

# **ADR INCLUSION NETWORK**

## **Charter**

### **I. Goals.**

The ADR Inclusion Network (“Network”) was founded upon the fundamental concept that neutrals<sup>1</sup> with a wide variety of cultural and life experiences – based upon characteristics such as gender, race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, and disability – enrich the alternative dispute resolution (ADR)<sup>2</sup> process by bringing diverse perspectives to preventing and resolving disputes. These perspectives stem from a range of personal and professional backgrounds that, in practice, may better serve, instill confidence in, and create greater perceived fairness in the ADR processes offered by, for example, better reflecting the communities served by the neutrals or providing normatively better outcomes for the end-users of those ADR processes. To that end, the goals of the Network are:

- (1) increasing the awareness of, use, visibility, availability, and selection of diverse neutrals within New York State in all aspects of the ADR field, including on state and federal court rosters and private and community ADR providers and programs;
- (2) improving the inclusion and growth of prospective diverse neutrals within New York State, while maintaining a focus on increasing the use of existing diverse neutrals; and
- (3) functioning as a resource for New York State on the topic of ADR inclusion and diversity.

### **II. Governance.**

The Network shall be governed by a Steering Committee comprising individuals who can provide leadership, guidance, and/or resources relevant to the goals outlined above. Steering Committee members will be selected by the members of the Network and may, but need not be, members of the Network. The Steering Committee will determine when and how often the entire Network membership will meet as a group.

### **III. Membership.**

The membership of the Network shall proactively identify and include all interested individuals who share some or all of the goals outlined above. Efforts will be made by the Network to reach out to and recruit members so that the Network will be as representative as possible of the ADR community, including, but not limited to, end-users, institutional providers, court ADR program administrators, agency ADR program administrators, in-house counsel, outside counsel, other practitioners, neutrals, academics, and other constituents and stakeholders in the ADR field. Members are free to serve on the Network for as long as they wish at the discretion of the Steering Committee.

#### **IV. Working Groups.**

Members of the Network will be divided into Working Groups based upon an initial assessment of potential focus areas by the Steering Committee and feedback of the Members. The number and nature of the Working Groups will be adjusted periodically by the Steering Committee with input from the Members.

The substantive work of the Network shall be accomplished through the creation and maintenance of these Working Groups, which will, through liaisons designated for each such group, provide updates to the Steering Committee on at least a quarterly basis. Working Groups may meet as frequently as their members deem appropriate and may meet in person or telephonically, unless the Steering Committee determines otherwise. The Working Groups shall have no authority to bind, speak on behalf of, or otherwise represent the Network.

#### **V. Minutes.**

Each of the Working Groups and the Network as a whole shall maintain written minutes of their respective meetings.

#### **VI. Evaluation.**

The Steering Committee shall review and reassess the adequacy of this Charter and the Network's performance periodically and recommend any proposed changes to the Members for approval.

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<sup>1</sup> The term "neutrals" encompasses all types of practitioners along the dispute resolution spectrum who serve as third-parties in assisting to prevent and resolve disputes, including mediators, arbitrators, and neutral evaluators.

<sup>2</sup> Alternative dispute resolution (ADR) refers to a variety of processes that help parties prevent and resolve disputes outside of litigation in the courts.