

# Diversity, Equity and Inclusion: the Employer Toolkit 2024



## **About ECO Canada**

Environmental Careers Organization (ECO Canada) is a not-for-profit corporation established in 1992 as part of Canada's Sector Council Initiative. ECO Canada is focused on identifying, communicating, and meeting the needs of environmental practitioners, employers, educators, and students. Its vision is to build the world's leading environmental workforce. ECO Canada has supported Canada's environmental workforce by establishing professional development resources, training programs and educational partnerships, conducting in-depth labour market research and providing the largest industry-specific job board. ECO Canada's programs and services are developed through strong national partnerships, consultative strategic planning, and ongoing labour market research. Its labour market research provides valuable insights into environmental career trends, which can be used by governments, educators, youth, and industry partners to make decisions and formulate strategies. To learn more, please visit [www.eco.ca](http://www.eco.ca).

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# I. THE IMPORTANCE OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION (DEI) IN THE WORKPLACE

Organizations in today's global business network understand that fostering diverse employee backgrounds – and welcoming these backgrounds into the workplace – are essential steps to economic growth. Yet the concept of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is not new.

The history of DEI is rooted in the broader social and civil rights movements that have sought to address systemic inequalities and discrimination based on race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and other important factors. DEI encompasses efforts to create more inclusive and equitable spaces in various domains, including workplaces, education, and society. DEI is not just a “buzzword”. ECO Canada has put together this DEI toolkit that encompasses all of ECO Canada's DEI material, training courses, and resources that are available to our employers.

The importance of DEI in the workplace and creating lasting and meaningful changes to policies requires sustained effort and a willingness to adapt. It's important to recognize that achieving justice in DEI is a long-term journey that requires dedication, resources, and the engagement of all members of your organization.

## A. Did You Know?

Teams with diverse backgrounds are more well-rounded and productive:<sup>1</sup>

- Diversity has been shown to be a better determinant of sales revenue than the company size, age, number of employees, and number of customers.
- Expect 15 times more sales revenue from companies who report higher levels of workplace diversity.
- Companies who employ a more diverse workforce reported over 12.5% more customers than those with a less diverse workforce.
- Sales revenue increased by 9% for every percentage increase in the rate of diversity compared to the rate of the relevant population.

# II. IMPORTANT DEI DEFINITIONS

## A. What does Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion mean?

The framework of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion may be referred to by different names and acronyms in different organizations and contexts. DEI may also be known as EDI (Equity, Diversity, Inclusion), DI (Diversity, Inclusion), DEIB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging), or DEIJ (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice).

No matter the name or acronym, the purpose of DEI in the workplace remains consistent in that it is to encourage representation and participation of people from a variety of backgrounds particularly referring

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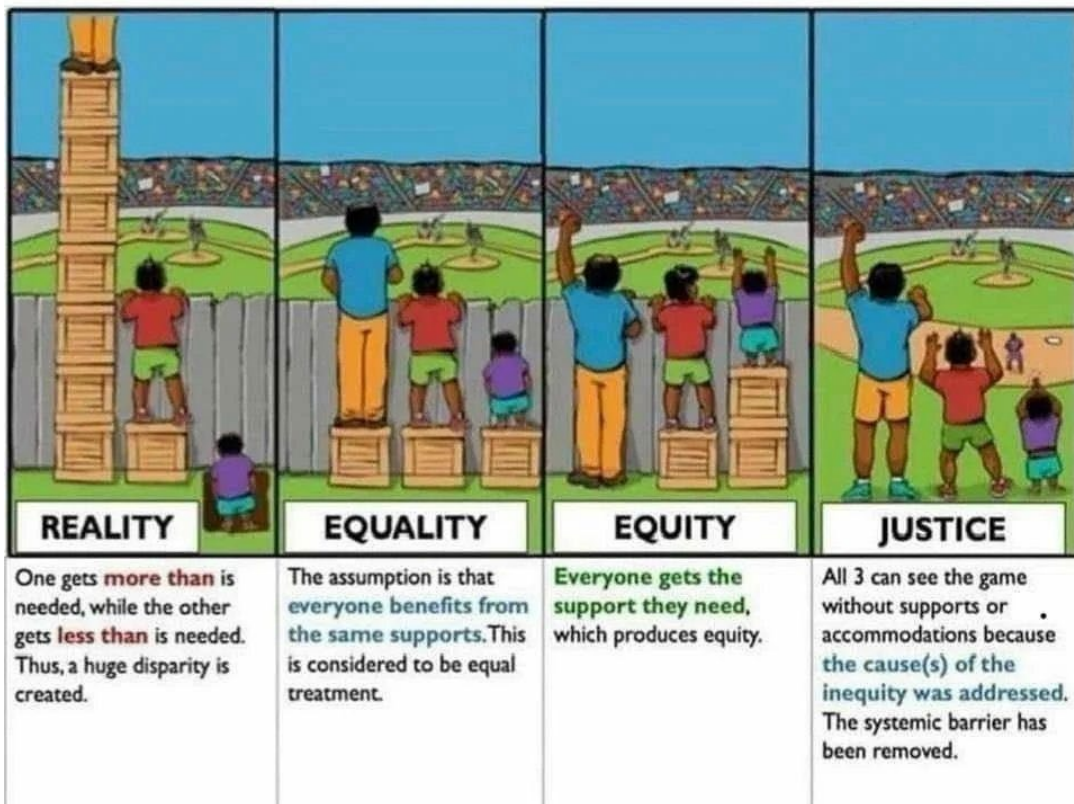
<sup>1</sup> Indigenous Recruitment Guide. ECO Canada

