

The Mountaineers
Equity & Belonging (E&B) Committee Charter

Purpose

To provide leadership and direction to The Mountaineers' efforts to achieve our stated core value of **COMMUNITY**: *we seek to provide opportunities for all, and believe a diverse and inclusive outdoors inspires unity, respect, and passion for the places we love**.

This committee represents an intentional evolution from the Equity & Inclusion Committee to the Equity & Belonging Committee, reflecting our commitment to moving beyond inclusion toward creating a true sense of belonging within our community. The Mountaineers has historically operated as a white-led organization, and outdoor recreation is traditionally more accessible to affluent individuals. We acknowledge this history and strive to break down any systemic barriers and seek to create a future in which our membership, leadership, and programs are welcoming and accessible to people of all backgrounds, identities, and abilities. This includes increased representation of individuals from historically underrepresented communities, fostering a culture of equity and belonging.

The committee will work to:

- Identify and prioritize equity and belonging related org-wide projects
- Advise on ways to acknowledge and reduce participation barriers due to systemic inequity and bias
- Lead meaningful change to become an equitable and welcoming community so all people have the opportunity to be fully engaged and find belonging in the outdoors

The Committee will abide by the bylaws and policies, and support the overall fulfillment of the purpose and mission of The Mountaineers.

Authority

The committee is a standing, Advisory Committee of the Board of Directors and derives its authority from and reports to The Mountaineers board of directors. Recommendations and actions will be published and shared with the broader Mountaineers community and reported directly at board meetings to hold us collectively accountable.

Membership

Building a welcoming and equitable community requires diverse perspectives. The E&B Committee will strive to include members who reflect a diversity of identities, including but not limited to: race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, physical and mental disability, veteran status, and socioeconomic background.

The E&B Committee will aim to balance members based on branch affiliation, family situation, length of involvement with The Mountaineers - to capture institutional knowledge and fresh

perspective. Every member should have professional or lived experience in diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

The committee recognizes there is no way for all identities to be represented, and will seek to ensure a fair and equitable selection process of the committee membership.

Membership of the E&B Committee consists of:

- Two members of the board
- Mountaineers members and external consultant (8-10)
 - Seven members will include the Equity Chair or an equivalent representative from each branch to ensure local perspectives are included.
- Ex-officio members from staff:
 - Chief Executive Officer
 - Director of Communications and Member Engagement
 - Director of Programs and Operations
 - Associate Director of Leadership

Chair

The committee shall be chaired by a person of color**, ensuring that the committee leadership is informed by lived experience.

People of color have historically been underrepresented in outdoor spaces, leadership roles, and decision-making processes within organizations like The Mountaineers. By centering leadership that brings direct experience, we aim to better identify and address the barriers that have historically excluded underrepresented communities.

Budget Signature Authority

The Chairperson shall have the authority to commit/disburse budgeted funds.

Voting

A motion to bring business before the Committee for vote may be made by any two Committee Members, not including the Chairperson. Additionally, any Mountaineers member is welcome to address the Committee in writing to discuss proposed business. The Committee Chair must bring forward any proposed business to the subsequent meeting. They may choose to invite the member who proposed the business to join the meeting as a guest to present the topic. The topic must receive a motion and a second by any two members of the committee in order for it to be addressed as business by the Committee. Any business that comes before the Committee for a vote must receive a two-thirds majority vote of the eligible Committee Members present, including voted proxies, in order to be adopted. As this is a Board Advisory Committee, all decisions related to organizational policy or practice must be ratified by the Board of Directors.

Eligibility

Each Committee Member other than the Chairperson shall be eligible to cast votes for all

motions and other Committee business. Each Committee Member may cast a single vote. The Chairperson shall only cast their vote in the event of a tie, but they are free to vote any and all proxies that have been delegated to them.

Proxy

In the event that a Committee Member other than the Chairperson is unable to attend a meeting, they may delegate their proxy to another individual in attendance. A verifiable proxy may be in, but not necessarily limited to, the following formats: written, email, text message, or voicemail.

Electronic Voting

Voting on motions and other business before the Committee normally occurs at a full committee meeting. This allows for a full debate of the issue at hand. In extraordinary cases voting may occur via email.

Quorum

A quorum of >50% of the Committee members, not including the Chairperson, must be present for a vote on any matter.

Meetings

The Committee shall hold regular meetings. A quorum of the Committee consists of a majority of its members and at least one board member. Attendance at a meeting may either be in person or by voice via electronic media. Decisions will be made by consensus, or majority vote of those present as necessary, with each member having one vote. The chair will cast a vote only in the event of a tie.

Members unable to attend a meeting may send their feedback in advance to the coordinating staff member, or may weigh in after a meeting when additional feedback has been requested.

When required, or in case of questions of points of order, the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall provide regulations and policies subject to The Mountaineers Bylaws, this Committee Charter and all Board Policies. Committee meeting minutes shall be taken and posted promptly on the E&B committee page. The Committee Chair or their designee will provide an update on its activities at Mountaineers board meetings.

Responsibilities

Lead Mountaineers efforts to become an equitable and welcoming community; advising the board and org leadership on best practices.

- Draft objectives for E&B related work.
- Build valuation matrix
 - To highlight the value (business case) for DEI investments alongside other investment priorities.

- To help us prioritize DEI investments and understand their associated risks.
- Identify and prioritize E&B related projects
 - Advise on ways to acknowledge and reduce systemic process issues within The Mountaineers
 - Determine methods to reduce participation barriers and address participants' overall comfort levels
 - Increase engagement of underrepresented populations in our organization
- Create a set of guiding principles through which all org-level projects will be evaluated
- Provide structure, support for, and evaluation of Mountaineers Affinity Groups, including, but not limited to, MountainQueers, Retired Rovers, and Singles Committees
- Act as a resource to the larger organization on formal DEI work

Removal of Members

No committee member shall be removed from the Committee except for good cause. The process of removal shall be consistent with the Board Policy on Committees.

Committee members are expected to actively participate in at least two-thirds of scheduled committee meetings, either in person or through electronic means. Engagement in key discussions and decisions, whether during meetings or through electronic communication, is essential to maintaining an effective and collaborative committee.

Members who are not engaged for extended periods - defined as consistently missing meetings and failing to contribute to key matters for more than three months - may be subject to removal. The decision to remove a member due to lack of engagement will be made by the committee Chairperson, ensuring fairness and transparency in the process.

Members facing potential removal will be given notice and possibly an opportunity to demonstrate their commitment before a final decision is made.

Amending the Activity Charter

Amendments to this Activity Charter may be proposed by petition by any Committee Member. A two-thirds vote of the Committee is required to enact an amendment.

Amendment History:

- This Charter was first approved by the Board of Directors as the Equity & Inclusion Committee Charter on May 16, 2019
- Committee name and charter updates: February 2025

**Quoted from our core values developed in 2017.*

****"When we look at data across our communities, whether it is people's health, access to housing and good paying jobs, graduation rates, incomes or incarcerations, disparities are greatest when we look by race. The most persistent and detrimental disparities are starkest when we look at race. By leading with*

racial justice we are committing to taking on the root causes of our most challenging problems and to focus where we can have the biggest impact and needs are greatest.” - King County in its [statement on Equity and Social Justice](#)