Table of Contents

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in the Leader Applicant Department 2

Updates from LAD Council 7

Semi-Annual Reports 8

How Would You Respond? 10

A supporting Leader wonders how to begin incorporating equity, diversity, and inclusion into their work with a Leader Applicant.

A Taste of LAD International 14

Linda Boissinot-Terreau, Ontario, Canada

Promenade

Congratulations on your appointment! 15

Photo Letters 16
Managing Editor’s Note

Depending on where in the world you are and what language you speak, you may notice that this issue of LADDers looks very different! The LADDers team has been working hard to make the magazine more inclusive and accessible to LAD representatives around the world. Hopefully you noticed in recent issues an increased number of article translations in French and Spanish. With this issue we are taking translations one step farther with separate issues translated into French and Spanish. LLL Japan will continue to translate the issues into Japanese and distribute those to their LAD representatives. We hope that these streamlined translations help our French, Spanish, and Japanese speaking LAD representatives to access the information and updates contained in LADDers more easily. We are working on adding a German translation to future issues. If you speak German and would like to help with reviewing the German translations, or if you speak a different language and would like to help with translations, please email the Managing Editor, Rachel Concitis, at rachel726@mac.com. Happy Reading!

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the Leader Accreditation Department
Adapted from Leader Today, March 2022 Issue
Sarah Quigley, San Francisco, California, USA and Linda Wieser, Nova Scotia, Canada

It is an important part of the preparation for leadership to increase one’s understanding about what equity, diversity and inclusion means for La Leche League Leaders.

Equity, diversity and inclusion are valued within La Leche League because:

• They complement our mission: To help mothers worldwide to breastfeed through mother-to-mother support, encouragement, information, and education, and to promote a better understanding of breastfeeding as an important element in the healthy development of the baby and mother.

• They encourage us to think of ways to reach mothers and parents who, in the past, have not sought out LLL support.

• They help us learn new ways to support babies who are being breastfed, nursed, supplemented or human milk fed.

• They broaden our view of whom we can support.

• They help us examine our organization for structural barriers that may be unwelcoming.

As a LAD representative, you may want to initiate a dialogue on this topic, perhaps in the welcome letter to the Applicant or when discussing the Applicant’s personal history writing. You can share the LLLI Inclusivity Statement and let the Applicant know that equity, diversity and inclusion is a priority in LLL and that LLL is exploring ways to reach a more diverse breastfeeding population.

LLL I Inclusivity Statement
We at La Leche League International have all nursed our babies. If you want to do the same, whoever you are, whatever your story is, we’re here to help.
LLL is committed to serving everyone inclusive of race, ethnicity, religion, sex, national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, physical or mental ability, socio-economic status, political views, gender identity, sexual orientation, family structure, or other protected status.

LLL seeks the equitable accreditation of a diverse body of Leaders.

Your correspondence with an Applicant respects diversity when you use the words the Applicant prefers:

- Mother, father, husband, partner, co-parent
- Breastfeeding, nursing, bottle-feeding, chestfeeding.
- Wheelchair user, visually-impaired, hard of hearing, physical disability

“Equity, diversity and inclusion” is in the Checklist of Topics to Discuss in Preparation for LLL Leadership (Checklist) under the topic “Importance of respect,” which is in the section “Helping mothers and parents one-to-one by telephone, by email, or in person.” Some Leaders may feel comfortable talking about equity, diversity and inclusion. Others may find it an unfamiliar topic and not know where to start. As you’ll read in the “How Would You Respond?” column in this issue of LADders, supporting Leaders may contact you for help.

As a LAD representative, it’s important to have a good understanding of what equity, diversity and inclusion means so you can support Applicants and Leaders in discussing these topics. We know that supporting people from different backgrounds and life experiences allows us to learn. Accepting those differences allows us to fully embrace the LLL Mission and philosophy, while also broadening our own perspectives. Viewing things from the baby’s point of view helps us support a mother or parent who may look different from us and/or have different beliefs.

Here are some suggestions for learning about equity, diversity and inclusion that you can share with Applicants or supporting Leaders.