to people of different races, genders, sexual orientations, disabilities, relations and more – at all levels in an organization including at the leadership level.

- **Diversity** – Diversity is about the individual. It is about the variety of unique dimensions, qualities, and characteristics individuals possess, and the mix that occurs in any group of people. Race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, economic status, physical abilities, life experiences, and other perspectives can make up individual diversity. Diversity is a fact, and inclusion is a choice.
- **Equity** – Equity recognizes that each person has **different circumstances** and allocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome, where everyone is treated according to their diverse needs in a way that enables all people to participate, perform, and engage to the same extent.
- **Inclusion:** Inclusion is creating a culture that embraces, respects, accepts, and values diversity. It is a mindful and equitable effort to meet individual needs, so everyone feels valued, respected, and able to contribute to their fullest potential. Where diversity occurs naturally, creating the mix in the organization, inclusion is the choice that helps the mix work well together.

Additional DEI definitions can be found in [Appendix A](#).

## B. What is the difference between Equality and Equity?



### III. INDIGENOUS REPRESENTATION IN YOUR WORKFORCE

With over 1.8 million people in Canada identifying as Indigenous (2021 Census of Population), it is essential to recognize the heritage, diversity, and rights of Indigenous Nations. The histories, traditions, and beliefs of Indigenous communities are unique, and all cultures are integral to Canada.

“**Indigenous peoples**” is a collective name for the original peoples of North America and their descendants. Often, “Aboriginal peoples” is also used. The Canadian constitution recognizes three groups of Aboriginal people: Indians (commonly referred to as First Nations), Métis, and Inuit. These are three distinct peoples with unique histories, languages, cultural practices, and spiritual beliefs.

Indigenous job seekers vary in their values, wants, and experiences. Although they come from a unique cultural mix (urban, rural, assimilated, and traditional), they seek employers who offer the following working conditions:

- An accepting, respectful, and nonjudgmental work environment
- Equality of treatment
- Pay equity
- Cultural diversity in the workplace
- Stability and longevity
- Potential for increased responsibility
- Competitive salary and benefits
- Opportunities for professional growth and development

#### A. Develop an Indigenous Strategy

Organizations are recognizing their corporate social responsibility in creating meaningful partnerships with Indigenous communities and groups. Not only is it critical in the journey towards reconciliation, but it also has the potential to be incredibly beneficial for the organization and the Indigenous communities when the relationship is established through mutual trust and respect. Developing an Indigenous strategy for your organization requires careful consideration of several key factors to ensure it is respectful, effective, and meaningful. Organizations should consider a holistic approach when creating an Indigenous strategy and recognize that it is a long-term commitment that requires ongoing engagement, support, and adjustment. The following are recommendations that organizations should consider in the development of an Indigenous strategy.

- **Consultation and Engagement:** Learn about Indigenous people and their communities within the regions or provinces in which your organization operates. Some organizations may have a legal duty to consult Indigenous communities and possibly accommodate when a decision will impact asserted or established Aboriginal rights<sup>2</sup>. This can be facilitated through consultation and engagement. Engagement involves building relationships with the intention of establishing trust and understanding and consultation is the willingness to listen and discuss their concerns and to be prepared to accommodate their concerns, it is more than an exchange of information. Once your organization has a better understanding of their needs, perspectives, and priorities, your

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<sup>2</sup> The duty to consult, and in some cases accommodate, was born out of Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982 and made legally required through numerous Supreme Court of Canada challenges. While a Crown responsibility, the duty can be delegated to other parties in some situation. <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1331832510888/1609421255810>

leaders must reflect on what they have learned and consider how your organization can accommodate and what actions your organization will take to promote Indigenous rights, cultures, and perspectives, and to contribute to reconciliation and meaningful relationships. This will form the foundation of your Indigenous strategy and vision. It is important to remember that not all Indigenous consultants or staff will want to be the educator in this space, so be respectful and follow their protocols.

