

GENDER INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE GUIDE

What's gender inclusive language?

Gender inclusive language is a way of communicating that strives to treat people of all genders and those with no gender with respect and dignity with the ultimate goal of making everyone feel included.

Examples of inclusive language and greetings

Here are some examples of inclusive language you can use at meetings, events, conferences and in general communication. The language you use may need to shift depending on the audience you're addressing.

- › Welcome, brothers, sisters, and *friends!*
- › Hello, *folks!* (Or just Hello!)
- › Greetings, *everyone!*
- › *Comrades*, it's time to work together.
- › *All participants*
- › *Delegate* at the mic, please state your point.
- › What's the name of the *member* who just spoke?

What are pronouns?

Pronouns are words we use to reference someone without repeatedly using their name. The pronouns we use can also express our gender identity to others.

An individual can use one set of pronouns or multiple sets, which can include *they/them/their*, *ze/hir/hirs*, *she/her/hers*, and *he/him/his*, among many others.

When you're not sure what pronouns a person uses, use their name. You can't know for sure what pronouns someone uses just based on their appearance, behaviour or by hearing them speak.

What if I make a mistake?

If you misgender someone or use the wrong pronouns, acknowledge your mistake and move on. Don't dwell on it and don't make it about you. Apologizing and correcting yourself demonstrates care, respect and a commitment to equity.

For more information about the history of union greetings, how to ask someone about their pronouns, and how to be affirming and inclusive of gender diverse communities, refer to PSAC's Gender Inclusive Language Toolkit.

