Sacramento State Employee Resource Group (ERG) Handbook

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Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) at Sacramento State

Last Updated 4/4/25

Introduction to Employee Resource Groups

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) at Sacramento State have been formed through grassroots efforts to connect individuals from historically marginalized or underrepresented groups. The Division of Inclusive Excellence provides university-wide leadership to support the development and success of these groups as part of Sacramento State's diversity and inclusion initiatives.

Mission and Purpose

Mission
ERGs sponsored by Inclusive Excellence aim to:

- Educate, raise awareness, and share information about issues affecting historically marginalized and/or underrepresented communities
- Provide professional development, networking, and cultural appreciation opportunities
- Improve diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging at Sacramento State
- Offer a forum for staff and faculty to voice campus climate concerns

Purpose
Sacramento State's ERGs contribute to the institution by providing:

- **Visibility** - Maintaining a visible presence that provides a sense of security and acceptance
- **Community** - Supporting new staff and faculty in navigating campus resources and university culture
- **Advocacy and Education** - Advocating for policies and programs to meet the needs of underrepresented groups
- **Recruiting and Retaining Talent** - Assisting in efforts to build a diverse workforce reflecting our student population
- **Campus Engagement** - Building bridges across the campus community and educating on diverse perspectives

Note: ERGs are not intended to address matters falling under the purview of labor unions, including but not limited to work hours, compensation, advancement opportunities, working conditions, or job assignments.

Benefits of ERGs

ERGs receive:

- Official recognition and executive sponsorship through Inclusive Excellence
- University webpage and email address
- Ability to reserve campus space and access to institutional resources
- Access to University financial accounts (if desired)
- Direct connection to University administration through the CDO of Inclusive Excellence

- Increased visibility through new staff/faculty orientations and University-sponsored events

Inclusivity Commitment

ERGs at Sacramento State are committed to fostering an inclusive environment. While they may form around shared identities or experiences, all ERG meetings, events, and activities must be open and welcoming to all university employees regardless of:

- Race, color, or national origin
- Sex, gender identity, or gender expression
- Sexual orientation
- Religion or creed
- Age or generational status
- Disability status
- Veteran status
- Marital or family status
- Cultural background
- Professional role or classification
- Department or unit affiliation
- Length of service at the university

Participation in ERGs is entirely voluntary and independent of managerial influence. No employee shall face discrimination, harassment, or exclusion in their participation or leadership in any ERG.

Starting a New ERG

We're excited to support new Employee Resource Groups at Sacramento State. Here's how to get started:

Building Your Foundation

Before officially applying, take these initial steps:

- Gather interested colleagues and develop your initial vision
- Draft a simple mission statement capturing your proposed ERG's purpose and goals
- Identify at least 5 faculty and staff members committed to supporting the group
- Consider potential leadership roles within your group

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Application Process

Step 1: Connect With Us

- Complete our brief interest form: https://forms.office.com/r/EsxUNp3Sea
- A team member from Inclusive Excellence will reach out within 5 business days
- We'll schedule a conversation to learn more about your vision, share available resources, answer questions, and discuss next steps

During our initial conversation, we'll walk through the ERG Guidelines & Requirements document together, covering important details about leadership structure, communication expectations, and annual activities.

Launch Planning

After our initial meeting, we'll help you:

- Finalize your mission statement and basic charter
- Set up your communication channels (email, website)
- Plan your first open meeting
- Connect with other ERG leaders for mentorship
- Set up any needed financial accounts

Once these steps are complete, you'll hold your first public meeting, establish a regular meeting schedule (minimum quarterly), and begin building your community!

ERG Guidelines and Requirements

This section outlines comprehensive guidelines for both new and established ERGs at Sacramento State. These requirements are designed to help ERGs succeed while maintaining alignment with university values.

