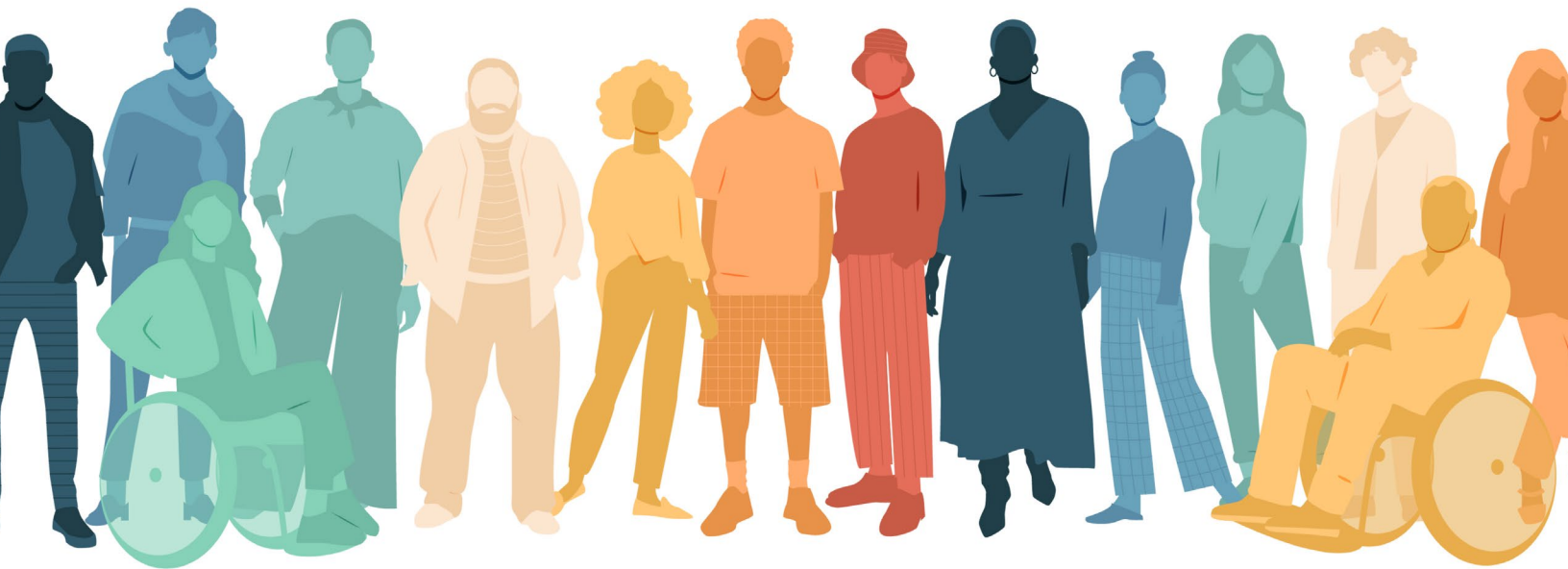


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Establishing a **Business Resource Group (BRG)**



WASHINGTON STATE
Office of Financial Management
State Human Resources



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The role of Business Resource Groups (BRGs)

BRGs play a pivotal role in fostering a diverse, equitable, inclusive, and respectful workforce. They create environments where employees can actively contribute, participate fully, and feel a genuine sense of belonging.

BRGs are statewide, cross-agency employee-led networks dedicated to supporting and advocating for specific demographic groups. These groups model belonging, facilitate networking, and offer professional development opportunities while illuminating and addressing pertinent workplace issues affecting their members.

They help build relationships, identify barriers to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB), develop best practices, and influence workplace culture while amplifying the voices of their communities.

1. Getting started

Identify the need

- **Assess Needs:** Conduct surveys, interest group assessments, or focus groups to identify specific needs and issues among diverse employee groups that a new BRG would address along with gauging interest and support.
- **Research Data:** Review workforce demographics and any existing disparities or challenges to support the creation of the BRG.
- **Avoid Overlap:** Research existing BRGs to avoid overlap.

Secure support from leadership

- **Leadership Endorsement:** Obtain written and verbal support from State HR, Office of Financial Management. Ensure the purpose and benefits of the BRG are communicated; BRGs are created to address unique needs and challenges in the workforce.
- **Executive Sponsor Identification:** Identify and engage with potential executive sponsors who can champion the BRG's mission. Ensure executive leaders understand the purpose and benefits of the BRG and their expected involvement to make the BRG successful.

2. Planning and formation

Form a planning committee

- **Recruit initial members** (aim to recruit at least ten interested employees) **to form the planning committee.** State HR will assign a staff member to participate in the planning committee and guide the group through this initial phase.
- **Develop Proposal:** Collaborate with State HR to create a comprehensive proposal detailing the committee's purpose and structure. This proposal will serve as a foundational guide for creating the group's final charter and bylaws.
- **Communication Methods:** Set up communication methods and processes, determine meeting frequency, and gather input from all interested employees.
- **Establish interim leadership roles.** Define and assign interim leadership roles to guide the committee during its initial phase.

