



# Equity & Inclusion Report

Fall/Winter 2021

*The AICP Equity & Inclusion Committee is the official workgroup driving the association's commitment to facilitate industry-wide change towards a more diversified industry.*

*Our overall goal remains to provide opportunity to marginalized groups and become a more inclusive industry across all areas of the business.*

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# AICP Equity & Inclusion

## Mission →

*The Equity & Inclusion Committee implements initiatives, programs and tools to help AICP members affect change and provide more access.*

The AICP Equity & Inclusion Committee is the official workgroup driving the association's commitment to facilitate industry-wide change. The committee is tasked by the AICP National Board of Directors to drive movement in all facets of the industry, to implement strong, diverse goals individually and company-wide across the commercial industry. It exists to push forward a demographic shift that is both real and sustainable and imperative to creating long-term programs and strategies that will facilitate a more equitable and balanced commercial community.

Our overall goal will remain to provide access and opportunity to marginalized groups and become a more inclusive industry across all areas of the business.

# Structure

The AICP Equity & Inclusion Committee Subcommittees focus on the following areas:

- Best Practices
- Hiring Practices & Access
- Mentorship

# Background

**In June 2020,**

in the wake of the murder of George Floyd and the subsequent protests that brought racial injustice to the forefront, the AICP National Board of Directors issued a *statement* promising to affect meaningful change in the industry.

The AICP Board convened in July and voted to form the AICP Equity & Inclusion Committee. Tabitha Mason-Elliott, Partner/Head of Production at BARK BARK, the President of the Southeast Chapter of AICP, a member of the National Board and its Executive Committee, was appointed Chairperson of the Committee. By August 2020, the full Committee was in place and met to establish an agenda and initiatives (please see Appendix A).

# Best Practices Subcommittee

## Best Practices for Engagement →

The Best Practices for Engagement are an evolving set of guidelines for agencies and marketers to consult when engaging talent. These guidelines are the product of a series of candid roundtable discussions between AICP member production and post companies and advertising agencies and marketers. Here are the guidelines in their entirety:

*The AICP and its membership are actively committed to working across the advertising and marketing ecosystem to make the industry more inclusive and diverse at all levels. Operating with the belief that change will happen by providing access and opportunity to under-represented groups.*

*Many AICP members, marketers, agencies and others have stated goals and commitments to increase representation across the board, which is a significant step. AICP and its members are working to honor their commitments to change.*

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*Diversity, equity, and inclusion should be considered and prioritized in all sectors. From ideation to production, through editing, finishing and audio, diversity can assure the potential for an approach that can take a 360 view of a project from concept to completion and bolster a more representative industry and level the playing field.*

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# AICP provides its members and the industry with resources and guidelines to promote good business practices, which provide the best possible environment for creativity and ingenuity.

The AICP and its membership are actively committed to working across the advertising and marketing ecosystem to making the industry at all levels more inclusive and diverse. Change will happen by providing access and opportunity to under-represented groups. Many AICP members, marketers, agencies and others have stated goals and commitments to increase representation across the board, which is a significant step. AICP and its

members are working to create tools and resources that will help various entities meet their goals and honor commitments to change.

Committees of members created by AICP have already collaborated with many agencies and marketers through a series of roundtable discussions to find out how we can partner to strive for a more representative industry. We used these sessions to solicit candid feedback from dozens of agencies on the problems and practices that inhibit our overall commitment to diversity. Those discussions created the foundation of this process.

Under the auspices of its Equity and Inclusion Committee, the AICP has created the following Best Practices Guidelines as we all work to change the demographics of our industry to reflect the overall population. As we work to create more opportunities for people of color across all aspects of the creative process, and allow for new perspectives and approaches that will be to the benefit of all, these are essential guideposts for all involved in production and post-production. It is our hope that these Best Practices will be a constant reference and ‘gut-check’ of sorts as we all work to achieve goals for diversity, inclusion, and equity across our industry.

# General Notes

While these considerations are offered as helpful tools, the underlying goal is that participation by all will be embraced, and the industry will work together to set a new standard for best practices moving forward.

