USSD COMMITTEE CHARTER
COMMITTEE ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION (DEI)
Approved – August 25, 2022

COMMITTEE DESCRIPTION
The mission of USSD’s Committee on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) is to intentionally
foster diversity, equity, and inclusion within the dams industry to provide a diverse and inclusive
environment, and to focus on opportunities within the dams industry to champion members of
diverse and under-represented identities and backgrounds related to race, ethnicity, culture,
gender, sexual orientation, social and economic status, age, disability, religion, and more.

The Committee’s vision is to identify growth opportunities, expand USSD’s reach and empower
the industry to cultivate an inclusive and diverse environment that offers equity to all
professionals.

TERMS OF REFERENCE
The annual meetings of the Committee are open to all who have an interest in DEI. The
Committee will keep the membership informed through contributions to the official newsletter,
semi-annual meetings, and activity announcements. Activities may include training, technical
sessions, or group discussions.

The Committee will collaborate and/or assist with other committees in developing and promoting
DEI activities under each of USSD’s strategic domains of Community and Connections,
Advocacy and Awareness, Recruitment and Growth, and Education and Professional
Development. This will include assisting in development of annual conference content,
developing and/or sponsoring workshops during the conference or as standalone events,
encouraging articles for publication in “Dams and Levees, Bulletin of the United States Society
on Dams,” and providing input to the USSD Board to set DEI goals for the USSD Board and
USSD committees. There are many DEI resources available, and we will solicit external support
for DEI initiatives, including sponsorships.

In addition to collaboration with USSD and USSD committees, we will collaborate with ICOLD
and other ICOLD country member organizations. We will share ideas and resources to develop
our global partnerships.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY
At the annual USSD conference in 2022, the “Women Who Give a Dam” event planning
committee petitioned and received the USSD board’s approval for an ad-hoc committee on DEI.
The ad-hoc committee was then charged with developing a charter for the proposed standing
DEI committee.

As part of promoting the “Women Who Give a Dam” event, the planning committee published an
article in USSD’s Bulletin that solicited interest in the event. They received positive responses
and requests for collaboration from USSD members and other parties, including several
organizations involved in the hydropower industry. The positive response indicated the need for
a standing committee within USSD.
The first “Women Who Give a Dam” event consisted of a panel session and a luncheon with a keynote speech. Both events were successful and received positive feedback via email and on social media. “Women Who Give a Dam” was pioneered and developed by Zara Plasencia, Amanda Adams, Melinda Dirdal and Merry Dang.

RESPONSIBILITIES
The pioneers of the Committee have established the following responsibilities:

● Help USSD set and achieve DEI goals through collaboration with the USSD Board and standing committees;
● Coordinate DEI activities with other USSD and/or ICOLD committees; Identify topics and organize workshops, seminars, and webinars, both within and outside of the national conference;
● Serve as a resource for USSD leadership on DEI programs;
● Through coordination with the USSD staff, solicit funding (sponsorships) for DEI related initiatives, including, but not limited to, compensation for external DEI experts, keynote speakers, workshops/trainings, luncheons, and social hours.
● On an annual basis, the Committee will:
  - Host an annual meeting at the annual conference to update the members;
  - Identify relevant topics and develop a program to address these topics;
  - Organize DEI activities as part of the annual conference, such as technical sessions, luncheons, or other events; and
  - Aim to recruit, retain and promote more diverse members to USSD membership and leadership roles through DEI committee activities.

CHAIR, VICE CHAIR, AND ADVISORY BOARD

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<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
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<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Merry Dang</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mdang@asi-group.com">mdang@asi-group.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Vice Chair</td>
<td>Melinda Dirdal</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mdirdal@schnabel-eng.com">mdirdal@schnabel-eng.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YP Vice Chair</td>
<td>Josh Porterfield</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advisory Board</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advisory Board</td>
<td>Amanda Adams</td>
<td><a href="mailto:amanda.adams@stantec.com">amanda.adams@stantec.com</a></td>
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GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
The goals and objectives of the Committee are aligned with the USSD Strategic Domains, including:

● Community and Connections
  ○ Coordinate committee activities with ICOLD activities
  ○ Promote USSD as an organization that welcomes all professionals
  ○ Create a network of professionals passionate about DEI initiatives including the industry’s under-represented groups

● Advocacy and Awareness
  ○ Promote DEI initiatives aligned with the USSD’s missions and values
  ○ Expand awareness about dams and levees by engaging diverse members of the industry
o Communicate with committee members to share goals and successes

● Recruitment and Growth
  o Foster career paths that will grow the talent pool for our industry by promoting the industry to diverse and under-represented groups
  o Attract students and young professionals, who typically have strong interest in DEI
  o Provide valuable information to industry employers including minority/woman/disadvantaged owned businesses

● Education and Professional Development
  o Lead the development of DEI goals within the USSD organization
  o Identify DEI opportunities within the dams industry
  o Identify education and training opportunities relating to DEI;
  o Develop and deliver relevant DEI related training sessions, and/or promote delivery of technical training sessions by diverse professionals, including those from under-represented groups.

MEMBERSHIP
As defined in the annual roster.
USSD DEI Committee Member Roster – September 2022

Amanda Adams
Amanda Dolezal
Amanda Queiroz De Paula
Dana Miller
Ed Toms
Gabriela Martinez Lyvers
Georgette Hlepas
Intesar Albu-Attiya
James Demby
John Atkins
Josh Porterfield
Junior Lagade
Justin Phalen
Katelyn Noland
Kwestan Salimi
Lucky Nagarajan
Mara McClain
Matt Muto
Melanie Walling
Melinda Dirdal
Merry Dang
Mohammad Amin Hariri Ardebili
Nichole Tollefson
Phoebe Percell
Renée Fernandez-Lipp
Scarlett Kitts
Shawn Calendine
Silas Sanderson
Stephanie Williams
Tara McFarland
Tiffany Adams
Tracy Owen
William Empson
Yulia Zakrevskaya
Zara Amini Plasencia