Itad Inclusive Language Guide 2023

This guide forms part of our verbal and written identity and should be used in conjunction with the Itad Tone of Voice and Style guides.

Knowledge Hub

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About this guide

We use **inclusive** and **person-centric** language that is respectful and considerate of our global audience. We are **current** and **considerate** when writing about race, culture, ethnicity, gender and sexuality.

We write in the **plain English** and avoid jargon to make our communications as accessible as possible.

This guide includes examples of **common-use words and phrases** to achieve this.

In all cases, **use the most specific, accurate terms to describe individuals or groups**. Where possible, ask what language is preferred by those you are describing.

Where generalisations must be used, use with care and elaborate with specific descriptors to ensure your language is not further marginalising or misrepresenting any group.

Further reading:

- The UK Government Digital service list of words to avoid for plain English.

- Stonewall list of LGBTQ+ words

- Bristol University inclusive writing guide

- UK government list of ethnic groups

- Centre for mental health – guide to race and ethnicity

Best practice for inclusive language can evolve rapidly. If there is something in this guide that does not seem right compared to other resources please contact communications@itad.com

Contents

People first language

Person–centric language means literally putting the 'person' first before any adjectives that describe them. This avoids defining people (or appearing to do so) by a single characteristic.

Correct ✓	Incorrect ✗
People experiencing homelessness or people who are homeless	Homeless people
People experiencing mental ill health/mental health problems	The mentally ill
People with a disability	Disabled people

There may be **exceptions** where individuals prefer to lead with **identity first language.**

For example, some people who have been diagnosed with **autism** consider autism to be part of their identity, not a condition to be treated. Some people also tend to see their disability as the ability to see the world in a different light. In this case, 'autistic person' would be preferred over 'person with autism'.

Where possible always **ask what term/phrase an individual would prefer.**

The Global South and developing countries

Describe the territory you are referring to with as much specificity as possible, using context–relevant details. This avoids generalised terms that may not be correct or appropriate.

Correct ✓	Incorrect ✗	Why we use this language
The global south/north (with caution) **When talking about economic issues:** Less economically developed/more economically developed countries (LEDC/MEDC) Advanced Economies/Emerging Market and Developing Economies	third world poor countries Undeveloped/developing countries	Where it is not possible to be more specific, the global south/north may be used. LEDC/MEDC might be the most inclusive option if you are describing economy (which can be objectively measured). The International Monetary Fund currently classify 37 countries as "Advanced Economies" and all others are considered "Emerging Market and Developing Economies". Using this would avoid directly describing a territory as 'lesser'.
Nepal has a gross domestic product of $21bn, making it a small player in the global economy compared to its neighbours, India and China.	Nepal is a developing country, bordering China and India.	Use descriptors that are relevant to the context you're talking about to contextualise the territory you are talking about.

Race and Ethnicity – basic principles

Race is… 'a social construct used to categorise groups of people usually based on perceived physical characteristics or shared ancestry. Racial categorisations have fuelled discrimination, violence and global power imbalances for centuries.' However, racial identity can also be important to provide a way for marginalised groups to collectively share support, build community or tackle prejudice.

Ethnicity is… 'a term used to describe a social group with a shared cultural identity, which may include language, traditions, geographic origin, religion, cultural expression or customs.' It can often be chosen by an individual. Ethnic discrimination may also be faced by some groups.

Nationality… refers to a persons country(s) of citizenship. A person's nationality may inform their ethnicity, but an ethnic group may not share a common nationality and visa–versa. Discrimination based on a person's nationality is known as xenophobia.