- **Create an organizational commitment:** Utilize the insights gained from consultations and engagements to develop a business case and vision statement, ensuring a clear understanding of the significance of developing an Indigenous strategy for your organization. It is crucial for leaders within your organization to champion the message across all levels and to take responsibility for fostering and nurturing meaningful relationships with Indigenous community leaders.
- **Build collaborative relations:** Pursue collaborative partnerships with communities and work together to improve employment strategies. Build ongoing trust with the community to ensure that the strategy is relevant and effective.
- **Cultural sensitivity:** Ensure the strategy and policies are culturally sensitive and respect Indigenous cultures, traditions, and languages. Ensure Indigenous perspectives are accurately represented.
- **Create a learning environment:** Build awareness, knowledge and understanding through cross-cultural or Indigenous awareness training. Provide education and training for employees to increase awareness and understanding of Indigenous cultures, histories, and current issues.
- **Build commitment through internal capacity and employee engagement:** Assign resources to implement Indigenous initiatives. Integrate Indigenous employment and initiatives into the business planning processes.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** Be transparent about the organization's efforts to develop and implement the policy and be accountable for its commitments and actions.

## B. Finding Qualified Indigenous Candidates

- **Know your organization:** From a potential employee's perspective, perceptions around an organization's culture through informal and formal networks (i.e., their reputation) can strongly influence whether they will pursue employment opportunities with them. An organization that, through its business practices, demonstrates a set of values that aligns with those of a potential recruit considered favorably.
- **Looking internally:** Hiring from within is a way to demonstrate your organization's commitment to its staff and their professional development. Further, it provides an opportunity for staff to move laterally or to more senior positions. Use internal job postings, employee referrals, and the resume pool.
- **Looking externally:** Networking is the most effective method to recruit Indigenous environmental practitioners. Much of the Indigenous population, whether living in urban, rural, or remote locations, stays connected through what the mainstream businessperson might refer to as networking. From a mainstream perspective, networking often focuses on a specific goal, such as finding an employee for a job. From an Indigenous perspective, networking is about developing relationships.
- **Building Networks:** While this process takes more time in the initial stages, it can be invaluable in the long term, as developing relationships with these communities will add value in many areas of your business.
  - i. Become (or appoint) an Indigenous liaison skilled at developing relationships.

- ii. Research the history and contemporary context of the local Indigenous communities from which you hope to recruit candidates.
  - iii. Tap into resources already established to support employers.
  - iv. Seek advice and introductions.
  - v. Become involved in community activities to build a relationship of trust.
  - vi. Identify the mutual needs, strengths, and interests of your business and the community.
  - vii. Enter into formal partnership agreements, wherever possible.
- B. Getting Assistance:** Engage professional recruitment agencies that support Indigenous candidates and create internships & co-op programs for Indigenous environmental students to provide hands-on learning opportunities.

## IV. DEI IN THE WORKPLACE

### A. Develop a Clear DEI Strategy:

- Based on the assessment, create a comprehensive DEI strategy that outlines specific goals, actions, and timelines.
- Ensure the strategy is aligned with the organization's mission, values, and business objectives.

### B. Audit Inclusive Policies and Practices:

- Review and update policies to ensure they promote inclusivity, fairness, and equity across all aspects of the organization, including hiring, promotions, compensation, and benefits.
- Implement practices that mitigate bias and ensure fair treatment throughout the employee lifecycle.

### C. Provide Training and Education:

- Provide ongoing training to employees and leadership on unconscious bias, microaggressions, and other topics related to DEI.
- Offer educational opportunities to raise awareness and promote a culture of understanding and respect.

### D. Focus on Recruitment and Hiring:

- Implement strategies to attract a diverse pool of candidates, including revising job descriptions, using diverse recruitment channels, and leveraging networks.
- Standardize interview processes to minimize bias and ensure fair evaluations.

### E. Provide Mentorship and Sponsorship Programs:

- Establish programs that facilitate mentorship and sponsorship for employees from underrepresented backgrounds.
- Encourage senior leaders to actively support and advocate for the career growth of diverse talent.

