AAAL DEIA Initiatives

The American Association of Applied Linguistics has launched and pursued a number of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access (DEIA) initiatives. In this section of the newsletter, we showcase three ongoing DEIA initiatives that we believe you will find interesting. The individuals in charge of these initiatives have kindy agreed to provide informational blurbs or referred us to existing documents, which we are including below.

Establishment of a social/mentoring network for under-represented scholars (Sobremesa Event)

Contact: Varies Yearly

Sobremesa began at the 2019 Annual Conference in Atlanta, Georgia. It is designed for community members, graduate students, and faculty from minoritized and underrepresented groups to have a space to socialize and to build supportive networks and a better sense of community within AAAL. We're in our third year of the initiative and we've just started planning for the 2021 Annual Conference. If you want to get involved, contact us at info@aaal.org.

Revision of Nomination Committee policies and procedures to specify diversity, equity, access, and inclusion efforts as criteria

Contact: Andrea Revesz, Chair of the AAAL Nominating Committee

The DEIA initiative of the AAAL Nominating Committee involves incorporating DEIA considerations formally into the Nominating Committee procedures and templates. Although the current manual instructs the Nominating Committee to consider DEIA, this is not yet formally written into the process. The initiative is guided by Laura Collins, who is a member of the Nominating Committee as Past President of the association. The goal of the initiative is to prepare recommendations to be considered by the Executive Committee, based on the experiences of the committee this year. The initiative will help ensure that DEAI is formally considered when the committee nominates candidates for various AAAL roles in the future.

Establishment of family-friendly policies to support members attending the annual conference with their children

Contact: Charlene Polio, AAAL Member-at-Large

Below is AAAL's policy for attending the annual convention with children. Although this policy is not immediately relevant to the 2021 convention (the conference being fully online), we would like to thank Prof. Polio for referring us to this important information. The website version is available at https://www.aaal.org/family-resources.

Dependent Children Event Attendance Policy

The AAAL Annual Conference is family friendly.

Everyone who attends must be registered and have a badge. Badges for children of registered attendees are free. For the purposes of this policy, "children" are defined as birth children, step children, adopted children, and dependents. It is requested that children be registered in advance in conjunction with their parent(s), however child registration is available onsite at the registration desk.

Children under 14 years of age must be accompanied by an adult guardian at all times. Guardians are asked to help maintain a professional, disturbance-free exhibition environment.

Children under 18 are not allowed in the exhibition area during exhibition move-in and move-out for their own safety. Please note that for reasons of security, all children must wear a badge identifying with whom they are attending. In addition, AAAL is committed to providing a space for lactation needs.

Please note that AAAL, nor the hotel, will be providing childcare during the conference. Children will be the responsibility of the parent.

Registration for Children

All children (of any age) must be registered for conference either online prior to the conference or at onsite registration. This information is needed in the event of an emergency or if a child needs to be reunited with a parent.

Child Access to Sessions

Children may be brought into all conference sessions. If the child begins to fuss or becomes a distraction to other attendees, the parent should step out to address the needs of the child. Reentry will be permitted once the disruption is resolved.

Lactation Spaces

Two 8'5" diameter x 7'3" tall Mamava Inflatable Lactation Pods will be available on the Majestic Level of the Sheraton Denver Downtown Hotel.

Cooperative Childcare

Cooperative childcare allows parents to equitably exchange baby-sitting services so they can enjoy the more formal aspects of conference knowing their children are taken care of and entertained.

You can read more about AAAL's diversity efforts in the June 2020 AAAL Letter, where Fabiola Ehlers-Zavala, AAAL Secretary and AAAL-AILA Representative, provides an extensive update.

Editorial note: The blurbs in this section were edited for brevity and clarity.

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