IMPLEMENTING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

A Reference Guide

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01 WHO IS THIS GUIDE FOR?

This publication presents a 'how to' for building a diverse and inclusive information and communications technology (ICT) business and workforce. Targeted at small to medium ICT businesses in Australia, it provides practical and actionable guidelines for those looking to begin or continue developing workplace diversity and inclusion (D&I).

ACS aims to support and inform ICT businesses on D&I, helping to grow a happier, healthier and more productive labour force; increase business performance outcomes; develop a stronger ICT sector; and contribute to a better Australia.

02 WHAT THIS GUIDE COVERS

This guide seeks to develop an awareness and understanding of D&I in Australia's ICT sector, while delivering practical ways to plan, implement, measure and mature D&I within businesses (See Figure 1). It includes:

- An explanation of what D&I means
- The organisational benefits of building a diverse and inclusive workforce
- Basic, intermediate and advanced D&I assessment methods
- Various initiatives, programs and ideas, from simple to advanced, to adopt when starting or advancing your D&I journey
- A showcase of Australian organisations and initiatives recognised nationally and internationally for their approach to D&I
- A range of helpful material to assist your business, including suggested toolkits, additional guides, resources, assistance and core definitions of D&I-specific language
- A D&I checklist to help you build and mature D&I within your business.

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FIGURE 1: D&I LIFECYCLE

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide begins with a focus on awareness and understanding, explaining what D&I is and its major organisational benefits. In addition to providing insights for leadership and employees, which encourage buy-in and establish value, the discussion of benefits will help you identify targeted D&I goals for your business.

Following this, we recommend a D&I assessment as fundamentally important for determining your organisation's current state on the D&I maturity scale. To help you achieve this, we have provided a range of assessment methods, from basic to advanced.

After uncovering your organisation's current state, you can choose to employ any of the programs and ideas presented in this guide – from simple actions to complex initiatives – to begin achieving your D&I goals.

We have listed several toolkits and guides to deliver additional help.

ACS invites your business to use this guide to either commence or advance your D&I journey and ultimately to deliver benefits to your employees, your organisation and the ICT industry.

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04 UNDERSTANDING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

What is diversity?

D&I goes further than targets, representation or numbers. The former Australian Department of Human Services (now Services Australia) says diversity "is about our individual differences and acknowledging the unique blend of knowledge, skills and perspectives people bring to the workplace" (Australian Department of Human Services, 2016).

Like many aspects of society, as diversity evolves and develops, so too does its definition. We can expect that legislation surrounding diversity will also continue to shift and reflect these changes.

The notion of diversity has metamorphosed over time. Proponents of a new perspective say that the traditional way of viewing diversity has become "stretched or diluted" (Konrad & Linnehan, 1995). In other words, society has changed in its complexity, makeup and attitudes, and so has diversity. This evolution means that the concept of diversity has become more broad, and can "include any attribute that might make people perceive themselves different than their work group" (IBM Talent & Transformation, 2019).

The evolution of diversity

The various forms of diversity are:

- Legacy diversity: This "reflects differences in physical attributes and social constructs" (Deloitte University Press, 2013). It includes those diversity dimensions we traditionally associate with diversity, such as race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, education, work experience, income level, religious beliefs, life experience, caring and family responsibilities, socioeconomic background and personality.

- Experiential diversity: This is "a function of our physical and social identities" and refers to "the impact those identities have had on our life histories and lived experiences" (Deloitte University Press, 2013). It includes generational diversity.

- Thought diversity or cognitive diversity: This incorporates "educational and functional diversity, as well as diversity in the mental frameworks that people use to solve problems" (Deloitte, 2018). It reflects the idea that even people of different or underrepresented minorities can have the same ideas and perspectives as the dominant group.

- Thought diversity, or diversity of thinking, is a newer facet of workplace diversity. It is also contentious, and many people suggest that a focus on cognitive diversity puts the rationale of workplace diversity at risk.

However, proponents of thought diversity are not saying we should eradicate traditional diversity. Rather, they are suggesting that "high-performing teams are both cognitively and demographically diverse" (Deloitte, 2018).

- Thought diversity reduces the likelihood of 'groupthink', where creativity is discouraged. It also decreases the likelihood of 'expert overconfidence', which stifles critical thinking and creative processing of information and data.

- Diversity of thought sees the alignment of like-minded people on specific tasks, projects or teams to solve problems in new and exciting ways. This increases inclusivity as members feel safe and accepted when contributing different ideas and ways of doing things.

Diversity aspects: all is not as it appears

The notion of workplace diversity comprises two main aspects: dimensions that can be seen and those that cannot. This is where the 'iceberg analogy' is useful. Workplace diversity is more than what we can see on the surface (Queensland Government, 2015). For example, gender, age and race might be the visible aspects of the iceberg, whereas work experience, work styles, beliefs, thought processes and life experiences remain unseen.

Visible and non-visible aspects of diversity

FIGURE 2: VISIBLE AND NON-VISIBLE ASPECTS OF DIVERSITY (QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT, 2015)

It is also important to remember that people do not have a singular identity. Intersectionality describes the overlapping and interdependency of social identities, and the multiple ways discrimination or disadvantage is experienced.

What is inclusion?

Inclusion in the workplace relates to how an organisation can "maximise the benefits of diversity by fostering and promoting full rights, access and privileges of employment and advancement to all organisational members" (Bennett, 2014). The Diversity Council of Australia suggests that an inclusive workplace is present when the diversity of people is "respected, connected, progressing and contributing to organisational success".

Equal opportunities, removing barriers

An inclusive workplace ensures all people have the same opportunities, including access to resources, the ability to contribute and the ability to succeed and reach their full potential. Inclusion also means that all people feel safe, are treated fairly and with respect. Removing barriers to allow equal access to opportunities and full participation is the central component of creating an inclusive workplace.

An inclusion model: enabling diversity of thought

Deloitte's inclusion model refers to inclusiveness as enabling and maximising the benefits that diversity of thought can provide. For people to feel included they must be treated fairly and with respect. They need to feel a sense of belonging – to feel safe, valued, empowered and able to participate without judgement or reprisal.

| Fairness and respect | Valued and belonging | Safe and open | Empowered and growing |

FIGURE 3: THE SCIENCE OF INCLUSION: DELOITTE'S INCLUSION MODEL (DELOITTE, 2018)

Sources: Bersin by Deloitte, *High-impact diversity and inclusion: The new maturity model, 2017*; Juliet Bourke and Bernadette Dillon, *Waiter, is that inclusion in my soup? A new recipe to improve business performance*, Deloitte Australia and the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, 2012.

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Although workplace diversity is important to organisations and employees, the reality is that without an inclusive organisation supporting and empowering diversity, the benefits will be squandered. Diversity and inclusion must both be present.

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05 ORGANISATIONAL BENEFITS – WHY STRIVE FOR A DIVERSE WORKFORCE?