Developing the BRG

- **Mission and Goals:** Clearly define the BRG's mission, goals, core values, and objectives. Incorporate feedback to ensure the mission resonates with the broader community.
- **Vision:** Define the vision for the BRG, detailing long-term aspirations.
- **Alignment:** Partner with State HR and the Office of Equity, to ensure the BRG's goals align with overall government business objectives and statewide DEIB goals.
- **Guidelines:** Ensure that the proposed BRG meet OFM guidelines to maintain sanctioned status. Review and adhere to [Executive Order 21-01](#).

- **Benefits:** Highlight the benefits of the BRG for both employees and the enterprise, emphasizing the value added to the workplace culture.
- **Deliverables:** Develop a framework for annual deliverables that addresses DEIB priorities on a statewide scale. Keep in mind that a report outlining established goals is submitted to OFM State HR by August each year.
- **Name the group:** Select a name for the group.
 - Solicit name recommendations from group members.
 - Discuss and finalize the name collaboratively.
 - Ensure the name reflects the mission and values of the BRG.

3. Set up communication methods and process

Internal communication

- **Organizational Communication:** Establish regular communication channels (e.g., newsletters, meetings) to keep members engaged.
- **Orientation:** Host orientation sessions for new members to introduce the BRG's mission and activities.
- **Marketing Campaign:** Promote the BRG through informational presentations at various cross-agency groups and committees, such as HR Managers' meetings, Statewide DEI Council meetings, Deputies' meetings, etc.

External communication

- **Outreach Campaign:** Conduct an outreach campaign with strategies to recruit members from the target demographic and allies. Establish regular communication channels (e.g., newsletters, meetings) to attract new members.
- **Networking:** Connect with other BRGs for insights and best practices.
- **Build Relationships** with organizations with similar goals.

4. Finalize charter and bylaws

Create a formal, flexible, and evolving charter that outlines the BRG's scope of work and activities including the following:

Structure

- **Mission, Vision, and Goals:** Revise to accurately reflect the group's voice and objectives.
 - Set specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals aligned with state DEIB priorities.
- **BRG's Structure and Governance:** Clearly define leadership roles and responsibilities.
 - Establish a leadership team, including but not limited to:
 - Executive sponsor (non-elected).
 - Chair and vice-chair or co-chairs (typically elected by members or appointed per charter).
 - Administrative liaison, secretary.
 - Treasurer.
 - Establish leadership selection procedures. If members are elected, use confidential platforms like Survey Monkey for nominations and voting.
- **Meeting procedures:** Determine meeting frequency, agenda preparation, and decision-making processes.
 - Decide on a decision-making approach, such as consensus, voting, or a quorum.

- **Subcommittee structures and purposes:** Form subcommittees to handle specific tasks (e.g., Best Practices, Recruitment and Retention).
- **Individual Grievances and Complaints:** Clarify that BRGs are not forums for resolving individual grievances.

Note: Clearly define leadership roles and responsibilities including the scope of work. The BRG will need someone to manage logistics, communication, administrative tasks, and the BRG's platforms, licenses, and subscriptions.

Membership criteria

Eligibility and Participation: Define criteria for membership and ensure open membership to all interested state employees. Determine if the group will also invite community members to general meetings.

Community guidelines

Supportive Environment: Develop community guidelines to foster a supportive and inclusive environment.

Note: Before being finalized, the charter and bylaws are reviewed by the State HR and OFM Legal Team to ensure that the group is operating under the proper authority granted by EO 21-01.

5. Resources

Technology

Ensure access to teleconferencing and other technologies for remote participation, such as:

- Video conferencing platforms (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams)
- Document sharing and collaboration locations (SharePoint, Microsoft Teams)
- Survey platforms
- GovDelivery for mass communication and public engagement
- Share Inbox

Budget

Collaborate with State HR to explore funding options for events, initiatives and accessibility. There is not an ongoing allocated funding source for BRGs.

Accommodations

Provide reasonable accommodation, such as ASL and CART services, for inclusive participation.

6. Implementation and activities

Organize initial meetings

- **Kickoff Meeting:** Conduct a kickoff meeting to establish the BRG's priorities and action plans.
- **Coordinate Regular Meetings:** Schedule and hold regular BRG meetings.

Operational plan

- **Annual Plan:** Create an annual action plan with specific goals, deliverables, and timelines.
- **Leadership Election:** Elect or appoint leadership positions as outlined in the charter.
- **Events and Activities:** Plan regular events, professional development opportunities, and outreach activities.
- **Coordinate Regular Reviews:** Review and update charter, goals, and objectives as needed.