- Diversity, equity, and inclusion should be considered and prioritized across the board. From production, through editing, through finishing, through audio, the approach must take a 360 view of a project from concept to completion to bolster a more representative industry and level the playing field.
- To be consistent across the ecosystem, be sure to look at all aspects of a job both behind the scenes and on-screen - does the approach and the desire to increase representation carry through at each phase of a project.
- Hold yourself and others accountable by asking essential questions early on, such as:
  - “Are we considering the positions, perspectives, and interests of individuals different from ourselves?”
  - “Have we done everything in our power to outsource work to businesses owned by minority/marginalized individuals? Including people of color, LGBTQIA+, and women” and
  - “Am I making assumptions that BIPOC talent is upcoming and ignoring the established talent currently out there?”

# Bidding

Agencies and marketers are issuing requirements and goals to achieve a higher level of inclusion across race, gender, and orientation in the workforce that creates its marketing communications.

Production and post-production companies are working to provide more opportunities for underrepresented talent across their ranks.

As we all work together to achieve these goals, there are some items to keep in mind when engaging a company in the bid process:

- **Don't ask for a bid** if the only objective is to check a box. Bids take time, resources, and money to craft, and if someone is not going to be seriously considered for a project, do not engage.
- **Communication is vital** - be as transparent as possible about the scope of the project, including budget, expectations, and who is included in the bid pool. Knowing this information from the onset of engagement is immensely helpful when considering the next steps.
- **Prioritize transparency** and be explicit if a project is underfunded, or a director/editor/colorist/artist is a last-minute addition to the bid pool; this will better assist the production and post-production companies in deciding if it's a project they wish to engage on.
- **Be open.** Underrepresented talent does not mean inexperienced talent. Many directors/editors/post-production artists have established careers in film, television, music videos, etc. Providing access can mean bringing a new look and perspective to a project and expanding the talent pool.
- **Know** that if a production or post partner recommends talent represented by their company, there is full apparatus surrounding that person to ensure a project succeeds.
- **Many companies** are very willing to have one of their more established commercial directors/editors/artists shadow someone new to the commercial production process to ensure the project's success.

# Bidding

- **In a multiple bid situation**, someone is not going to get the project. Often the conversation ends for the company that wasn't awarded the job - setting precedence for engaging in an open and honest conversation with the production company and director and/or post company and EP about why they didn't get awarded the project is advisable. These conversations can help all involved approach future projects from a more robust and more informed place.
- **When producing commercials targeted at BIPOC Communities**, it does not mean that it should have lesser resources. Do not allow a scenario where there is an assumption that these projects can be critically underfund and do not perpetuate this misnomer by asking your production and post partners to work pro bono on a project for a for-profit entity. Presenting these low-budget projects as 'incredible opportunities' undervalues the work of the creatives you are reaching out to. Expecting people of color to work for less on projects targeted at specific community initiatives will not move the industry forward. Simply saying that an issue is important and worthy of attention is not enough; there must be more effort to support its value.
- **Respect relationships and credentials**. Do not appropriate the work or reputation of a company or talent to bolster your own company's reputation and/or present a picture of greater company diversity.

# Crews

Increasing access for underrepresented communities to the commercial production industry is paramount when ensuring opportunities and careers. Diversity in crew make-up is achievable with thoughtful consideration and effort.

- Look to expand access to leadership positions, not just entry-level positions. Initiatives like *Double the Line* can help.
- Seek out resources and databases for experienced talent from other fields. AICP maintains a list, which can be *found here*.
- Set goals rather than mandates but create a system of checks and balances to ensure best practices were considered and utilized when appropriate.

# Employment Data

All sectors of the marketing and advertising industry are setting goals to increase diversity in their companies. Some have issued mandates - for instance, 15% of a crew must be people of color; others have set goals with deadlines; many are interested in seeking data on race, gender, and orientation so they may track change. These are all goals everyone can get behind to help change the industry's demographics, but employment and privacy laws surrounding hiring and data collection can make this a complicated endeavor; so making sure that all of the realities are understood. (Please see page 20 for more details.)