Social benefits

The social benefits of building workplace D&I are highly valuable. Inclusive businesses provide all employees – no matter their differences – with equal access and opportunities. The social benefits for employees can include:

- Economic independence
- Financial security
- Autonomy over their own lives
- Higher living standards
- Improved quality of life for themselves and those who rely on them
- Enhanced socialisation
- Increased confidence self-worth
- Improved wellbeing.

Employee satisfaction and wellbeing

Workplaces with a D&I focus are also connected to increased employee satisfaction, as people working in these businesses more likely to be engaged, resilient, enriched and dedicated. This type of work environment produces happier and more fulfilled employees who are likely to stay within the company. From a business standpoint, this type of workplace offers an advantage over competitors when it comes to attracting and retaining staff, and tends to be more attractive to high achievers and performers.

Talent attraction, development and retention

In many instances, organisational D&I is used to attract and retain employees – particularly the best and brightest. This is significant in the era of the international workforce, where competition for talent circles the globe and crosses industries.

LinkedIn found that 78% of organisations are now focusing on diversity as a priority to improve company culture – a main reason people choose and remain with an employer (IBM Talent & Transformation, 2019).

Performance and productivity

One of the most significant outcomes of having a well-developed business D&I program is stronger organisational performance and productivity. Despite this, organisations are failing to understand this relationship.

PwC's Diversity & Inclusion Benchmarking Survey found that only 17% of technology organisations associated improved business performance with D&I. In contrast, 47% said their primary objective for building D&I was to attract and retain talent (PwC, 2019).

Every D&I program should be customised according to the business case for pursuing best practice, and should align with the organisation's own vision and mission. A well-executed D&I program can help your organisation achieve its strategic objectives.

There is a strong relationship between D&I and performance. Inclusion enables the benefits of diversity, which in turn leads to improved business performance. In fact, if a business is diverse and inclusive, performance can increase up to 80% (Deloitte Access Economics, 2017).

Relationships between diversity, inclusion and performance

Diversity: The variety of differences between people in an organisation

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Inclusion:

1. Ensuring individuals are not treated differently or less favourably on the basis of specific characteristics

2. Opinions and views of all members of a group are encouraged, valued and respected

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Business Performance: Improved business performance, e.g. customer satisfaction and team collaboration

FIGURE 4: RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN DIVERSITY, INCLUSION AND PERFORMANCE (WESTPAC, 2017)

By increasing employee engagement, D&I can also reduce business costs associated with staff turnover, as well as reducing absenteeism and sick leave costs (Canadian Institute of Diversity and Inclusion, 2014).

Additionally, workplace D&I can increase the financial bottom line. For example, people with diverse knowledge, experience and backgrounds are more likely to adapt products and services to new markets, reach new markets by having community members on staff and promote further innovation.

According to Deloitte (2018), organisations with inclusive cultures are twice as likely to meet or exceed financial targets, six times as likely to be innovative and agile, and eight times more likely to achieve better business outcomes.

The Suncorp Inclusion@Work Index, which surveyed 3,000 working Australians, found that if a person works in an inclusive team, they are 10 times more likely to be highly effective compared to those in non-inclusive teams (Diversity Council Australia, 2016).

A McKinsey & Company (2018) study also found a link between executive team diversity and financial performance. Based on 2017 global data, it found that companies in the top quartile for gender diversity on their executive teams were 21% more likely to experience above-average profitability than companies in the fourth quartile.

The research also found that companies with the most ethnically and culturally diverse executive teams and boards are more likely to outperform their peers on profitability, by 33% and 43% respectively. For the most part, these results were similar across all countries included in the study.

Innovation

Diversity promotes innovation by encouraging new ideas, knowledge and perspectives. Inclusion then provides a safe, open environment that invites this difference to thrive.

The Suncorp Inclusion@Work Index found that if a person works in an inclusive team, they are nine times more likely to be innovative (Diversity Council Australia, 2018).

It has also been shown that diverse and inclusive teams make better decisions than homogeneous groups. Decisions are more rapid and agile, more likely to be based on factual evidence and less likely to be biased – all characteristics of quality decision making that leads to organisational innovation. 'Diverse teams make better decisions 87% of the time, according to a study of 200 different business teams.' (SmartCompany, 2017)

Competitive advantage

D&I can give your organisation a competitive advantage. When supported and encouraged, diverse knowledge, experiences, perspectives and methods can create a more competitive organisation than a homogeneous business with similar ideas and backgrounds.

Organisational reputation

Organisations with mature and successful D&I programs are portrayed as more credible and seen to have better reputations. These benefits are linked to every stakeholder; employees, customers, suppliers, the communities within which these organisations operate and the broader society all see these businesses in a positive light. The opposite is clear when a negative D&I controversy occurs: reputations are harmed and the effects are felt throughout wider society.

Investor attraction

Although it is not necessarily the focus of D&I, organisational D&I can attract business investors. Improved performance accompanied by a credible reputation can present your business as an attractive investment.

Regulatory compliance

Some elements of organisational D&I are required under legislation. In Australia, compulsory Commonwealth D&I legislation includes the Sex Discrimination Act 1984, Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986, Disability Discrimination Act 1992, Race Discrimination Act 1975 and Affirmative Action (Equal Employment Opportunity for Women) Act 1986.

Customer and client awareness

Being a diverse and inclusive organisation can also benefit your customer and client base. Diverse employees reflect a diverse customer base and are often able to better understand, target, serve and provide additional value to various customer markets. This presents significant opportunities for the future, and can expose your business to opportunities not yet considered or even gaps in the market.

There are many benefits of workplace D&I, from social benefits for the workforce to economic advantages for the organisation. Building a diverse and inclusive culture makes perfect business sense.

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ASSESSING YOUR WORKFORCE

D&I challenges

Some of the reasons why diversity challenges continue to exist in the technology industry include:

- Visibility – a lack of visible role models in technology, particularly female and minority role models, and limited exposure to leadership roles
- Pipeline – a lack of diversity among qualified candidates
- Culture – a workplace that is not inclusive and does not support diverse employees (Dalberg, 2016).

D&I practitioners and change agents suggest that 75% of D&I change management is never, rarely or only sometimes implemented effectively in business (Diversity Council Australia, Google and Deloitte, 2019). They have found that only 40% of D&I change attempts are based on realistic goals, which presents itself as the main barrier to change. Furthermore, only 6% of businesses use a designated organisational change model when implementing a new initiative, and only 37% are actively monitoring and evaluating the impact of that initiative.

D&I: what can be measured?

PwC's Global Diversity & Inclusion Benchmarking Survey found that 16% of technology organisations did not gather and analyse any type of diversity data, while 55% measured employee demographics. Other less common measurements included discrepancies in performance (32%), discrepancies in compensation (30%) and discrepancies in promotions (25%).

D&I assessment can be broken up into internally and externally focused measures. For example, internally focused measures can include the demographics of the workforce; recruitment, retention, advancement and attrition by demographic; and whether managers and employees have participated in D&I training. Externally focused measures can include customer demographics; customer churn or retention rates; and customer satisfaction or engagement by demographic.

