

**EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION CALENDAR**

**OCTOBER – 2021**

### **MONTH-LONG OBSERVANCES:**

* **National Disability Employment Awareness Month.**

This observance was launched in 1945 when Congress declared the first week in October as “National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week.” In 1998, the week was extended to a month and renamed. The annual event draws attention to employment barriers that still need to be addressed.

* **LGBT History Month**

An annual month-long observance of [lesbian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lesbian), [gay](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gay), [bisexual](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bisexual) and [transgender](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transgender) history, and the history of the [gay rights](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_LGBT_rights_by_region) and related [civil rights](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civil_rights) movements. It was founded in 1994 by Missouri high-school history teacher Rodney Wilson. LGBT History Month provides role models, builds community, and represents a civil rights statement about the contributions of the LGBTQ+ community.  As of 2020, LGBT History Month is a month-long celebration that is specific to Hungary, the United States, Canada, Australia, Brazil, Greenland, and the city of Berlin. In the United States, Canada, and Australia, it is celebrated in October to coincide with National Coming Out Day on 11 October and to commemorate the first and second marches on Washington in 1979 and 1987 for LGBT rights.[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LGBT_History_Month#cite_note-4) In Hungary and the United Kingdom, it is observed during February; in the UK, this coincides with a major celebration of the 2003 abolition of [Section 28](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Section_28).[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LGBT_History_Month#cite_note-5) In Berlin, It is known as [Queer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queer) History Month and is celebrated in May.

* **Polish American Heritage Month**

An annual event celebrated in October by Polish American communities. It was first celebrated in 1981 after organization by Michael Blichasz, President of the Polish American Cultural Center in [Philadelphia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philadelphia). Originally, it was celebrated in August at various gatherings, travel events, and culturally significant locations in [Pennsylvania](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pennsylvania). The Polish American Cultural Center and the [Polish American Congress](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polish_American_Congress) lobbied politicians at the state and national level to make August the month for Polish heritage. In 1984, House Joint Resolution 577 passed, making August Polish American Heritage Month. President Ronald Reagan urged all Americans to join in the celebration honoring Polish heritage in the United States. The month was changed to October in 1986 to aid participating schools in organization during the school year, and October holds significance as the month when the first Polish settlers came to Jamestown, Virginia.

* **Global Diversity Awareness Month**

A month to celebrate and increase awareness about the diversity of cultures and ethnicities and the positive impact diversity can have on society.

**October 1:**  **The beginning of Black History Month**

In the UK, Ireland, and the Netherlands.

**October 1:**  **Native American Women’s Equal Pay Day**

The aim is to raise awareness about the wider-than-average pay gap between Native American women and White men. Native American women are paid 57 cents for every dollar paid to white men.

**October 1: International Day of Older Persons**

On 14 December 1990, the United Nations General Assembly designated October 1 as the International Day of Older Persons ([resolution 45/106](https://undocs.org/A/RES/45/106)). This was preceded by initiatives such as the [Vienna International Plan of Action on Ageing](https://www.un.org/development/desa/ageing/resources/vienna-international-plan-of-action.html#targetText=It%20aims%20to%20strengthen%20the,promotes%20regional%20and%20international%20cooperation.&targetText=protection%20of%20elderly%20consumers,housing%20and%20environment), which was adopted by the 1982 World Assembly on Ageing and endorsed later that year by the UN General Assembly. In 1991, the General Assembly adopted the United Nations Principles for Older Persons ([resolution 46/91](https://undocs.org/A/RES/46/91)). In 2002, the Second World Assembly on Ageing adopted the [Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing](https://undocs.org/A/CONF.197/9), to respond to the opportunities and challenges of population ageing in the 21st century and to promote the development of a society for all ages. In Canada October 1 of each year is National Seniors Day, which coincides with the United Nations International Day of Older Persons and is an occasion for Canadians to celebrate the profound contributions of seniors in our homes, communities and workplaces.

**October 2**: **International Day of Nonviolence,** and **Gandhi’s Birthday**.

Mohandas Karamchand “Mahatma” Gandhi is one of the most respected spiritual and political leaders of the twentieth century. Through nonviolent resistance, he helped free India from British rule. The Indian people called Gandhi “Mahatma,” meaning “Great Soul.”

