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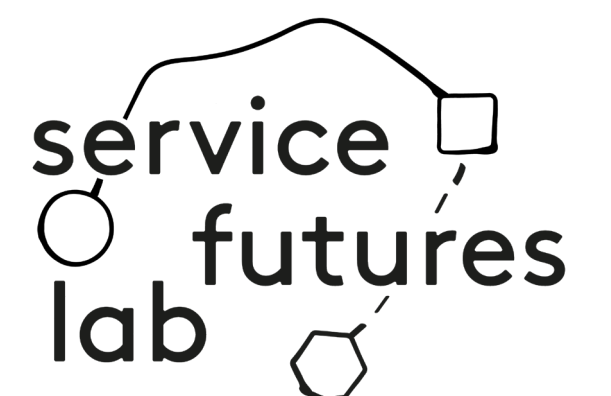
# EDI in the Workplace

## Actions and Implementations



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of communication



# Introduction

## Why this framework is needed

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is widely accepted as an approach across businesses. Within design, this manifests both on an organisational level, in the policies, practices and culture of the organisation and design teams, as well as on a design output level, in the inclusive design values, methods and products the team designs. Inclusive Design, “design that considers the full range of human diversity with respect to ability, language, culture, gender, age and other forms of human difference”(Inclusive Design Research Centre, no date), widens audience and customer bases by creating products that are suitable for a wider range of people. “Diverse firms and product teams have repeatedly been shown to make better decisions, come up with more competitive products, and better understand potential customers. Racial and gender diversity are linked to increased sales revenue, more customers, and greater relative profits” (Wachter-Boettcher, S., 2017. It is widely acknowledged (Wachter-Boettcher, 2017; Costanza-Chock, 2020; Noel and Paiva, 2021) that a workforce that reflects the make-up of the general population will be able to better design for a wider range of people, as opposed to reinforcing current inequalities.

The Design Council’s 2022 report on the design Economy details some shocking statistics about the design industries in the UK. Product Design and Digital Design are respectively the second and third largest sector in the UK Design Economies, but they are also the two most unequal in terms of gender distribution, with respectively 12% of the workforce in product and industrial design (increased from 5% in 5 years) and 15% of digital design workers identifying as female, despite a roughly equal distribution of male and female students in design courses in higher education. This problem is compounded by its intersectionality. Non-white ethnic minority groups are significantly under-represented in the design industries at managerial and senior levels, and those with a disability are less likely to occupy senior positions (Design Council, 2022).

This framework comprises of three parts; EDI in the Workplace and Inclusive Design outline actions and implementations that people at different levels of design businesses and teams can take in order to make an impact on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and Inclusive Design outcomes. Inclusive Design Framework: Exploring Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Designers’ Career Lifecycle outlines how designers’ careers develop over time, as well as mindsets, enablers and barriers encountered along the way. These three parts can be used individually or together.

# Methodology

## How this framework was designed

The data collection for this research was carried out through a 3-month sabbatical funded by the University of the Arts London and hosted by Elvie as an industry partner, and was structured into three phases:

1. Initial literature review: to include academic literature on the subject of EDI and Inclusive Design, as well as books written for a more general audience, in particular focussing on the reading list that had been created by the inclusive design group at Elvie.

2. Interviews with practitioners: Semi-structured qualitative interviews of about 45 minutes were carried out with 26 participants. The participants were recruited according to the criteria that they had experience of working within a design team within the product or digital product industries, and keeping in mind the diversity of respondents in terms of seniority and amount of experience in the field as well as in light of protected characteristics. The interviews were anonymised; participants were given aliases and the main recognisable characteristics were omitted or changed.

3. Co-design workshops: two co-design workshops were conducted with 18 participants in total, to start defining the framework. These workshops linked good practice (in terms of policy, culture and actions) back to principles and literature and case studies, as well as forward to impact and metrics). One workshop was carried out in person at the Elvie offices with participants from across the digital and physical product design teams, and one was conducted remotely and asynchronously with participants from the same industries but outside of Elvie. Participants were given a choice whether they wanted to be named as co-authors of the framework.

