



The Alliance for Buddhist Ethics

Promoting non-harming for a safe, just and compassionate world

Recognizing the interdependent nature of reality, *The Alliance for Buddhist Ethics* is committed to advancing the principles of diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion (DEAI) in all our work.

Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion for Buddhists

We wish to begin by defining these terms for ourselves and our members.

Diversity refers to the differences – both visible and invisible – among a group of people. They can include differences in gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, native or indigenous origins, age, generation, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, socio-economic difference, appearance, language and accent, disability, mental health, education, geography, nationality, work style, work experience, job role and function, thinking style, and personality type. It is important to note that while a group can be diverse, and individual is not “diverse.”

Equity in its simplest terms means fairness. In an equitable society, all people would have full and unbiased access to livelihood, education, participation in the political and cultural community, and other social benefits. It does not mean that everyone is the same or receives the same benefits.

Accessibility refers to the design of products, devices, services, or environments so as to be usable by people with varying abilities or disabilities. Accessibility refuses to fault an individual for the ways in which they are different, instead choosing to emphasize on the rights of individuals with differences to be full and participating members of society, including Buddhist circles.

Inclusion is a dynamic state of operating in which diversity is leveraged to create a fair, healthy, and high-performing organization or community. An inclusive environment ensures equitable access to resources and opportunities for all. It also enables individuals and groups to feel safe, respected, engaged, motivated, and valued, for who they are and for their contributions toward organizational and societal goals.

In our commitment to non-harming, it is important that we recognize the systemic nature of bias. Specifically, because of the global domination of White supremacist and patriarchal thought through colonialist practices, our minds have developed a tendency to see White people as the “default” and for Western practitioners to center White comfort over awakened consciousness to injustice. An example may be the dearth of Asian teachers in English-language Buddhist magazines and books, despite the fact that Buddhism originated in South Asia. The extractive practice of gleaning intellectual resources from a culture and claiming it as one’s own is a tool of colonialism and domination. We will not truly be liberated until we free ourselves of harmful practices such as these, giving credit to the cultures of origin and including everyone, regardless of difference, in our spaces and practices.

– Minal Bopaiah

*Definitions derived from The Centre for Global Inclusion