
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Karla Fackler Grafton, Hartford International University for Religion and Peace

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Brady Beard, Emory University
- Elli Cucksey, Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Capital University, Co-Chair
- Karla Fackler Grafton, Hartford International University
- Stephen Sweeney, Co-Chair
- Karen Adjei, Atla Staff Liaison

YEAR IN REVIEW

The DEI Committee met in person at Atla Annual 2025 in Pittsburgh, PA. We finalized the recommendation of a scholarship recipient for the Atla Diversity Scholarship and discussed our priorities for 2025-2026, including the creation of a more formal scholarship rubric, ways to further engage scholarship winners and applicants, the possibility of hosting a webinar (or series of webinars), as well as ideas for several blog posts. We also plan to work to update the libguide.

At the conference, the committee led a conversation with Atla members about Jeannine Hill Fletcher's essay, "The Promising Practice of Antiracist Approaches to Interfaith Studies." In this session, we examined Atla's history of diversity efforts and initiatives and asked our participants to look forward to potential futures. The purpose of the session was to help participants think about the history of Atla within the religious and racial history of the United States and reflect on their own institution's roles.

Over the course of the year, we reworked the wording of the scholarship application, the scholarship letter, and the website announcement. We updated, clarified, and coordinated the language in all three locations. We discussed ways to better engage our scholarship winners, the other applicants, and students in general. A blog post was submitted by last year's scholarship winner, Colton Whelpton, and published on the Atla blog.

Co-chairs for the 2024-2025 year were Elli Cucksey and Stephen Sweeney. Brady Beard was welcomed as a new member.