

2022 NASPEs Award
Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. Award Nomination
Innovative State Human Resource Management Program - One Page Summary

The Commonwealth of Kentucky's Employee Resource Groups (ERG) are comprised of over 250 employees who participate in this voluntary, employee-led program. These employees share a common interest in diversity and inclusion. The ERGs are committed to raising cultural awareness, and to creating a sense of belonging amongst all state government employees by collectively developing programming, conducting in-person and virtual activities and supporting community initiatives when possible.

The Commonwealth of Kentucky is committed to providing a working environment in which all employees feel valued, respected and have a sense of belonging. The Personnel Cabinet's Office of Diversity, Equality and Training (ODET) spent over two years researching data proven methods on how the most successful employers were engaging with their employees.

We, as the rest of the world, had major workplace disruptions due to the COVID 19 pandemic. Our workforce shifted to a hybrid model, when appropriate, where employees were working from home part of the week and in the office on the other days. There were also major social issues, including the Breonna Taylor case, that were in the news and affected many of our employees. We sensed a need for our workforce to have a voice, a safe place where they could express their thoughts and receive support from others who have gone through or have supported others in similar situations.

As we began the process of creating and developing our ERGs, we were guided by three key principles. One, regardless of the ERG focus, they all would be open to all employees, not just members of a particular demographic but anyone who wanted to be an ally. Second, we wanted to make sure our ERGs would be reflective of the demographics of our workplace. As a result, we established eight ERGs: Women, Veterans, Black or African American, Hispanic and Latino, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ+), Accessibility, Multi-Generational, Asian American or Pacific Islander. Third, we understood the importance of support from executive leadership. Our ERGS are led by Cabinet Secretaries and executive leadership.

2023 NASPEs AWARD

Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. Award Nomination Innovative State Human Resource Management Program

Nominations from dues-paying states are considered for eligibility. Nominated leaders and programs should have a positive effect on the administration of state human resource programs. A state's central human resource department or line agency human resource operations may administer nominated programs.

Programs and projects must have been operational for at least six months and must be transferable to other states. Selection criteria are based on the questions asked on the award application. Included in this packet are the specific criteria for each award and their categories. Nominations are encouraged in all areas of human resource management administration.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Program Title: Commonwealth of KY Employee Resource Groups State: KY

Contact Person: Vikki Stone

Contact's Title: Executive Director

Agency: KY Personnel Cabinet Office of Diversity, Equality and Training

Mailing Address: 501 High Street, Frankfort KY 40601

Telephone: 502-797-9752

E-mail: Vikki.stone@KY.gov

NOMINATOR INFORMATION

Nominator: Mary Elizabeth Bailey Title: Deputy Secretary, KY Personnel Cabinet

State: KY Agency: KY Personnel Cabinet

Telephone: 502-564-6619

E-mail: MaryE.Bailey@ky.gov

ALL SUBMISSIONS MUST:

- Meet all eligibility requirements • Meet deadline requirements
- Include a complete nomination packet • Conform to all copyright laws

2023 NASPEs AWARD

Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. Award Nomination

Innovative State Human Resource Management Program

DETAILS

Please attach a one-page summary of the program. Provide a narrative answer for each of the questions. You are limited to four pages (based on regular 8 1/2 x 11-inch paper double-spaced in 12-point font). The four-page limit does not include the one-page summary.

1. Please provide a brief description of this program.

Commonwealth of Kentucky's Employee Resource Groups (ERG) are comprised of over 200

employees who participate in this voluntary, employee-led program. These employees share a

common interest in diversity and inclusion. The ERGs are committed to raising cultural

awareness, and to creating a sense of belonging amongst all state government employees by

collectively developing programming, conducting (virtual) events and activities, and supporting

community initiatives when possible.

2. How long has this program been operational (month and year)?

March 2022

3. Why was this program created? (What problem[s] or issues does it address?)

The Commonwealth of Kentucky is committed to providing a working environment in which all

employees feel valued, respected and have a sense of belonging. The Personnel Cabinet's Office

of Diversity, Equality and Training (ODET) spent over two years researching data proven

methods on how the most successful employers were engaging with their employees.