- Think broadly about equity, diversity and inclusion.
  - Diversity involves being welcoming to those of a different race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, socio-economic status, physical ability, or family structure.
  - Equity includes considerations for meeting access, languages spoken, and financial constraints of those seeking LLL support.
  - Inclusion may involve supporting mothers/parents with feeding methods other than breastfeeding.
- Brainstorm populations the Group is currently not attracting.
- Check the website of LLLI and/or your entity’s website for resources.
- Participate in an equity, diversity and inclusion session at an Area workshop.
- Join a virtual book club. Some Leaders are reading books about populations they are not familiar with and then discussing them virtually.
• Attend a webinar on this topic. Sources of free or low-cost webinars include:
  • LLLI Webinar Library
  • GOLD Learning
  • Michigan Breastfeeding Network
  • BreastfeedLA

Equity, diversity and inclusion means reaching all. In the LAD this means reaching all Applicants, supporting Leaders and LAD representatives.

**LADders in Other Languages**

*LADders* has been moving closer to reaching all LAD representatives by publishing articles in other languages. LAD Japan translates each issue of *LADders* into Japanese. And with this current issue, there will also be separate *LADders* issues in Spanish and French. We hope to have a German *LADders* issue starting in September. Contact *LADders* Managing Editor Rachel Concitis at rachel726@mac.com if you would be able to help review the German issue, or if you speak another language you would like to include.

**Audio Recordings of Childbirth and Breastfeeding**

Audio resources are beneficial for anyone who is sight-impaired or prefers listening rather than reading. The LAD resource, *Childbirth and Breastfeeding*, is currently being revised. By the end of the year LAD Council hopes to have audio versions of *Childbirth and Breastfeeding* available for the following languages: English, French, German, Spanish, simplified Chinese, Japanese, Greek and Italian.

**Interested in Leadership Videos**

Two videos, “Interested in LLL Leadership?” and “Convirtete en Líder/Monitora de LLL” from the LLLI October 2021 Conference are now available on the [Become a Leader](https://www.lli.org) page of the LLLI website.

**Reducing Financial Barriers**

Many Direct Connect Entities (DCEs) have made applying for leadership more equitable by eliminating application and/or accreditation fees. Other DCEs waive the fee if the person has a financial difficulty. Some Groups will also cover the fee for Applicants from the Group.

In 2016 the LAD set up the [Karin Gausman Leader Accreditation Fund](https://www.lli.org). Applicants who apply can have $50 US reserved in their name for application expenses. Please see the sidebar for more information.

Equity, diversity and inclusion will appear differently depending on where you live and the people you support. As you discuss this topic with Applicants and Leaders, you may identify resources that would be helpful to others. Contact your DCE Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee or the [LLLI Inclusivity and Outreach Committee](https://www.lli.org) with your suggestions.

**Current Resources on the LLLI Website about the Equity, Diversity and Inclusion:**

News from LLLI:
  • Becoming Welcoming, May 2021
Black Lives Matter: “A Lived Experience,” June 2020

Leader Today:
- “Reaching Adolescent Mothers,” April 2021
- “In Pursuit of Equitable Breastfeeding Support,” January 2021


Breastfeeding Info A to Z
- Islamic and Cultural Practices in Breastfeeding
- Transgender & Non-binary Parents

LLL Webinar Library
- Cultural Awareness and Cultural Humility - English
- Cultural Awareness and Cultural Humility - Spanish

LLL Policies and Standing Rules
- Accessibility and Cultural Sensitivity
- Inclusivity Statement
- Language in LLLI Publications

Sarah Quigley lives in San Francisco, California, USA. She and her husband, David, are proud parents to daughters Charlotte (14) and Katherine (11). Sarah became a Leader in 2010 and joined the Leader Accreditation Department (LAD) in 2013, where she serves as Coordinator of Leader Accreditation (CLA) for Northern California/Hawaii/Northern Nevada and Regional Administrator of Leader Accreditation (RALA) for LLLL USA LAD. She works as an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC) at a local hospital.

