Demographic Options We Use

ADA 25 Advancing Leadership seeks to collect a variety of demographic information about our applicants. While we annually review and revise this section based on user feedback with the intention of including diverse response options, we would like to acknowledge that this system is imperfect. Below is an explanation of various options to help you make the selection that best fits your identities. We recognize the limitations of the response options provided and value the opportunity for all applicants to self-identify. We encourage the utilization of the "Other" response option as a way to self-identify beyond the categories provided.

If you have any feedback, we welcome you to reach out to Risa Rifkind at rrifkind@ada25advancingleadership.org.

Pronouns:

What are pronouns?
- **Pronouns** are the words that we use to refer to ourselves and others indirectly.
  - *Example: Jane went to the store. **She** bought ice cream, vanilla is **her** favorite.*
- This link provides a general definition of gender pronouns, when they are used, and working examples.

Why do pronouns matter?
- This link explains the importance of validating identities by actively and intentionally referring to people by their self-identified pronouns, how to ask someone what pronouns they use, and what to do if you misgender someone.

Pronouns 101
- This video expands on the importance of respecting pronouns and how they directly relate to gender identity.

Examples:

She/her/hers
- **She/her/hers** pronouns are most often used by individuals who identify as women (within the gender binary) but are not exclusively used by people who identify as women or within the gender binary. These are commonly used.

He/him/his

- o **He/him/his** pronouns are most often used by individuals who identify as men (within the gender binary) but are not exclusively used by people who identify as men or within the gender binary. These are commonly used.
- They/them/theirs
  - o **They/them/theirs** pronouns are most often used by individuals who identify outside of the gender binary (man or woman). These are becoming more commonly used.
- Outside of the gender binary
  - o This link explores pronouns that people use to self-identify as genders outside of the gender binary (man or woman) or to identify with no gender at all (gender neutral or inclusive).

Gender:

Man
- o **Man** is a gender identity that refers to an individual who identifies as being a man. This may include people who were assigned as the male sex at birth and identify their gender as a man, meaning that their sex and gender align (cisgender). Identifying as a man is not exclusive to people who were assigned the male sex at birth, thus including people who were assigned female at birth or are intersex.
- o Many people who were not assigned the male sex at birth but identify their gender as a man may identify as a "transgender man" or just a "man".

Woman
- o **Woman** is a gender identity that refers to an individual who identifies as being a woman. This may include people who were assigned as the female sex at birth and identify their gender as a woman, meaning that their sex and gender align (cisgender). Identifying as a woman is not exclusive to people who were assigned the female sex at birth, thus including people who were assigned male at birth or are intersex.
- o Many people who were not assigned the female sex at birth but identify their gender as a woman may identify as a "transgender woman" or just a "woman".

Transgender
- o **Transgender** is used to describe a gender identity that refers to an individual whose sex assigned at birth (male or female) does not align with their gender identity.

- Transgender man – Gender identity is man; sex assigned at birth is female
- Transgender woman – Gender identity is woman, sex assigned at birth is male

Cisgender

- o **Cisgender** is used to describe a gender identity that refers to an individual whose sex assigned at birth (male or female) aligns with their gender identity.
  - Cisgender man – Gender identity is man; sex assigned at birth is male
  - Cisgender woman – Gender identity is woman, sex assigned at birth is female

Non-binary/gender non-conforming

- o **Non-binary** is a gender identity that refers to gender outside of the gender binary (man or woman). It does not specifically refer to a third gender, but rather can act as a single gender identity or as an umbrella for all non-normative gender identities.
- o Since non-binary is a non-normative gender identity where an individual's assigned sex at birth does not align with their gender identity. Therefore, non-binary is housed under the larger umbrella of transgender.

Genderqueer

- o **Genderqueer** is a gender identity that refers to non-normative gender. It is different from non-binary because genderqueer includes the potential to identify within the gender binary (man or woman) in addition to other gender identities. It does not specifically refer to a third gender, but rather can act as a single gender identity or as an umbrella for all non-normative gender.
- o Since genderqueer is a non-normative gender identity where an individual's assigned sex at birth does not align with their gender identity. Therefore, genderqueer is housed under the larger umbrella of transgender.
- o This article discusses the difference between non-binary and genderqueer, as they are often grouped together.

Two-Spirit

- o **Two-Spirit** is a culturally distinct gender identity that describes Indigenous North Americans who simultaneously hold masculine and feminine spirits or traits.
- o It is considered to be third and fourth gender identities within Indigenous communities as either masculine women or feminine men. Individuals who identify as Two-Spirit often engage in sexual relations with people of either sex (male or female).