We, as the rest of the world, had major workplace disruptions due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

Our workforce shifted to a hybrid model, when appropriate, where employees were working

from home parts of the week and in the office on the other days. We also had major social

issues, including the Breonna Taylor case, that were in the news and affected many of our

employees. We sensed a need for our workforce to have a voice, a safe place where they could

ALL SUBMISSIONS MUST:

- Meet all eligibility requirements • Meet deadline requirements
- Include a complete nomination packet • Conform to all copyright laws

2023 NASPEs AWARD

Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. Award Nomination

Innovative State Human Resource Management Program

express their thoughts and receive support from others who have gone through or have supported others in similar situations.

As we began the process of creating and developing our ERGs, we were guided by two principles. One, regardless of the ERG focus, they all would be open to all employees, not just members of a particular demographic but anyone who wanted to be an ally. Second, we wanted to make sure our ERGs would be reflective of the demographics of our workplace. As a result, we established eight ERGs: Women, Veterans, Black or African American, Hispanic and Latino, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ+), Accessibility, Multi-Generational, Asian American or Pacific Islander.

In terms of procedure and policy, our employees must apply to participate in the program and obtain their supervisor's approval. With approval, ERG participants may use up to two (2) hours per month to participate in planning and programming activities. An employee in an ERG leadership position, may use up to three (3) hours per month as long as it does not interfere with regular work responsibilities or impact fellow employees, and it must not result in overtime. Each ERG has an elected Chair, Vice Chair and Scribe. High level agency leadership serve as Executive Sponsors and advocate for the group.

ERGs are an enhanced benefit for our employees in that they provide the opportunity for networking and professional development. Perhaps the most valuable aspect of participation in an ERG is the sense of community and belonging, which is inherent to the goals and objectives of the ERGs.

As a part of our learning module, Cornerstone, we have a place for forums where employees

ALL SUBMISSIONS MUST:

- Meet all eligibility requirements
- Meet deadline requirements
- Include a complete nomination packet
- Conform to all copyright laws

2023 NASPEs AWARD

Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. Award Nomination

Innovative State Human Resource Management Program

can post messages, attach articles and share information of interest. These forums are monitored for content and employees must acknowledge they understand their conduct must adhere to standard workplace policies.

4. Why is this program a new and creative method?

The KY Personnel Cabinet provides leadership and guidance to attract, develop, motivate and retain a talented, diverse workforce; foster an understanding of and adherence to regulatory requirements; and create a positive, supportive work environment that values all employees. We have a workforce of over 27,000 employees, who work in 11 Cabinets, that serve all 120 counties in the state. To advance our DEI initiatives and further demonstrate our commitment to provide a workplace environment where our employees feel valued, respected and have a sense of belonging, we embarked upon the journey to create our inaugural ERG program. We were innovative in our approach to creating our ERGs by applying the best practices we identified in the private sector, but also being mindful of the processes and protocol that are inherent in the public sector workplace. Our ERGs provide safe spaces where our employees can openly discuss some of the social issues and, together, find ways to better support their needs and the needs of their fellow employees in the workplace. The creation of this program is one of the initiatives we have undertaken to support our employees.

5. What was the program's startup costs? (Provide detailed information about specific purchases for this program, staffing needs and other expenditures, as well as existing materials, technology, and staff already in place.)

N/A funding not required utilized staff support

6. What are the program's operational costs? N/A funding not required utilized staff support

Click or tap here to enter text.

7. How is this program funded?

N/A funding not required utilized staff support

ALL SUBMISSIONS MUST:

- Meet all eligibility requirements • Meet deadline requirements
- Include a complete nomination packet • Conform to all copyright laws

2023 NASPEs AWARD

Eugene H. Rooney, Jr. Award Nomination Innovative State Human Resource Management Program

8. Did this program originate in your state?

9. Are you aware of similar programs in other states?

If yes, how does this program differ?