→ Many marketers and agencies ask production and post-production companies for data on their crew and office employees to track goals for diversity and inclusion. Be transparent and detailed about these requests, and have frank discussions about the possibilities.

→ While many larger companies (those with 100+ employees) are required to report race, ethnicity and gender, and the data can be collected from the employee or as an observation from an employer, this is not the case for smaller companies (less than 100 employees). Please be aware that production and post companies cannot simply provide that data for their crews.

→ Employers can ask employees to self-report race, gender, ethnicity, and orientation, but cannot mandate they do so or do so on their behalf. Encourage conversations with employees about the importance and relevance of gathering this data - the decision is ultimately theirs to make. Still, context is always helpful, and the issues are important to acknowledge.

# Casting & Scripts

Start considering casting choices as early as possible in the process.

Consider the following:

- Avoid stereotypes at all costs.
- Unless specified, avoid mention of race, ethnicity, gender, and orientation - be open to all for all roles.
- Expand casting resources and agencies to get a wider pool of talent.
- Make sure that scripts are vetted to avoid stereotypes and problematic imagery/dialogue/situations.

Consider creating guidelines for casting with diversity in mind.

One example to review is *[Hire Higher](#)*, drafted by a group of Canadian Directors who are working to improve casting.

# Post Production

All of the above should apply and/or impact post-production, but there are several other vital factors to remember when finishing your project.

- Be mindful and intentional with edits and representation so as to feel authentic and not mandated with what ends up on the screen.
- Engage diverse and untested talent from top to bottom, including leadership.
- Credit new and diverse post artists in your public relations materials and social media, as visibility and familiarity are paramount in our relationship-based business.



# Certification Programs

There are several certifications for companies owned by members of an under-represented group. To view a list of AICP member companies who have self-reported their certifications, please [\*click here\*](#).

The page also contains an overview of the types of certifications available to qualified companies.

Many federal, state and local government advertisers will mandate that companies with particular certifications be part of the project's bid pool. Certifications are not transferable to other companies or agencies. Asking a company to act as a third party is unacceptable and delegitimizes the whole premise of the certifications. It is not only a bad business practice to recommend appropriation of a company's certification or credentials, but it is also likely illegal.

# Hiring Practices & Access Subcommittee

This subcommittee works on several areas:

- Creates tools and resources for those wishing to engage more diverse talent across the production and post production ecosystem.
- Facilitate demographic reporting with the payroll community. (See page 20.)
- Highlight organizations that provide opportunity and access to the industry.

# Commitment To Change Webinars

The Commitment to Change (C2C) webinars, first presented in June of 2020, are a monthly series, held on the third Wednesday of every month. C2C highlights organizations that create opportunities across the spectrum of filmmaking, advertising and marketing for people of color, specifically the Black community. These presentations are designed to introduce existing programs and take away the perceived barriers that diverse talent can't be found to fill various ranks. The webinars are open to the entire industry, not exclusive to AICP membership. To date, 26 organizations have been highlighted:

[Made in NY PA Training Program](#)

[Made In NY Post Production Program](#)

[ManifestWorks](#)

[Streetlights](#)

[Commercial Directors Diversity Program \(CDDP\)](#)

[HBCU LA](#)

[Made in Her Image](#)

[Minorities in Film](#)

[re:imagine|ATL](#)

[Free Spirit Media](#)

[Incorp\[HER\]ated](#)

[Academy Gold](#)

[E4Youth](#)

[.movtogether](#)

[Bid Black](#)

[Marcus Graham Project](#)

[Change the Lens](#)

[Pipelines](#)

[Black Girl Film School \(BGFS\)](#)

[Ghetto Film School \(GFS\)](#)

[Sporas](#)

[Vets2Set](#)

[Bridgebuilder Cinematic Arts Program](#)

[CineCares Foundation](#)

[Venice Arts](#)

[Hollywood CPR](#)

# Demographic Reporting

Intensifying over the past year, many agencies and marketers have been requesting that their production and post partners to report on the demographic make-up of the crew and employees working on their projects. AICP identified challenges to collecting this data, including legal issues and protections in place to prevent discrimination. Members of this subcommittee, AICP Staff and AICP Legal Counsel worked over the period of a year to find a solution to address these requests and create a demographic reporting methodology in conjunction with the payroll companies that service AICP members. In September 2021 AICP announced a legally vetted, standardized, and effective methodology for reporting employment demographic data that can be shared with advertising agencies and marketers. Please [\*click here\*](#) for more details.

