

Call for Participation in a Discussion Group on
Can Companies Help? Furthering Racial Equity
Through Corporate & Securities Laws and Disclosures
Abstracts due: Monday, September 11, 2023

Introduction

The following is a Call for Participation in a Discussion Group on the following topic: Can Companies Help? Furthering Racial Equity Through Corporate & Securities Laws and Disclosures. The Discussion Group will be held during the in-person AALS Annual Meeting from January 3-6, 2024 in Washington, DC.

Discussion groups allow a small group of faculty to engage in a sustained conversation about a topic of interest. This discussion group's participants will begin their participation in the discussion with a brief 5-minute presentation. The rest of the session will feature a moderator engaging the participants in a lively and engaging discussion among the group of participants, followed by audience Q&A. The participants in this discussion group will be the individuals identified in the original proposal submitted to the Program Committee, plus additional individuals selected from this "call for participation".

Description

After George Floyd's murder at the hands of a Minneapolis police officer and worldwide protests calling for policing reform, U.S. companies like Amazon, Nike, and Walmart made statements in support of Black Lives Matter and called for racial equity. In addition to their external efforts, companies looked inward to consider how they perpetuate racial inequality in the economy. Moreover, institutional shareholders enhanced their efforts around diversity, equity, and inclusion ("DEI") initiatives such as increased board and C-suite diversity, pay gap reports, transparency around corporate political contributions, the end to concealment clauses that restrict employees from disclosing discrimination, and racial equity audits. Three years later, such efforts have been attacked by some politicians as subverting capitalism, weaponizing the term "woke" like a racial slur. This panel will cut through the noise. Participants will discuss the regulation and disclosure regimes of U.S. companies related to anti-racism and racial equity to focus on whether such regulation and disclosures are helping dismantle white supremacy in the economy. The panel fits with the AALS Annual Meeting theme "Defending Democracy" by discussing race, feminism, and LGBTQ+ identities intersectionally in the context of company regulation and disclosure.

Call for Abstracts

The Annual Meeting Program Committee invites faculty and administrators who would like to join this Discussion Group to submit a three-page abstract that addresses the topic of the Discussion Group **by September 11**. Current organizers and confirmed discussion participants include Afra Afsharipour (UC Davis), Alicia Plerhoples (Georgetown), Atinuke Adediran (Fordham), Carol Liao (University of British Columbia), and Omari Simmons (Wake Forest).

Space in this Discussion Group is limited; the Committee, along with the faculty organizer who proposed this discussion, will select the remaining discussion participants from the abstracts submitted. At the AALS Annual Meeting in January, selected participants will make a one-five minute presentation during the Discussion Group. The remaining time will be devoted to a moderated, roundtable group discussion.

Each submission for this Discussion Group should include:

- The title of the submitted presentation;
- The name, school, and email of the applying participant;
- A two-page abstract that addresses the Discussion Group topic; and
- The curriculum vitae of the applying participant.

In reviewing the submitted abstracts, the discussion group organizer and selection committee will consider the following:

- The fit and overall quality of the abstract for the Discussion Group;
- The diversity that the applying participant may bring in terms of a variety of factors including gender, LGBTQ+, and racial diversity, diversity in research and evidence-based arguments about the Discussion Group topic, institutional affiliation and status (tenure-track, non-tenure track, tenured)

Abstracts are due by **Monday, September 11, 2023** and should be submitted using the online submission form <https://aalsweb.wufoo.com/forms/sja3po01qn0yl9/>