

Diversity and Inclusion Manual



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AAUW Diversity and Inclusion Guidance and Commitment

This manual establishes guidelines for all AAUW Tech Trek camps to ensure that programmatic offerings are in accordance with federal law and AAUW National's Diversity and Inclusion Policy. Camps must adhere to policies outlined regarding: ADA compliance, developmental disorders, and reasonable accommodations; anti-bullying; transgender campers, and general campus safety.

AAUW Diversity Statement

In principle and in practice, AAUW values and seeks an inclusive membership, workforce, leadership team, and board of directors. There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization or any of its programming on the basis of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, geographical location, national origin, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.

Please also see the AAUW Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Toolkit at <https://www.aauw.org/resources/member/governance-tools/dei-toolkit/>.

Physical, Medical, and Developmental Disabilities

ADA Compliance

The AAUW Tech Trek program complies with all provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and will provide, upon request, reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with a disability.

According to the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), a disability is 1) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of the individual; 2) a record of such an impairment; or 3) being regarded as having such an impairment. Please see Appendix A for the full Tech Trek Americans with Disability Act Accommodation Policy.

To plan for an inclusive camp:

1. *Choose an accessible online platform for your virtual event.*
A list of recommended resources is found at <https://www.acacamps.org/resource-library/coronavirus/virtual-program/online-tools>
2. *Communicate your commitment to ADA standards*
Let campers know that your virtual event will meet ADA standards.

AAUW's ADA policy must be included in the application packet and materials provided after acceptance to the camp. Please see Appendix A for the full policy.

During the pre-camp registration process, ask participants to indicate accessibility requirements. **This should not be discussed during the interview process, nor should this be a consideration in whether to accept a student for the camp.**

4. *Collaborate with the requestor*

If you have any questions about accommodations, follow up with the requestors for more information. Work with them to make sure their needs are met and keep them informed as accommodations are put into place. If participants have disclosed disabilities to you, you may also want to reach out to an organization that supports individuals with those disabilities to get specific tips on how to make your event accessible.

5. *Prepare accessible formats of content*

Your state disability commission or local library, as well as the host campus Disability Services office, can help you identify the appropriate resources for creating accessible formats as necessary. For more information on providing aids and services for participants, [Lighthouse Guild](#) is a great resource. You can find additional resources on the [U.S. Department of Labor website](#).

Participants with visual disabilities

You may need to provide accessible formats for written information, such as Braille materials, audio recordings, digital copies, or large-print materials. Work with participants in advance so that you can find out which format they prefer and give them extra time to review written materials if needed.

Participants with hearing disabilities

You may need to provide accessible formats for spoken information, such as certified interpreters; real-time, open, or closed captioning; written materials; a note taker; or assistive listening devices. Work with participants to determine what type of assistance is required. For example, some people with hearing disabilities may require a sign language interpreter while others read lips or can hear if they sit near the speaker or use a sound amplification device.

Medical Conditions and Developmental Disorders

AAUW Tech Trek camps are inclusive environments, focused on providing access and opportunity to all students who identify as female. Camps will work to accommodate all learners, regardless of disability or developmental disorder. Developmental Disorders are defined by the most current Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM). Organizing Affiliates and Camp Directors are responsible for staying current on the guidelines in this manual. For more information, visit the DSM website (<https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/practice/dsm>).

Reasonable Accommodation

Accommodations are wide-ranging and necessary to minimize the functional limitations of the individual with a disability or developmental disorder with regards to participation in programs or employment with the AAUW. "Reasonable accommodation" is considered to be those accommodations that are readily achievable and do not pose an undue hardship on the organization or do not alter the fundamental purpose or intent of the service.

AAUW Tech Trek may impose legitimate safety requirements necessary for the safe operation of its services, programs, or activities. However, AAUW Organizing Affiliates and Camp Directors must ensure that its safety requirements are based on real risks, not on speculation, stereotypes, or generalizations about individuals with disabilities.

AAUW Tech Trek may restrict attendance or deny attendance if an individual's disability causes or potentially causes a direct threat to the health or safety of others. A direct threat is a significant risk to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level by modification of policies, practices, or procedures, or by the provision of auxiliary aids or services.

It is the responsibility of the Camp Director(s) and Organizing Affiliates to collaborate with families, teachers and campus staff to coordinate and define reasonable accommodations for students with additional needs. Camp Directors and Organizing Affiliates should understand what/if any accommodations are made for the student during the regular school year. Virtual platform limitations and capabilities should be assessed to establish whether similar accommodations can be made for your camp.