These measurements can also be broken into quantitative metrics supported by statistics, and qualitative metrics (Office of Financial Management – Washington, 2019).

Examples of quantitative data include:

- Representation: What is the workforce profile of your organisation? Which groups are underrepresented in the workforce?
- Hiring: Are new hires in your organisation from the same demographic as the applicants and candidates who attended interviews? Are certain groups less represented in the recruiting and hiring process?

- Development: How many employees have an individual development plan?
- Pay equity: Are employees in groups affected by affirmative action paid the same as white male counterparts or those in similar positions?
- Promotion: What are the promotion rates of men, women and other affected groups within the organisation? Are the rates similar for men and women?
- Accessibility of programs and services: How many enhancements were made to ensure programs and services were accessible to all persons?

Examples of qualitative data include:

- Employee inclusion: What results have employee satisfaction surveys revealed?
- Employee resource and affinity groups: Does your organisation have employee resources or affinity groups? If so, how many groups are there in the organisation?

D&I assessment: basic to advanced

For the purposes of this guide, we have broken down PwC's six stages of D&I data analytics into basic, intermediate and advanced measurement types (adapted from PwC, 2018).

- Basic
  - Basic D&I data
  - D&I surveys
- Intermediate
  - D&I metrics and dashboards
  - D&I benchmarking
- Advanced
  - Advanced D&I analytics
  - Predictive D&I analytics

Basic D&I assessment

Basic D&I data

This basic level refers to statistics that your business already has, captured in existing operational reports. The Canadian Institute of Diversity and Inclusion (2016) suggests starting with the easy-to-measure dimensions of D&I that are already available to your organisation, such as the statistics of underrepresented groups by employment level; recruitment, promotion and turnover statistics by demographic group; employee engagement scores by demographic group; harassment or discrimination complaints; and D&I training.

D&I surveys

These are dedicated and simple surveys your organisation can conduct at regular intervals – for example, during recruitment, induction, employment and exit interviews. There are many simple online surveys available.

Survey Monkey's diversity survey helps businesses better understand their employees so they can build more representation, address any employee special needs, create stronger communities and celebrate existing diversity within the workforce (Survey Monkey, 2019).
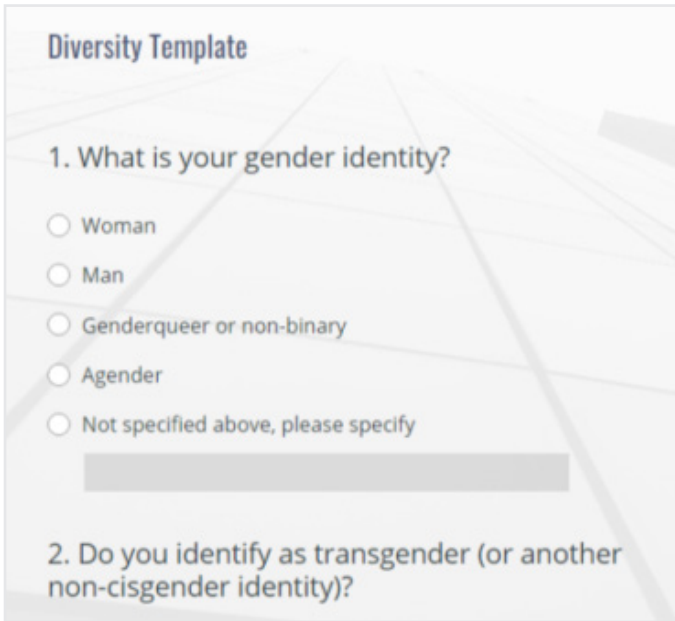

FIGURE 5: DIVERSITY SURVEY (SURVEY MONKEY, 2019)

Survey Monkey's inclusion survey "focuses on three key components of inclusion, each based on research by Stanford University experts Carol Dweck, Greg Walton, and Geoffrey Cohen" (2019).
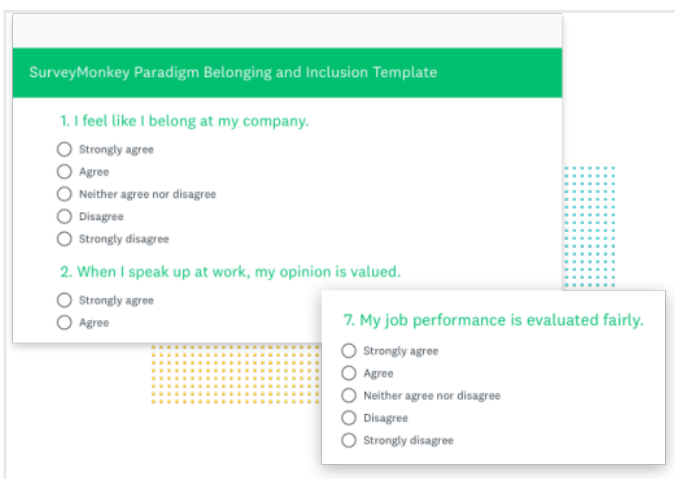
FIGURE 6: INCLUSION SURVEY (SURVEY MONKEY, 2019)

Square's inclusion survey "measures self-reported demographic information in categories beyond race and gender. Employees also rate their experience in categories including: fairness, belonging, decision-making, voice, opportunities and resources, personal importance (i.e. the level to which one cares about I&D) and taking action" (2019).
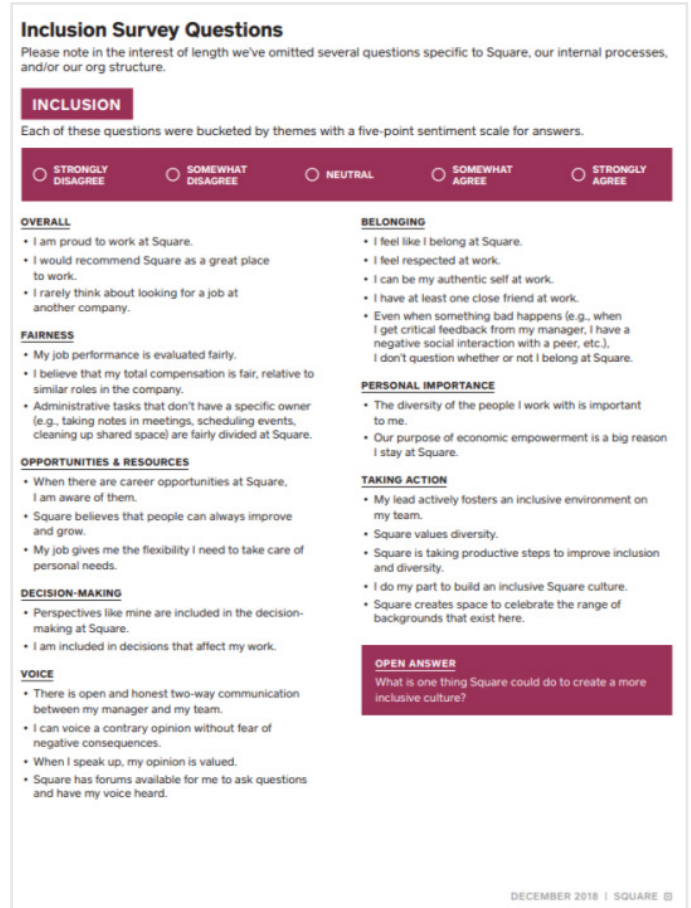
FIGURE 7: INCLUSION SURVEY (SQUARE, 2019)

Intermediate D&I assessment

D&I metrics and dashboards

D&I dashboards consolidate D&I-related metrics, providing an overview of the landscape that the organisation can see and understand quickly. These metrics can relate to recruitment, hiring, retention, promotions and leadership data. Some data examples include engagement and inclusion scores, percentage of target groups represented, flexibility participation rates and recruitment rates.