Linda Wieser lives in a rural part of Nova Scotia, Canada with her husband Jim. They have two grown daughters and four grandchildren. Linda has been a Leader since 1984. She worked for many years in the Professional Liaison Department before joining the Leader Accreditation Department in 2008. Linda is currently the LLLI Director of Leader Accreditation Department (DLAD). She is also Outgoing Contributing Editor for “How Would You Respond?” in LADders. Linda continues to lead local LLL meetings with her co-Leaders in Nova Scotia.

Karin Gausman Leader Accreditation Fund

The Leader Accreditation Department (LAD) Council organizes the Karin Gausman Leader Accreditation Funds (KGF) to support Leader Applicants with financial difficulties and encourage LAD representatives to participate in enrichment opportunities.

Karin served as one of the LLLI LAD Directors from 2005 to 2010. During her term she created Thinking About La Leche League Leadership? and Leader Applicant’s Resource Kit (LARK).
Before Karin passed away from cancer in 2016, she helped LLL Leaders who were suffering from cancer and offered her support as much as possible. The LAD Council hopes to further Karin’s passion to accredit more Leaders and strengthen this department.

The KGF offers $50 US to Applicants to cover their application expenses and helps LAD representatives pay the registration fee of LLL/LAD events including online conferences. For more information, please visit the following web pages at the LLLI website:

Frequently Asked Questions for Leader Applicants

Frequently Asked Questions for LAD representatives
Leader Application Surveys

Look for an email from LLLI within the next month about the two Leader accreditation surveys. They will be available in French, Spanish, German, Japanese, simplified Chinese and English. Both surveys will take about 10 minutes to fill out.

**Leader Accreditation Survey:** We ask that all Leaders fill out this survey. Encourage the Leaders in your Area to fill it out.

**Applicants Who Did Not Become LLL Leaders Survey:** Please personalize and send the following invitation to any Applicant you worked with, who started their application in April 2017 or later but withdrew the application before becoming accredited.

*Invitation to Participate in a Survey about LLL Leader Accreditation*

La Leche League International requests your participation in a survey about Leader accreditation. We are seeking to improve our application and accreditation processes with the goal of increasing equity and diversity in our organization. Your responses will help accomplish this.

This survey is for anyone who was a Leader Applicant during the period April 2017 to the present and did not continue to accreditation. We also will be seeking information from current Leaders, especially Leaders accredited since March 2017 and Leaders who have worked with an Applicant over the last five years. What we learn from both surveys could help you and/or others who wish to apply for leadership in the future.

If you are willing to share your experience as a Leader Applicant and the reasons why you stopped your application, please go to this [link](#) and complete an anonymous short survey by July 20, 2022. The survey will take about 10 minutes to complete.

*If you have any questions, ask the Leader who sent this invitation to you.*
The information from the previous SAR is indicated in parentheses. "Length of applications“ shows the median length in months; subtotals and LLLI total are averages of the medians.

### LLL Canada, Ligue La Leche, Great Britain, New Zealand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Applicants</th>
<th>New Applications</th>
<th>Discontinued Applications</th>
<th>Accreditations</th>
<th>Length of Applications (Months)</th>
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<td>0 (4)</td>
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<td><strong>34 (26)</strong></td>
<td><strong>17 (22)</strong></td>
<td><strong>18 (30)</strong></td>
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### Europe, Latin America, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East

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<td>Latin America</td>
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<td><strong>69 (94)</strong></td>
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### United States

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<td><strong>119 (97)</strong></td>
<td><strong>105 (125)</strong></td>
<td><strong>16.4 (14.3)</strong></td>
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LAD Council Semi-Annual Report – April 2022

Comparison of Four Reporting Periods
Abbreviations used are: LLL Canada (LLLC), Ligue La Leche (Ligue), Great Britain (GB), New Zealand (NZ), Asia, Africa, and the Middle East (AAME). “United States” refers to LLL Alliance and LLL USA.

Applicants

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New Applications

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<th>Apr 2022</th>
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<td>Europe, Latin America, AAME</td>
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<td>United States</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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Discontinued Applications

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<td>United States</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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Accreditations

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<td>United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>105</td>
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Dear Lakeisha, LAD representative,

This is my first time working with a Leader Applicant and I have only been a Leader for two years. I’m pleased to see that “equity, diversity and inclusion” is now a topic on the Checklist. However, this is a very large topic. I’m not sure where to start in discussing it with an Applicant. I welcome your input.