Anti-bullying

AAUW Tech Trek is committed to providing a safe learning and physical environment for campers, staff and volunteers. Bullying of any kind, from any individual, will not be tolerated. Bullying shall be defined as any repeated behavior from an individual or a group with the intention to hurt another/others. In the event that bullying is occurring at a Tech Trek camp, AAUW National staff must be notified immediately. While your events will be virtual, cyberbullying can occur. All staff and volunteers must complete an anti-bullying training to be eligible to participate in the planning or execution of a Tech Trek camp. This training must cover how to identify all of the following forms of bullying:

Adapted from the [American Camp Association](#) website:

Relational – this includes more subtle forms of exclusion such as humiliation, peer pressure, blackmail or threats to reveal personal information, gossip and the spread of rumors and the general manipulation of friendships. The point of exercising relational bullying is to give the bully power over the victim and use this power to further triangulate relationships to their benefit.

Verbal – teasing, mocking, intimidation, threats or other verbal assaults. The long-term effects of this kind of bullying can be detrimental to one's psyche, self-image and self-confidence. Denigrating a peer in front of others is humiliating and can create a domino effect for other kinds of bullying.

Transgender Campers

AAUW Tech Trek does not discriminate based on sexual or gender identity, and our priority is that all campers have a positive, educational and fun experience at Tech Trek.

- A family and child's privacy is the first and foremost priority.
- It is the responsibility of camp staff to keep the transgender child's gender identity private.
- Parents of a transgender camper are in no way required to notify camp directors, staff, AAUW members, branch coordinators, or anyone else associated with Tech Trek, that their child is transgender before the virtual event.

If the family of a transgender student wants to discuss our policy, the following are examples of talking points:

During a pre camp conversation the child and their family should be reassured that AAUW wants what's best for all campers and that we are evolving with the student and family. The following should be discussed with families and campers:

- How does the camper see themselves at camp?
- What pronouns/name do they prefer?
- How has the family identified the child in their community?
- How can we best serve the child and family to ensure that they are safe and respected?
- Would they like staff to be notified of the child's gender identity? (This may be helpful in preparing staff if the child's privacy is not kept confidential)

At Camp

All camp directors, staff, volunteers, and other campers will address transgender campers with the pronouns they prefer to use. If they prefer to be addressed as "she" and "her" that is what will be used. Transgender campers at no time are to be referred to any other way, i.e. "a boy who identifies as a girl" or "a boy dressed as girl" is not acceptable language.

Transgender campers should be treated with respect by all campers and camp staff, if any other type of behavior is demonstrated it must be addressed immediately.

Communication Guidelines

All AAUW Tech Trek staff and volunteers should employ the utmost respect to one another and all campers at all times. **Each and every person is responsible for upholding AAUW's commitment to providing safe and inclusive spaces for all staff and campers in accordance with all AAUW National policies.** The following are guidelines for how to execute these standards at camp:

1. *Interact respectfully.*

Respect each person's confidentiality and desire for privacy; never disclose or discuss a participant's disability, accommodation request or gender identity with other participants or members except as needed to secure the accommodations.

Always engage directly and respectfully with the participant. If a sign language interpreter is present, speak to the person with the hearing disability, not the interpreter. Try to learn some sign language.

If a participant has a speech disability, don't be afraid to ask them to repeat. Be flexible with your language; if one word doesn't work, try another.

People with intellectual disabilities can respond to questions and follow directions. Speak in a normal voice. Don't use overly complex sentences.

2. *Use inclusive language.*

Language can shape perceptions of people, often in unconscious ways. These subconscious ideas can affect how people with disabilities are treated. Here are a few guidelines for ensuring that your language values people with disabilities.

Emphasize the person, not the disability. Nouns such as “campers” and “people” should come first to emphasize the person. Don’t say “the disabled”; instead say “campers or people with disabilities.” Each person has a complex identity that is not limited to a disability, so if you need to refer to a person’s disability, describe it the way you would any other characteristic. For example, instead of saying “She is epileptic,” say “She has epilepsy.” Instead of saying “She is blind,” say “She has a visual disability.”

Avoid stereotypes and condescension.

Make sure you are using up-to-date terms. Outdated terms such as “crippled,” “afflicted,” “mute,” and “deaf and dumb” are considered derogatory and paternalistic and should never be used. Instead use phrases like “people without speech,” “people with visual disabilities,” and “people who use wheel-chairs.”

Use legal definitions, when appropriate. If you are referring to laws and regulations, “handicapped” is the appropriate term because it is used in legal documents. For more general purposes, “disabled” is appropriate.

3. *Question common phrases.*

Our language is full of phrases and idioms that reinforce the idea that some identities are “normal” and others are outside the norm. Phrases such as “see you later” or “step up to the job” are just a few examples of how our language subtly reinforces expectations around ability. Many people with disabilities and their allies feel that these phrases are part of our language and will generally not be offended by them, while others find them to be small, even subconscious reminders of ability and disability. As you work to use inclusive language, you may begin to notice more of these phrases in use. Don’t be afraid to ask questions and engage others in discussion on the topic of language.

WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO?

Using this guide will help you take concrete steps to be more inclusive of campers with disabilities. But there are many ways that you can continue this work to ensure that your branch makes accessibility a priority. Here are a few things:

- Become an advocate.
- Educate others inside and outside of AAUW.
- Organize and participate in diversity and inclusion training for your staff/volunteers.
- Rethink how you traditionally do business. Reach out and involve people with disabilities in your program.
- Network and build coalitions with local disability organizations.
- Publicize your inclusion successes.

Additional Resources

Implicit Association Test (IAT) through Harvard’s Project Implicit:
<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>

AAUW article on Science behind Implicit Bias: <https://www.aauw.org/2016/05/19/science-behind-implicit-bias/>

Formal Complaints and Appeals

AAUW national welcomes all persons to be members and participants in its programs. However, AAUW national expects individuals to comply with the eligibility requirements set forth for each specific activity, program, or service. Additionally, AAUW national firmly believes individuals have the right to appeal decisions made regarding their eligibility for membership or service, the types of programs and services in which they may participate, and any disciplinary actions taken resulting from problems experienced during participation. The appeal process is structured to ensure fairness and is outlined in Appendix A.

It is the responsibility of the camp director to promptly inform AAUW National office of any and all appeals and formal complaints made against the camp.

Appendix A: Tech Trek Americans with Disability Act Accommodation Policy

*[** Tech Trek policy for **FIRST POINT** of contact. To be included in Application packet and Student Consent packet.]*

TECH TREK AMERICANS WITH DISABILITY ACT ACCOMMODATION POLICY

I. POLICY

All AAUW Tech Trek programs are produced and sponsored by local AAUW affiliates and are not produced or sponsored by the national AAUW organization. All Tech Trek programs are committed to the principles of equal access and opportunity for persons with disabilities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (“ADA”) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and their applicable state law counterparts. Tech Trek does not discriminate on the basis of disability against any qualified person with a disability in regard to application, acceptance, attendance, or other aspect of a girl’s participation in Tech Trek.

The AAUW Tech Trek ADA Accommodation Policy describes an interactive relationship between the camper, parents, local Tech Trek administrators and the AAUW national organization. At every AAUW Tech Trek site, Tech Trek staff will make a reasonable accommodation for a qualified person with a disability to allow the performance of the essential requirements of Tech Trek. If an accommodation alters the nature of the program or would result in undue hardship to AAUW Tech Trek or the College/University where the camp is held or threatens the health and safety of the student with a disability or other persons, then AAUW Tech Trek staff will not make that accommodation.

Therefore, so that participants and AAUW Tech Trek staff can successfully communicate and determine what, if any, reasonable accommodation is requested and can be made at the site, a parent or legal guardian must complete the attached Health History and Consent Form (“Consent Form”) and submit the completed Consent Form to the site Camp Director (whose name and contact information is identified in the welcome letter of this application packet) **NO LATER THAN TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE CAMP START DATE**. For purposes of identifying the date a parent or guardian submits the Consent Form, if sent via U.S. Mail or Overnight Delivery, the Consent Form must be post-marked by the carrier no later than two weeks before the camp start date, and if sent via e-mail, the e-mail date stamp must be dated no later than two weeks before the camp start date.

DUE TO THE RISKS TO SAFETY AND MEDICAL PREPAREDNESS, IF THE CONSENT FORM IS NOT COMPLETED AND PROVIDED TO THE SITE CAMP DIRECTLY AT LEAST TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE CAMP START DATE, THE CAMPER WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ATTEND TECH TREK.

II. DEFINITIONS

A. Disability

According to the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), a disability is 1) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of the individual; 2) a record of such an impairment; or 3) being regarded as having such an impairment.

Specific examples of physical impairments include orthopedic, visual, speech, and hearing impairments, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, cancer, heart disease, diabetes, HIV, TB, drug addiction, and alcoholism. Simple physical characteristics such as the color of one's eyes, hair, or skin; baldness; left-handedness; pregnancy; or age do not constitute physical impairments.

Examples of mental impairments include mental retardation, organic brain syndrome, emotional or mental illness, and specific learning disabilities. Common personality traits such as poor judgment or a quick temper, where these are not symptoms of a mental or psychological disorder, are not disabilities covered by the ADA.

Even if a condition is an impairment, it is not automatically a disability. To rise to the level of a disability, an impairment must substantially limit one or more major life activities. Major life activities include such activities as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. The major life activities limited by mental impairments differ from person to person. For some people, mental impairments restrict major life activities such as learning, thinking, or communicating.

B. Qualified Person with a Disability

For purposes of being a participant camper in a program, a qualified person is one who can satisfy the essential eligibility requirements for participation with or without reasonable accommodations.