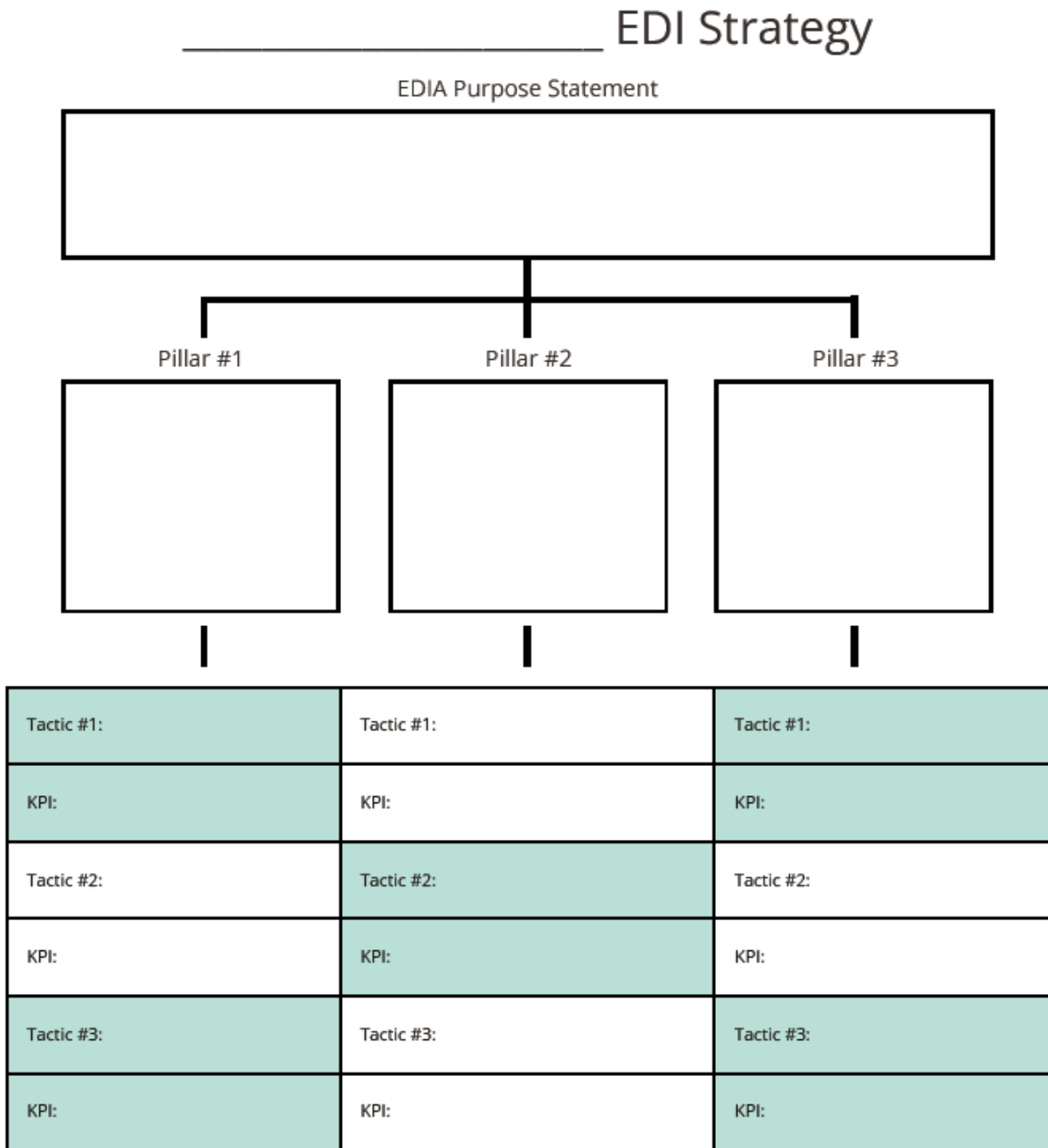
### F. Work Towards Continuous Improvement:

- DEI efforts should be ongoing and evolving to address changing needs and societal contexts.
- Continuously solicit feedback from employees, conduct pulse surveys, and adapt strategies accordingly.



## V. BUILDING YOUR DEI STRATEGY

### A. DEI Strategy Roadmap



## B. Sample DEI Strategy Roadmap

### DEI Strategy

To have a respectful and supportive workplace that enables us to attract and retain a diverse workforce that represents our clients and the community in which we are honoured to be a part of.

### DEI Purpose Statement

This strategy is a two-year plan to help us achieve our business and people goals. It provides a shared direction and commitment for the organization so we can work together to respect and value our diverse workforce and build a more inclusive workplace. It comprises of three key goals and identifies the priorities and actions we will take over the next two years. It outlines the key roles and responsibilities and how we will track progress and measure success.

#### Pillar #1

**Workplace Diversity:** recruit from a diverse, qualified group of candidates to increase diversity of thinking and perspective, ensuring representation of our clients and the community in which we are a part of.

**Tactic #1:** Advertise roles in a broad range of platforms.  
**KPI:** Increase in the representation of diverse employees based on self-identification by Q1 2025.

**Tactic #2:** Ensure a diverse range of candidates are represented at shortlist stage.  
**KPI:** Increase in the representation of diverse candidates, through self-identification, by Q1 2025

#### Pillar #2

**Workplace Inclusion:** foster a culture that encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness to enable all employees to contribute to their potential and increase retention.

**Tactic #2:** Provide inclusive leadership training for manager.  
**KPI:** All managers participate in inclusive leadership training.

**Tactic #2:** Establish employee resource/affinity/ advocacy groups.  
**KPI:** Minimum three employee resource/affinity/ advocacy groups are established by Q3 2024.

#### Pillar #3

**Sustainability & accountability:** identify and breakdown systemic barriers to full inclusion by embedding diversity and inclusion in policies and practices and equipping leaders with the ability to manage diversity and be accountable for the results.

**Tactic #3:** Review policies and practices to identify and remove systemic barriers to inclusion.  
**KPI:** All policies and practices are reviewed and updated by Q2 2025.