# Double The Line

Ali Brown, President of PRETTYBIRD and a member of the Equity & Inclusion Committee, is the architect of the Double the Line (DTL) initiative. Upon presenting to the Committee, it was decided that AICP would embrace the concept of DTL, within the E&I approaches.

The premise is simple: as agencies and marketers reach out to production and post companies regarding corporate policies and requirements to the bidding process to increase diversity, they can support inclusion (and grow opportunity) by doubling a line in the bid. On every commercial production, roles for the project are listed on individual lines in the budget with their associated costs. On every job a production or post partner is bidding, the agency and/or client can consult with the bidding entity regarding potential candidates, costs, and opportunities, will agree to double the role of any single position on the bid. In doing so, they agree to cover the costs to hire a BIPOC candidate to work alongside the identified employee.

Double the Line isn't a mentorship or training program – rather it provides access for someone who is seasoned in a role (i.e. Line Producer) but has not had the opportunity to work in commercials. By working in tandem, the person in the doubled role will learn the nuances of advertising and gain experience to work on a future for a production. Marketers and agencies have enthusiastically embraced DTL, and AICP maintains a supporters page, found [here](#).

*The premise is simple. Put your money and your resources to work expanding the diversity talent pool represented in commercials. Agencies and marketers have the opportunity to support inclusion by doubling a line in the bid to hire skilled professionals from other areas of film and tv, and introduce them to the nuanced differences in the creation of marketing content.*

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# Talent Resources

Many AICP members express a desire to source more diverse talent for their companies.

To that end, the subcommittee compiled a list of resources – accessible to the membership and industry at large – for both above and below the line talent, as well as post production. The organizations and staffing services on the list represent individuals with a broad range of experience levels and talents.



# Mentorship Subcommittee

The *AICP Mentoring Program* is designed to promote the growth and development of our Members and Mentees, through a one-on-one, nurturing and mutually stimulating environment. The first cycle officially launched in July 2021 with over 70 mentees. AICP Members signed up to serve as mentors, and represent a cross-section of the industry.

This nine-month long program connects experienced leaders with aspiring talent. The pair will work together to pinpoint and resolve core challenges that can best benefit from the Mentor's experience. Regardless of age or tenure, each participant has something of value to offer. This dynamic allows for real-life wisdom and experience to inform the real-life challenges faced by our up-and-coming Mentees.

Each Mentor and Mentee commits to a one-hour phone call once a month, for nine months. In addition, a series of workshops for Mentees is held over the course of the program cycle. Recognizing that strong networks are the key to strong careers and opportunities, mentoships are a cornerstone of industry-wide change.



*The AICP Mentoring Program is designed to promote the growth and development of our Members and Mentees, through a one-on-one, nurturing and mutually stimulating environment.*

*Recognizing that strong networks are the key to strong careers and opportunities, mentorships are a cornerstone of sustainable industry-wide change.*

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The accomplishments outlined in this report are just the beginning. AICP's Equity & Inclusion Committee continues to work on resources and initiatives to ensure the commercial production and post production industry emphasizes inclusion at all levels.