Leadership & Governance

- Maintain a minimum of 3 officers who are current Sacramento State faculty or staff
- Establish clear officer roles, responsibilities, and terms of service
- Document succession planning and election/selection processes
- Optional: Designate a Treasurer position if managing university funds
    - Treasurer must complete cash handling and accounting services training
    - Treasurer oversees any membership dues collection and financial reporting

Foundational Documents

- **Mission statement** that:
    - Aligns with university values

  - Clearly states group purpose, goals, activities, desired outcomes, and success measures
  - Identifies target community and intended impact

- **Charter or bylaws** that specify:
  - Membership eligibility and expectations
  - Decision-making processes
  - Leadership structure and transitions
  - Meeting requirements and procedures

Active Engagement

- Hold minimum of 4 meetings per year open to campus community
- Maintain consistent communication with members
- Track and report participation metrics
- Document activities and accomplishments annually

Communication & Presence

- Monitor and respond to official ERG email
- Keep university-provided website current with:
  - Meeting schedules and locations
  - Current leadership contacts
  - Upcoming events and initiatives
  - Links to any external platforms or social media

Note: Website maintenance can be handled by Inclusive Excellence or a member of the ERG if they have the requisite web publishing training required by IRT

Annual Renewal Process

- Complete annual check-in with Inclusive Excellence that includes:
  - A narrative summary describing their events and activities for the past year, as well as descriptions of how the group and their activities have served their mission and goals.
  - Update officer information as needed
  - Review and revise mission/goals as needed for the upcoming fiscal/academic year

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Resources and Support for ERGs

Institutional Support

- Official university recognition and sponsorship
- Direct partnership with Inclusive Excellence
- Annual funding allocation opportunity for programming and initiatives (pending budgetary approval)
- Access to accounting support

Operational Resources

- Dedicated ERG website hosted on the university platform
- Official Sacramento State email address
- Marketing and communications support
- Event planning and logistics assistance

Growth and Development

- Leadership development opportunities for ERG officers
- Annual ERG retreat participation
- Cross-ERG networking and collaboration opportunities
- Opportunity to shape campus culture and policy

Assessment and Impact

- Annual impact report template and support
- Metrics tracking assistance
- Support for measuring program effectiveness
- Documentation of ERG contributions for institutional reporting

Funding and Financial Procedures

Funding Guidelines

What We Can Fund (based on state funding guidelines)

We're happy to be able to support these activities and expenses:

- Educational events and programs, including:
    - Food and refreshments for educational events
    - Speaker fees and service providers
    - Sac State faculty guest lecturer stipends

    - Event supplies for participants
    - Room rentals and technical support
- Educational resources:
    - Books and journal subscriptions
    - Professional membership fees
    - Conference or webinar registrations
    - Event promotion materials and flyers

What We Can't Fund (and Why)

Due to state funding guidelines, we cannot cover:

- Food for internal meetings or networking events (state funds are restricted to educational programming)
- Alcoholic beverages (state policy restriction)
- Staff stipends
- Branded items or "swag" (state funds must be used for educational purposes)

How to Request Funds

Important Timeline Tips:

- For events with outside speakers or vendors: Start planning 2 months ahead
- For events with Sac State faculty speakers: Plan for 2-3 months processing time
- For general funding requests: Allow 7-10 business days for approval

Two Easy Steps:

1. Submit your request:
    - Fill out the ERG Request Form: https://forms.office.com/r/LHZNsZwgNW
    - We'll respond within 7-10 business days

2. Once approved, choose your purchasing method:
    - Option A: Work directly with Inclusive Excellence to handle all purchasing
    - Option B: If you're familiar with university purchasing, you can process purchases yourself using your department's procurement card (Procard)

Working with Speakers and Vendors

To ensure smooth payment processing:

1. All external speakers and vendors need to register as university suppliers
2. Our Inclusive Excellence (IE) team will guide you through this process
3. For Sac State faculty speakers receiving stipends, IE will coordinate with Faculty Advancement

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Food Service Guidelines

- Events in the University Union: Please use Epicure catering
- Need specialty meals (halal, kosher, etc.)? We can help request an Epicure exception
- Events outside the Union: Feel free to choose any restaurant. Please note that delivery services such as Door Dash and Uber Eats are not allowed

Need Assistance? Questions about what's allowed? Need guidance? Contact Jennifer Wagelie, Director of Cultural Development and Equity Initiatives:

- Email: wagelie@csus.edu
- Schedule a meeting to discuss your plans!