**Tactic #3:** Implement a DEI KPI for all employees with greater distinction for senior leadership and up.  
**KPI:** KPI is implemented into all employee performance plans by Q1 2025.

## VI. INTEGRATING DEI IN THE EMPLOYEE LIFECYCLE

Refer to ECO Canada's DEI employer resources that include guides, webinars, presentations, and checklists, or reach out to ECO Canada's Human Resources team for further information.

### A. Recruitment

Creating a DEI recruitment process is essential for building a more representative and effective workforce.

- Educate yourself and your team
- Define DEI goals
- Create a DEI team
- Inclusive language
- Diverse representations
- Expand sourcing channels
- Networking and partnerships
- Anonymize applications
- Accommodations
- Structured interviews
- Diverse interview panels
- Training for interviewers
- Fair evaluation criteria
- Holistic Assessment
- Timely communication
- Constructive feedback
- Inclusive onboarding
- Employee resource groups
- Demographic data
- Regular assessment

### B. Retention

Creating a DEI workplace isn't just about hiring: it's also about retaining and supporting employees from all backgrounds.

- Inclusive work environment
- Leadership commitment
- Professional growth and development
- Employee resource groups
- Diverse leadership representation
- Fair compensation and inclusive benefits
- Anti-discrimination policies
- Performance reviews and feedback
- Employee surveys and feedback
- Transparent communication
- Work-life balance
- Employee assistance programs
- Career pathing
- Recognition and rewards
- Continuous assessment and improvement

### C. Training & Development

Creating a DEI training and development program is crucial for fostering an inclusive workplace culture and supporting the growth of all employees.

- Needs assessment
- Inclusive content
- Trainer diversity and training teams
- Accessibility
- Inclusive learning environment
- Interactive and engaging activities
- Unconscious bias training
- Cultural competency training
- Inclusive leadership development
- Feedback and evaluation
- Continuous learning
- Accountability and measurement

### D. Performance Management

Integrating DEI principles into performance management is essential for promoting fairness, transparency, and employee growth.

- Clear performance criteria
- Mitigate bias in evaluation
- Regular feedback
- Equal access to opportunities
- Inclusive goal setting
- Accommodations and support
- Skill enhancement and training
- Inclusive recognition and rewards
- Assessing inclusive leadership
- Employee self-assessment
- Data-driven insights
- Cultural competence training
- Addressing underperformance
- Inclusive performance reviews
- Review and adaptation

## E. Business Development

Infusing DEI into your business strategy is a holistic approach that can lead to long-term success, innovation, and positive social impact.

- Leadership commitment
- Define DEI goals
- Inclusive vision and mission
- Diverse talent acquisition
- Product and service innovations
- Market segmentation
- Inclusive marketing and communication
- Supplier diversity
- Employee resource groups
- Inclusive leadership development
- Transparent reporting
- Continuous education
- Collaboration and partnerships
- Feedback and listening mechanisms
- Crisis and risk management
- Social responsibility

## VII. FAQ's

### 1. What is Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)?

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are values that seek to increase awareness and support for people of differing backgrounds.

### 2. Why is DEI important?

DEI policies create a more just society, in which everyone has the support to contribute fully. It's been well-documented that individuals are more productive and engaged when they feel represented and involved, and diverse communities are more likely to be open-minded and accepting of different world views.

Strong DEI initiatives within a workplace have also been linked to positive business outcomes. Research shows that individual performance and overall profitability are significantly higher in companies with higher gender, ethnic, and cultural diversity. Among other things, this is driven by increased access to skilled talent and better employee engagement. Virtually all quantifiable data shows that investing in DEI initiatives pays off in the long run.

Raising awareness for DEI in the workplace also has broader social benefits. While we certainly can't argue that all organizations have nailed diversity yet, workspaces and offices are usually comparatively more diverse than family or friendship circles, religious groups, sports clubs, or other social networks. By introducing DEI in corporate spaces, we increase the likelihood that these ideas are transferred into more homogeneous spaces as well.<sup>3</sup>

### 3. What are the most common barriers to workplace DEI?

Although many organizations may acknowledge the importance of DEI, numerous obstacles can prevent them from making any significant progress. Overcoming these barriers requires identifying them, understanding their underlying causes, and taking proactive measures to address them.

**Unconscious bias** is one of the most fundamental barriers to DEI. Most people are inherently drawn to others that look like them or come from similar backgrounds, and these automatic judgments influence workplace interactions, hiring decisions, and more. **Informal mentoring** can be problematic for this reason, as managers may unconsciously hinder equity and inclusion efforts by mentoring employees who are most similar to themselves. Overcoming biases requires education, but mandating or recommending that managers choose a diverse group of mentees can also equalize access to opportunities for all.

**Lack of support**, especially from managers and executives, can also hinder progress. DEI is not one-dimensional and cannot be successful when driven solely by a handful of advocates. Executives often need to approve new policies, and managers at all levels must be on board with initiatives and lead by example to resolve deep-seated cultural issues.