D&I benchmarking

Once your business has collected and analysed D&I-related metrics, you are ready to perform benchmarking. D&I benchmarking can reference other industries or regions, different-sized organisations or even other areas within your own organisation.

One example of a D&I benchmarking tool is the Global Diversity & Inclusion Benchmarks Model (GDIB) (O'Mara and Richter, 2017). The model consists of four groups and a total of 14 categories. Each category has five benchmark levels: inactive, reactive, proactive, progressive and best practice.

FIGURE 8: GDIB MODEL (O'MARA AND RICHTER, 2017)

Other sources of D&I benchmarking include:

- Australian Workplace Equality Index – a benchmark for LGBTIQA workplace inclusion that drives best practice in Australia and provides a comparative benchmark for Australian employers across all sectors
- The Refinitiv Global Diversity and Inclusion Index, which ranks more than 7,000 publicly listed international companies and compares publicly available statistics, allowing businesses to identify the most diverse and inclusive organisations participating in the index.

Advanced D&I assessment

Advanced D&I analytics

At the more advanced level, your organisation can combine both internal and external data to provide a greater understanding of your D&I progress. Examples of external data your organisation can use to inform strategy development, goals, assessment and progress include:

- The Global Gender Gap Report, which benchmarks 149 countries on their progress towards gender parity. It examines economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment.
- The Global Human Development Indicators, which include the Human Development Index, Inequality-Adjusted Human Development Index, the Gender Development Index, the Gender Inequality Index and the Multidimensional Poverty Index.

Predictive D&I analytics

At the most advanced level, PwC suggests "companies should strive to develop real-time, predictive analytics and artificial intelligence that can guide their decision making" (PwC, 2018).

> *"Predictive analytics is a category of data analytics aimed at making predictions about future outcomes based on historical data and analytics techniques such as statistical modelling and machine learning." (CIO Australia, 2019)*

Predictive analytics recognises trends and makes forecasts using a wide range of methods and technologies, including statistical modelling, machine learning, big data, data mining and assorted mathematical processes.

The D&I maturity model

A maturity model is a valuable tool for assessing workplace D&I, equipping your business to identify its overall D&I, including its awareness of, understanding of and commitment to D&I. The model provides a framework for measuring your current state, progress and goals for building a more diverse and inclusive workforce.

PwC's Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmarking Survey found that only 10% of technology organisations reach the highest level of D&I maturity, while 14% remain on the most basic level.

Deloitte presents a four-level D&I maturity model. The first level represents basic legislative compliance, typically dictated by external pressures where action is seen as simply fixing a problem. The second recognises the value of diversity but takes minimal action to foster it. Level three sees a significant shift in culture, with leaders opting in and D&I becoming a business priority. The final level is the most mature: D&I becomes embedded and integrated throughout the entire organisation. (PwC Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmarking Survey, 2019)

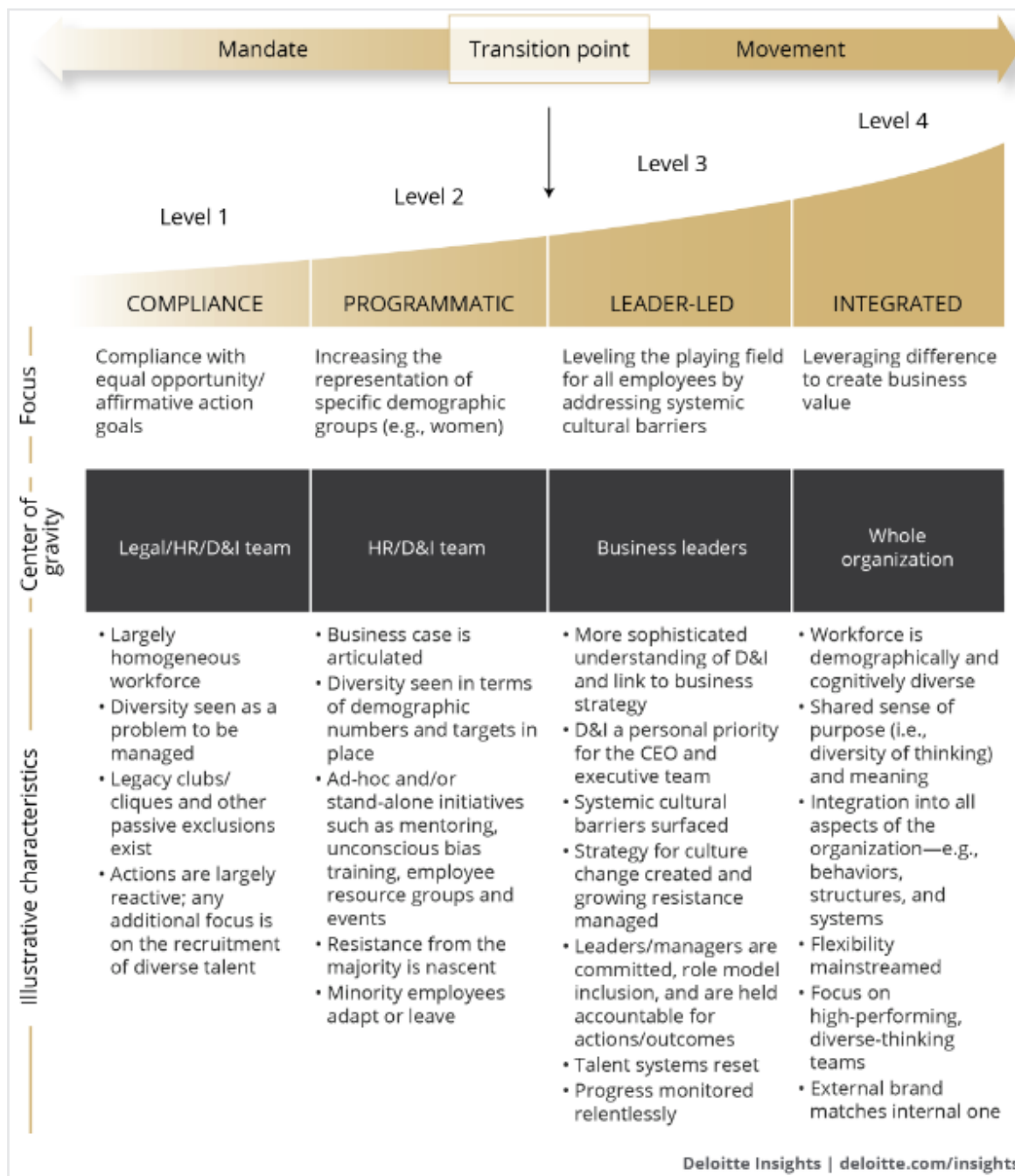|	Mandate	Transition point	Movement	
	Level 1	**Level 2**	**Level 3**	**Level 4**
	COMPLIANCE	PROGRAMMATIC	LEADER-LED	INTEGRATED
Focus	Compliance with equal opportunity/ affirmative action goals	Increasing the representation of specific demographic groups (e.g., women)	Leveling the playing field for all employees by addressing systemic cultural barriers	Leveraging difference to create business value
Center of gravity	Legal/HR/D&I team	HR/D&I team	Business leaders	Whole organization
Illustrative characteristics	• Largely homogeneous workforce • Diversity seen as a problem to be managed • Legacy clubs/ cliques and other passive exclusions exist • Actions are largely reactive; any additional focus is on the recruitment of diverse talent	• Business case is articulated • Diversity seen in terms of demographic numbers and targets in place • Ad-hoc and/or stand-alone initiatives such as mentoring, unconscious bias training, employee resource groups and events • Resistance from the majority is nascent • Minority employees adapt or leave	• More sophisticated understanding of D&I and link to business strategy • D&I a personal priority for the CEO and executive team • Systemic cultural barriers surfaced • Strategy for culture change created and growing resistance managed • Leaders/managers are committed, role model inclusion, and are held accountable for actions/outcomes • Talent systems reset • Progress monitored relentlessly	• Workforce is demographically and cognitively diverse • Shared sense of purpose (i.e., diversity of thinking) and meaning • Integration into all aspects of the organization—e.g., behaviors, structures, and systems • Flexibility mainstreamed • Focus on high-performing, diverse-thinking teams • External brand matches internal one