**October 4:**  **St. Francis Day**

Feast day for St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of animals and the environment, celebrated by many Catholic denominations.

**October 4:**  **Blessing of the Animals**

In congruence with St. Francis Day. Many Unitarian Universalists have picked up on the Catholic tradition of blessing animals, particularly pets, as St. Francis was known for his special connection to animals.

**October 6 - 14:**  **Shardiya Navaratri or Maha Navratri**

The nine-day festival celebrating the triumph of good over evil. It worships God in the form of the universal mother commonly referred to as Durga, Devi or Shakti, and marks the start of fall. The nine-day festivity culminates on the tenth day with Dussehra or Vijaya Dashami. Women, especially in Maharashtra and Gujarat, adorn themselves with 9 different colours, which are allocated to each day of Navratri. The colour of the day is decided on the weekday. Each weekday is ruled by one of the planets or Navgrahas, and accordingly, colours are assigned to each day.

**October 10:**  **World Mental Health Day**

First celebrated in 1993, this day is meant to increase public awareness about the importance of mental health, mental health services, and mental health workers worldwide.

**October 11:**  **National Coming Out Day (U.S.)**

For those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, this day celebrates coming out and the recognition of the 1987 march on Washington for gay and lesbian equality.

**October 11:**  **Canadian Thanksgiving**

A chance for people to give thanks for a good harvest and other fortunes in the past year.

**October 11: Indigenous People’s Day**.

Beginning in 1992 on this day, drums across the USA and in different time zones coordinate ceremonies and observances at 12 p.m. to celebrate and honor 500 years of North American Indigenous people’s resistance and survival. From that day to the present, Native Americans observe Indigenous People’s Day, not Columbus Day. Indigenous People’s Day began in 1989 in South Dakota, where Lynn Hart and Governor Mickelson backed a resolution to celebrate Native American day on the second Monday of October, marking the beginning of the year of reconciliation in 1990. It was instituted in Berkeley, CA, in 1992, to coincide with the 500th anniversary of the arrival of Christopher Columbus in the Americas. Two years later, Santa Cruz, CA, instituted the holiday, and in the 2010s, various other cities and states took it up. It is similar to Native American Day, observed in September in California and Tennessee.

**October 11: International Day of the Girl Child**

The main aims of the day are to promote girls’ empowerment and fulfillment of their human rights, while also highlighting the challenges that girls all over the world face. The celebration of the day also “reflects the successful emergence of girls and young women as a distinct cohort in development policy, programming, campaigning and research.”

**October 12: Dia de la Hispanidad (Spain) Spanish National Day**

This date remembers the arrival of Christopher Columbus in America, a day with complex controversial meanings. Hispanics in the US are split on their political feelings about the holiday. In most Spanish speaking countries, it is celebrated as Dian de la Raza (Mexico), Dia de las Culturas (Costa Rica) to celebrate the contributions of the country’s indigenous, Spanish, African and Asian cultures. Latin Americans celebrate October 12 under many different names, including Day of Respect for Cultural Diversity (Argentina), Decolonization Day (Bolivia), Day of Interculturality and Plurinationality (Ecuador), Day of Indigenous Peoples and Intercultural Dialogue (Peru) and Indigenous Resistance Day (Venezuela). October 12th is not recognized as a holiday in Cuba.

**October 15:**  **Dasara, Dussehra, or Vijayadashami**

In the eastern and northeastern states of India, marks the end of Durga Puja, remembering goddess Durga's victory over the buffalo demon Mahishasura to help restore dharma.

**October 15: International Day of Rural Women**

The first of which was observed in 2008. This new international day, established by the General Assembly in its resolution 62/136 of 12/18/07, recognizes “the critical role and contribution of rural women, including indigenous women, in enhancing agricultural and rural development, improving food security and eradicating rural poverty.” It is purposely held the day before World Food Day in order to highlight the role played by rural women in food production and food security.

**October 16**: **World Food Day.**Since 1979, this worldwide event has sought to increase awareness, understanding, and informed year-round action to alleviate hunger, malnutrition, and poverty.