Finally, **good intentions alone** are not enough. To make tangible change, organizations need to set measurable goals and trackable metrics that allow them to monitor long-term progress.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Leske, H. Nimdzi. <https://www.nimdzi.com/back-to-the-basics-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-faq/>

<sup>4</sup> Leske, H. Nimdzi. <https://www.nimdzi.com/back-to-the-basics-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-faq/>

#### 4. Why do DEI and inclusive language matter in global business?

Language used should resonate with as many people as possible. Organizations that don't consider diversity, equity, and inclusivity will, at best, limit their reach to a smaller audience and, at worst, actively polarize potential customers.

There's a lot to consider when it comes to applications of inclusive language and DEI initiatives, though. To start with, inclusive language varies not only from language to language but also from locale to locale. Cultural sensitivities are often shaped by history and society, so terms acceptable in one country may not be acceptable in another, even where the same language is used. Language guidelines can't necessarily be rolled out globally; they should consider each region's unique experiences and cultural backgrounds. Further, public reception to diversity, equity, and inclusion can vary significantly worldwide.

In short, DEI and inclusive language are influenced by locale just as much as location should influence the adoption and implementation of DEI concepts. Neither should exist without the other if organizations want to reach their full potential.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Leske, H. Nimdzi. <https://www.nimdzi.com/back-to-the-basics-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-faq/>

## VIII. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR EMPLOYERS

ECO Canada provides groundbreaking Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) solutions, training, and resources for your growing business.

### A. HR Solutions & DEI Training

Our DEI training is based on the C.O.N.N.E.C.T model:

- **Collaboration:** Our training is centered on teamwork, diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.
- **Ownership:** We can help to review your company culture, vision, and mission statement. We will review empowerment, accountability, and commitment from a DEI lens.
- **Nimbleness:** Our industry-leading research will highlight best practices regarding remote work, the pandemic, emotional agility, skill development, change agents, and psychological safety.
- **Notability:** DEI initiatives should be open and transparent. We will help to review your organization's DEI policies in relation to brand identity, company values, relationships, and behavior.
- **Engagement:** ECO Canada provides strategies to encourage growth by including DEI deliverables in your performance management plans core competencies, professional development, and retention efforts.
- **Champion:** Learn how to become a DEI champion by involving leadership, reviewing outcomes, reiterating the purpose, monitoring career progression, and promoting mentorship.
- **Team:** Conduct audits of the stakeholders involved (employees, leadership, the community, and external stakeholders). We can provide audit frameworks for your organization.

Gain invaluable insights and practical strategies to foster an inclusive workplace with ECO Canada programs such as:

- **BEAHR Indigenous Program:** Our one-of-a-kind Indigenous training program, dedicated to First Nations, Metis and Inuit learners, provides culturally relevant and practical learning that is unmatched elsewhere. Becoming a certified trainer allows your organization to build relationships with local communities and grow an inclusive workforce.
- **Workforce Research & Resources:** Our research team is at the forefront of Canadian environmental thought and analysis. We conduct extensive study of the environmental workforce, from trend and statistical analysis to socioeconomic impacts and issues. This research can help you make better, more efficient, and more informed talent management decisions.
- **Custom HR Solutions:** For almost 30 years, we've been at the forefront of research, training, and staffing in the Canadian environmental sector. Our team of HR experts work with organizations of all sizes to help them optimize and manage their workforce. Let us help you grow your team and take the next steps in your organization's evolution.

## *Identify & Commit to Actions*

## APPENDIX A – DEI DEFINITIONS

The language around DEI and social justice topics is constantly evolving. Below are some common DEI definitions that may be helpful to employers in understanding DEI.

- **Ability:** Having the mental and/or physical capacity to do a task or activity, such as walking, seeing, hearing speaking, job functions, self-care activities, etc.
- **Ableism:** Discrimination or exclusion based on conscious or unconscious beliefs that people with disabilities are less valuable, and therefore less able to contribute and participate in society. Ableism may be embedded in institutions and can limit opportunities and inclusion of persons with disabilities in community and corporate life
- **Acceptance:** Approval and embracing of differences in nationality: race, ethnicity, religion, beliefs, and values beyond simply tolerating them
- **Accessibility/accessible:** A building, facility, structure, program, activity, resources, product etc. that is readily usable, or the extent to which it is readily usable by a person with a disability
- **Accommodation:** Adjustments made to policies, programs, practices, facilities, or resources to allow for equitable access in the workplace. Accommodations are made in the hopes of achieving accessibility by eliminating existing barriers
- **Adaptability:** The extent that something (a building, structure, tool, etc.) can be altered to meet the needs of people with different disabilities
- **Advocacy:** Speaking up on behalf of a group either as a group member or as someone outside of the group
- **Ally/Allyship:** Rooted in the term “alliance”. Ally is an individual in a position of privilege or power who makes consistent efforts to understand, uplift, employer, and support equity deserving groups. An ally is not a member of the group, but seeks to stand in solidarity with an equity deserving group to end oppression, discrimination and/or prejudice
- **Anti-oppression:** Strategies and actions that actively challenge existing intersectional inequities and injustices.
- **Anti-racism:** An active effort to eliminate all forms of racism
- **Barrier:** Obvious or Subtle obstacle(s) that prevents or imposes restrictions on members of society from accessing, using, or doing something that others can readily access, use, or do. Can be physical, economic, financial, informational, and/or organizational policies/practices
- **Belonging:** Feeling secure, supported, accepted, and included
- **Bias:** Bias is a strong inclination of the mind or a preconceived opinion about something or someone. A bias may be favourable or unfavourable: bias in favour of or against an idea. The conscious (explicit) or unconscious (implicit) opinion, preference, prejudice, or inclination formed without reasonable justification that prevents a balanced or even-handed judgement
  - **Institutional bias:** institutional norms, practices, procedures, and policies that create a culture of belonging for the dominant social groups in the workforce, while creating a disparate impact and culture of isolation for those who may be under-represented in the workforce
  - **Explicit bias:** incorporates the attitudes, preferences, and generalizations towards others that the biased individual is aware of and acknowledges. Explicit biases are intentional



