VTTI’s Road to Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity (RIDE)
Committee Charter
Updated: October 19, 2022

PURPOSE
Virginia Tech Transportation Institute’s (VTTI’s) Road to Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity (RIDE) is intended to create and foster a safe, equitable, and inclusive work environment for all personnel at VTTI. RIDE will: 1) open channels of communication with senior leadership; 2) educate VTTI employees on the importance and means of achieving diversity, equity, and inclusion; and 3) strategically execute realistic goals developed based on the needs of students, staff, and faculty.

RESPONSIBILITIES
1. The committee will have the following responsibilities, which may evolve over time:
   - create educational opportunities for students, staff, and faculty;
   - act as a liaison between senior leadership and students, staff, and faculty;
   - provide resources to support human resources (HR) in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives where possible;
   - determine initiatives to understand work environment of VTTI students, faculty, and staff to track the effectiveness of the committee in order to show measurable change;
   - work with VTTI leadership to develop goals; and
   - ensure underrepresented populations are part of the membership (e.g., ethnic groups, disabled).

2. The committee has the following broad responsibility: to be a model for other institutes and departments at Virginia Tech by increasing diversity, improving equity, and fostering inclusion in all aspects of the work environment at VTTI.

MEMBERSHIP
1. Member Type and Attributes: Each VTTI units will have a volunteer as their representative. Individuals can self-nominate when the call for committee members (voting) and supporters (non-voting) opens. Based on the self-nominations, candidates for each unit will be submitted to the unit director for approval according to the following:
   - One employee from each unit representing faculty, staff, or wage positions.
   - One student from each unit (if available).
   - For the Committee Member representatives above, we encourage volunteers to self-identify attributes that will help us voice needs for diversity and inclusion (e.g., age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, English non-main language, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation, and veteran status). If characteristics for a self-nominated volunteer are not represented in current RIDE membership, an additional representative from a unit could be considered.
   - Committee Support members may be considered from divisions to satisfy the above statement.
   The Committee Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary will make the final selection of the committee members and committee supporters to represent each unit.

2. RIDE’s leadership: 13 members will be identified by their role and act as voting members. These members will be elected by the committee members and serve no less than 1 year, except for the Vice Chair, who will serve for two
terms and become the Chair Elect.

- Committee Chair
  - The Chair shall be the chief executive officer of the committee. The chair shall preside over meetings of the committee. The chair presides over any issues that arise in the committee and approves all expenditures. The chair will also appoint, with the advice and consent of the leadership committee, members not otherwise specified in these bylaws. The chair, along with the vice chair, will support the student leader and provide guidance where possible to assist in educating future leaders to understand the importance of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) in the workplace.

- Committee Vice Chair
  - The Vice Chair shall act as an understudy to the chair and become acquainted with the business and operations of the committee. The Vice Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair during the Chair’s temporary absence, or in the event that the chair is not able to perform their duties, as determined by a two-thirds vote of the leadership committee.
    - *Chair or Vice Chair will not be held by human resource position to avoid conflict of interest.

- Committee Secretary
  - The Secretary shall keep a true and faithful record of all business meetings committee meetings. The Secretary shall be the custodian of all records and correspondence of the committee and shall maintain the records of DEI metrics, such as attendance at conferences, speaking engagements, certifications, etc. of each member and supporter. The secretary will also assist with tracking budget information with the Chair and Vice Chair when needed.

- Committee Membership Coordinator
  - The Membership Coordinator shall be responsible for maintaining the membership list of the RIDE committee, including access to materials, sites, Teams channels, etc. This position will also manage RIDE events and communications.

- Student Leader
  - The Student Leader is responsible for sharing a student perspective on RIDE activities and highlighting student concerns being to the committee. Being a voice of students at VTTI may require meeting with other students at VTTI to learn about their experiences. This role will have the opportunity to identify and participate in or lead at least one project that will better support the lives of students and employees at VTTI. The Student Leader will receive support and guidance from the other committee leaders.

- Committee Unit Representative
  - Committee Unit Representatives shall take part in voting, will support and assist with the committee’s decisions, and relay information to each of their units. Each division will have a unit representative (5) and at least one individual will act as representatives for the small centers/groups.

