

DEI Resource Guide

provided by the USARA DEI Committee



FIRST VERSION, JUNE 2023

Hello Race Director,

#WeARtogether. We are together with our athletes. We are together with our communities. We are together as an organization.

Outdoor activities experienced increased interest in the last few years. Riding the momentum of a surge in adventure racing participants, we want to continue improving the experience for all and bolster the sport's resiliency. One approach is to broaden the scope of who participates, cultivating a community of support to those who have been, and still are, underrepresented.

The USARA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee has drafted a collection of easy-to-use tools for race directors to increase access to the sport, cultivate a culture of adventurous inclusion, and further enrich the AR experience for everyone involved.

You are receiving this email as a part of a small group of race directors we hope will take part in a pilot program during the 2023 race season. The tools:

- Resources for inclusive social media marketing
- Targeted marketing and promotion for your race, including a list of outdoor/adventure-based organizations that may want to know about your events
- Language of best practices for engaging with racers/volunteers during your events
- Safety considerations to be implemented in pre-race information and at events
- Methods to collect demographic information so that you can chart your event's growth, including details on how to add this to RunSignUp, USARA's partner registration platform

First, we are asking you to implement at least one resource during an event this season. Second, we are hoping you will consider participating in a post-season survey, to help us evaluate the utility of these strategies and practices. Collecting data on this will help us to improve our resources and ensure they are adding value to our race directors. We hope to be able to pursue grants and funding resources in the future and this information will be helpful in that process.

We are aware that planning and directing races entails a lot of time and effort. We made it a priority to develop resources that add value to your events and require limited additional time or energy from you. We hope that you'll take part in this pilot program to help us amplify the message that adventure racing, while an extreme sport, is also extremely welcoming.

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USARA Value Statement

We All Seek Adventure.

In the spirit of adventure racing's collaborative nature, we value the strength of diversity. Adventure racing exists because of the different skills, backgrounds, and mindsets of its participants.

We embrace inclusion as an action, rather than simply an ideal.

We support and cultivate broad representation in all aspects of the sport.

We expect our participants to welcome and respect each other no matter their gender, gender identity, race, age, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, political affiliation, or level of racing experience.

Adventure racing brings us close to a variety of natural surroundings, which we respect and preserve, as we do each other.

USARA DEI Committee Mission Statement

Adventure Needs All of Us.

USARA's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee believes our AR community is strongest when we welcome all participants no matter their gender, gender identity, race, age, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, political affiliation, or level of racing experience. Through our collaborative efforts, we will broaden access to the sport, cultivate a culture of adventurous inclusion, and further enrich the AR experience. #WeARtogether

Targeted Marketing Recommendations

Below is a list of organizations we recommend for direct marketing outreach. Also, if you have groups/organizations that you would like to add to this list please provide it [here](#).

BROAD ADVENTURE RACING COMMUNITY

1. [Adventure Racing Discussion Group](#) on Facebook
2. Regional Adventure Racing Groups, for example, [Mid-Atlantic Adventure Racing](#)

NEW RACERS BROADLY

1. Local orienteering clubs. Find your nearest club [here](#)
2. Local triathlon clubs. Find your nearest club [here](#)
3. Local mountain biking clubs. Find your nearest club [here](#)

DEMOGRAPHICALLY SPECIFIC MARKETING

1. [Women of AR](#)
on Facebook
2. [Black Adventure Racers](#)
on Facebook
3. [Outdoor Afro](#)
4. [Outdoor Asian](#)
5. [Latino Outdoors](#)
6. [Trail Sisters](#)
7. [Pride Outside](#)
8. [Running Industry
Diversity Coalition](#)
9. [G.R.I.T. Adventures](#)
(youth-focused)

REGIONAL OUTDOORS GROUPS

Please use [this Google sheet](#) to add groups with which you're familiar.

WASHINGTON D.C. METROPOLITAN AREA

1. [Muddy Pedals](#)
2. [WDQ Adventure Racing Club](#)
3. [Soul Trek](#)

CANADA

1. [Colour the Trails](#)

Resources for Inclusive Social Media Marketing

1. **Check your posts for insensitive writing.** We recommend the tool Alex, which can be found [here](#).
2. **Have multiple people make posts through your account.** Having a diverse social media team helps to incorporate more perspectives into your posts, and decreases the likelihood that you will unintentionally overlook the same perspectives in consecutive posts.
3. **Choose your images carefully.** Be aware of the people, perspectives, and experiences that you're representing in the images you post. While you will never be able to represent every unique identity, showcasing a multitude of identities can signify to readers that—even if they don't see their identities represented—you welcome and value diversity.