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FIGURE 9: THE DELOITTE D&I MATURITY MODEL (DELOITTE, 2018)

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D&I INITIATIVES AND IDEAS

Every business is unique and has its own visions and goals. This should also be true of D&I efforts. Like most commercial operations, a one-size-fits-all approach simply doesn't work.

First and foremost, building D&I into a workplace should involve considering "internal and external needs of the organisation in the area of diversity and responding with a strategically aligned approach" (Washington Office of Financial Management, 2019). Your business should purposefully select initiatives and ideas, and adapt them to suit the distinct requirements of your organisation.

There are countless programs, activities and ideas available to help your business build D&I. Some are basic ideas and actions, others involve more complex programs. It's important to identify what approach will work best for your business.

Accountability

Accountability is one of the biggest drivers of success in D&I programs. In fact, when specific employees are held accountable for D&I within an organisation, it can result in better outcomes from other types of activities. A study of 708 private sector establishments from 1971 to 2002 found that "organisations that establish responsibility see better effects from diversity training and evaluations, networking and mentoring" (Kalev, Dobbin & Kelly, 2006).

The study concluded that accountability is one of the most effective tools for building organisational diversity.

> *"Structures that embed accountability, authority, and expertise (affirmative action plans, diversity committees and taskforces, diversity managers and departments) are the most effective means of increasing the proportions of white women, black women, and black men in private sector management."*

D&I cultural embeddedness

D&I initiatives should not be stand-alone programs that exist purely to fulfil a business requirement. To be successful, D&I must be completely embedded throughout the culture of your organisation. It should be stated as a core value that supports and promotes organisational success.

D&I periodic review program

As with any business program, your organisation should periodically review elements of D&I to determine progress and goal attainment. Ongoing assessment will identify progress made and provide insights on how and where you may need to revise your D&I efforts.

D&I policy

D&I policies go beyond mandatory compliance responsibilities and can be as simple or complex as appropriate for your business. These policies should demonstrate a commitment to ensuring a diverse and inclusive workplace for all employees, and should discuss why the commitment is important to the workplace. D&I policies can also be tailored for specific industries and might include relevant standards and legislation.

These policies can cover topics including objectives, measurement, training and development, leadership, legislation, additional relevant policies and formal complaints processes. The Commonwealth Bank of Australia's D&I policy, which applies to the Group, directors, employees and contractors, is a good example of a simple and succinct policy. It includes a purpose and scope; policy statement, requirements, governance and accountabilities; compliance statement; breach of policy processes; definitions; and a relevant documents section (Commonwealth Bank, 2019).

Ambassador programs

Ambassador programs are another way to build organisational D&I. Ambassadors typically communicate the details of the D&I program within an organisation. Their role involves supporting, educating, promoting and taking part in related activities, including programs that tap into the ambassador's own understanding, knowledge and experience.

Ambassadors can be the go-to person and chief communicator as D&I is being implemented across your organisation. They can encourage discussion and present and distribute relevant D&I information. As a link between employees and program leaders, ambassadors often play a significant role in implementing D&I programs.

Mentorship

Mentors assist others by sharing their own knowledge, skills and experiences – including how they've successfully navigated the work environment. They help to support talent, promote potential and grow excellence in those they mentor. Mentoring can be internal or external, and has been shown to increase retention and the promotion of diversity within organisations.

> *"Large companies implement a variety of diversity initiatives, including voluntary training, targeted recruitment, cross-training as well as mentorship. Mentorship programs can boost the representation of Black, Hispanic and Asian American women,*

and Hispanic and Asian-American men at manager levels by 9% to 24%, as compared to the other initiatives which have lower results ranging from −2% to 18%." (Conboy & Kelly, 2016)

Reverse mentoring

Reverse mentoring turns the traditional mentoring model upside-down and pairs leadership, in particular, with underrepresented groups to develop awareness, understanding, knowledge and experience. This can promote empathy, reduce unconscious bias, increase inclusivity, seed a diverse talent pipeline, and improve employee satisfaction and retention rates.

Recruitment

Building D&I into the recruitment process is a fundamental way to help your organisation achieve its goals. An inclusive recruitment process invites prospects from diverse backgrounds to apply and fosters a sense of belonging within the organisation. It also signals to diverse candidates that they will have every opportunity to succeed if and when they become an employee.

Your organisation could build D&I into the recruitment process by:

- Seeking out talent pipelines that provide diverse employees, for example, sourcing alternative pipelines if the traditional pipeline is not providing a diverse range of candidates
- Carrying out blind screening when reviewing candidate CVs, which reduces unconscious bias
- Structuring job interviews so all applicants are asked the same questions, also reducing bias
- Using neutral and inclusive language in job descriptions
- Demonstrating a commitment to D&I during recruitment, such as in the role description and online careers page
- Advertising online or on other platforms that are specifically targeted at diverse groups
- Inviting existing diverse employees to participate in the recruitment process, particularly in interviews, to provide relevant insights and experience.

