

**New York State Bar Association
Real Property Law Section
Diversity & Inclusion Committee - Diversity & Inclusion Plan**

I. Background

In 2003, the New York State Bar Association (“NYSBA”) adopted a diversity policy, which was amended in January 2020 (the “Diversity Policy”). The Diversity Policy committed the NYSBA to increase diversity in its members, officers and staff.” Diversity is an inclusive concept, encompassing gender, race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age and disability.” In order to realize the Diversity Policy’s goal of increasing diverse attorney membership, the Real Property Law Section (the “Section”) has developed and adopted this Diversity and Inclusion Plan (the “D&I Plan”).

II. Purpose & Goals

The purpose of the D&I Plan is to increase the Section’s membership of, and engagement with, diverse attorneys.

III. Action Plan to Achieve Goals

Coordination with Section Committees

The Section’s Diversity and Inclusion Committee (the “D&I Committee”) will meet with the other Committees of the Section to explore joint programs and networking events to encourage diverse attorney participation in Section sponsored activities and recruitment to the Section.

Specifically we seek to actively recruit attorneys from diverse backgrounds and practice areas to join, and become active members of the Section, to serve on Section committees and to participate in programs to foster an atmosphere of inclusion and participation of all attorneys and to benefit from each individual’s unique perspective. To this end, the Section seeks a varied membership based on a number of characteristics and factors, including but not limited to:

- race
- ethnicity
- gender
- gender identity
- sexual orientation
- age and experience level
- disability
- public sector employment
- not-for-profit sector employment
- private practice
- corporate counsel employment

- geography
- position within a firm or organization
- practice area within environmental law

Mindful of the Diversity and Inclusion goals, the Section and its Membership and Continuing Legal Education Committees should seek to:

- Ensure that first-time registrants feel welcome especially prior to their first in-person meeting.
- Maintain an Ambassador program to greet new members to Section meetings.
- Continue outreach between meetings so as to encourage continued membership and participation.
- Invite the student editors from the Section's Law Journal to attend the Executive Committee meeting in January each year. Further, the Committee recommends that the Section's Journal include a regular column from law students and an article featuring individual newly admitted attorneys.
- Establish an Ambassador program with local law schools to reach future lawyers interested in Real Property Law.

In addition the Section's Journal will publicize the Section's efforts to increase diversity and inclusion through outreach efforts, including law schools and local and specialty bar associations.

In coordination with the CLE Committee and Program Chairs, the Committee encourages the selection of speakers and panels with diverse backgrounds and experiences.

Coordination with Other NYSBA Sections

The D&I Committee will reach out to other NYSBA Sections and their Diversity and Inclusion committees to discuss ways in which diversity recruitment and engagement efforts can be coordinated and fostered across Sections.

Outreach to Affinity Groups at Law Schools

We will focus our outreach and recruitment on law students and attorneys at the onset of their careers - meaning attorneys who are within the first three years of practice (a "Newly Admitted Attorney"). To effectuate better recruitment and engagement from law students and attorneys, we will encourage Section committees to work with the career offices of New York State law schools to (i) identify and contact affinity groups at New York State law schools; and (ii) develop networking and outreach programs geared towards the interests of this cohort of diverse attorneys to increase engagement and recruitment.

Events

- *Encouragement of Panel Discussions*

The D&I Committee will seek to foster panel discussions on topics geared towards promoting attorney diversity. We would also endeavor to enlist a diverse group of attorneys to participate as panelists and moderators for these panel discussions and look to co-sponsor these events with other Section Committees to increase attendance and engagement.

Tools

To achieve the goals identified above, the Committee has identified a number of tools.

Section Message on Diversity and Inclusion

The Committee will lead the Section's efforts to:

- Amend the Section Mission Statement to include a commitment to diversity and inclusion, as set forth above.
- Ensure that the Section Committees performing nominating functions are informed of the Section's goals for diversity and inclusion.
- Provide a copy of this document and the Section's Speaker Selection Guidelines to all existing and incoming Committee and Program Chairs.

Outreach Efforts

The Committee will lead the Section's efforts to:

- Conduct outreach to law schools, including Environmental Law Societies and affinity groups, especially through the efforts of Section members who are alumni of a law school.
- Conduct outreach to local and specialty bar associations (e.g., NYCBA, Office of Diversity and Inclusion; Black; Hispanic; Asian; and Women's Bar Associations).
- Coordinate efforts with those of the NYSBA Committee on Diversity and Inclusion
- Encourage the Section's Membership Committee to promote diversity and inclusion in its outreach efforts, such as:
 - Review NYSBA corporate counsel list to identify potential Section members.
 - Work with General Counsels and other active Section members from government agencies to attract more members.
 - Work with senior attorneys in law firms to encourage participation by younger and more newly admitted attorneys. Work with Section members who are active in other NYSBA sections to encourage cross-over membership.
- Encourage the Section's leadership to use Section leaders from underrepresented areas of the State to seek greater participation from attorneys in those areas, including asking Section leaders to speak at County Bar Association meetings