

A New Idea



Time for Another Cooperative Principle:

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The idea of creating a new Cooperative Principle evolved through conversations with professionals in the area of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

The Cooperative Principles were originally written in 1844. The world looked different then. Slavery was legal in many states. Women lacked the right to vote. In fact, women were prohibited from inheriting property and were generally considered the chattel of their husbands.

An 8th Cooperative Principle establishes a forthright affirmation that diversity and inclusion is an ideal that should be pursued. Some argue that P(1) satisfies the diversity requirement with its prohibition on discrimination. This new principle goes beyond defense and provides a provocation to actively seek changes in public policy and private practice. Raising all voices is both pragmatic and moral. This is an opportunity to advance economic justice, human dignity and community development.

The call to action is to simply engage in a conversation on how to make our public and private systems work for everyone. This is a movement whose time has come for action.

Cooperative Principles

1 Voluntary & Open Membership

Cooperatives are voluntary organizations, open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership, without gender, social, racial, political or religious discrimination.

2 Democratic Member Control

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting their policies and making decisions.

3 Member Economic Participation

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative.

4 Autonomy & Independence

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members.

5 Education, Training & Information

Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives.

6 Cooperation Among Cooperatives

Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together through local, national, regional and international structures.

7 Concern for Community

Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.



Diversity & Inclusion

Cooperatives believe we are stronger when a proactive effort is put forth to engage everyone in governance, management and representation.