Induction

Once a candidate has been recruited, their induction should include D&I awareness training. This demonstrates your organisation's commitment to a diverse and inclusive workforce, and promotes understanding among everyone in the business. It also shows that D&I is a priority of the workplace and demonstrates the type of environment new employees can expect to experience.

Training and development

D&I training is fundamental to an inclusive workplace, and all employees should receive awareness training and education. Training sessions should not follow a one-size-fits-all annual approach; you should conduct a needs analysis to identify areas where and when training is required.

D&I professionals, general educators and organisational leaders can conduct D&I training. This training can be undertaken via self-learning, online platforms, experiential learning, social media or case studies. Training can create general awareness and reinforce the importance of D&I, focusing on topics such as eliminating unconscious bias, complying with regulations, embracing differences and managing diverse populations. Training should also demonstrate the correct way to communicate and discuss D&I within the workplace.

Communication

Effective communication is a key component of building D&I into your business. From reinforcing and supporting organisational D&I to informing external stakeholders, there are several actions your organisation can take to ensure you communicate effectively.

- Provide D&I information online and within the intranet, ensuring it is frequently revised and updated to align with organisational changes.
- Involve all departments in communications. For example, make sure marketing and public relations departments support and promote your organisation's D&I principles.
- Train all employees involved in communications should in D&I and how to incorporate the principles into all business communications.
- Periodically and purposefully send D&I information to all employees.
- Provide internal and external communications in various formats and languages so information is accessible to all.
- Use visual communications that demonstrate and reflect the organisation's commitment to D&I principles.
- Have employees, leaders and executives contribute D&I articles, social media posts, blog posts and news articles.
- Develop and distribute workplace communications that illustrate how employees can help to achieve a diverse and inclusive workplace
- Establish D&I programs that recognisable within the organisation as well as externally, promoting an improved organisational reputation.

- Give all employees equal opportunity to prepare and share their ideas, opinions and concerns during meetings and discussions.

Inclusive events

Recognising and celebrating days or events of cultural significance promotes awareness and a sense of belonging within the workplace. Participating in charity functions also increases awareness and understanding, and opens up dialogue across the organisation. Attendance at conferences relating to D&I matters also leads to increased awareness, knowledge and understanding.

Sponsorship

Choosing to sponsor an event or another organisation is a practical and positive way to promote the importance of D&I in the workplace. Not only does it demonstrate your organisation's commitment to D&I, but the knowledge and awareness gained through external events can further enrich a business.

Workplace flexibility and wellbeing

Workplace flexibility is directly linked to inclusiveness as it provides employment opportunities to those who cannot work within traditional models. Flexible work arrangements commonly include part-time employment, job sharing or working remotely. This flexibility shows employees they are valued, and improves retention rates, employee satisfaction and job commitment.

Incentives and activities focused on employee wellbeing also work to promote D&I in the workplace. These can include providing mental health first aid for mental health support; childcare and aged care arrangements for family support; accessibility for disability support; and gym memberships for physical health and fitness support.

Unconscious bias

Unconscious bias is an existing barrier to diverse and inclusive workplaces. These biases are usually developed and held without an individual being aware of it; they are subjective, reinforced by lived experiences and ultimately drive behavioural habits. Testing and training can help identify and eliminate these biases within the workplace.

Working differences

A diverse workplace brings together employees who work differently from one another. This includes individual differences in communication styles, group interactions and how information is processed. Understanding,

valuing and leveraging unique working styles can create stronger teams and workplaces. Pre-employment testing can help to better inform employment placement.

Employee resource groups

Employee resource groups (ERGs), also known as affinity groups, consist of employees who share D&I experiences, campaign for change and provide insights to inform organisational policies surrounding D&I.

PwC's Global Diversity and Inclusion Survey found that 78% of technology companies have affinity groups (PwC, 2019). Of these, 44% used affinity groups to connect people and foster new networks; 43% used them to execute programs; 36% used them to provide support and mentorship; and 23% used them to drive strategic priorities.

Strategies for increasing the effectiveness of these groups include promoting and communicating the work they do; providing them with the necessary resources; and empowering them to organise activities and make decisions.

Executive sponsors in ERGs

Executive sponsors can mentor and advocate for ERGs. Although they do not necessarily have to reflect the identity of the ERG, sponsors act as supporters and promotors of the group's initiatives. Executive sponsors are typically highly accomplished and prominent leaders within the organisation.

Leadership

Organisational leaders must be committed for their workplace to become diverse and inclusive. All leaders must champion D&I and take responsibility for implementing relevant programs and initiatives. Deloitte found that when leadership remains quiet on matters of D&I, employees and prospective employees perceived that workplace to be unwelcoming.

> *"The behaviours of leaders (be they senior executives or managers) can drive up to 70 percentage points of difference between the proportion of employees who feel highly included and the proportion of those who do not. This effect is even stronger for minority group members."* (Deloitte, 2018)

Your workplace's D&I leader should ideally be a senior and prominent member of the leadership team. You can also appoint diversity champions to represent employee opinions, ideas and concerns. The Board should also be diverse and should hold the leadership team accountable for building and achieving the organisation's D&I

objectives. In smaller businesses, it might be appropriate to appoint a designated employee to take on the D&I leadership role.

D&I linked to performance bonuses

The leadership team may be rewarded when your organisation achieves its D&I outcomes, just as they do when the business reaches other targets. Meeting pre-set D&I indicators and goals may result in compensation in the form of a pay increase, bonus or promotion.

Partnerships and external-facing initiatives

Partnerships are another way to build D&I within the business, especially partnerships with not-for-profit and community organisations that are focused on specific areas of D&I. You should frame these initiatives as a core business function that will serve to further embed D&I within the workplace culture.

Participating in community initiatives can also be incredibly rewarding. For example, your business might donate employee time to community programs where non-employee participate. You might also provide scholarships or internships for underrepresented community groups, to open up a more diverse talent pipeline.

