

DEI Style Guide for ADLM Branding Guidelines

RACE AND ETHNICITY

General guidelines

Geographic Origin - Whenever possible, be specific and/or follow a person's preference when referring to race/ethnicity.

For example, *Haitian American* is preferable to *Black*, *Vietnamese American* is preferable to *Asian*, etc. unless an individual prefers otherwise.

As another example, if someone prefers the term *Hispanic*, use this instead of *Latino/a/x/e*.

Capitalization - The names of races, ethnicities, and tribes should be capitalized. The one instance where a race should not be capitalized is in the term “white supremacy,” as capitalization here could be perceived as inflammatory or inappropriate.

Adjectival Usage for Specific Categories - Racial and ethnic terms should not be used in noun form (e.g., avoid Asians, Blacks, Hispanics, or Whites); the adjectival form is preferred (e.g., Asian Americans, Black people, Hispanic scientists, Native American, or White participants).

Specific Terms

Whenever possible, be specific and/or follow a person's preference when referring to race/ethnicity.

American Indian, Native American (adj.) – Both of these terms are acceptable when referring to two or more people who are indigenous to the continental U.S. and who have different tribal affiliations. For individuals or a group of people from the same tribe, however, use the name of the specific tribe. *Examples: He is a Navajo commissioner. She is a citizen of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma.*

- **Alaska Natives** – The preferred term for the collective Indigenous groups of Alaska.
- **First Nations** – The preferred term for the collective Indigenous peoples of Canada who are neither Métis nor Inuit.

Asian (adj.) – Refers to a person of Asian descent. The term Asian is a broad category that can include numerous countries of origin (e.g., Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, and others) and regions (e.g., East Asia, South Asia, Southeast Asia). Reporting of individuals' self-identified countries of origin is preferred

when known.

Biracial (adj.) – Refers to a person who has parents from two different racial or ethnic backgrounds. *Multiracial* or *multiethnic* can be used to describe someone of two or more racial/ethnic backgrounds. Avoid *mixed* or *mixed-race*.

Black (adj.) – Refers to a person of African descent.

- **African American (adj.)** – This term is also acceptable when referring to an American Black person. However, this term is not as all encompassing as Black and is not necessarily interchangeable with Black. For example, American Black people of Caribbean descent generally refer to themselves as Caribbean American.

Hispanic (adj.) – Refers to a person from, or whose ancestors were from, a Spanish-speaking country or culture. *Latino*, *Latina*, *Latine*, or *Latinx* are sometimes preferred instead of *Hispanic*.

Indigenous (adj.) – Capitalize this term when using it to refer to the original inhabitants of a place.

Latino, Latina, Latine, Latinx (adj.) - *Latino* is often the preferred adjective for a person from, or whose ancestors were from, Latin America. Latin America includes all of the Spanish-speaking countries in the Americas, as well as Brazil. *Latina* is the feminine form of *Latino*.

Some prefer the recently coined gender-neutral terms *Latine* or *Latinx*. However, be aware that as recently as 2019, only 23% of people who self-identified as Latino/a or Hispanic were familiar with the term *Latinx*. Similarly, the majority of Latin Americans have not embraced *Latine*. For now, the terms should therefore be confined to quotations, names of organizations, or descriptions of individuals who request them and should be accompanied by a short explanation when possible (e.g., *Hernandez prefers the gender-neutral term Latinx*).

People of color (n.) – Acceptable only when referring to a broad categorization of people who are not White (e.g., *People of color suffer greater health disparities than White people*). When possible, it's always better to refer to the specific ethnic groups in discussion. Don't use the term *BIPOC*.

Pacific Islander (n.) – Refers to a person descended from the original inhabitants of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

Hawaiian, Native Hawaiian (adj.) – Both of these terms can be used to refer to the Indigenous people of the Hawaiian Islands.

Roma (adj. or n.) – Don't use *Gypsy* in colloquial speech or to refer to the Roma/Romani, as this term is an offensive word across many cultures. The Roma are an Indo-Aryan people living mostly in Europe. There are also Roma diaspora populations in the Americas.

White (adj.) – Refers to a person of European descent.

Don't use *Caucasian* as a synonym for *White*, unless it's in a quotation.

INTERNATIONAL TERMS

Country – Use this term instead of *nation* to refer to sovereign political entities. The official definition of “nation” is a group of people who share the same cultural identity and links.

Developed/developing, first world/third world, low/middle/high-income countries - The terms *first world/third world* and *developed/developing* are not recommended as descriptors when comparing countries or regions. The term *third world* is pejorative and archaic. The term *developing* may seem like an acceptable alternative, but it too can be considered pejorative and insensitive to the complex metrics used to assess economic, political, and social progress.

Best practice is to avoid such general terms and use specific terms that reflect what is being compared, such as *low-income* or *high-income* for an article comparing countries based on measures such as gross national product per capita.

