

Tool Kit for ATA Diversity Equity Networks



The Alberta
Teachers' Association

DENs =
DIVERSITY EQUITY
NETWORKS



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The Alberta Teachers' Association

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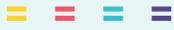
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Contents



Introduction	1
About DENs	3
Communication and Reporting Structure	3
Four Guiding Principles of DENs	4
Allyship and Intersectionality	5
Creating a Provincial DEN	6
Application Process	6
Provincial DENs Frame of Reference	8
Creating a Regional DEN	9
Maintaining a DEN	9
ATA Supports and Services	9
DENs Initiatives Grant	9
Measuring Success	11
Reviewing and Disbanding a DEN	11
Appendix A: DEN Application Forms	12
Appendix B: DENs Initiatives Grant Program Application Form	13

DENs signal the importance of strengthening diversity and equity within the ATA and serve as a resource for both their members and the ATA at large.



Introduction



The *Tool Kit for ATA Diversity Equity Networks* outlines the general guidelines and framework within which diversity equity networks (DENs) operate and contains information about services, supports and grants available from the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA).

DENs signal the importance of strengthening diversity and equity within the ATA and serve as a resource for both their members and the ATA at large.

Each DEN is responsible for its own operation, with the assistance of ATA staff. DEN policies must align with the policy and objects of the ATA and be guided by the processes and information in this tool kit.

For further information or assistance, a DEN should contact its ATA staff advisor or the ATA's Professional Development program area (dehr@ata.ab.ca).

This tool kit was developed in consultation with the ATA's Diversity, Equity and Human Rights (DEHR) Committee, as well as with others involved in the work of diversity, equity and human rights within the ATA.

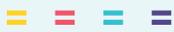
A tool kit, unlike a handbook, can be revised quickly as DENs grow and evolve.

If you have feedback or suggestions, contact dehr@ata.ab.ca.

DENs are provincewide networks of teachers organized around diversity and equity.



About DENs



DENs are provincewide networks of teachers organized around diversity and equity. A DEN provides support, networking and resources to active and associate ATA members who identify as belonging to a particular community.

DENs are intended to support teachers. They are not directly related to supporting students or the context in which teaching occurs. The ATA’s 20 specialist councils are best positioned to do work related to curriculum and classroom contexts.

DENs are member driven and self-defining (within the scope of the work of the ATA). Each DEN defines its own goals and leadership structure, as long as they align with the objects, model and structure of the ATA.

As a result of the Status of Racialized Teachers (SORT) working group, an ad hoc committee of the DEHR Committee, a number of recommendations were brought forward to the ATA’s Provincial Executive Council (PEC).

At the ATA’s 2024 Annual Representative Assembly (ARA), the following resolution was approved:

Be it resolved that the Association provide funds to create a constitutional and funding framework to support the establishment and operation of diversity and equity networks.

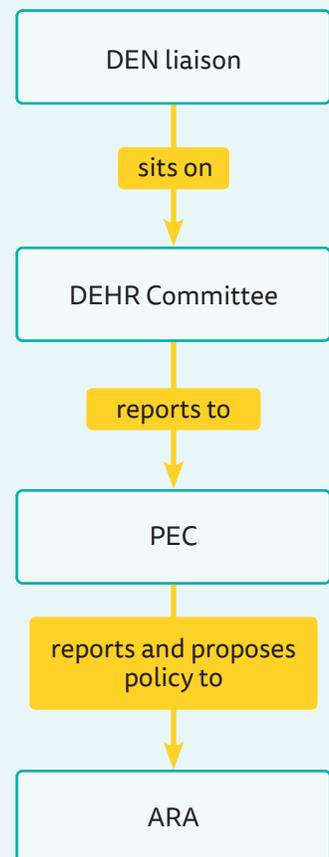
Following the approval of this resolution, the DEHR Committee—which advises PEC on issues related to diversity, equity and human rights—became the sounding board for the development of this tool kit.

The Alberta Teachers’ Association Gender and Sexuality Alliance (ATAGSA), a subgroup of the DEHR Committee, provided a model for DENs. The ATAGSA was established as a foundational framework for supporting historically marginalized groups. Because of the success of the ATAGSA, its structure helped shape the vision for DENs, ensuring an inclusive and sustainable approach to addressing equity within the ATA.

Communication and Reporting Structure

One representative per DEN may sit as a field member on the DEHR Committee for a three-year term and report on DEN activities and information at committee meetings.