and typically derive from the person's beliefs and values, life experiences, and the desire to belong or be surrounded by people similar to them

- **Implicit bias (Unconscious bias):** incorporates attitudes, preferences, and generalizations towards others that the individual is not aware of or does not control, where the bias exists subconsciously or without much thought. Implicit biases may go unnoticed and can show up in ways that conflict with the person's stated beliefs and values
- **Bigot/bigotry:** Someone who has and upholds a biased attitude or opinion toward an individual or group.
- **Brave space:** A term that emerged as a concept out of the critiques of safe spaces. A brave space encourages dialogue. It is conceptualized around recognizing differences and holding each person accountable to do the work of sharing experiences and coming to new understandings – a feat that is often hard, and typically uncomfortable.
- **Bullying:** Repeated behaviours that are intimidating, threatening, degrading, humiliating, or hostile and that physically or psychologically harm the victim.
- **Bystander:** A person who witnesses an incident but does not intervene or otherwise take part
- **Coming out:** The process where someone accepts their gender identity and/or sexual orientation (coming out to themselves) and starts sharing it with other people (coming out to others). Coming out is not a simple or straightforward process, and individuals may be 'out' in some circumstances (with friends and family) but not others (at work or school). Also sometimes referred to as 'coming out of the closet'.
- **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):** Policies and practices where the business is accountable to itself, its stakeholders, and the public while aiming to positively impact the community and the environment.
- **Dead name:** The name that a person was given when they were born but they no longer use, usually a trans or non-binary person. Some people use the term 'birth name', but the word 'dead' is used to emphasize the seriousness of not using the person's birth name. Use of someone's 'dead name' is offensive and, in the case of a trans person, generally misgenders them
- **Discrimination:** Intentional or unintentional denial of equal treatment, civil liberties and opportunity to individuals or groups with respect to education, accommodation, health care, employment and access to services, goods, and facilities. Can occur based on ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, record of offences, race, colour, nationality, sex, age, religion, gender identity, gender expression, political affiliation, marital or family status, and sexual orientation, physical, developmental, or mental disability
- **Dominant Group:** A group with the power and privilege in society to influence systems. The dominant group can be but is not necessarily always the majority.
- **Duty to accommodate:** Employers, organizations, service providers, and public institutions' legal obligation to provide accommodations to individuals for equitable access, so long as the accommodation is reasonable
- **Employee engagement:** the involvement and enthusiasm of employees in their work and workplace
  - **Actively Engaged:** Employees who are enthusiastic about their work and committed to their employer
  - **Not Engaged:** Employees who regularly perform at the bare minimum level and who have few emotional attachments to their workplaces.

