



**Call for Papers: Conference and Special Section of Marketing Science on
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

Conference: March 24-25 ,2023

SMU

Conference Submission Deadline: January 15, 2023

Special Section Submission Deadline: May 31, 2023

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) has become a central concern for society, organizations, regulators, and policymakers. In business research, DEI has received the most attention in the context of organizational behavior and human resource management. These are seen as high stakes settings due to impact on job opportunities and careers of historically marginalized groups.

From a marketing perspective, DEI involves the practice of “Inclusive Marketing,” aiming to serve diverse segments of consumers in a society equitably and inclusively. As a topic of concern for consumers, DEI is relevant at all levels of the marketing organization. Though DEI considerations impact many aspects of marketing -- strategic marketing (market segmentation, targeting, branding and positioning), tactical marketing (the 4Ps) and the design of marketing organizations -- there is little marketing science research-based scholarship to help guide marketers. Moreover, while specific marketing choices (in areas such as product design, advertising content, channel access) may be viewed as lower stakes, if left unexamined, they can have considerable cumulative disparate impact across groups of consumers over time.

The goal of this conference (co-sponsored by ISMS and the Cox School of Business at SMU) and special section of *Marketing Science* is to encourage marketing science research on various topics related to DEI; to convene and curate a set of high-quality, rigorous papers that showcase the multi-faceted relevance of marketing science to this important topic; and to increase the visibility and impact of this research not just for marketers and consumers but also for regulators and policy makers.

For the purpose of this special conference and section, we view DEI broadly. Groups may be identified by race, ethnicity, caste, gender, sexual orientation, socio economic status, physical ability, mental ability, religion, and country of origin, and by the intersection of two or more of these identities. We also recognize that not everyone will agree on the optimal DEI initiative, that firms’ motivations to engage in DEI initiatives might vary and that some DEI initiatives may be considered controversial by some constituents or even backfire with targeted constituents. We further recognize that the relative importance of specific DEI issues varies across contexts.

The Special section welcomes papers from all research paradigms, including theoretical, methodological, and empirical. Empirical papers can be based on field studies, archival data,

secondary data, surveys, natural/field experiments, “big data” and include various types of econometric analyses. Papers will be evaluated based on academic contribution and correctness, and not on whether they support or challenge a political or social viewpoint.

Potential research topics include, but are not limited to:

1. Perspectives on and Implementation of DEI in the marketplace
 - a. Movements for social justice among consumers and employees
 - i. How preferences for social justice vary and evolve among consumers and employees
 - ii. The role of social networks, WOM in social justice movements
 - iii. How firm support for inclusion initiatives positively or negatively impact the brand among consumers and employees
 - iv. How do social movements grow and diffuse? What can we learn about other types of diffusion (e.g., innovation) from studying the diffusion of social movements?
 - b. DEI in marketing communications
 - i. Strategies for and impact of inclusive marketing communications
 - ii. Differential consumer response to inclusive media; When is it positive versus negative? Does it matter?
 - c. Consumer perceptions and response to intra-organizational DEI practices
 - d. DEI and the customer-employee interface
 - i. Do different consumer groups differentially experience service at customer service, retail settings?
 - ii. Impact of potential consumer biases on marketing employees
 - iii. Can consumer bias impact performance/feedback of consumer facing sales/service employees?
 - iv. Can organizations modify service and sales process/performance/feedback metrics appropriately to equitably manage the potential impact of bias
 - e. Drivers of meaningful diversity in served markets and organizations
 - i. How does the shift from an in-person marketplace to more digitally driven exchanges impact equity and inclusion?
 - ii. Do the same behavioral theories still hold?
 - f. Beyond DEI
 - i. How have conversations around DEI evolved and how will they evolve?
 - ii. What is/will be the impact of the decolonization movement on DEI? Other social movements?
 - iii. What happens when growth and profit-maximization views collide with indigenous, community-based views?
2. Big Data, Algorithms and AI
 - a. How sampling (representational) deficiencies of smaller segments in data impact marketing choices of target segments, product design, price, advertising content, marketing channels.
 - b. Algorithmic bias and fairness in marketing to protected and unprotected groups