- o Traditionally, these individuals have taken on specific work roles and held a sacred status within their communities. Most often, this gender identity was held by individuals who were assigned the male sex at birth who took on the social identity and appearance of a woman. This still remains a gender identity held by Indigenous people today and may differ from traditional roles depending on whether or not to the individuals live within Indigenous communities.
- o While this gender identity would be considered non-normative in the context of Western understandings of gender identity, Two-Spirit is not the Indigenous equivalent of identifying as transgender, queer, or LGBTQ+.

Queer

- o **Queer** is an umbrella term for individuals who do not identify as heterosexual and/or cisgender and can be used to describe all individuals that fit into this group. It can be used as a way to identify an individual's sexual orientation (see below).
- o Queer was and is still used in a derogatory way by heterosexual and/or cisgender people against LGBTQ+ people. Many LGBTQ+ people have reclaimed this word and use it with pride.

Gender identity 101

- o **Gender identity** refers to the way that an individual understands themselves in terms of gender. This does not have to correspond with the sex they were assigned at birth (male or female).
- o Gender occurs on a spectrum rather than within a gender binary (only man or woman). There is no one way to be a man or a woman, thus the spectrum. This also applies to people who identify outside of the gender binary (only man or woman). The use of the "gender spectrum" normalizes gender identities that are not man or woman and emphasizes variation in gender expression.
- o Gender is not static, meaning that it has the potential to change throughout one's lifetime.
- o This article describes how humans understand gender (body, identify, socially) and how it differs from one's sexual orientation.

Gender terminology

- o There are many gender identities and gender-related terms not discussed in this FAQ. This glossary provides brief definitions of a range of identities, expressions, and verbs/activities related to gender.

How to be an ally

- o **Allyship** is something that people, regardless of gender identity, can engage in to support people of all genders in promoting acceptance, inclusion, and understanding.
- o Allyship is not only relevant to gender, it can be applied to sexual orientations.
- o This video focuses on how people who are cisgender (sex assigned at birth and gender identity align) can combat the gender binary, prioritize the gender spectrum, and actively support people who identify as transgender.

Sexual Orientation:

Heterosexual (Straight)

- o **Heterosexual/straight** is sexual orientation when an individual has romantic and/or sexual attractions to someone of the "opposite" gender, referring to those who identify within the gender binary (man or woman).

Bisexual

- o **Bisexual** is a sexual orientation where an individual has romantic and/or sexual attractions to more than one gender.
- o Traditionally it has been meant that an individual likes both men and women, but as the understanding of gender has grown outside of the gender binary, this can include people who identify as transgender, non-binary, genderqueer, etc.

Pansexual

- o **Pansexual** is a sexual orientation where an individual has romantic and/or sexual attractions to all genders. They important thing about pansexuality is that this attraction is not based on the gender itself.

Gay

- o **Gay** is a sexual orientation where an individual has romantic and/or sexual attractions to someone of the same gender.
- o Typically used to refer to men but can be used to describe anyone with this attraction.

Lesbian

- o **Lesbian** is a sexual orientation where an individual who identifies as a woman has romantic and/or sexual attractions to other people who identify as women.

Asexual (aka "ace")

- o **Asexual** is a sexual orientation where an individual does not have sexual attractions to other people.
    - ▪ Identifying as asexual does not mean that individuals don't engage in sexual activity still.
    - ▪ This does not mean that an individual does not have romantic attractions to other people. If they do, they may use "homoromantic," "biromantic," "panromantic," etc.
- o **Aromantic** is a sexual orientation when an individual does not have romantic attractions to other people.
    - ▪ This does not mean that an individual does not have sexual attractions to other people.

Queer
- o **Queer** is an umbrella term for individuals who do not identify as heterosexual and/or cisgender and can be used to describe all individuals that fit into this group. It can be used as a way to identify an individual's gender identity (see above).
- o Queer was and is still used in a derogatory way by heterosexual and/or cisgender people against LGBTQ+ people. Many LGBTQ+ people have reclaimed this word and use it with pride.

LGBTQ+ acronym
- o **L** – Lesbian
- o **G** – Gay
- o **B** – Bisexual
- o **T** – Transgender
- o **Q** – Queer
- o **+** - All the other gender identities that are not cis-gender and sexual orientations that are not heterosexual.

Sexual orientation
- o **Sexual orientation** is an individual's understanding of their romantic and/or sexual attractions to other people. An individual's sexual behavior can differ from their sexual orientation.

Sexual orientation terminology
- o There are many sexual orientations and orientation-related terms not discussed in this FAQ. This glossary provides brief definitions of a range of orientations, expressions, and verbs/activities related to sexual orientation and queerness.