Diversity pledges

By taking a diversity pledge, your businesses and its leaders visibly display a commitment and desire to achieve a diverse and inclusive workplace. The following are some examples of diversity pledges your business could commit to:

CEO ACT!ON FOR DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

"The CEO Action for Diversity & Inclusion aims to rally the business community to advance diversity and inclusion within the workplace by working collectively across organisations and sectors. It outlines a specific set of actions the undersigned companies will take to cultivate a trusting environment where all ideas are welcomed, and employees feel comfortable and empowered to discuss diversity and inclusion." (PwC, CEO Action for Diversity & Inclusion, 2019)

parity.org

The parity.org ParityPledge calls for businesses to "commit to simply interview at least one qualified woman for every open role, VP and higher – including the C-Suite and the Board." (Parity.org, 2019)

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Toolkits

Age

Age Management Toolkit
https://snef.org.sg/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/AgeManagementToolkit.pdf

Carers

Supporting Carers in the Workplace: A toolkit
https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/UnpaidCaringToolkit_2013.pdf

Diversity strategy

Locking in Your Leadership: Toolkit for Developing a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

https://ccdi.ca/media/1075/20140910-ccdi-report-di-strategy-toolkit.pdf

Disability

Disability Employment Toolkit
http://www.disability.wa.gov.au/business-and-government1/business-and-government/employing-people-with-disability----disability-services-commission-disability-wa/disability-employment-toolkit/

Diversity

TasCOSS Workplace Diversity Toolkit
http://www.ttmhn.org.au/_literature_6051/TasCOSS_Workplace_Diversity_Toolkit

Domestic and family violence

Playing our part: Workplace Responses to Domestic and Family Violence – 16 days of activism toolkit
https://malechampionsofchange.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Playing-Our-Part-Activism-Toolkit-November-2018.pdf

Gender

Women in male-dominated industries: A toolkit of strategies
https://www.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/document/publication/WIMDI_Toolkit_2013.pdf

Parenting

Supporting Working Parents: A Toolkit for Employers
https://supportingworkingparents.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/2015_Supporting-Working-Parents-Employer-Toolkit.pdf

Metrics

How High-Performance Organizations Measure D&I Program Efforts
https://www.nationalacademyhr.org/sites/default/files/Publications%20/D_I_Program_Metrics_Toolkit_i4cp.pdf

Guides

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Targeted recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-social-justice/publications/targeted-recruitment

Age

Age Discrimination – exposing the hidden barrier for mature age workers (2010)
https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/age-discrimination/publications/age-discrimination-exposing-hidden-barrier-mature-age

Employing Older Workers Research Report
https://www.ahri.com.au/media/1198/ahri_ahrc_employingolderworkers_report.pdf

Disability

Willing to Work: Good Practice Examples for Employers (2016)
https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/disability-rights/publications/willing-work-good-practice-examples-employers-2016

Inclusion

Leading Practice Principles for Inclusion
https://www.dca.org.au/topics/inclusion/leading-practice-principles-inclusion

Building Inclusion: An evidence-based model of inclusive leadership
https://www.dca.org.au/topics/inclusion/inclusive-leadership

Gender

Accelerating the advancement of women in leadership: Listening, Learning, Leading
https://malechampionsofchange.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/30.-2013-MCC-Report.pdf

LGBTIQA

LGBTIQ Inclusive Language Guide
https://www.vic.gov.au/inclusive-language-guide

Mental health

2010 Workers with Mental Illness: A Practical Guide for Managers
https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/disability-rights/publications/2010-workers-mental-illness-practical-guide-managers

Religion

Managing Religious Diversity in The Workplace: A Good Practice Guide
http://www.diversite-europe.eu/sites/default/files/equalatwork_2016_lr.pdf

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09 FURTHER ASSISTANCE, INCLUDING GRANTS

Your organisation may be eligible to receive further assistance to help you build a diverse and inclusive workplace. This assistance can include additional information, grants and support programs.

Organisation	Assistance	URL
Diversity Council Australia	Workshops focused on key D&I topics, which can be delivered in-house.	https://www.dca.org.au/
Diversity Australia	A range of services, from a one-off training program to the complete design and implementation of a diversity strategy.	https://www.diversityaustralia.com.au/
Linkwest	A wide variety of development activities to help build the capacity of your organisation, including: • Developing strategic, business, marketing and funding diversity plans • Undertaking feasibility studies, such as for changing the strategic direction of your organisation or exploring accommodation options • Developing operating policies, procedures and training materials • Carrying out a staff training needs assessment • Delivering professional development, including training for volunteers and Board members • Developing quality assurance strategies.	https://www.linkwest.asn.au/products/grant-opportunities/grant-opportunities
Australian Government	Indigenous Cadetship Support, linking Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with employers who want to offer work placements and ongoing employment. The program provides payments to employers so they can support cadets with a living and studying allowance. A wage subsidy is available to employers when they employ an eligible Indigenous jobseeker who is receiving employment services.	https://www.business.gov.au/people/hiring/equal-opportunity-and-diversity/employing-indigenous-australians
Queensland Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors	Sponsorship for events, activities or other initiatives that benefit the Queensland community.	https://www.qld.gov.au/community/community-organisations-volunteering/funding-grants

10 GET STARTED NOW

Building and developing D&I in your business can seem overwhelming, whether you're starting or furthering your journey along the maturity scale.

If you're reading this publication, it's likely that you and your business already realise the value of a diverse and inclusive workplace. While starting the journey might seem difficult, it doesn't have to be.

Your business can start or progress along its D&I journey with minimal investment.

After reading this guide, you'll hopefully realise that building or further developing D&I in your organisation can involve minimal and time, using your existing workplace resources.

Your business can start small first.

If your business is already on the D&I maturity scale, there are many small actions, ideas and initiatives you can easily adopt. The best strategy is to build and mature your D&I approach slowly and methodically, in a way that is right for your business.

Your business can start easy and then progress.

There are many easy ways to build and mature D&I in your business. You don't have to start with a ground-breaking initiative and your measurements can begin with what's already available, and then mature over time.

Your business can adapt and change its D&I program at any time.

Building D&I is not about having a fixed plan in place. Like many business operations, you can adapt your D&I program over time to suit your changing business needs and the surrounding environment.

There are many benefits to a diverse and inclusive workforce – so what are you waiting for?

Start taking some of the easy-to-implement steps and ideas mentioned in this guide, and adapt them to your own unique circumstances. You can begin building your diverse and inclusive business today!

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D&I checklist

We have developed this simple checklist based on the ideas and initiatives discussed throughout this guide. You can use it to help plan, implement, measure and improve procedures and processes for building D&I within your organisation.

| D&I elements	D&I considerations	✔
Stated value or priority area	• Does your organisation see D&I as a stated value or priority area? • Does the leadership team understand the value of D&I to the organisation? • Is the leadership team committed to building D&I? • Are employees open to building D&I?	
Strategy	• Are your D&I objectives aligned with the organisation's goals? • Is D&I aligned with the company values? • Has the D&I strategy been developed according to the organisation's needs and requirements? • Has your organisation identified D&I key performance indicators?	
Objectives	• Does the D&I program have stated goals, such as legal, reputation, talent and business outcomes?	
Accountability	• Does your organisation have a D&I program leader? • Does your organisation have diversity champions? • Are the D&I program outcomes measurable? • Are the D&I program outcomes included in performance evaluations? • Is the D&I program linked to any compensation?	
Communication	• Has your organisation set up formal channels to communicate its D&I goals and related information, internally and externally?	
Dimensions	• Has your organisation decided what diversity dimensions are the primary focus areas of its D&I program?	
Initiatives	• Has your organisation set out the D&I initiatives or programs to be rolled out? • Has your organisation decided on the main focus areas for the D&I program, such as recruitment, talent pipeline and candidate pool, development opportunities and fairness? • What actions, activities and steps does your organisation plan to take? • What are the anticipated outcomes?	
Training	• Has your organisation arranged D&I training and education, including compliance, unconscious bias, diversity management and inclusive behaviour training? • Is training available for leaders and other employees?	
Data, assessment and measurement	• Have you worked out what D&I data will be collected, including demographics, discrepancies in performance, compensation and promotion data? • Has your organisation decided how to measure D&I? • Has your organisation worked out its current D&I maturity level and how it plans to advance and mature? • Does your organisation plan to periodically measure and review its D&I progress? • Has your organisation worked out how it can continually improve its D&I efforts?	