- c. Regulations related to potential bias and fairness in the use of AI/Algorithms in marketing
 - d. Need for transparency related to equity, fairness in using AI and Algorithms
 - e. How do consumers react to automated explanations of AI decisions? How should AI decisions be explained to maximize their acceptance?
 - f. Exploring the intersection of Critical Race Theory and quantitative methodologies
3. Cultural Competency and DEI within the Organization
- a. What does it mean for marketing/ brands to reflect cultural competency? What are the measurable benefits?
 - b. How do consumers perceive targeting that is based on race, gender, or other demographic variables?
 - c. Implications of organizational blindness to DEI or low cultural competency
 - i. Do some smaller sub-groups receive worse service, lower product quality/fit (e.g., food deserts)?
 - ii. Price discrimination along gender, racial and socioeconomic class
 - iii. Brand management considerations
 - d. What is a DEI brand, and how can this be measured and managed?
 - e. Costs-Benefits of and challenges in making DEI an organizational priority
 - f. How does a focus on DEI (and on specific DEI initiatives) affect employee productivity and satisfaction, consumer sentiment and response to marketing efforts, firm innovativeness, and other aspects of firm performance?
 - g. What are the moderators, mediators, and boundary conditions in the relationships between DEI focus (and specific DEI initiatives) and marketing outcomes? What is the moderating role that DEI characteristics of consumers have on marketing effectiveness? How do different sub-populations respond to different types of marketing?
 - h. Expanded application and models of the Other-Race Effect (ORE) and its impact on internal and external constituencies of an organization
4. Methodological Issues in DEI
- a. When does ignoring protected attributes (as required by regulation) lead to biased and unfair marketing outcomes?
 - b. When should managers consider disparate treatment or disparate impact across groups in evaluating DEI initiatives? When should DEI relevant outcomes of an algorithm be evaluated in terms overall accuracy, false positives, false negatives, etc.? Are these outcomes defensible given the firm's proclaimed values?
 - c. Can intermediate proxies for desired outcomes (given data availability, feasibility of measurement etc.) lead to unrecognized bias/unfairness? What proxies are likely to be robust?
 - d. How do representational learning methods in foundational technologies for language (e.g., Word2Vec, BERT) and images (e.g., CLIP) impact biases and fairness in marketing decisions?

Important Dates

Conference: March 24-25, 2023 at SMU

Conference Submission Deadline: January 15, 2023

Special Section Submission Deadline: May 31, 2023

Tentative date for special section: June 2024

Conference Selection Committee

Raji Srinivasan

K. Sudhir

Jakki Thomas

Olivier Toubia

Catherine Tucker

Kalinda Ukanwa

Special Section Senior Editors

K. Sudhir

Olivier Toubia

Catherine Tucker

Conference Submission Guidelines

Authors interested in presenting their paper at the conference should submit papers in pdf format and include the title of the paper, names, affiliations, mailing and email addresses of the authors, and an abstract of no more than 500 words. Please specify who the presenting author will be. Papers should be submitted via: <https://bit.ly/3EGAmcN> by the submission deadline. The Conference Selection Committee will select papers for presentation at the conference.

Authors are strongly encouraged to submit their papers for the conference although papers will be considered for the special section independent of submission or presentation at the conference.

Special Section Submission Guidelines

Please submit your manuscript online via ScholarOne Manuscript Central at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/mksc>. When choosing Manuscript Type in Step 1 of the submission process, enter Special Section – DEI. All papers will go through the standard Marketing Science review process i.e., the EIC will assign each submission to an SE who will then manage the review process from that point.

For questions about the fit of a paper for the “DEI” special section, authors can send a one-page abstract to one of the special section editors. The editors will comment on the fit without making any judgment on the quality and the potential publication prospects, which will be judged

entirely by the review process. Authors can submit papers for review to the “DEI special section” at any time until the special section deadline.