

# THE 10-STEP PRIMER FOR ENGAGING AUDIENCES IN INCLUSIVE CONTENT: A DATA STORY

**1** Acknowledge your bias from the beginning...  
... and then encourage your visitors to do likewise.

**STEP 1A** Create a plan to address your bias, e.g., advisors, team approach, etc., and be upfront about it with your audiences.

**2** Reinforce your visitors' aspirational identity as curious, open-minded, and/or well rounded individuals.

(This aspirational reinforcement makes it more likely they will live up to those descriptors and consider new content or perspectives.)

**3** **Spark curiosity:** Hedonic curiosity to provide positive feedback loops while also providing new content and ideas, and eudaemonic curiosity to enjoy the ride to unexpected conclusions.

**4** Engage in dialogic questions.

**STEP 4A:** Present them with questions that their worldviews may not have considered.

**STEP 4B:** "Consider this..."

**STEP 4C:** And practice courageous empathy by being open to their answers.

**5** Give them the facts. ALL the facts.

**STEP 5A:** That includes multiple perspectives.

**STEP 5B:** And it includes telling the truth, even when it changes our understanding of the past, different cultures, or others.

**STEP 5C:** This means trusting audiences with the facts, the perspectives, and our changed understandings.

**6** Show your work.

Trust cuts both ways, so you need to share your process and sources, and identify advisors.

**7** Mainstream inclusive content. And *never* apologize for being inclusive.

**8** Pace your work at the "speed of trust."

Some of the content you share may be difficult for some visitors, especially if it represents a change from what they thought they understood.

**STEP 8A:** Do not make them feel dumb.

**STEP 8B:** Do not preach.

**9** Be a forum for civil discourse.

**10** Your visitors are human, as are you. There will be bias on both sides. There will be controversy.

**STEP 10A:** Accept that, despite your best efforts, you will not be 100% successful.

A few will simply not accept more inclusive (and "changed") content.



*"History shows us where we have been so we can understand how to move forward. If we only see one version of history, we only see how the group that benefits from that version moves forward. We can only move forward collectively, as a community, when the experience of every member of the community has a place in the history and we understand the disparities among them. I respect history organizations which are able to show that history belongs to everyone, and depict differing experiences in history with equity, sensitivity, accuracy, and thoughtfulness."*

This 10-step primer is excerpted from *Audiences and Inclusion: A Primer for Cultivating More Inclusive Attitudes Among the Public*.

Visit [aam-us.org/audiences-and-inclusion](http://aam-us.org/audiences-and-inclusion) to download a free copy of the entire primer, including more on curiosity, supporting data, and context for these 10 steps.

More Data Stories can be found at [wilkeningconsulting.com/data-stories](http://wilkeningconsulting.com/data-stories)



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