After the sabbatical an analysis and design phase followed. This consisted of

- Qualitative analysis of the interview transcripts, identifying themes from the literature as well as emergent themes from the interviews.
- Qualitative analysis of the results of the co-design workshops, and definition of the final framework.
- Design of the frameworks, feedback from the co-designers, and iteration.

# Instructions

## How to use this framework

The framework is meant to be a starting point for people wanting to drive change within their organisation, no matter what role and level of seniority they are in at the moment. It is not meant to be completely comprehensive, but it is meant to be a starting point that individuals and organisations can use and build on.

Often the topic of EDI feels huge, and an all-or-nothing situation. Individual small actions can feel futile. However, small actions at any level can have a snowball effect on the organisation's culture and ways of working and be a starting point or a catalyst for more systemic change.

The framework comprises 3 parts: Inclusive Design, Equity Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace, and Designers' Career Lifecycle. These parts can be used together or individually.

This part on EDI is divided into sections, and each section relates to its most relevant EDI principles. The sections are: Diversity (Training & Awareness), Diversity (Recruitment & Retention), Safety & Wellbeing, Communication, Networking & Community building.

Each Section is divided into Actions, Implementation, Metrics and Impact, and each section features relevant quotes from the qualitative interviews.

Actions shows Actions that can be taken by people in different roles: Leadership (executive), Head of level/line manager/team leader, Employee.

Implementation features prompt questions based on the actions, again divided by roles.

Metrics answers the question How do we know they are working? By detailing different data points that can be used to understand if the actions are having an effect

Impact shows what changes we see or we can expect from these actions.

The framework is made available under a Creative Commons CC BY-NC. This means individuals and organisations can use this as a starting point, modify it, and make it their own.

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# Diversity (Training & Awareness)

Diversity is much more than just how a person looks or how they identify themselves.

Valuing that diversity is important, and better than just having people who have similar lived experiences.

Awareness

( EDI ) Trainings

Addressing bias

Contextualisation

Put action where mouth is

“ I’ve been in a team before where I really felt like the odd one out and [...] it was a very white male same age, they [all] had the same hobbies, [...] I felt that the designs that were then agreed were almost sometimes very masculine and what they liked, and so that, that was hard.

- Marcie

## Leadership (executive)

Diversity training - especially around biases - can be very useful but have to be careful with the tone.

- Require top leadership to undergo in-depth unconscious bias training to set an example for the rest of the organisation.
- Actively sponsor and promote unconscious bias training programs for all employees.
- Integrate discussions about mitigating unconscious bias into strategic planning and decision-making.
- Create spaces for leaders to openly discuss their experiences with unconscious bias.

1) Being sensitive to vulnerability.

2) Being aware of political and religious conflict that affect people's ability to be open about their gender, sexuality and orientation.

- Show your 'mindset' and 'beliefs' through a company manifesto/ motto that clearly represents the intent and beliefs that you have as an org.
- Acknowledge your ability to harm.

Look outside of the business to encourage diversity at earlier stages e.g. education, to then allow for the opportunity to continue this at employment etc

- Career Workshops: organise workshops in schools to introduce students to various careers, emphasising the value of diversity and inclusivity in the workforce.
- Partner with schools, colleges, and universities to create programs that promote diversity.
- Sponsor scholarships, internships, and mentorship programs for students from marginalised backgrounds to encourage their pursuit of higher education.

## Head of level/line manager/team leader

Be conscious and aware of any existing biases within the business and seek to address them - condition specific training for managers

- Mandate attendance in workshops that explore various types of bias and their impact.
- Offer training on techniques to recognise and counter unconscious bias in hiring, performance evaluations and promotions.
- Encourage managers to cultivate team cultures that foster open conversations about bias and its effects.
- Provide guidance on delivering feedback to team members about potential biases observed in their actions.