Whereas some state-led ERGs are found within independent state agencies, the Kentucky ERGs

are open to all Kentucky Executive Branch employees. Allowing any agency to join and interact within a state-wide ERG promotes inclusion and allyship across all agencies within state government. To further build networking and belonging, all ERG Executive Sponsors hold positions in cabinet-level leadership.

10. How do you measure the success of this program?

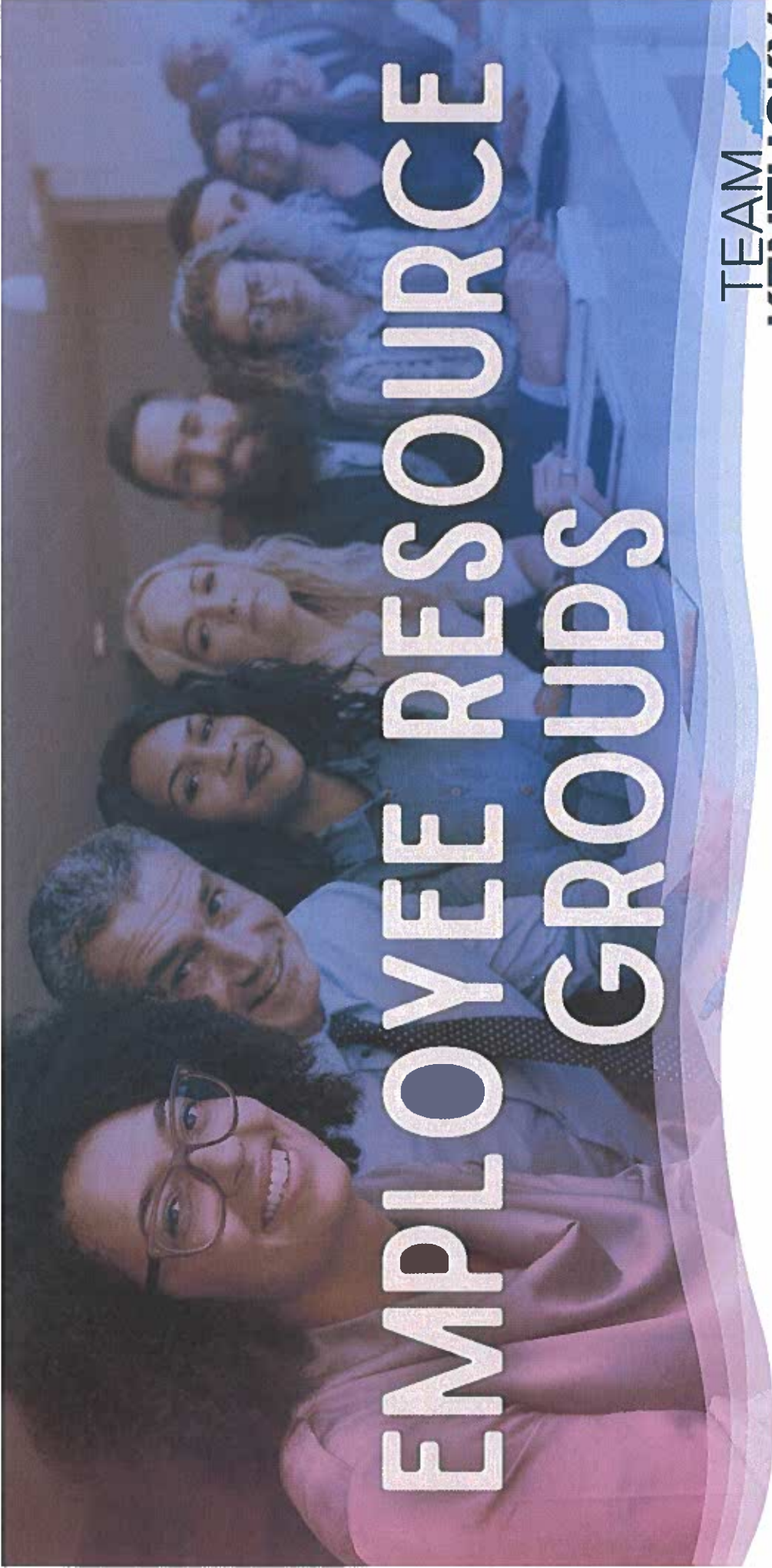
At this point we measure success by engagement and participation. As mentioned earlier our ERG program currently has over 200 participants with employees signing up virtually every day.

