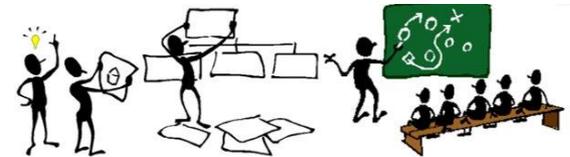
Key Notes: How to Diversify

Naming Strategies



1. **Communicate:** make space and time for candid conversation

- a. What does diversity mean to your board? What kind of diversity do you need?
- b. Consider your board's culture: How ready is the board to be welcoming of a diversity of members? What do you need to consider first?



2. **Act**

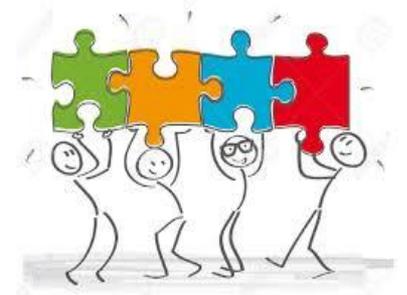
- a. Develop a case and plan for change – your motivation and philosophical and strategic reasons for diversifying.
- b. Picture what diversity will look like and how it will allow you to better support your mission. If you have a board profile, make sure it includes your diversity aims.
- c. Plan the practices and strategies to get there. Think differently to develop a pipeline of candidates; avoid tokenism – develop a number of diverse members; involve them early and often.

3. **Monitor and Respond:** Pay attention, learn and adapt. Track retention, prioritize exit interviews, complete assessments on diversity.



From L'Arche GWDC: Learnings on Intentional Inclusion

1. **Plan.** Be intentional with preparation so the person you are including is ready to engage from the start. Find out from them what they need to be prepared.
2. **Include multiple and diverse voices.** Benefit from a range of styles and perspectives.
3. **Build relationships.** L'Arche is good at this and it supports someone's welcome and engagement. Mentors, co-leaders, engagement with the group.
4. **Decision-making and leadership:** Make sure the person is at the center, not the edges, ready and respected in decision-making; consider where co-leadership can support someone to be better prepared to give input or vote and to lead from their gifts.
5. **Welcome and Support:** Be intentional to know ahead what needs or accommodations someone has and then be ready. Presume their competence and honor their valued perspective.
6. **Courage and Making Mistakes.** Inclusion takes lived practice; we need to have courage to try, learn from our mistakes and try again.



Q and A with our guests



Group Discussion as time permits

Round One

- Where is your board in its intention and efforts to diversify?
- What seems to be working or not working?

Round Two

- What questions do you have for each other?
- What strong practices or wisdom do you have to share with each other?

Finally

- What is one learning or commitment you take from this engagement?