Awareness driven by organisation on different habits

- Provide flexible working arrangements for various needs.

Awareness driven by organisation on different cultures

- Schedule regular 1-on-1 meetings with team members to discuss their personal experiences and aspirations.
- Organise workshops that help team leaders develop cultural sensitivity and awareness.
- Acknowledge and celebrate important cultural holidays, events, or achievements of team members.
- Encourage the formation of employee resource groups based on cultural or affinity backgrounds.
- Collaboratively create development plans that consider each team member's background, skills and aspirations.

## Employee

Being aware and learning about D,E&I

- Join internal EDI initiatives and communication channels.
- Initiate talks to share experience.
- Propose EDI-related events.

Being aware of different habits

- Reflective manual of me activity.

Empathy and Sensitivity

- Listen actively and empathetically to the experiences and stories shared by others.
- Use inclusive and respectful language that acknowledges the diversity of perspectives.

Self-reflection

- Reflect on bias: Take time to reflect on your own biases and consider how they might impact your interactions and decisions.
- Mindful self-awareness: Be aware of how your thoughts and reactions might be influenced by unconscious biases.



## Leadership (executive)

How can you ensure that diversity and inclusion goals are integrated into the organization's strategic plans and communicated effectively?

How will you foster an environment where open dialogues about unconscious bias and its impact can take place at all levels?

## Head of level/line manager/team leader

How can you incorporate diversity and inclusion training into your team's professional development plans?

How will you encourage your team to actively engage in diversity and inclusion workshops and apply their learnings in day-to-day work?

What measures can you take to ensure that your team feels comfortable discussing bias-related topics and sharing experiences openly?

## Employee

What aspects of the training are resonating with me? Are there any areas I feel could be improved?

How can I incorporate ongoing learning about diversity into my professional development plan?

“ Diversity takes different forms. But a diverse team, I think, is also super important, you know, and it's been proven in so many different board meetings and like board review meetings like having that voice from different people really does help you make more considered decision making. But where everybody thinks the same? Why are you going to get that varied view? So to me, I feel like having representation, having the opportunity to feel empowered to beyond the status quo and also probably like an acceptance that we're on a journey and being open about that. And then I think the other things like also realizing that it's a continuation on your product's journey itself. (Wendi)



### Representation

- Numbers from recruitment
- Numbers on internal employees
- You can look at your team, notice the differences between members and how those differences benefit the team and its output

### Team Culture

- Feedback, staff retention, recruitment, quality of output, attitudes around work
- Staff retention rate
- Staff absences (number of people and absence days)
- Diversity at all levels (junior to senior leadership)
- Costs of recruitment
- I feel safe to share my project
- I contribute to success of the project
- I am asked for my opinion and I know it will be taken into account
- Number of times leaders and employees admit to not knowing an answer to a question

### Accountability

- Put action where mouth is
- Accountability culture
- Anonymous surveys on questions like psychological safety, diversity and inclusion

### Aligning Understanding

- Joint understanding of inclusion/exclusion
- Vision everyone can stand behind
- Survey about how people feel before and after intervention

### Avoid assumptions and blind spots

- Identifying knowledge gaps (who are we not focusing on)/ unintended consequences/harms
- Don't make assumptions when designing

## Sense of Belonging

- Reduced inequalities
- People feeling heard, accepted and validated
- People gravitate towards good companies, and stay
- Active and engaged communities
- Healthy workplace
- Reduced inequalities
- Happier colleagues, feeling confident to be themselves, and supporting others to be themselves too
- Let people add to the culture, not just fit in
- Better team morale
- Let people bring their whole selves to work

## Empowerment & Agency

- People can thrive in their own way
- By rebalancing the 'gender gap', more women in the future will feel empowered to choose a certain career path - and have a say on gender-discriminating policies or culture that still exist (e.g. pay gap)
- Agency to choose what to share and be what they choose to be at work

## Wider impact & systemic change

- Positive social and societal impact (supporting EDI initiatives)
- It reflects active commitment from an organisation to try tackle the underlying systemic issues with proactive support

# Diversity (Recruitment & Retention)

“ I mean, I think what tends to happen is that there might be more people come in at like the junior levels, but then not many then move up. And I'm a massive believer if you can see it, you can believe it. Yeah, I don't think a lot of companies really put weight behind that.