Website Management

Creating a New ERG Website

To create a new ERG website, follow these steps:

1. **Submit Your Request**
    - Email Alexandra Owens in Inclusive Excellence at acowens@csus.edu with the subject line: *Request for New ERG Website*.

2. **Provide the Following Information**:
    - **ERG Name**
    - **ERG Abbreviation**
    - **ERG Description**: Briefly describe your group and its mission.
    - **Joining Information**: How can individuals join your ERG?
    - **Links, Resources, and Documents**: Include any relevant files, links, or resources you'd like on your webpage.
    - **Header Image (Optional)**: Attach an image if you have one for your webpage banner. You can find images in Sac State's Flickr Albums or supply one of your own.
    - **Contact Email**: Indicate the ERG's contact email (this can be a generic CSUS email or an individual's email). **If your ERG needs a generic email address, please mention it in your request.**
    - **Meet Us Page (Optional)**: If you want a "Meet Us" page, send a roster of your members, including their titles, emails, and headshots (if available).
    - **Web Content Manager**: Specify if you want to assign a Web Content Manager from your ERG or prefer Inclusive Excellence to manage the website.

3. **Timeline:** Inclusive Excellence will work with IRT to create your blank website. IE will then fill in your site with the information you provided. Please allow at least **2 weeks** for the process.

Requesting Edits to an Existing Website

1. **If Your ERG Has a Web Content Manager**
    - Work directly with your Web Content Manager to update your website.
    - **To Become a Web Content Manager**: Email Alexandra Owens at acowens@csus.edu for assistance.

2. **If Your ERG Does Not Have a Web Content Manager**
    - Email Alexandra Owens at acowens@csus.edu with the subject line: *ERG Website Edit Request*.
    - **Provide the Following Information**:
        - **Webpage URL**: Specify the page(s) requiring edits.
        - **Detailed Edits**: Clearly describe the changes you'd like to make.
        - **New Content**: Attach any updated language, links, files, or images to be added.
3. **Timeline**
    - Minor edits: Allow **3-5 business days**.
    - Creating new linked webpages: Allow up to **2 weeks**.

For further assistance or questions, reach out to Alexandra Owens in Inclusive Excellence at acowens@csus.edu.

Event Planning

Planning Inclusive and Accessible Events

Scheduling

- Avoid scheduling events during major religious or cultural holidays. Utilize Inclusive Excellence's Multifaith and Cultural Calendar to stay aware of important dates.
- Consider connecting with other organizations and integrating into existing events to maximize attendance.
- Add your event to the Sacramento State ERG Calendar (see instructions in the next section).

Venue

- Do a walk-through of potential venues to assess accessibility issues (e.g., wheelchair accessibility, assistive technology, etc.) and identify any barriers.

Promotional/Registration Materials

- Publicize events at least three (3) weeks in advance to ensure good attendance and allow time for accommodation requests.
- Include language about how and when to request accommodations, materials, interpretation, or dietary modifications, with:
    1. A contact person with phone number and/or email address
    2. Clear deadline by which to make requests known

Sample Accommodation Language:
Inclusive Excellence seeks to ensure that our events are inclusive and that all attendees are able to fully participate. The event will have wheelchair accessible seating and vegetarian and gluten-free food options will be provided. Please request an ASL interpreter or live captioning as soon as possible, but no later than five (5) business days before the event, by sending an email to asl@csus.edu with your request and providing the name, date, time, and location of this event. For all other requests, please email [INSERT EMAIL ADDRESS] no later than five (5) business days prior to the event.

- The deadline for accommodation requests should be no longer than five (5) business days prior to the event, unless there are special circumstances.
- Include information about planned accommodations (e.g., vegetarian and gluten-free food options, wheelchair accessible seating, etc.)
- Consider common dietary restrictions and allergies when serving food.
- Ensure electronic flyers are screen-reader compatible, with text included in the body of emails.
- If inviting community members or the public, include parking information on advertising materials.

