

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement

German Association for American Studies (GAAS/DGfA)

The GAAS/DGfA affirms its commitment to fostering an environment in which all members can participate fully and on equal terms. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) are foundational principles for our work as a scholarly community. Advancing DEI is essential not only to the pursuit of academic excellence but also to our responsibility as an organization devoted to the study of the United States in its historical and contemporary dimensions.

As a scholarly organization representing American Studies in Germany, we understand Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion as integral to our engagement with the democratic principles and intellectual debates that define our field. At a time when DEI initiatives are increasingly challenged, and when anti-democratic tendencies threaten academic freedom internationally, we reaffirm our responsibility to safeguard an inclusive, respectful, and critical scholarly community.

We acknowledge that discrimination and systemic inequality—whether based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability, class, religion, or other forms of marginalization—continue to structure academic life in Germany and beyond. Inequities do not remain outside the university or this association; they shape access, participation, professional advancement, and the conditions under which scholarship is produced. Confronting inequalities these requires sustained institutional attention and action, and demands that we examine our own academic and institutional practices critically.

We unequivocally condemn any form of intimidation, harassment, or discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender or gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, class, institutional affiliation, academic rank, age, or religious belief. Upholding a climate of mutual respect and safety is a shared responsibility of all members and essential to our collective mission.

The establishment of the Diversity Roundtable, the FLINTA Caucus for Gender Equity (formerly Women's Caucus), and a DEI Officer position in 2025 reflect our recognition that meaningful change cannot rely solely on individual commitment. Durable structures are needed to support inclusive participation, to identify and dismantle barriers—both overt and subtle—and to ensure that the GAAS/DGfA's activities align with our stated values.

The DEI Officer collaborates with the Executive Board, the Advisory Board, local conference organizers, and the various GAAS/DGfA initiatives to develop strategies, gather and communicate relevant information, and advise on measures that promote equitable access and representation across all areas of the association. In line with these efforts, the Executive Board and DEI Officer are currently developing a Code of Conduct. This Code will articulate the association's core values and foster a culture of shared responsibility for upholding them.

Through these collective efforts, the GAAS/DGfA seeks to sustain a scholarly environment that reflects the democratic, critical, and inclusive principles central to both our field and our profession. We recognize that this work is ongoing and commit to regularly reviewing and strengthening our practices in service of these goals.