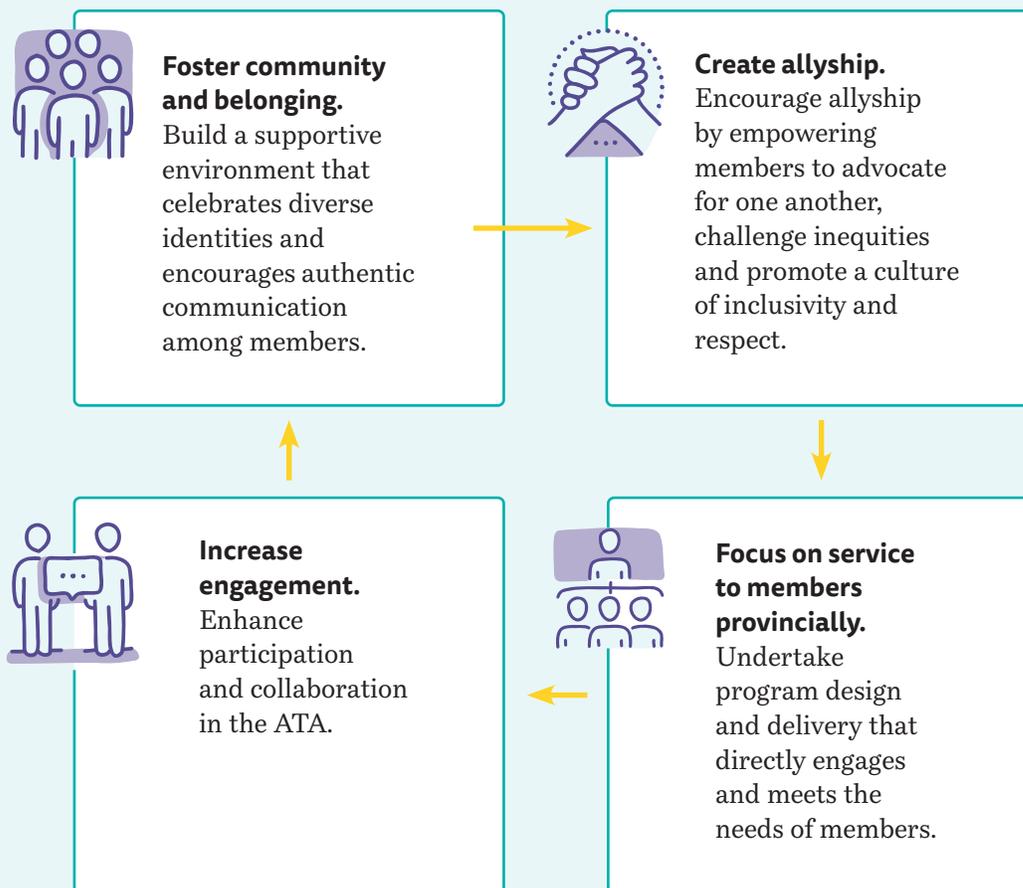
The DEHR Committee then shares information and decisions with PEC, as well as proposing policy to PEC for advancing to ARA for consideration.



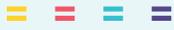
Four Guiding Principles of DENs



Although each DEN creates its own vision and goals, the work of DENs in general is focused on four guiding principles.



Allyship and Intersectionality



An ally is a person who may not identify as part of a specific group but actively supports the inclusion of its members.

Allies may play a role in developing and supporting a DEN, but their involvement should never overshadow or silence the voices of those who self-identify as part of the community supported by the DEN. The work of a DEN may include ways for colleagues to speak up and advocate for those who experience marginalization or discrimination. Whether or not to include allies is up to each DEN.

Intersectionality looks at how various identities—such as ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender identity—intersect and work together to influence how someone experiences privilege or discrimination.

To recognize the realities of intersectionality, the ATA encourages collaboration between DENs. Holding joint meetings, collaborating on resource development and cohosting events can use the knowledge and experience of group members to their best advantage.

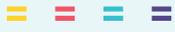
The ATA will look for opportunities for DEN leaders to share contact information, ideas and opportunities for collaboration.



To recognize the realities of intersectionality, the ATA encourages collaboration between DENs.