# Appendix A

## AICP Equity & Inclusion Committee Members

First Name	Last Name	Company
Tabitha	Mason-Elliott	BARK BARK (Chairperson)
Emily	Alexander-Wilmouth	AMD Films
Jackie Kelman	Bisbee	Park Pictures
Ali	Brown	PRETTYBIRD
Sally	Campbell	Somesuch
Rich	Carter	Brother
Yvette	Cobarrubias	Cosmo St.
Gloria	Colangelo	MacGuffin Films
Andrew	Colón	SMUGGLER
Tova	Dann	Caviar
Rebecca	Davis	m ss ng p eces
Carol Linda	Dunn	Human
Sara	Eolin	Rocket Film
Julie	Fong	Partizan
Sophie	Gold	ELEANOR
Molly	Griffin	Somesuch
Danielle	Hinde	Doomsday
Qadree	Holmes	Curiosity Productions
Mel	Jones	Invisible Collective
Megan	Kelly	Honor Society
Mark	Kovacs	Bodega
Ralph	Laucella	O Positive
Michaela	McKee	1st Ave. Machine
Lisa	Mehling	Chelsea
Tracie	Mochizuki	RadicalMedia
Jessie	Nagel	Hype
Tracie	Norfleet	Invisible Collective
Kate	Oppenheim	m ss ng p eces
Gloria	Pitagorsky	Heard City
Justin	Pollock	Park Pictures
Shelby	Ross	Group Thrpy
Sila	Soyer	Arcade Edit
Christa	Thompson	Knucklehead
Brittney	Walker	Framestore
Robert	Wherry	Fancy Content
Casey	Wooden	Caviar

## Best Practices

First Name	Last Name	Company
Sophie	Gold	ELEANOR (Co-Chair)
Sally	Campbell	Somesuch
Yvette	Cobarrubias	Cosmo St.
Carol Linda	Dunn	Human
Sara	Eolin	Rocket Film
Danielle	Hinde	Doomsday
Julie	Fong	Partizan
Qadree	Holmes	Curiosity Productions
Megan	Kelly	Honor Society
Michaela	McKee	1st Ave. Machine
Gloria	Pitagorsky	Heard City
Sila	Soyer	Arcade Edit
Brittney	Walker	Framestore
Casey	Wooden	Caviar

## Hiring Practices & Access

First Name	Last Name	Company
Andrew	Colón	SMUGGLER (Co-Chair)
Rebecca	Davis	m ss ng p eces (Co-Chair)
Emily	Alexander-Wilmouth	AMD Films
Ali	Brown	PRETTYBIRD
Tova	Dann	Caviar
Megan	Kelly	Honor Society
Mark	Kovacs	Bodega
Kate	Oppenheim	m ss ng p eces
Justin	Pollock	Park Pictures
Christa	Thompson	Knucklehead
Robert	Wherry	Fancy Content
Casey	Wooden	Caviar
Shelby	Ross	Group Therapy

# Appendix B

## AICP Equity & Inclusion Subcommittees

## *Mentorship*

# Appendix B

## AICP Equity & Inclusion Subcommittees

First Name	Last Name	Company
Gloria	Pitagorsky	Heard City (Co-Chair)
Christa	Thompson	Knucklehead Films (Co-Chair)
Jackie Kelman	Bisbee	Park Pictures
Sally	Campbell	Somesuch
Yvette	Cobarrubias	Cosmo St.
Carol Linda	Dunn	Human
Molly	Griffin	Somesuch
Mark	Kovacs	Bodega
Tabitha	Mason-Elliott	Bark Bark
Lisa	Mehling	Chelsea
Tracie	Mochizuki	RadicalMedia
Jessie	Nagel	Hype
Justin	Pollock	Park Pictures
Shelby	Ross	Group Thrpy
Sila	Soyer	Arcade Edit
Brittney	Walker	Framestore
Robert	Wherry	Fancy Content

# Appendix C

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## Press Coverage

### **Equity & Inclusion Committee Launch Announcement**

AdAge

Below the Line

Deadline

LBBOnline

Reel360

Shots

SHOOT

Mediapost

### **Best Practices for Engagement Release**

Campaign

LBBOnline

SHOOT

Shots

Reel360

### **Double the Line Launch**

Deadline

MediaPost

LBBOnline

Reel360

Shots

SHOOT

### **AICP Mentoring Program**

LBBOnline

Reel360

Shots

SHOOT