Also, be aware that some people may experience images differently than you do. We recommend using [Color Oracle](#) to simulate color blindness, and we recommend always including alt text and image descriptions.
4. **Ensure your content is accessible.** We recommend [this guide](#) from the University of Rochester as a starting point for accessibility.
5. **Call attention to the ways you've made your event more DEI-friendly.** Actions speak louder than words. Posting about your commitment to DEI is great, but it becomes more powerful and sincere when it's backed up by specific examples of the steps you've taken to ensure your event embraces these principles. Sharing these actions may also help attract like-minded participants who will exemplify these ideas during your race, and it may inspire other race directors to follow your lead!



Best Practices for Engaging with Volunteers and Racers

Below are some suggestions for how best to interact with racers and volunteers, to foster an inclusive and welcoming race environment. We welcome other best practices from the AR community.

INSTEAD OF: Hi, you must be new to AR.

TRY: What have been some of your most memorable races?

INSTEAD OF TRYING TO HELPFULLY ANSWER AN UNFINISHED QUESTION:

Oh, are you looking for the beginner briefing?

TRY: Waiting to hear the question before assuming what it will be based on who's asking it

INSTEAD OF: Assuming that gear/experience/finances are barriers

TRY: How can we/I support your participation?

Inclusivity-Minded Safety Considerations

1. Require teams to wear race bibs or team numbers. This makes participants present as “official,” which can be especially important for racers traveling in inhospitable areas at night.
2. Alert participants to potentially inhospitable or uncomfortable places on the race course, so that racers are not blindsided during an event. Indicate areas where racers might encounter signs, monuments, flags, or other ephemera that implies violence or hate toward a particular group. We recommend conveying this in a pre-race briefing, and potentially also in your written communications with racers.
3. Develop positive community relationships, not only to promote the sport but also to ensure that local communities are aware of and prepared for racers' presence. This might be, for example, making a donation or giving a race t-shirt to local law enforcement or fire safety, or putting up flyers around the area, or posting on local Facebook groups. Any marketing materials should model who will be at the race — including women, racers of color, etc.

Collecting Demographic Data

We are asking RDs in this pilot program to collect the following data through their registration platform. If you are using Runsignup, instructions for add-on questions can be found [here](#). Please make sure to add these in check all format, rather than select one.

SUGGESTED LANGUAGE:

We are part of a small group of race directors piloting a new initiative aimed at the US Adventure Racing Association's ongoing commitment to fostering a welcoming and inclusive adventure racing community. As part of this work, we are collecting demographic data from participants of our event. Responding to these questions is optional. If you choose to do so, neither your name nor any identifying information will be passed along to USARA. The organization is collecting aggregate data in order to better understand who is attending adventure races in the United States and whether their efforts are resulting in expanding diversity in the sport.

QUESTIONS TO INCLUDE:

Do you identify as:

- Caucasian
- Black or African American
- Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI)
- Hispanic or Latino
- Indigenous
- Middle Eastern or North African (MENA)
- Multi-racial or multi-ethnic

Do you identify as:

- Woman
- Man
- Transgender
- Nonbinary/non-confirming

Do you identify as:

- Gay
- Lesbian
- Queer
- Straight
- Asexual
- Bisexual
- Other: _____

Do you identify as

a person with a disability or are you a person with accessibility needs? If yes, would you be open to telling us a bit more about this?



Learning Resources

1. **Five Ways to Make the Outdoors More Inclusive**
<https://www.theatlantic.com/sponsored/rei-2018/fivve-ways-to-make-the-outdoors-more-inclusive/3019>
2. **Breaking Down the Lack of Diversity in Outdoor Spaces**
<https://nationalhealthfoundation.org/breaking-down-lack-diversity-outdoor-spaces>
3. **Diversity in the Great Outdoors: Is Everyone Welcome in America's Parks?**
<https://tinyurl.com/bdd985cj>
4. **Outdoor Industry Getting More Diverse, Slowly**
<https://www.outsideonline.com/2328831/outdoor-industry-getting-more-diverse-slowly>
5. **Can We Render the Outdoors Truly Inclusive?**
<https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/can-we-render-outdoors-truly-inclusive>
6. **Melanin Basecamp**
<https://www.melaninbasecamp.com>
7. **Special Report on Diversity in the Outdoors**
<https://www.gameandfishmag.com/editorial/special-report-diversity-in-the-outdoors/362989>
8. **Black Faces, White Spaces**
<https://uncpress.org/book/9781469614489/black-faces-white-spaces>

PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS

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