11. How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception?

We have been and continue to be responsive to the needs of our employees. The ERG program expanded from five groups to eight in response to employee interest. Additionally, the program has grown through a continual increase in participation. Participation is measured by new member signup, activity in the online ERG forum, monthly meetings, community engagement, in-person events, and employee development opportunities. The ERGs are partnering with local non-profits to serve the public and build professional working relationships across the Commonwealth. The changes have been organic. An example of this is the sub-committees that are being developed in the ERGs. The sub-committees focus on mentorship, leadership, and volunteering in the community. The ERG program has developed a Speaker Series where each ERG hosts speakers to speak to the groups on topics like leadership, DEI, state-wide initiatives, and employee health.

ALL SUBMISSIONS MUST:

- Meet all eligibility requirements • Meet deadline requirements
- Include a complete nomination packet • Conform to all copyright laws



EMPLOYEE RESOURCES GROUPS

TEAM



KENTUCKY.

PERSONNEL CABINET

EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS

ERG Mission Statement

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are an employer-recognized, voluntary employee-led group of individuals who share a common interest in diversity and inclusion. ERGs are committed to raising cultural awareness and creating a sense of belonging amongst all state government employees by collectively developing programming, conducting (virtual) events and activities, and supporting community initiatives when possible.

Some benefits of belonging to an ERG are:

- ✓ Gain a sense of belonging and community with fellow employees.
- ✓ Support the Commonwealth of Kentucky's diversity initiatives, aspirations and goals.
- ✓ Participate in mentoring, educational and professional development opportunities.
- ✓ Connect with fellow ERG team members via MyPurpose online communities.
- ✓ Collaborate with ERG team members to create programming for positive outcomes and cultural awareness.





Current ERGs

- Women
- Accessibility
- Veterans
- Black or African American
- Hispanic or Latino
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ)
- Multi-Generational
- Asian American or Pacific Islander

ERG Organizational Structure

Executive Sponsors

LGBTQ

Executive Sponsor
Secretary Lindy Casebier
Tourism, Arts and Heritage Cabinet

Veterans

Executive Sponsor
Deputy Secretary Keith Jackson
Justice and Public Safety Cabinet

Women

Executive Co-Sponsor
Secretary Gerina D. Whethers
Personnel Cabinet
Marita Willis, Chair
Kentucky Commission on Women

Hispanic/Latino

Executive Sponsor
Secretary Holly M. Johnson
Finance Cabinet

Multi-Generational

Executive Sponsor
Secretary Jamie Link
Education and Labor Cabinet

Black or African American

Executive Sponsor
Secretary Jim Gray
Transportation Cabinet

Asian American or Pacific Islander

Executive Co-Sponsor
Secretary Rebecca Goodman
Energy and Environment Cabinet
Commissioner Whitney Allen
Ky Department of Veterans Affairs

Accessibility

Executive Sponsor
Secretary Eric Friedlander
Cabinet for Health and Family Services

ERG Employee Participation Overview

Participation:

Open to ALL Kentucky Executive Branch employees. Applicants must receive their supervisor's or manager's approval to participate.



Time Commitment:

Employees can volunteer in a limited capacity (no more than two hours) during work hours each month for planning ERG activities and meetings.



[Click Here To Join Today!](https://extranet.personnel.ky.gov/Pages/erg.aspx)

<https://extranet.personnel.ky.gov/Pages/erg.aspx>



Scan the QR Code to learn more or join an ERG.

Additional Questions?

Please Contact: Syl Flores at Syl.Flores@ky.gov