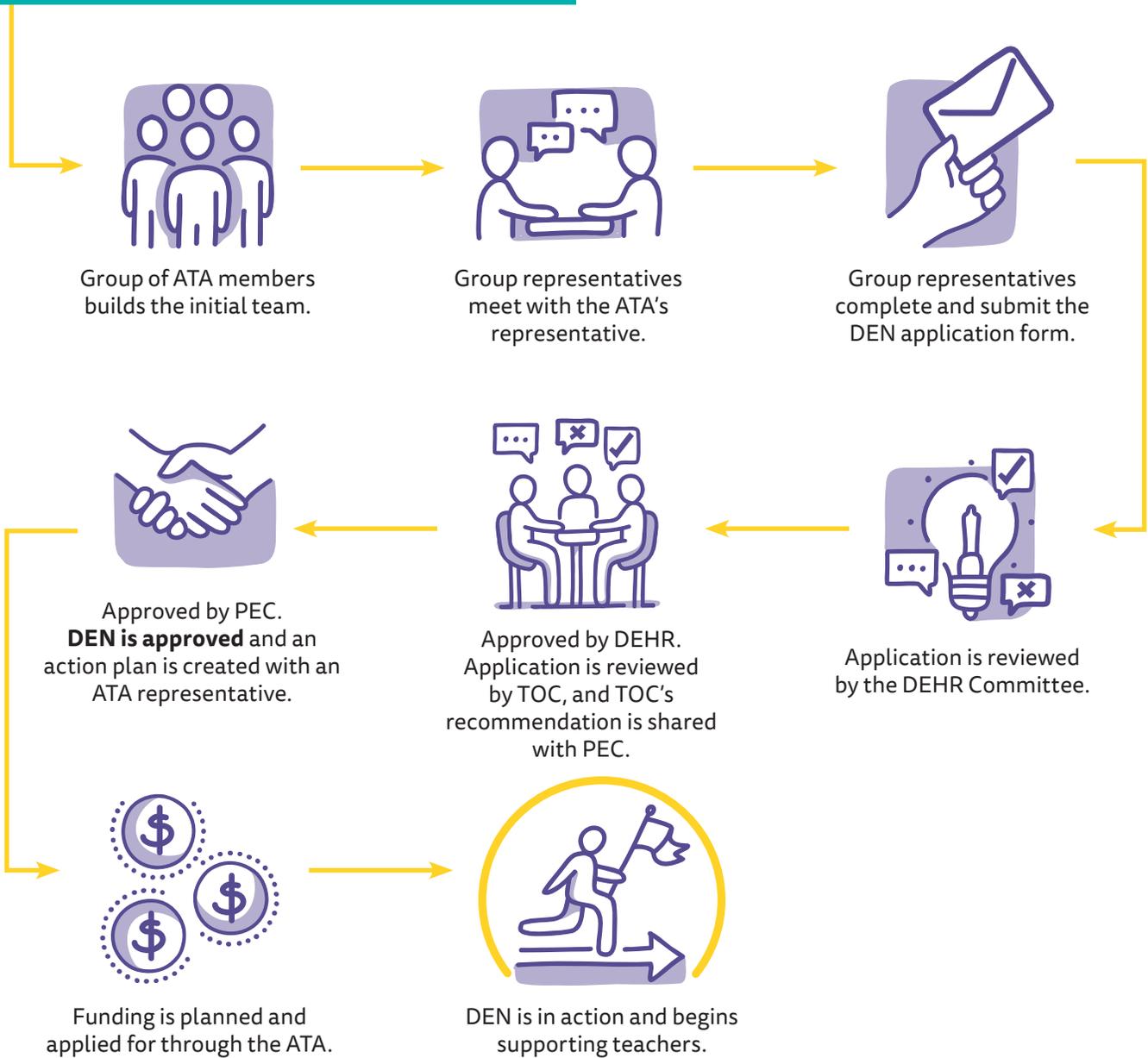
Creating a Provincial DEN



Application Process

1. A group of active or associate ATA members builds the initial team and guides the discussion of the purpose and goals of the proposed DEN.
2. The group or a lead from the group meets with the associate coordinator in Professional Development who oversees DEHR work to discuss the proposal and the criteria for creating a DEN.
3. The group meets to complete and submit the DEN application forms (Appendix A).
4. The application is received by ATA staff and forwarded to the next meeting of the DEHR Committee.
5. The DEHR Committee reviews the application and recommends one of the following:
 - *Approve.* The proposal meets all criteria. The DEHR Committee forwards its recommendation for approval to the Table Officers Committee (TOC), which forwards its recommendation to PEC.
 - *Request information or modification.* Aspects of the application are unclear or need modification to meet the criteria. The associate coordinator in Professional Development will let applicants know which items require modification and work with them prior to resubmission.
 - *Decline.* The proposal does not meet the criteria. The group may appeal the DEHR Committee's decision to TOC.
6. If the DEHR Committee approves the application, it goes to the next TOC meeting. TOC makes one of the following decisions:
 - *Approve.* The creation of the DEN is approved.
 - *Request information or modification.* An ATA executive staff officer is assigned to work with the group to adapt their proposal for resubmission to TOC.
 - *Decline.* The group may appeal TOC's decision by providing additional information for TOC to consider. TOC provides its decision on the appeal as a recommendation to PEC for consideration. If the appeal is unsuccessful, the process is concluded.
7. If the DEN is approved, an executive staff officer is assigned to the DEN and works with members to create an action plan and begin their work.
8. Funding for a strategic planning meeting is available through the ATA's Strategic Planning Grant Program.
9. The DEN schedules meetings and begins its work to support teachers.

*DENs are member driven,
self-defining and created in
alignment with the ATA.*



CRITERIA

The proposed DEN must meet the following criteria:

- The goals of the DEN align with the objects of the ATA (<https://teachers.ab.ca/about/ata-governance/mission-statement>).
- The DEN has an initial mission and goals.
- The DEN has clearly identified its target participants.
- The DEN has identified a group that has experienced systemic discrimination in society at large over time.
- The DEN will meet the unique needs of ATA members that are not currently met by other structures or services offered by the ATA.
- The DEN has proposed a tentative name.
- The DEN has submitted the name and contact information of one person who will serve as its lead.
- The DEN has included a list of names of 25 interested active or associate members of the ATA.
- The DEN has a provincial focus on diversity and equity.
- The DEN acknowledges that its members must be active or associate ATA members.