- **Actively Disengaged:** Employees who dislike their responsibilities and employers so much, they are willing to leave work undone, openly criticize coworkers or decisions, and create a toxic working
- **Employee resource group (ERG):** Employee led groups that serve many purposes depending on the organization, its focus, structure, sector and/or industry. Their primary purpose is to provide equity seeking groups with a formal structure within the organization to support their unique needs.
- **Employment barriers:** The formal or informal policies or practices that result in the restriction or exclusion of marginalized members on factors not related to the job requirement
- **Equality:** Equality means each individual or group of people is given the same resources or opportunities. Where everyone is treated the same regardless of individual diversity and needs
- **Equity:** Equity is a solution for addressing imbalanced social systems. Justice can take equity one step further by fixing the systems in a way that leads to long-term, sustainable, equitable access for generations to come.
- **Equity-seeking groups/equity-deserving groups:** Groups of people who have been historically disadvantaged and underrepresented. These groups include but are not limited to women, visible minorities, Aboriginal Peoples, people with disabilities, and people in the LGBTQ2+ community/people with diverse gender identities and sexual orientations. Equity-seeking groups identify barriers and unequal access, and actively seek social justice and reparation.
- **Exclusion:** The denial of access or leaving someone out either consciously or unconsciously
- **Gender identity:** How someone internally, mentally, or psychologically perceives their gender
- **Human Rights:** Basic rights that all people are entitled to. The Canadian Human Rights Act, the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the provincial human rights legislations outline the rights that Canadians are entitled to. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights from the United Nations governs the national and provincial human rights legislation.
- **Intergenerational trauma:** The trauma experienced and inherited through generations. Research has found that trauma can be passed down genetically through changes in DNA expression, socially through traumatic events affecting social interactions, or structurally through the continued marginalization of the traumatized groups. Intergenerational trauma has been found to affect the families of holocaust survivors, residential school survivors, refugees, and other groups who experienced traumatic events.
- **Internalized dominance:** Where individuals unconsciously believe they are superior or inferior to other groups due to systemic inequalities and social conditioning.
- **Intersectionality:** Intersectionality is the acknowledgement that everyone has their own unique experiences of discrimination and oppression.
- **LGBTQ2+/LGBTQ2S+ and other acronyms:** LGBTQ2+/LGBTQ2S+ is an acronym that stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, and Two-Spirit. A plus sign or asterisk added to any acronym indicates the inclusion of identities not explicitly included in the acronym. There are many acronyms that may be preferred by different individuals.
- **Marginalized groups:** Members of society that face exclusion due to societal and systemic barriers
- **Microaggression:** Small interactions with people or the environment that expose bias towards marginalized groups. While microaggressions may be unintentional, they can have cumulative negative effects on an individual's well-being and sense of belonging. Examples include asking a

person of colour, “where are you really from?” or a woman in a meeting being repeatedly spoken over or dismissed by her male colleagues

- **Prejudice:** Pre-judgement or negative assumptions made about an individual or social group based on stereotypes rather than experiences. Prejudicial attitudes prevent equal treatment and lead to discrimination
- **Privilege:** Unearned access, benefits, and opportunities possessed by members of a social group with a high level of power. Privilege occurs when structures and institutions have been historically designed for the benefit of or to be accessed by a particular group
- **Prohibited grounds/protected grounds:** Personal characteristics defined in human rights legislation that are legally protected from discrimination. Prohibited grounds are defined in the Canadian Human Rights Act as race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, genetic characteristics, disability, and conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted or in respect of which a record suspension has been ordered.<sup>127</sup> Prohibited grounds are defined in the Canadian Human Rights Act as race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, genetic characteristics, disability, and conviction for an offence for which a pardon has been granted or in respect of which a record suspension has been ordered.
- **Pronouns:** Words that refer to a person when not using their name. Gendered pronouns include she/her and he/him. Gender neutral pronouns include they/them or neo-pronouns such as ze/zir and ey/em
- **Psychological safety:** The feeling of being safe to express ideas, feelings, and questions or to make mistakes without repercussion
- **Safe space:** A “safe space” is a space where people feel psychologically safe and can express honest impressions, thoughts, and attitudes without fear of ridicule. A safe space is one that does not incite judgement based on identity or experience – where the expression of both can exist and be affirmed without fear of repercussion and without the pressure to educate. A safe space can be as small as between two people or can be expanded to include all members of a larger team, network, department, or organization. It can even be an expectation of the organizational culture overall
- **Social Justice:** The view that all people should have equitable access to resources, opportunities, and human rights. Social justice is action taken towards addressing the root cause of inequities and is rooted in the belief that all people are equal in value.
- **Socioeconomic privilege:** Benefits available to an individual due to their income, education, and level of financial security as well as perceptions of class and status based on these factors (socioeconomic status).
- **Stereotype:** An assumption about a certain group, and the notion that the assumption applies to all members of the group. Stereotypes can be positive but are generally negative and ignore the diversity that exists within a group
- **Supplier diversity:** Providing diverse suppliers with equal access. Actively seeking out diversity in the supply chain network of the organization and maintaining relationships with diverse suppliers through inclusive practices.
- **Systemic barrier:** Policies, practices, or behaviours in society that exclude marginalized groups

- **Tolerance:** Setting aside differences in culture, beliefs, or values without necessarily embracing or agreeing with them.
- **Under-represented groups (URG):** Groups that are not proportionally represented in positions of economic influence and leadership, including on corporate boards and in senior management. These groups include women, racialized persons, those who identify as LGBTQ2+, First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples, and people with disabilities
- **Upstander:** Someone who takes action in support of another person or cause or who intervenes in situations of bullying or violence.
- **Workplace inclusion:** Intentional work to create feelings of belonging for all employees so they feel comfortable contributing and performing at their best.

*Above definitions acquired from the [CCDI Glossary of Terms](#) (Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion / Centre canadien pour la diversité et l'inclusion, 2022) and the Oxford Dictionary*