For example, a person might identify as: '**White** (Race), **Italian** (Ethnicity), **American** (Nationality)'

Further resources:

- UK government list of ethnic groups

- Centre for mental health – guide to race and ethnicity

- Underpinning principles: Identity, race, ethnicity, nationality

Race and Ethnicity

Correct ✓	Incorrect ✗	Why we use this language
Black people / people from Asian backgrounds / people who identify as Black / people from Black backgrounds	'Blacks' / 'Asians' (as nouns)	**Only describe a person's race or ethnicity when it is relevant to your context.**
White	Caucasian	**Be specific where you** can and, where they must be used, **explain any generic terms** with more specific descriptors to ensure your language is not further marginalising any group.
African Caribbean / African American	African-Caribbean / African-American	
People of mixed heritage / people of mixed background	'Mixed race people'	Terms such as BAME blend ethnicity, geography, nationality and in doing so erase key identities reducing them to an 'other.' These descriptions also imply that individuals are a homogeneous group.
Minority ethnic group **(if no other option is suitable)**	Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME)	
Racialised communities / communities experiencing racial inequality **(if no other option is suitable,** when talking about inequality and injustice)**		Both descriptions also single out specific ethnic groups, which can be divisive and exclusionary. The descriptions also tend to refer to people who are not white, which excludes white ethnic groups who may also be under-represented or face barriers.

Age, gender and sexual orientation

Correct ✓	Incorrect ✗	Why we use this language
Adolescent (13–19 years old) Youth/young people Older people (65+ years) Early childhood (0–5 years)	Teen/teenager Elderly/senior citizens	Only describe people by age when relevant to the conversation.
Postal worker Flight attendant Nurse 'A student should do their homework'	Postman Stewardess Male Nurse 'A student should do his/her homework'	To include all genders in our language we use a singular 'they' pronoun. Use gender neutral terms and avoid quantifying traditionally gendered roles.
Spouse Partner Person who is a member of the LGBTQ+ community. Person who is homosexual/bisexual/a lesbian Parents, carers and supporters / 'Parents/carers'	Husband/wife Boyfriend/girlfriend Person who identifies as homosexual/LGBTQ+ A homosexual/a gay/lesbian Parents	To avoid heterosexual bias we use gender neutral and avoid assuming a person's identity. Sexuality is a protected characteristic, not an identifier. LGBTQ+ stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer/Questioning, Asexual. Where possible be specific when identifying by sexuality. LGBTQ+ is the acronym standardly used by Stonewall.

Disibility

Correct ✓	Incorrect ✗	Why we use this language
Disabled people / people with disabilities	The disabled	Always avoid disempowering language and seek to challenge stereotypes and discrimination.
People with health conditions or impairments		
Non-disabled	Able-bodied	Use specific and precise language and only describe a persons disability if it relevant to your context.
… has xx condition	'suffers from'	
Uses [a wheelchair]	'confined to [a wheelchair]'	Use language with caution; some people may not identify with the label 'disabled'. Similarly, preferences for person first vs. identity first language may vary from individual to individual.
special educational needs (SEN) – in the context of childrens' education.	differently abled / handicapped / special needs	
'D/deaf'	deaf	In general, there is no need to capitalise words around disability. However, Deaf is often capitalised to indicate a person identifies as culturally Deaf and belong to the Deaf community. 'd/Deaf' should therefore be used.
People with [schizophrenia] /	Do not use the name of a disability as a noun or to describe a group of people (e.g. a 'schizophrenic', 'the blind')	
Mental health conditions / mental health diagnoses	Mental illness / mental health problems	Avoid perpetuating stereotypes and discrimination by using language associated with disability to describe other topics (e.g. describing a person as OCD, saying something is crazy). Similarly, avoid ableist phrases such as 'the blind leading the blind'.
wheelchair accessible desk / assistive software	'special' desk / software etc.	

Citizen status and refugees

According to the Refugee Council, a refugee is defined as

'a person who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.'

Correct ✓	Incorrect ✗	Why we use this language
Migrant (use with care) Refugee (use with care) 'Those <u>considered</u> unauthorised…' 'Those who do not have access to legal protection' Internally Displaced People (when describing someone within their home country)	Illegal Alien Unauthorised/undocumented Displaced people Asylum seekers	Many of these terms have negative connotations from previous use. Undocumented/unauthorised present the subject from the viewpoint of the local legal/political system which may be inherently discriminatory. Take care using generic terms such as migrant and refugee for some groups where this may not be correct. As always, the more specific you can be describing a group the better.