- Wendi

## Leadership (executive)

### Commitment to diversity

- Develop and communicate a clear diversity and inclusion strategy, showcasing leadership's commitment to fostering a diverse workplace. Sets the tone for the entire organization, signalling that diversity is a strategic priority.
- Incorporate diversity goals into the overall strategic plan of the organization.
- Allocate a specific budget for diversity and inclusion initiatives.

### Resource allocation

- Create a dedicated budget for diversity recruitment efforts.
- Invest in technology and tools that support diversity and inclusion.
- Anonymous recruitment methods and diverse recruitment panels.

### Diverse leadership representation

- Actively seek and promote diversity within leadership positions. Provides role models and creates a more inclusive organizational culture.

### Transparent policies

- Transparent pay policy. Publish pay bands across characteristics beyond gender, to include age, ethnicity, etc.
- Maternity and parental leave policy: Advocate for and implement flexible work arrangements that accommodate diverse needs.

## Head of level/line manager/team leader

### Inclusive onboarding

- Provide training for onboarding staff, including managers, on the importance of diversity and inclusion in the onboarding process.
- Develop personalized onboarding plans that consider the individual needs and backgrounds of new hires.
- Establishing mentorship or buddy systems helps new hires integrate into the company culture and provides a support network, fostering a sense of belonging.

### Unbiased recruitment practices

- Explicit measures in the recruitment process to remove biases - ie anonymisation of CVs.
- Look for culture fit + add for each employee (how do you see the employee being part of the team, and identify the value they bring).
- Writing down/sending job interview questions upfront. Consider alternative and accessible interview formats based on needs, e.g. written, paid job trials.

### Offer/invite people to ask for reasonable adjustments upfront

- Publishing pay bands and supporting policies in ads.
- Encouragement to apply without ticking all the boxes.

### Diverse talent pipeline

- Establish relationships with diverse talent pipelines, including universities, organizations, and networks.
- Implement training for managers on unbiased recruitment practices, ensuring fair and inclusive hiring processes.
- Promote an inclusive team culture by actively addressing bias, encouraging open communication, and valuing diverse perspectives.

## Employee

### Active participation in diversity initiatives

- Actively participate in diversity and inclusion initiatives, such as employee resource groups and volunteer programs.
- Engage in cultural competency training to enhance awareness and understanding of different backgrounds.
- Continuously educate oneself on diversity and inclusion topics through reading, workshops, and discussions.

## Leadership (executive)

How can we effectively communicate our commitment to diversity and inclusion throughout the organization?

How can we ensure that our commitment to diversity is embedded in our organisational values and culture?

What strategies can be employed to overcome potential barriers to diverse leadership representation?

## Head of level/line manager/team leader

What steps can be taken to make our organisation more visible and attractive to a broad range of candidates?

How can managers ensure that unbiased recruitment practices are consistently applied across different teams?

What proactive steps can managers take to promote an inclusive team culture that actively addresses bias?

## Employee

In what ways can employees leverage their unique skills and interests to support diversity initiatives?

How can employees incorporate learning about diverse perspectives into their professional development plans?