Yours,
Sonya, Supporting Leader

---

Dear Sonya,

Congratulations on having a Leader Applicant to work with. Equity, diversity and inclusion is indeed a large topic, and it relates to many different items on the Checklist. You may want to mention how it influences some of topics you’re discussing. For instance, when you talk about organizing Series Meetings, you could discuss whether the meeting location is accessible to people with mobility concerns, offers free parking or is close to public transportation, is in a neighbourhood that people from different population groups feel comfortable in. Advertising meetings could start conversations about how and where to reach out to people that may not be part of your Group right now, language that is easy to understand and welcoming, what media mothers of different ages use most, whether it is clear to parents that meetings are free and informal, whether partners are invited.

Other aspects of the Group may be more subtle. Perhaps you could ask the Applicant to do the Listening Exercise and include observations about the atmosphere. If there is a group of “regulars,” are they warm and friendly towards newcomers? Do Leaders make it clear at the beginning of the meeting that everyone is welcome? Do they speak clearly, use simple language, and intervene quickly when a side conversation starts? This is useful for everybody, and particularly so for participants who are deaf, hearing impaired, or speak a different language.
Applicants often bring new perspectives, and you may get some great ideas about how to revitalize the Group!

Thanks for the question!
Lakeisha

Jo-Anne Elder-Gomes
New Brunswick, Canada

Thank you, Sonya, for your inquiry about addressing the discussion topic of “equity, diversity and inclusion” as shown in the latest revision of the Checklist. It is an important topic and can take some time to fully explore.

Consider introducing the topic while exploring LLL resource materials together, perhaps starting with the Leader’s Handbook. You’re sure to find the topic overlaps in different segments of the Handbook.

You can also explore the different LLL Canada information sheets <https://www.lllc.ca/information-sheets> such as “Trans Nursing Tip Sheet,” and “Cross-Nursing and Milk Sharing.” Talk about how a Leader needs to be unbiased when sharing these resources with someone asking for LLL help. This could lead to introducing the optional leadership preparation exercise: Bias Exercise. It clearly shows the importance of recognizing bias.

I hope this is helpful to you, Sonya. And I thank you for all you are doing to ensure La Leche League’s growth and a healthy future.

Love,
Lakeisha

Sylvia Walker
Manitoba, Canada

Dear Sonya,

Sometimes the easiest way to address big or difficult conversations is to start simple. You could begin by acknowledging that meetings are open to all who are currently breastfeeding or who are expecting and want more information to help them make an informed decision. You could them move on to discussing ways to make the meeting accessible to attend - will you be in-person, online, or hybrid?
That easily leads into how to choose a physical meeting space that is welcoming - easily accessible (location, no stairs, adequate parking or on a public transportation line, etc.) - comfortable seating, child-friendly for those bringing toddlers, clear signage, etc.

Once you have had that discussion, you can ask the Applicant if she has other ideas on how to make the Group even more welcoming. Does she feel there are populations that are not being reached? What ideas can she think of to broaden the Group's outreach? You know your environment best - both the physical surroundings of the meeting location as the population that attends. As you engage the Applicant in the decisions, you both may become more comfortable with the discussion and come up with some excellent approaches for the Group. If your entity has a Communication Skills Department, they may also have some good suggestions for you.

Yours,
Lakeisha

Cindy Garrison
Pennsylvania, USA

Sonya,

Thanks so much for your question. Yes, equity, inclusion and diversity are all really large topics and can have such a wide range of interpretations, so it is great that you are giving this so much thought before deciding on how to proceed with this Applicant. Something that I like to do with Applicants is to start a discussion on this by asking what equity, inclusion and diversity means to them. This will help to give you a good idea of what the Applicant's understanding is of these topics, and where any potential biases exist that you can work on. Coming from a place of curiosity is also a really great spot to start from because often people have different interpretations of these topics when they come from different cultural and experiential backgrounds. This will help ensure that space is made for learning and understanding and how this relates to LLL policies and philosophies instead of focusing on where further learning is needed. You can relate it back to different topics that are covered throughout the application this way also. For example: How might the term "mother" impact people from different backgrounds who might be attending meetings and seeking LLL support from a Leader. Or how does exclusive language impact people's willingness to seek support and help from LLL as an organization?