Staff/Volunteers

- Appoint a point person for accessibility issues and list as contact on all materials.
- Conduct a venue walk-through a few days before and on the day of the event.
- Test all technical equipment when it arrives and on the day of the event.

Virtual Events

- Provide both internet and dial-in options for participation as not everyone has reliable internet access.
- Provide attendees with a tip sheet related to the software used, including login instructions and accessibility features.
- Brief presenters on best practices for the platform and accessibility features.

- Test the technology and all functionalities both several days in advance and immediately before the event.
- Designate individuals to troubleshoot problems during the event.
- Establish and communicate a process for submitting and responding to questions.
- Consider having opening slides with important information about accessibility features, question submission, etc.

Helpful resources for accessible virtual events:

- Accessibility Features (Zoom)
- Getting Started with Closed Captioning (Zoom)
- Accessibility Tips for a Better Zoom/Virtual Meeting Experience

Presentation Set-Up

Seating

- Reserve seats in front of presenter for persons with visual, hearing, and cognitive limitations.
- Ensure accessible seating is integrated throughout the room.
- Identify and communicate any barriers that cannot be eliminated.

Screen

- Provide screens viewable from all areas of the room.
- Make text and visuals large enough to be read from the back of the room.
- Enable closed captioning on all videos or films.

Microphones

- Provide presenters with a lapel and/or handheld microphone.
- Include multiple microphones for question-and-answer sessions.

Materials

- Ensure visual aids are printed in large font and make print copies available.

Presenter Guidelines

- Introduce interpreters and service providers by name at the start of the meeting.
- Orally describe the room layout and location of emergency exits, food/beverages, and restrooms.
- Inform attendees of any writing or reading activities during the meeting.
- Always use a microphone.
- Provide written descriptions of all images.
- Use multiple communication methods for different learning styles.
- Describe images and visual elements out loud.

- Repeat all audience questions and comments into the microphone.

Working with Interpreters or Live Captioners

- Provide presenters with information about working with ASL interpretation.
- Give interpreters copies of presentation materials in advance if possible.
- Address comments directly to audience members, not their interpreters or assistants.

For specific guidance regarding event accessibility, contact Sacramento State's ADA Coordinator, Jennifer Murchison at murchison@csus.edu.

Submitting Events to the ERG Calendar

Step 1: Access the Calendar

- Visit the **Sac State ERG Calendar**.
- Click **"Submit Event"** on the left-hand side of the page.

Step 2: Sign In (Optional)

- If desired, sign in with your **SacLink** credentials.
- Signing in allows you to view and manage your submission after it has been submitted.
- For more details, click **"Benefits of Signing In"** on the right-hand side of the page.

Step 3: Complete the Event Submission Form

- Fill in all required fields with your event details.
- **Add an Image (Optional)**: Click **"Choose File"** to upload an image for your event.

Step 4: Provide Additional Details in the Description Field

In the **Description** box, include the following:

- **Event Description**: A brief summary of your event.
- **Accommodations Information**:
  - Who should attendees contact for accommodations?
  - How far in advance should they make the request?
- **Optional: Registration Details** (for in-person events only):
  - **Audience**: Specify if registration is open to everyone or limited.
  - **SacLink Requirement**: Indicate if attendees must sign in with SacLink credentials.
  - **Capacity**: State the maximum number of registrants if applicable.
  - **Registration Timeline**:
    - Default: Registration starts when the event is published.
    - Specify a different start date if desired.
    - Include the registration end date.
  - **Organizer Emails**: List emails to receive notifications about registrations.
  - **Confirmation Email**:
    - Do you want a confirmation email sent to registrants?

- If yes, provide any custom message text.
-

For Virtual Events: We recommend setting up registration via your virtual platform (e.g., Zoom).

Step 5: Submit Your Event

- Click **"Next"** at the bottom of the form.
- Review your event details.
- Click **"Submit"** to finalize your submission.

After Submission

- Inclusive Excellence will review your event details.
- If any clarification is needed, we will contact you.
- **Timeline**: Please allow at least **3 business days** for your event to appear on the calendar.

For assistance or questions, reach out to Alexandra Owens in Inclusive Excellence at acowens@csus.edu.