



**MOLLOY  
UNIVERSITY**

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

# A GUIDE FOR EMPLOYEE AFFINITY GROUP FORMATION



# WHAT IS AN AFFINITY GROUP?

An Affinity Group is a **group of faculty and staff linked by a common purpose, ideology, or interest**. Affinity Groups play a vital role in ensuring an inclusive environment where all are valued, included, and empowered to succeed.

Molloy University Employee Affinity Groups are supported by the Office of the Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

The Office of the Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, in consultation with the University's DEI Committee, approves Groups that focus on:

- 1). supporting historically marginalized and underrepresented populations within society
- 2). the success of all employees
- 3). advancing Molloy's mission, values and guiding virtues, and diversity, equity and inclusion goals.

All employees, regardless of race, ethnicity, color, national origin, religion, ability, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, or other identity markers, are welcomed to attend all meetings and programs sponsored by each Group. Participation is voluntary, so Molloy does not mandate or track participation in the Groups.

Proposals for new Groups must use the *Framework for Proposing an Employee Affinity Group* guidance and completed proposals can be emailed to [dmitchell1@molloy.edu](mailto:dmitchell1@molloy.edu).

## FRAMEWORK FOR PROPOSING AN EMPLOYEE AFFINITY GROUP

1. The Group should create a name.
  - a. The proposed name must not be misleading as to the purpose or nature of the Group (including the use of acronyms).
  - b. Groups cannot use trademarked or registered names in their official title. Names and titles of Groups must be unique and distinguishable from existing Groups and student organizations at Molloy.
2. The Group should create a mission aligning with Molloy's mission, values and guiding virtues, and diversity, equity, and inclusion goals.
  - a. The purpose and/or functions of a Group should not duplicate those of an existing recognized Group.
  - b. The Group should establish bylaws, procedures, or rules and regulations to govern the Group.
    - i. Sample mission statements and other information about affinity groups at institutions of higher education can be found in the links provided in Attachment A to this Guide.
3. The officer structure for the Group should include, but is not limited to:
  - a. Chair and Liaison to the Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
  - b. Vice-Chair
  - c. Secretary
  - d. Treasurer
4. The Group's primary work should focus on four areas:
  - a. Social support and networking
  - b. Advocacy
  - c. Educational programming for the Molloy community
  - d. Student support
5. The Group should set goals to support the Group's work by **October 1<sup>st</sup>** each academic year.
6. The Group and its participants are required to comply with all policies applicable to employees of Molloy University,



including, but not limited to, the University's Non-Job Related Molloy Activities Policy, Anti-Harassment Policy and Procedures, the Sexual Misconduct Policy, and the Anti-Discrimination Policy (see [Employee Handbook](#)).

7. An annual report concerning the extent to which annual goals were met should be delivered to the Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion by **May 15<sup>th</sup>** each academic year. The report allows the Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to monitor the Group's work to ensure the Group is operating in furtherance of its mission and achieving its annual goals as well as complying with all applicable University policies. Both factors are essential for continued support from the University. While Groups are established to support employees, revocation of Group status is an option when Groups do not adhere to the guidance and policies set forth in this document, applicable University policies, and within the Employee Handbook. The Group's participants may also choose to dissolve the Group as determined by the Group's bylaws, procedures, or rules and regulations.

8. The Office of the Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion sets aside funds each academic year (September through May) to support recognized Groups. Allocated funds are determined annually during the University's budgeting process and are divided equally across the Groups. A Group may also fundraise to support the Group's goals; funds raised through fundraising must be deposited into the Office of the Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion's account to ensure proper accounting and usage. All fundraising events and all fundraising materials must be approved in advance by the Office of Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Office of the Vice President for Advancement.

9. Other benefits the Group is entitled to include, but are not limited to:
- a. an official email account for the Group
  - b. use of campus facilities for events
  - c. webpages for the Group
  - d. event listings on the University's website and other appropriate public relations mediums.

10. Participation in the Group is limited to full-time and part-time employees of Molloy University. Student employees, including graduate student employees, are not eligible for participation.

11. The Group cannot intervene in employee disputes or student academic/conduct matters. If specific disputes do arise, members should direct those concerns to the appropriate University reporting mechanism (e.g., Academic Affairs, EthicsPoint, Human Resources, Title IX Coordinator).

12. No Group shall take any action which is inconsistent with or may jeopardize the University's tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, including, but not limited to, engaging in prohibited lobbying or political activity.

13. Group proposals that are denied may appeal the decision. The appeal will be reviewed by a three-person review panel that consists of representatives from the Office of Human Resources and the President's Cabinet; any appeal decisions of the panel are final.

## OTHER UNIVERSITIES WITH AFFINITY GROUPS

- Florida State University
- Grand Valley State University
- Johns Hopkins Medicine
- Loyola University Maryland
- MIT
- St. John's University
- University of Kentucky
- University of Rochester
- Vanderbilt University
- Villanova University
- Xavier University





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