### Recruitment

- Placement student comes back to work in the industry
- Improved diversity in the design industry
- A diverse range of job applicants and team members
- Diverse talent growth
- Reduced paygap across diversity traits
- Referrals
- Scores and feedback

### Reasonable adjustment

- Employee retention
- User uptake
- Inclusive talent retention
- Employee satisfaction

“

*And yes, so the current place I work at is the most diverse place I've worked at. And every team is equal. There's a lot of emphasis on actively hiring people from different backgrounds, different ethnicities. I think it really helps. We were designing a, I can't tell you what, it is a space and we really benefited from having one of our Indian colleagues on the team and she just had a whole other view on something that we just didn't know about culturally, just, it's not part of our culture. And it was able to be caught or something, before it went [to] market or wherever. [...] It could have been quite negative. So having that kind of extra knowledge, it just stops you making mistakes blindly. (Lucy)*

## Reputation

- Good reputation - PR and marketing successes

## Motivation

- Opportunity to share practices with others / winning employer awards

## Creativity & innovation

- Diverse teams have a competitive advantage - different perspectives offered
- Diverse opinions lead to diverse business models, diverse experiments

## Productivity

- Employees enjoy working for the company and do good work
- Better productivity both in terms of quantity and quality



Culture Creation

Retention

Put action where mouth is

# Safety & Wellbeing

“ *Making places which are safe. I think that's the first thing because you want to prepare the ground for bringing people in. I find that harsh if you bring somebody who is from a different background into a place which is not safe. They will leave [...].*

- Georgina

## Leadership (executive)

### Creating equitable policy

- Conduct equity impact assessments.
- Developing safety training programs that consider diverse learning styles, languages, and cultural sensitivities.
- Develop safety policies that encompass physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

### Invest in well-being programs and resources

- Allocate resources for well-being programs, including mental health support, fitness initiatives, and stress management resources.
- Provide access to well-being resources, such as counselling services or employee assistance programs.

### Lead by Example

- Promote a culture that values time off and discourages overworking.
- Sponsor or donate to EDI initiatives.
- Employee, not customer / investor first culture.

## Head of level/line manager/team leader

### Performance review and personal development programmes tailored to each individuals needs

- Providing alternative progression paths.
- Employee, not customer / investor first culture.

### Implement flexible work arrangements

- Create a culture where there is room for everybody's needs and culture, despite abilities and background.
- Ensure that employees feel comfortable utilizing and requesting flexible work options.

### Facilitate regular check-ins and feedback

- Implement regular check-ins to assess employees' well-being and address concerns.
- Encourage ( anonymous ) feedback culture.

## Employee

### Participate actively in well-being initiatives

- Actively participate in well-being programs, such as fitness challenges, mental health workshops, or wellness activities.
- Encourage colleagues to join and create a supportive well-being community within the organization.

### Utilize well-being Resources

- Provide feedback on the effectiveness of these resources to contribute to continuous improvement.
- Check for privileges and bias and be vocal about your observations.

## Leadership (executive)

Are there specific well-being resources that our employees need that we may not have considered?

How can we ensure our safety policies address a broad spectrum of well-being concerns?

Are there organizational practices that unintentionally encourage overworking that need to be addressed?

## Head of level/line manager/team leader

Are there concerns or barriers preventing employees from utilising flexible work options that need to be addressed?

How can managers use feedback to adapt and improve well-being strategies within their teams?

How can we structure regular check-ins to be meaningful and supportive for employees?

## Employee

How can employees be motivated and encouraged to actively participate in well-being initiatives?

Are there specific well-being resources that employees are not utilizing, and if so, why?

How can employees support each other in maintaining a healthy work-life balance?

## Governance and policy

- Employees understanding of bias
- Employees satisfaction rate
- Increasing use of personas of under-represented people
- Standards in requirement writing introduced
- Criteria in inclusive design expand and deepen
- Signups to inclusion training
- Community driven initiatives on inclusion eg, show and tell of projects

“

*I think psychological safety building spaces to discuss things without any predetermined expectation of things being shared or, you know, notes being taken, I think just having an open forum to discuss experiences and encourage and empowering people within teams to share them and find ways to learn and act on those experiences. (Scott)*

## Sense of belonging

- Better wellbeing and 'feeling of being part of the team'
- Reduced inequalities
- People feeling heard, accepted and validated
- People gravitate towards good companies
- Active and engaged communities
- Healthy workplace
- Better team morale