- The DEN acknowledges that invited guests at meetings are not members of the DEN.
- The DEN acknowledges its responsibility to act within the policies of the ATA.
- The DEN has proposed a schedule for regular meetings.

Provincial DENs Frame of Reference

MEMBERSHIP

- Teachers who are active or associate members of the ATA
- ATA executive staff
- DEN liaisons (up to three people to fulfill the following roles):
 - Communications liaison
 - Grant liaison
 - DEHR Committee liaison (three-year term)

SCOPE

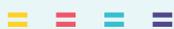
- DENs are provincial in focus, and a DEN should serve all members who identify as part of the DEN from all parts of the province.

- A DEN is to be focused on a group that has faced systemic barriers but continues to strive for equitable representation and opportunity.

DUTIES

- To dialogue, network and support teachers who identify as members of the DEN
- To provide service to members, including hosting relevant events and creating resources related to the DEN
- To advise the DEHR Committee on matters of concern related to diversity and equity via a DEHR Committee liaison
- To network with other DENs to foster a lens of intersectionality

Creating a Regional DEN



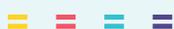
An ATA local may wish to create a regional DEN to meet regional needs.

Each local has the autonomy to support the creation of regional DENs and to determine the application process, how regional DENs will operate and what support the local will provide.

If a group has interest in creating a regional DEN, they should contact their local's DEHR chair. If no local DEHR committee exists, the request should be made to the local president.

Note: Provincial ATA supports and services are available only to provincial DENs.

Maintaining a DEN



ATA Supports and Services

The ATA is committed to reflecting and supporting diversity and equity.

The ATA has established a subunit in its Professional Development program area to offer targeted support for DEHR-related initiatives. Staff will be assigned to each DEN to provide support and guidance to the DEN as it establishes and grows.

The ATA will also provide assistance with events, communication initiatives and the development of resources.

DENs Initiatives Grant

Staff in Professional Development and Finance will help administer the DENs Initiatives Grant Program.

AMOUNT

Up to \$8,000 per DEN, per year.

DETAILS

The DENs Initiatives Grant Program supports projects that foster community connections and contribute to the support of members who identify as being from a group that has faced systemic barriers but continues to strive for equitable representation and opportunity within the ATA.

If an application is approved, half of the grant will be *paid upon approval* of the grant. The remaining half will be disbursed upon submission to and approval by the ATA of the project report, along with all receipts accounting for the full grant amount. The expenditures must be in the same budget year as the proposal (September 1 to August 31 of each year).