Emerging countries only applies to countries that have some characteristics of a developed market, but that do not fully meet the standards of one. Examples: Argentina, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Poland, South Africa, South Korea, and Turkey. Egypt, Iran, Nigeria, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan, and Thailand are other major emerging countries.

Since most people are not familiar with the precise definition of *emerging countries*—and *emerging* can also be considered problematic for the same reasons that *developing* can—it's generally best to avoid this term.

Recommended Terms for Global Regions

1. **Sub-Saharan Africa** - Use this term for countries that lie south of the Sahara, excluding Algeria, Djibouti, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Somalia, Sudan, and Tunisia, which are Middle East and North African (MENA) countries
2. **East Asia and Pacific**
3. **Europe and Eurasia**
4. **Middle East and North Africa (MENA)**
5. **North America** – Use this term when referring to the region of the world that includes Greenland, Canada, the U.S., Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean.
6. **South and Central Asia Region**
7. **Latin America and the Caribbean** – Use this term when referring to the region of the world that includes Mexico, Central America, South America, and the Caribbean.

Don't use the acronym *LATAM* as an abbreviation for *Latin America*. Additionally, don't use the term *Latin America* by itself to collectively refer to Mexico, Central America, and

South America, because some of the non-Spanish speaking countries in Central and South America (such as French Guiana and Belize) are considered Caribbean countries. The term Latin America only refers to Spanish-speaking countries in the Americas plus Brazil.

America – Whenever possible, use **the U.S.** or **the United States** to refer to the United States of America. While the word **America** is widely recognized as being synonymous with the U.S., many people outside the U.S. use “America” to refer to North, Central, and/or South America. Using this word to refer to the U.S. alone can therefore cause confusion or potentially even offense when communicating with an international audience.

BRICS is a rapidly evolving grouping acronym that currently refers to the countries of Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. These countries are considered to be at a similar stage of newly advanced economic development and to be on their way to becoming high-income countries. Prior to 2010, this group of countries did not include South Africa, so this acronym is also commonly rendered as “the BRIC,” “the BRIC countries,” “the BRIC economies,” or alternatively as the “Big Four.”

GENDER IDENTITY AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION

General guideline – When possible, ask individuals how they would like to be described. Only mention gender and sexual orientation when relevant; highlighting them in an inconsistent or irrelevant way can bring undue attention to these characteristics and portray them as unusual.

LGBTQ or LGBTQIA+ (adj.) – pertaining collectively to people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning. Some add I and A “+” to include intersex and asexual identifying people and to ensure additional communities are included. Avoid using to describe an individual; use their specific identity instead.

Though some in the LGBTQ community have reclaimed the word *queer*, it has historically been used as a slur and should therefore be avoided unless explicitly preferred by an individual or community.

Do not use *homosexual* or *sexual preference*; use, respectively, *gay/lesbian* and *sexual orientation* instead.

Asexual (adj.) – a person who does not experience sexual attraction, though they may feel other types of attraction, such as romantic or aesthetic.

Bisexual (adj.) – a person who has the capacity to form attractions to people of the same gender or to people whose gender is different from their own.

Gay (adj.) – a man who is sexually or romantically attracted exclusively to other men. Can also refer to women who are exclusively attracted to other women, though *lesbian* is typically used in this case. When the subject is a woman, ask her which term she prefers when possible.

Lesbian (adj.) – a woman who is sexually or romantically attracted exclusively to other women.

Heterosexual (adj.) – a person who is sexually or romantically attracted exclusively to people whose gender is different from their own.

Pronouns - Always use an individual's identified pronouns. However, when describing a generic or hypothetical person, use *they*, *them*, or *their*. Example: Instead of “Each member reported to his or her committee,” reword to “Each member reported to their committee.”

Use gender-neutral terminology when possible. Examples: “workforce” instead of “manpower,” “menstrual products” instead of “feminine hygiene products.”

This often applies to prefixes and suffixes. Examples: “humankind” instead of “mankind,” “chair” instead of “chairman” or “chairwoman,” “firefighter” instead of “fireman.”

Transgender (adj.) – Denoting a person whose gender identity does not correspond to the sex assigned for them at birth. Some individuals may prefer to be described as *gender fluid* or *nonbinary*. Should not be used as a noun.

Avoid references to *both genders* and other language that implies gender is binary. *Gender affirmation surgery* is the appropriate term, not *sex change*.

Do not write that an individual *identifies* as a certain gender. State simply that they *are* *male/female/nonbinary* etc.

Cisgender (adj.) – Denoting a person whose gender identity corresponds to the sex assigned for them at birth. Should not be used as a noun.

DISABILITY

General guidelines – use person-first, rather than identity-first, language: *person with a disability* instead of *disabled person*. Doing so emphasizes that a disability is not inherent to a person's identity. There can, however, be exceptions. Many in the deaf

community, for example, prefer to be described as *deaf* or *Deaf* rather than *person with deafness*.