## Retention

- High staff retention
- Less staff absences
- Measurable effects - lower attrition leading to greater diverse representation in senior roles
- Staff feels valued and can progress in their careers regardless of their individual circumstances

## Creativity & innovation

- Wider range of ideas - diverse teams have a competitive advantage - different perspectives offered
- Culture of experimentation and innovation - ideas from people who don't feel like their ideas will be shot down
- More willingness to challenge the status quo/disruptive thinking that leads to innovation
- Companies move from being revenue 'machines' to knowledge nodes
- Diverse opinions lead to diverse business models, diverse experiments

## Empowerment & agency

- People can thrive in their own way
- By rebalancing the 'gender gap', more women in the future will feel empowered to choose a certain career path - and have a say on gender-discriminating policies or culture that still exist (e.g. pay gap)
- Agency to choose what to share and be what they choose to be at work

## Productivity

- Better productivity both in terms of quantity and quality
- Employees enjoy working for the company and do good work

# Communication

Sponsorship

Publicity\*

Advocacy

Transparency

Put action where mouth is

“ *I think more good experiences coming from communication in the working space, [...] we have specific channel called Woman's Power or something. It's for female colleagues in the organization. They are in the top and then they are sharing why or what. I feel incredible this week, so everyone can just put what they feel. They are happy about it or confident about it.*  
- Nola

## Leadership (executive)

### Good communication of values and culture

- Ensure that language used in all company literature (inc. job listings etc) does not suggest bias - sensitivity to all protected characteristics.
- Conduct regular town hall meetings to update employees on key initiatives and provide a platform for questions.
- Facilitate Q&A sessions to address concerns and promote two-way communication.
- Establish feedback mechanisms to gather insights and suggestions from the workforce.

### Speak up culture

- Normalise calling out small but potentially damaging behaviours.
- Reward and celebrate listening.

## Head of level/line manager/team leader

### A clear and explicit commitment to workplace diversity, reflected in tangible actions, not just words.

- Activities supported and attended by senior colleagues.
- Establish a system to recognize and reward those actively contributing to EDI initiatives.
- Include modules on recognising unconscious biases, promoting diversity, and creating an inclusive culture.

### Encouraging good and open communication

- Reward and celebrate listening.
- Encourage employees to communicate challenges faced in the workplace.
- Normalise calling out small but potentially damaging behaviours.
- Sensitivity to all protected characteristics.

### Meeting practices

- Encourage a multi-lingual, multi-cultural environment.
- Following up with people after a meeting to ensure they understood and they are heard.
- Include agendas in invites, record calls for absentees, and utilize MS Teams' transcript feature for those who prefer written communication.
- Go easy on the humour. Nothing travels like laughter, and nothing sinks like a misunderstood joke.
- Implement a rotation system for meeting facilitation among team members.

### Less biased language

- Ensure that language used in all company literature (incl. job listings etc) does not suggest bias.

## Employee

### Utilize inclusive communication styles

- Encourage employees to use inclusive language and consider diverse perspectives in their communication.
- Normalise calling out small but potentially damaging behaviours.
- Actively participate in team meetings, contributing ideas and perspectives.

### Support and recognition

- Establish an Employee Resource Group (ERG) focused on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.
- Recognize individuals who share valuable insights, raise important questions, or actively engage in discussions that contribute to a more transparent and inclusive workplace.
- Establish a recognition program that celebrates and rewards employees who contribute to open communication within the organisation.



## Leadership (executive)

What steps can leaders take to create a culture where transparency is valued and practiced?

Are there channels for anonymous questions to encourage honest and open feedback?

How can leaders ensure that employees feel comfortable providing feedback, even if it's critical?

## Head of level/line manager/team leader

How can organizations foster a culture where employees feel comfortable sharing challenges without fear of reprisal?

How can the organization establish a schedule for rotational facilitation that considers everyone's availability and preferences?