Once you know where the Applicant's understanding is regarding inclusivity, diversity and equity, then you can discuss what sorts of barriers can interfere with each of these. Again, there is always the opportunity to relate it back to any personal biases or experiences that can be learned from. The exciting part is that often there are opportunities for us as Leaders to learn and grow as we support Applicants from different backgrounds to engage in conversations about inclusion and diversity. You should find a lot of opportunities throughout the course of the application work to come back to this topic particularly when articulating inclusive language.

I hope this gives you some ideas, Sonya, and helps you make further connections with your Applicant as they move through the application work.
Dear Christina CLA,

I am working with an Applicant who has not responded within the past six months and has not sent any application work for over a year. I have emailed her twice within the last four months asking if she wants to continue but have had no response. What should I do?

Sincerely,
Agnes ACLA

How would you respond? Send your ideas for a reply or an extract you would like to share with other LAD representatives to Vicky Reynell at vickyreynell@gmail.com.
Hello from Canada!

My name is Linda Boissinot-Terreau and I've been a LLLeader since December 1989 (yes, that's a LOT of years!) Along with being a Group Leader all this time, I've also held a number of positions in LLLCanada, most recently as an ACLA since 2015. It's wonderful to help parents directly but there's something very special about helping to build LLL's future through the accreditation of passionate advocates. Some of my knowledge is transmitted to them and in turn their enthusiasm energizes me!

Together with my high school sweetheart, and after a pregnancy loss, we raised 2 sons and now enjoy the company of 2 grandchildren, with another one due soon! We are very fortunate that everyone, including my octogenarian parents, lives nearby in Orleans, a suburb of our Nation's Capital, Ottawa.

I don't have a long list of hobbies. I live a quiet life, something I savour after years of hectic homeschooling. I still work part-time in a busy chiropractic office but my favourite activity is travelling, something I miss very much. Along with pandemic restrictions, I'm also affected by chronic pain and mobility issues. In early 2020, it was a blessing for me to learn how to host virtual LLL Meetings. I'll continue to do so when other groups return to in-person gatherings. It's been wonderful to help parents from across Canada, some in remote areas and many with very young newborns.

Linda, in 2021, holding her then 7 month-old grand-daughter Max Lucille
Congratulations on your appointment!

Christine Arneitz, CLA, Austria

Erica de Pace, co-CLA, Italy

Misha Laudicina, ALA, European Area Network

Kergi Leitgeb, ALA, European Area Network

Veronique Lesoinne, LADders French Translation Reviewer

Vicky Reynell, How Would You Respond? Contributing Editor
Greetings from the European LAD!

Natasha Kapsali, LLL Greece

My hometown is a land of light, a land of much suffering, with ancient history and people of today. Somewhere in the blue sky and bright days we greedily "suck" in hope to have the courage to go on in our journey (Natasha Kapsali, CLA-LLL Greece)

Για μένα ο τόπος μου είναι μια χωρά με φως, μια χώρα πολυπαθής, του χθες και του σήμερα. Κάπου στο γαλάζιο του ουρανού και στις φωτεινές μέρες αχόρταγα ρουφάμε ελπίδα για να συνεχίσουμε το ταξίδι μας (Νατάσσα Καψάλη, CLA LLL Greece)
France Gouy, LLL France

I was born 40 km from Paris, in France. I still live in this region with my husband, Fabrice, and our two children who are 18 and 15 years old. One can imagine that near the capital of France, it is a dense urbanization. Behind my house, there are forest and fields. As a family, we like to walk or cycle in the forest. You can see deer and hinds.

LLLove,
France Gouy

Elayne Rath, LLL Germany

Hi, I'm Elayne Rath, CLA from Germany. I live with my husband in Viersen, which is in West Germany close to the Netherlands. It's a green city with a lot of fields and forests. We have 6 children. Three of them are still living at home. I've been an LLL Leader for 25 years. My LAD Team consists of 5 wonderful women. This is a photograph of me with my mother.
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