When describing disability, avoid terms that portray disability as debilitating, like *afflicted with*, *lost a battle with (a disability/disease)*, *wheelchair bound*, *stricken by*, *suffers from*, *victim of*. Likewise, only describe individuals with disabilities as *patients* in the context of a diagnosis or medical care.

Avoid using disability-related terms metaphorically, as it can trivialize disability and reinforce misconceptions. Examples of inappropriate usage: describing a highly organized person as *OCD*, inconsistent behavior as *bipolar*, a feeling of restlessness as *ADD*, and strange behavior as *crazy* or *psychotic*.

Able-bodied, normal – Do not describe people without disabilities as *able-bodied* or *normal*. If necessary to specify that someone doesn't have a disability, use *person without a disability* or *non-disabled*.

PATIENTS/MEDICAL

General guidelines – Person-first language should also be used when describing patients or people in a medical or health context. *Examples: People with COVID-19* instead of *COVID-19 cases*, *person with/experiencing obesity* instead of *obese person*.

When describing patients, follow the guidelines under the entry for “DISABILITY” about avoiding terms that portray medical conditions as debilitating.

A person should only be described as a *patient* when discussing medical interventions for their illness or their relationship with a healthcare provider. In certain contexts, especially psychological and psychiatric care, *client* may be preferred to *patient*.

Health equity is the state where everyone has an equal opportunity to achieve optimal health, and includes equitable access to appropriate clinical testing. Whereas in an *equality* framework, everyone receives the exact same resources, *equity* addresses historic injustices in healthcare and considers how they lead to inequitable health outcomes for marginalized groups.

Disability vs. chronic illness – While a *disability* is a physical or mental impairment that limits a person's activity, a *chronic illness* is any ailment or condition that persists for at least a year and requires medical attention, but it need not lead to a disability.

Controlled substances – Preferable to *drugs of abuse* in referring to drugs whose prescription

and use is regulated by the federal government and have the potential for abuse.

AGE

General guidelines – Only refer to a person’s or group of people’s age when it is contextually relevant.

Terms such as *elderly* and *the aged* are considered by many to be condescending and pejorative. *Seniors* may be acceptable, but it’s better to use *older people/adults/patients*, etc. (instead of *old*) and refer to a specific range of ages (*adults aged 75-85*) when possible.

Like disabilities and medical conditions, age and aging should not be described as hardships in and of themselves or inherent to a person’s identity.

SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

Socioeconomic status is a complex concept that involves income, education, housing, occupation, and other systemic and external factors.

People experiencing homelessness is the person-first alternative to *homeless*, though *unhoused*, which conveys that becoming homeless is not the fault of the individual, is preferred by some.

Deficit-based terms – Consider avoiding deficit-based terms, which focus on what people lack (*vulnerable, at risk, struggling*) and prioritize language that centers the structural issues that may influence socioeconomic status (*people who experience opportunity gaps*). *Low-income* is a preferred alternative to *poor*, but consider using *people with low(er) incomes* as the person-first alternative.

Racially coded terms – Do not use racially coded terms for socioeconomic status, like *urban, inner-city, and ghetto*.

Underrepresented, marginalized - *Underrepresented* can be used to describe a group of people (often along racial or ethnic lines) represented at disproportionately low levels in a certain community (medicine, higher education, tech, etc.). *Marginalized* emphasizes that people have been actively excluded from these opportunities, historically and/or currently.

Minorities –

Don't:

- Use the general term *minorities* when describing groups or populations because it is overly vague and implies a hierarchy among groups.
- Use the term as a stand-alone noun.

Do:

- Include a modifier when using *minority*, for example, *racial and ethnic minority groups* and *racial and ethnic minority individuals*. However, even this umbrella term may not be appropriate in some settings.
- Use terms such as *underserved populations* (e.g., when referring to health disparities among groups) or *underrepresented populations* (see the entry for this above) provided the categories of individuals included are defined at first mention.

The term *minoritized* may be acceptable as an adjective provided that the noun(s) it modifies is included (*racial and ethnic minoritized group*). *Groups that have been historically marginalized* could be suitable if the rationale for this designation is provided and the categories of those included are defined or described at first mention.

Blue-collar - Referring to an occupation or type of work as *blue-collar* has traditionally been a derogatory term for skilled or manual labor or laborers, who were considered unsophisticated. Though some today take pride in the term, it's best to use more specific descriptions (*technician, mechanic, etc.*).

CORPORATE TERMS

Stakeholders (n.) – a general word used for those involved in or affected by a course of action. Because the word has roots in colonialism (settlers staking their claims on Indigenous land), it is considered offensive by some and should be avoided. Alternative terms should be context-specific and may include *associates, allies, participants, and interested parties*.