CRITERIA FOR GRANT PROJECTS

Support of Diversity and Equity

Initiatives must emphasize the support of members who identify as being part of a group that has faced systemic barriers but continues to strive for equitable representation and opportunity within the ATA.

These initiatives can vary. Examples include the following:

- DEN strategic planning activities
- DEN-led professional development for teachers
- Guest speakers at DEN meetings
- Resource development
- Mentorship
- Collaborative projects with other DENs

Sustainability and Lasting Impact

Projects must be sustainable and should be designed to have a lasting impact on teachers and the K–12 education community.

INELIGIBLE GRANT PROJECTS

The following types of projects will not be considered:

- One-time events not linked to a broader action plan
- Materials or services ordinarily purchased with school or local funds (such as books, salaries, substitute costs, capital equipment and technology)
- Projects that support fundraising events
- Funding for individual teacher professional development
- Activities that do not directly support active and associate ATA members
- Remuneration for DEN members for products or services accessed within their own DEN

GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

- Grant applications must include a description of the project, goal(s), evaluation procedures, timeline and budget. Include any other sources of funding. The project must occur during the upcoming school year.
- One-half of the grant will be paid at the inception of the project. The other half will be paid upon completion of the project and receipt of the project report by the ATA.
- Upon project completion, a final budget report (including paid receipts totalling the grant amount) and an evaluation report must be submitted to the ATA. The remaining balance of the grant will be released once these documents are received and approved. Criteria for the final report will be provided to successful applicants.
- DENs can apply for a grant for more than one project per fiscal year (September 1 to August 31), up to a combined maximum of \$8,000.
- Applying for this grant does not preclude the DEN from applying for other ATA grants. However, DENs may not apply for a DEHR grant.

HOW TO APPLY

Complete and submit the DENs Initiatives Grant Program application form (Appendix B).

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis **between September 1 and April 30** of each year. A DEN may apply multiple times during a school year if it remains within the maximum allotment.

Applications must be submitted **at least 60 days in advance** of the proposed project start date.

All claims must be made by **August 31** of each year.

SELECTION

Projects will be chosen based on how well they meet the outlined criteria.

Measuring Success

Each DEN should chart its own course.

The DEN should create a handbook that includes the following:

- Mission and vision
- Goals (aligned with the four guiding principles of DENs and the objects of the ATA)
- Principal activities
- Meeting frequency and structure

- Strategic plan
- Communication plan
- Budget
- Roles and responsibilities of the DEN and its leadership

To measure its success, the DEN must establish clear goals and success criteria. Having goals and measures will help to bring focus to the DEN's work and determine the impact of that work.

Reviewing and Disbanding a DEN



A DEN may experience difficulties, such as insufficient membership or a lack of members willing to take on leadership roles.

The ATA's TOC may place the DEN under review to assess its challenges and make recommendations.

The following are possible courses of action:

- Assisting a DEN in reorganizing
- Recommending actions to remediate a problem
- Disbanding the DEN

A DEN may need to cease operations for any of several reasons. A group can become ineffective and need to be disbanded and reconstituted in another form or at another time.

A DEN may make its own request to be disbanded. The request should be forwarded to the DEN's ATA staff advisor, who will then forward the request to TOC.

Appendix A



DEN Application Forms

Step 1: Complete the Application to Form a Diversity Equity Network (DEN).

Find the DEN application form at <https://abteach.cc/qxpcgs> or scan the QR code.



Step 2: Have 25 members complete the DEN interest form.

At least 25 active or associate ATA members must indicate that they are interested in establishing the DEN for which you are applying. Each person interested in joining your DEN must complete the form individually online. This must be completed within two weeks of the DEN application meeting assessment criteria by staff.

Find the DEN interest form at <https://abteach.cc/i9etas> or scan the QR code.



Appendix B



DENs Initiatives Grant Program Application Form

How to Apply

- Complete the DENs Initiatives Grant Program application form using the link or QR code below.
- Applications are accepted **September 1–April 30** each school year.
- Submit applications **at least 60 days before** the proposed project start date.
- A DEN may apply multiple times in a school year, provided the total funding requested does not exceed the maximum allotment.
- All claims must be submitted by **August 31** each year.

Selection Process

Applications will be evaluated based on how well the proposed project meets the program's outlined criteria.

Find the DENs Initiatives Grant Program application form at <https://abteach.cc/2epdpy> or scan the QR code.





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