Assessment

Online tool: The Workplace Cultural Diversity Tool

The Workplace Cultural Diversity Tool is an online, do-it-yourself tool that helps businesses assess their cultural diversity against 30 measures of competence.

It also offers practical steps for those starting out, managing cultural diversity and wanting to advance their efforts.

Self-assessment: Global Diversity & Inclusion Benchmarks (GDIB)
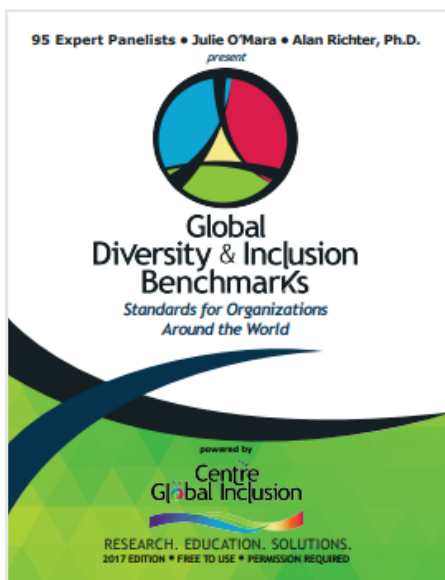
These standards help organisations build and implement D&I best practice, by assessing their current state of D&I and comparing against each benchmark.

The standards provide an overview of organisational progress, fostering a deeper understanding of D&I practice and helping organisations develop strategies for future progress.

Assessment software: LEAD Network D&I Maturity Self-Assessment Tool
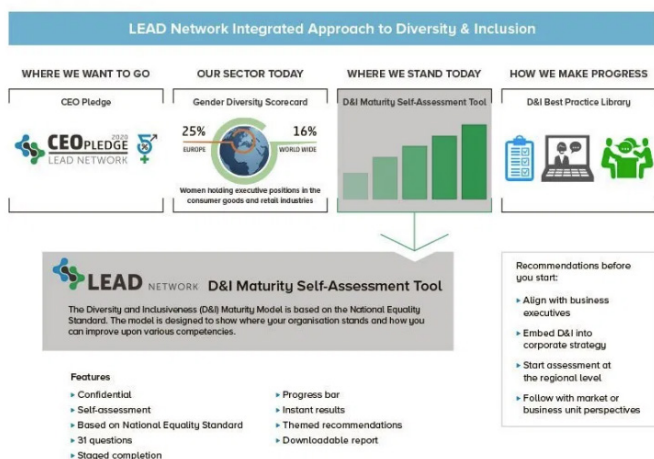
This software is available to LEAD Network Partners. It is designed to help businesses understand their D&I journey and the opportunities for progress that are available.

The system uses 31 questions to instantly calculate a company's position on a five-point maturity scale. A report of strengths, weaknesses and recommendations for improvement is also provided.

Definitions

The following definitions listed are relevant to the topic of diversity & inclusion.

Accessibility

When physical and digital environments are planned and developed in such a way that they deliver positive experiences for all users equally.

Affinity bias

The predisposition to connect more with individuals and groups who appear to be like us, for example those who are similar in appearance.

Affinity groups

A group of people who share the same diversity identity such as gender, race or sexual orientation. Also referred to as employee resource groups (ERGs).

Ageism

When an individual holds a set of value and beliefs that stereotypes and discriminates against people based on their age.

Bias

When attitudes towards people, identities and groups are based on unfounded or incorrect judgement and ideas.

Bicultural

When a person identifies as a combination of two cultures.

Bisexual

When a person is attracted to more than one gender.

Business case

The rationale for, and the benefits derived from, D&I.

Diversity

The variety of experiences, backgrounds, attitudes, values, beliefs and lifestyle preferences with respect to gender, race, ethnicity, age, mental and physical abilities and characteristics, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic characteristics and thinking.

Diversity champion

An advocate for diversity and inclusion in the workplace and society.

Cognitive diversity

Differences in the way people view things and process information.

Culture

Shared values, beliefs and behaviours of a group that are communicated, learned and transmitted.

D&I technology

Enterprise software that provides insights or alters processes or practices, at the individual or organisational level, supporting an organisation's efforts to become more diverse and inclusive.

Disability

A physical or mental state that restricts an individual's movements, senses, activities or emotions.

Discrimination

Behaviour or action against an individual or group based on their shared characteristics.

Diversity dimensions

The different elements that make up a person's identity, such as gender, ethnicity, race, age, sexual orientation, culture, religion, thinking style and personality type.

Diversity network

A group of employees with the same diversity identity who support, promote, inform and change D&I within their workplace. Also called an employee resource group (ERG) or affinity group.

Equal opportunity

The elimination of barriers to inclusion and access in the workplace or society.

Equity

Addressing barriers to ensure individuals or groups receive fair outcomes.

Gender and sexual diversity

All diversities of sex characteristics, sexual orientations and gender identities.

Gender expression

How an individual chooses to express their gender, framed within societal expectations and constructions.

Gender identity

An individual's perception of their gender that may not reflect their birth sex.

Groupthink

When people in a homogeneous group strive for consensus and stifle high-quality thought processes or decision making.

Inclusion

When individuals share a sense of belonging in a team, company or society regardless of their differing identities, barriers are removed and all people have equal access to opportunities.

Inclusive leader

A model of leadership in which all employees are encouraged to share differing perspectives and opinions, contribute openly and safely to inform business strategy.

Intersectionality

The overlapping and interdependency of social identities and the multiple ways discrimination or disadvantage is experienced, recognising that no individual has a singular identity.

Intersex

A person who may have the biological attributes of both sexes or whose biological characteristics do not fit within traditional societal assumptions about what it means to be male or female.

LGBTIQA

An acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, and asexual or allied.

Neurodiversity

Refers to the range of differences in individual brain function and behavioural traits, regarded as part of normal variation in the human population (particularly in the context of autistic spectrum disorders).

Stereotype

Representations of how a particular group is perceived based on how similar or different they are to other groups.

Tokenism

When an individual from an underrepresented group is included in activities without having equal opportunities, authority or autonomy that the other group members have.

Unconscious bias

Assumptions made about other individuals or groups without the person making that assumption even realising that it is happening. Also known as implicit bias.

Underrepresented group

A group that makes up a smaller percentage in the workforce than they do in the general population.

Workplace inclusion

A work environment where all employees belong, are supported, contribute and have equal access to opportunities.

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