C. Reasonable Accommodation

Accommodations are wide-ranging and necessary to minimize the functional limitations of the individual with a disability with regards to participation in programs with the AAUW. "Reasonable accommodation" is considered to be those accommodations that are readily achievable and do not pose an undue hardship on the organization or do not alter the fundamental purpose or intent of the service.

D. Undue Hardship

Tech Trek will make a reasonable accommodation to a qualified individual with a disability unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the operation of its business, which includes the Tech Trek program. Undue hardship means an action that requires significant difficulty or expense when considered in relation to factors such as a business' size, financial resources, and the nature and structure of its operation. The size of the organization and its budget are only two factors that determine what is reasonable.

III. PARENT/GUARDIAN DISCLOSURE AND SERVICE ACCOMMODATION

Communication and full disclosure of any disability is critically important for the safety and enjoyment of Tech Trek by each participant. If a participant camper requests a reasonable accommodation for a disability, it is imperative that her parent or legal guardian completely disclose, sufficiently in advance of the start of camp as described above, any physical or mental conditions, medical treatment, medical equipment, instruction for use of equipment and other request for accommodation. Therefore, a parent or legal guardian must complete and provide the attached Health History and Medical Treatment Consent Form to the site Camp Director (name and contact information provided in the welcome letter of this application packet) **NO LATER THAN TWO WEEKS BEFORE CAMP START DATE.**

This will allow Tech Trek staff to discuss with the parent/guardian the camper's accommodation request and any related treatment and medical restrictions that are sought to be in effect during camp, to determine if and what reasonable accommodation can be provided, and to make the necessary accommodation arrangements in preparation for the camper's full participation at Tech Trek.

IF THE CONSENT FORM IS NOT COMPLETED AND PROVIDED TO THE SITE CAMP DIRECTLY, U.S. POST-MARKED, OVERNIGHT DELIVERY, OR ELECTRONIC MAIL DATE STAMPED AT LEAST TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE CAMP START DATE, THE CAMPER WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ATTEND TECH TREK DUE TO THE RISKS TO SAFETY AND MEDICAL PREPAREDNESS.

If a camper requests accommodations at camp that have not been previously disclosed on the submitted Health History and Consent Form, the camper will not be admitted to the Tech Trek program. The site Camp Director has the exclusive authority to make the final decision as to whether the camper can be accommodated and may be permitted to attend/remain at the camp.

IV. APPEALS POLICY

AAUW welcomes all persons to be participants in the Tech Trek programs. AAUW also expects individuals to comply with the eligibility requirements set forth for each specific activity, program, or service. AAUW recognizes that during a camper's attendance at Tech Trek, it is possible that a concern may arise with respect to a camper's disability or request for reasonable accommodation. The site Camp Director and/or site Tech Trek camp staff will work with the camper to resolve any immediate concerns. However, there may be decisions and actions that are outside the scope of concerns that can be resolved directly between the camper and site Camp Director and/or Tech Trek camp staff immediately, or that were not satisfactorily resolved despite good faith efforts.

AAUW firmly believes individuals have the right to appeal decisions or actions made regarding their eligibility for participation and/or reasonable accommodation, and regarding any problems experienced in connection with a disability and/or request for accommodation of a disability. AAUW is committed to working with Parents/Guardians and campers to ensure that all concerns are addressed and that the Tech Trek experience is positive for all participants. The appeal process is structured to ensure fairness.

1. Parents or legal guardians of campers (parents and legal guardians are both referred to in this section as "Guardian") should first contact the site Camp Director regarding any issues, or complaint regarding such matters. The Guardian will be given the opportunity to discuss the matter in private.
2. If, after notifying the site Camp Director, the Guardian is not satisfied with the resolution of the issue or complaint, the Parent may contact AAUW [STATE] and/or AAUW national at techtrek@aauw.org. The name of the site Camp Director the Guardian first spoke to about the complaint in order to resolve the issue, the nature of the concern or complaint, and the corrective action being sought should be specified. AAUW will make all reasonable efforts to respond within 24 hours. A duly authorized representative will contact the Guardian in order to discuss and resolve all issues and concerns with the Guardian. The Guardian will be given the opportunity to discuss the matter in private.

If there are any questions regarding this policy, please contact the site Camp Director (name and contact information provided in the letter accompanying this policy). If the site Camp Director is unable to satisfactorily resolve your concerns, please contact AAUW [STATE] (contact information in the letter accompanying this policy) and/or National AAUW at techtrek@aauw.org.

V. QUESTIONS

If there are any questions regarding this policy, please contact the site Camp Director (name and contact information provided in the welcome letter accompanying this policy and application packet). If the site Camp Director is unable to satisfactorily resolve your concerns, please contact AAUW [STATE] (contact information in the welcome packet) and/or National AAUW at techtrek@aauw.org.