3. Respect for all members

All committee members will be respectful of other committee members’ points of view. We will foster a safe and supportive environment for growth within the committee. The committee will honor the Virginia Tech Principles of Community.

- We affirm the inherent dignity and value of every person and strive to maintain a climate for work and learning based on mutual respect and understanding.
• **We affirm** the right of each person to express thoughts and opinions freely. We encourage open expression within a climate of civility, sensitivity, and mutual respect.

• **We affirm** the value of human diversity because it enriches our lives and the University. We acknowledge and respect our differences while affirming our common humanity.

• **We reject** all forms of prejudice and discrimination, including those based on age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, and veteran status. We take individual and collective responsibility for helping to eliminate bias and discrimination and for increasing our own understanding of these issues through education, training, and interaction with others.

• **We pledge** our collective commitment to these principles in the spirit of the Virginia Tech motto of *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve).

4. Guidelines for membership

• Committee Members (voting)
  
  i. Members in good standing, who have attended regular meetings or otherwise actively supported the committee’s mission, may request or be requested to serve additional terms.
  
  ii. Members shall participate in courses, learning materials, and guest speaker opportunities provided by RIDE.
  
  iii. Members must be willing to present materials approved by RIDE to their unit, routinely present their unit’s interests to RIDE, and promote RIDE initiatives.
  
  iv. Members must commit to a minimum of 1-year term unless a shorter term has been voted into place. Members may petition to extend the commitment past one year based off majority approval of RIDE leadership members.
  
  v. Division/Center directors will be considered for membership; however, they will need to be approved by the acting committee with final approval by chair or vice chair
    
    • *Note Division/Center directors will be to donate salary if selected
  
  vi. RIDE Committee will focus on maintaining diversity in employee classification, with representation of faculty, staff, wage, and student classifications.

• Committee Supporters (non-voting)
  
  i. Supporters will endorse the rules of the committee and are encouraged to attend at least half of the scheduled meetings.
  
  ii. Supporters may participate in courses, learning materials, and guest speaker opportunities provided by RIDE.
  
  iii. Supporters may be asked to step into the role of a committee member if called upon to replace a committee member who cannot attend.
  
  iv. Supporters do not have term limits.

• Students serve a 1-year term, if not in a leadership role.

**MINUTES**

The Committee Secretary will post minutes to the RIDE website within 10 business days of the meeting date.

**ELECTION PROCESS**

Elections will be held for the Committee Vice Chair, Secretary, Membership Coordinator, and representative positions upon completion of their terms. The Committee Chair will be replaced by the Vice Chair. Special elections will be held for
vacancies in the leadership positions. All committee members will vote, and the tallies will be counted in a timely fashion by the Committee Secretary. In the event that a committee member is not able to be present during a vote, that member could select an active committee supporter as a proxy. The committee will select the representatives from each unit through self-nominations. RIDE leadership may make recommendations of viable candidates for their position. Each potential candidate will need to fill out the Join RIDE survey.

ATTENDANCE
All committee members are expected to contribute fully. Committee members are required to attend monthly meetings and engage in decision-making. Failure to contribute and engage regularly may warrant replacement on the committee.

REPLACEMENT OR DISMISSAL
Members will be replaced or dismissed from the RIDE committee for the following:

- Missing 50% of the meetings without legitimate justification.
- Not being respectful to other committee members.
- Not participating, engaging, or contributing to meetings or RIDE activities.
- Not contributing to their role on the committee.

The decision to replace or dismiss a member of the committee will be reviewed by the committee members. If the committee members come to a majority vote to replace or dismiss another member, then said member will be replaced swiftly.

MEETINGS
Each year, the Chair will develop a regular schedule for meetings. At a minimum, the committee will meet at least once per month. The schedule will be distributed to committee members and maintained on the RIDE committee website.

COMMITTEE CHARTER DOCUMENTS UPDATES

- At the beginning of each calendar year, the committee will address any updates to the committee charter.
- Any updates to the committee charter document must be approved by the majority of the committee members.