How can we make sessions on diversity and inclusion attractive to a diverse audience? *For example: the people who might not find themselves directly related to it.*

## Employee

How can organisations ensure that team meetings are inclusive, allowing all voices to be heard?

How can organisations foster a collaborative environment where employees feel empowered to share their ideas and opinions?

How can the organisation measure and recognise the impact of Employee Resource Groups' (ERG) activities on both internal and external EDI efforts?

How can the organisation create a system for peers to nominate each other for open communication achievements?

## Inclusive communication within teams

- Feedback on company communication
- Volume of direct contact and requests from the team
- Referrals
- Employee retention
- Number of complaints (increase to discover them)
- Number of new ideas/solutions (increase)
- Employee satisfaction
- Everyone has KPIs and targets on EDI
- Accreditation

## External communication

- A diverse range of people engaging with the business at different levels - employees, clients, collaboration partners, suppliers

“

*The thing that I've seen worked [is] to allow space for multiple voices and in different settings, so inviting people in with their perspective and opinion like creating [...] psychological safety and trying to foster that. You can really undermine that or damage that very quickly and then to build it up takes a lot of time and trust. (Graham)*

### Sense of belonging

- A happier, more motivated team
- Better wellbeing and 'feeling of being part of the team'
- Reduced inequalities
- People feeling heard, accepted and validated
- People gravitate towards good companies
- Happier colleagues, feeling confident to be themselves, and supporting others to be themselves too
- Better team morale
- Active and engaged communities
- Healthy workplace

### Support

- People managers are able to give adequate support and help people thrive
- People departments are clued up on reasonable adjustments and are able to provide support
- Ensure there's no space for misunderstanding

### Efficient problem-solving

- Raising risks and addressing them sooner
- Ensure that everyone has a chance to raise their concerns and the concerns are visible to all, are addressed by leadership, and can be raised anonymously if required

### Empowerment & agency

- People can thrive in their own way
- By rebalancing the 'gender gap', more women in the future will feel empowered to choose a certain career path - and have a say on gender-discriminating policies or culture that still exist (e.g. pay gap)
- Agency to choose what to share and be what they choose to be at work

# Networking & Community building

Culture Creation

Equitable

Value / Purpose

Put action where mouth is

“ *We would have a yearly conference. And we had one of the women present about women in leadership. And there was a big discussion about women in leadership and then we had like a workshop afterwards, where we had lots of different leaders in the organization discussing how do we grow the talent of women in the organization to be leaders and talk about what strategies work and what strategies don't.....*

## Leadership (executive)

A genuine commitment to co-creation with audiences that are representative of the future user base

### Establishing leadership networking events

- Organise networking events specifically for leaders within the organization, enabling leaders to share insights and cross-learn.
- Facilitate opportunities for leaders (internal and external) to share insights, collaborate on strategic initiatives, and build relationships.
- Leadership lead in difficult conversation.
- Leaders that listen.

## Head of level/line manager/team leader

### Facilitating cross-departmental networking opportunities

- Organise cross-departmental networking sessions for managers and heads of various teams.
- Create a platform for sharing best practices, collaborating on projects, and building a sense of unity across different functions.
- Flexible company/team socialising options for inclusion.

### Establishing mentorship programs

- Implement formal mentorship programs that connect managers with experienced leaders.
- Encourage mentorship relationships to include networking components, fostering professional growth and relationship-building.
- One to one mentorships:
  - within the company, one mentor per team
  - outside of the organisation - allows exposure to people with different background

Establishing employee resource groups (eg: EDI workgroup, neurodiverse Community)

Providing support, such as sponsorship or guidance, to facilitate active engagement in external networks such as leadership training/conferences.

## Employee

### Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) with networking focus

- Provide a platform for employees with similar interests or backgrounds to connect, share experiences, and build a supportive community.
- Establish Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) that focus on networking opportunities.