**October 17: Black Poetry Day**

Observed annually. This is a day to honour past and present black poets. Jupiter Hammon, the first published black poet in the United States, as born in Long Island, New York on October 17, 1711. In honour of Hammon’s birth, we celebrate the contributions of all African Americans to the world of poetry.

**October 17: International Day for the Eradication of Poverty**

The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty is held annually on 17 October to provide: an opportunity to acknowledge the effort and struggle of people living in poverty; a chance for them to make their concerns heard; and a moment to recognize that poor people are the first ones to fight against poverty. Through resolution 47/196, adopted on 22 December 1992, the UN General Assembly declared 17 October as the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty and invited all States to devote the Day to presenting and promoting, as appropriate in the national context, concrete activities with regard to the eradication of poverty and destitution.

**October 18 - 19 (sundown to sundown):** **Eid Milad un-Nabi or Mawlid al-Nabi**

An Islamic holiday commemorating the birthday of the prophet Muhammad. Mawlid al-Nabi is a spiritual and social occasion for the Muslims who celebrate it. It is a memorial day when the Sirah (the life story of the Prophet) is revisited and scholars and singers in the Sufi tradition remind the members of the Ummah about the teachings of the Prophet(s) as well as the successes and challenges of the young Muslim community in Mecca and Medina. During this celebration, homes and mosques are decorated, large parades take place, and those observing the holiday participate in charity events. Shi’a Muslims celebrate it five days later than Sunni Muslims.

**October 20:**  **Sikh Holy Day**

The day Sikhs celebrate Sri Guru Granth Sahib, their spiritual guide.

**October 20:**  **International Pronouns Day**

Seeks to make respecting, sharing, and educating about personal pronouns commonplace. Each year it is held on the third Wednesday of October.

**October 21: LGBTQ+ Spirit Day**

Started in 2010 by [Canadian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canadians) teenager Brittany McMillan, it was initially created in response to a rash of widely publicized [bullying-related suicides](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bullycide) of gay school students in 2010, including that of [Tyler Clementi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suicide_of_Tyler_Clementi). Promoted by [GLAAD](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GLAAD), observers wear the color purple as a visible sign of support for LGBTQ youth and against bullying during [National Bullying Prevention Month](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=National_Bullying_Prevention_Month&action=edit&redlink=1), as well as to honor LGBTQ victims of suicide.

**October 24: United Nations Day**

UN Day marks the anniversary of the entry into force in 1945 of the [UN Charter](https://www.un.org/en/charter-united-nations/index.html). With the ratification of this founding document by the majority of its signatories, including the five permanent members of the Security Council, the United Nations officially came into being. There is no other global organization with the legitimacy, convening power and normative impact of the United Nations. Today, the urgency for all countries to come together, to fulfil the promise of the nations united, has rarely been greater. 24 October has been celebrated as United Nations Day since 1948. In 1971, the United Nations General Assembly recommended that the day be observed by Member States as a public holiday.

**October 29:**  **Latinx Women’s Equal Pay Day**

The aim is to raise awareness about the wider-than-average pay gap between Latinx women and White men. Latinx women are paid 54 cents for every dollar paid to white men.

**October 29: National Organization for Women (NOW)**

Was founded in 1966 to take action to bring about equality for all women The foundation focusses on a broad range of women’s rights issues, including economic justice, pay equity, racial discrimination, women’s health and body image, women with disabilities, reproductive rights and justice, family law, marriage and family formation rights of same-sex couples, representation of women in the media and global feminist issues.

**October 31:**  **All Hallows’ Eve (Halloween)**

A celebration observed in a number of countries on the eve of the Western Christian feast of All Hallows' Day. It begins the three-day observance of Allhallowtide, the time in the liturgical year dedicated to remembering the dead, including saints (hallows), martyrs and all the faithful departed.

**October 31:**  **Reformation Day**

A Protestant Christian religious holiday celebrated alongside All Hallows' Eve (Halloween) during the triduum of Allhallowtide in remembrance of the onset of the Reformation.

**October 31 - November 1 (sundown to sundown): Samhain**

A Gaelic festival marking the end of the harvest season and the beginning of winter or the "darker half" of the year.