### Internal and external networking events and mixers (in working hours)

- Create opportunities for employees to meet colleagues outside their immediate work circles and foster a sense of camaraderie.
- Reaching out to network formed by universities and charities connected to EDI.

## Leadership (executive)

Are there specific themes or topics that can be incorporated into these events to encourage meaningful discussions?

How can the organisation measure the impact of leadership networking events on cross-functional collaboration and innovation?

## Head of level/line manager/team leader

How can the organisation ensure that these cross-departmental networking opportunities are inclusive and foster collaboration?

Are there training sessions or resources available to support managers in their roles as mentors or mentees?

## Employee

How can the organisation ensure that ERGs are accessible and welcoming to all employees, fostering a sense of inclusivity?

How can the organisation measure the impact of ERGs on employees' professional networks and sense of belonging?

How can the organisation ensure that internal networking events cater to employees with varying levels of social comfort or introversion, and different demands on their time (eg childcare)?

### Leadership

- Male / Female ratio
- Diverse talent growth
- Employee retention
- Inclusive talent retention
- Referrals
- Employee satisfaction

### Mentorship

- Mentorship rate
- Retention
- Employee satisfaction

“

*..... I was paired with my Managing Director and a director from another studio so they were a lot more senior than me, but I was able to in that space that was created articulate to them why just giving people money to decide what they want to do for their own personal development is not necessarily a strategy that's going to empower women into leadership. It's not about choice. About creating choice, it's it was about how that create or provide opportunities for people to have a space where we were able to have conversations about why certain strategies would or would not help women in leadership. (Sandy)*



### Sense of belonging

- A happier, more motivated team
- Better wellbeing and 'feeling of being part of the team'
- Reduced inequalities
- People feeling heard, accepted and validated
- People gravitate towards good company
- Happier colleagues, feeling confident to be themselves, and supporting others to be themselves too
- Active and engaged communities
- Healthy workplace
- Better team morale

### Support & Productivity

- People managers are able to give adequate support and help people thrive
- People departments are clued up on reasonable adjustments and are able to provide support
- Ensure there's no space for misunderstanding
- Better productivity both in terms of quantity and quality
- Employees enjoy working for the company and do good work

### Wider impact & systemic change

- Positive social and societal impact (supporting EDI initiatives)
- It reflects active commitment from an organisation to try tackle the underlying systemic issues with proactive support

### Empowerment & agency

- People can thrive in their own way
- By rebalancing the 'gender gap', more women in the future will feel empowered to choose a certain career path - and have a say on gender-discriminating policies or culture that still exist (e.g. pay gap)
- Agency to choose what to share and be what they choose to be at work

### Creativity & Innovation

- Wider range of ideas
- Diverse opinions lead to diverse business models, diverse experiments
- Culture of experimentation and innovation - ideas from people who don't feel like their ideas will be shot down
- More willingness to challenge the status quo/disruptive thinking that leads to innovation
- Companies move from being revenue 'machines' to knowledge nodes

### Retention

- Improved retention
- Measurable effects - lower attrition leading to greater diverse representation in senior roles
- Less staff absences
- Staff feels valued and can progress in their careers regardless of their individual circumstances

**This is one of three parts of the Inclusive Design Framework.**

All parts can be found here:

## **Designers' Careers Lifecycles**

Grimaldi S. et al (2023,) Inclusive Design Framework: Exploring Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Designers' Career Lifecycle. University of the Arts London, London. DOI [10.58129/y0gd-t323](https://doi.org/10.58129/y0gd-t323)

## **EDI in the Workplace**

Grimaldi, S. et al (2024), Inclusive Design Framework: EDI in the Workplace Actions and Implementations. University of the Arts London. DOI [10.58129/kn1n-m289](https://doi.org/10.58129/kn1n-m289)

## **Inclusive Design**

Grimaldi, S. et al (2024), Inclusive Design Framework: Inclusive Design Actions and Implementations. University of the Arts London. DOI [10.58129/ckbf-m922](https://doi.org/10.58129/ckbf-m922)