

# Who Leads in Minnesota?

## Introduction

Wilder Research and Bush Foundation have teamed up to obtain a holistic picture of leadership in our state. This includes understanding the current demographics of leaders in the government, business, and nonprofit sectors, and also identifying current practices and policies in use by organizations in these sectors to support and develop leaders.

To inform this work, Wilder Research conducted a literature review to better understand which diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) policies and practices in the workplace have been found to make an impact. This includes increasing diverse leadership within organizations, changing attitudes and behaviors of staff, and increasing satisfaction among staff who identify as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color), women, LGBTQ+, and other historically marginalized identities, such as older adults and individuals with disabilities, chronic health conditions, or mental health concerns. While numerous articles and resources in the field of leadership development exist, a much smaller pool of articles clarify which strategies work and, if they do, to what extent they can move the needle. We have included peer-reviewed literature and gray literature, including evaluation reports and reports from reputable organizations, in this literature review. Below, we've summarized what we've learned and included some key takeaways for organizations and departments as they plan for future DEI work.

## What works in diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts (and what doesn't)

The following describes what those working in research and evaluation of DEI work have learned about their efforts. Lessons learned from one intervention could likely be applied more broadly; it could be that a program or intervention that works for one underrepresented group may work for another. Similarly, programs or interventions that have unintended negative consequences for one underrepresented group might have similar consequences for another. Because of this, we discuss the literature according to type of intervention and include which demographic groups were involved. We encourage readers to consider ways to implement evidence-based DEI efforts within their own context and to critically think about how a strategy might or might not be appropriate for the demographic group or groups they intend to focus their work on.

There is a lack of research about evidence-based strategies targeting individuals of many marginalized backgrounds, such as those with disabilities and LGBTQ+ individuals. We hope that organizations will think broadly about what diversity entails and act to increase diversity among leadership and staff in a holistic way. As DEI efforts become more diverse, equitable, and inclusive, we anticipate that research and evaluation of these efforts will follow.

Additionally, it is important to note that leaders and other organization staff have intersecting identities, such as race, class, and gender; all of which interact in unique ways. Literature that examines the experiences of intersecting identities is emerging, but still limited. The findings summarized below should be viewed with intersectionality in mind, and those working in the field of diversity, equity, and inclusion should continue to monitor the literature to better understand how their work affects the multitude of identities we each hold.

## Bias and cultural competence training

Trainings are one of the most common strategies employers use to further their DEI efforts. However, trainings vary greatly in the topics they cover, their depth and intensity, and their goals. Accordingly, research suggests that the impact of trainings also varies. Some research suggests these trainings can have a positive impact. In a survey of Black professionals, the Center for Talent Innovation (2019) found that providing bias training for all staff may increase satisfaction, advancement, and retention among Black employees. Additionally, trainings targeting ageism have yielded positive effects, including more positive attitudes toward aging, a stronger understanding of ageism, and greater confidence in working cross-generationally (Harllee et al., 2019). Lastly, in an evaluation of the efficacy of a mental health training, Dimoff and Kelloway (2019) found that leaders who received the training were more likely to share information and resources about mental health and to be more supportive of mental health concerns among staff, and staff whose leaders received the training were more likely to seek and use mental health resources.

However, other research indicates mixed findings regarding the efficacy of trainings. In a 2019 study of nonprofit staff on the racial leadership gap in the nonprofit sector, White respondents were more likely to perceive trainings positively than BIPOC employees (Kunreuther & Thomas-Breitfeld, 2020). BIPOC focus group attendees expressed concern regarding training content, “which frequently presents information that is new for many White people but not for people of color, resulting in a DEI experience that focuses on White staff and board members rather than how to improve the workplace experience for people of color” (p. 35). BIPOC participants also expressed concerns regarding the implementation of DEI efforts as “a means to check DEI efforts off an organizational to-do list” (p. 35) rather than meaningfully addressing DEI issues.

Additionally, Caleo and Heilman (2019) conducted a meta-analysis of diversity efforts to reduce gender bias in the workplace, including bias trainings. Overall, they found that positive attitudinal and behavioral outcomes from trainings are fleeting. Participants who express less bias and are more tolerant and welcoming of women in the workplace in both attitude and behavior quickly revert back to their previous attitudes and behaviors. In a review of diversity training research spanning over 40 years, Bezrukova and colleagues (2016) also found evidence that the positive attitudinal changes often seen after trainings decline over time.

Furthermore, trainings may yield unintended and undesirable consequences. Research exploring the use of tools that assess implicit bias against a particular marginalized group has found that individuals often respond defensively after receiving results indicating bias, reducing their likelihood of engaging in egalitarian behavior (Howell et al., 2017). Trainings can also promote stereotypes and amplify differences between groups; efforts to increase awareness of the pervasiveness of gender bias in the workplace have been found to normalize these beliefs, and discussing bias as implicit or unconscious can reduce perceptions of individual accountability for reducing these biases (Caleo & Heilman, 2019).

However, research suggests strategies employers can use to ensure the efficacy of training. Trainings may be most effective when designed to empower participants and capitalize on participants’ desire for all staff to be treated fairly, allowing individuals “to see themselves as agents of change rather than as targets of bias-reduction initiatives” (Dover et al., 2020, p. 172). It is important to use these trainings to affirm that individuals have control over their biases and to encourage motivation to reduce their own biases (Legault et al., 2011). Similarly, in a randomized controlled study of an intervention designed to reduce gender bias, Carnes and colleagues (2015) identified self-efficacy to promote gender equity as particularly crucial in determining the intervention’s impact. Specifically, intervention participants identified specific behaviors they could practice to promote gender equity in their daily lives, and increases in attitudes of self-efficacy around promoting gender equity were sustained three months after the intervention. Carter and colleagues (2020) came to a similar conclusion in their review of research on anti-bias

trainings. The authors argued that trainings should focus on increasing bias awareness and behavior change, as a dual approach can yield positive outcomes regarding both attitudes and behavior.

Additional evidence-based strategies to maximize effectiveness include integrating perspective taking, in which participants are prompted to consider the perspective of an individual from a marginalized background (Lindsey et al., 2015). Furthermore, trainings that focus on similarities between groups of women and men are more effective at reducing gender bias in the workplace (Nishii, 2013).

Trainings are also more likely to be effective when they are more intensive. In their review of effective DEI strategies, Roberson and colleagues (2020) concluded that trainings should be interactive, and longer trainings showed greater impact on attitudes and knowledge. Other research suggests participants are more likely to perceive a positive impact from a training initiative when more topics are covered (e.g., implicit bias, structural racism, White privilege) rather than fewer (Kunreuther & Thomas-Breitfeld, 2020).

Similarly, Thomas (2018) noted that trainings should not be implemented as a one-off intervention. Instead, long-term efforts were most successful in reducing implicit bias. Carter and colleagues (2020) also described the importance of including training as only one part of a broader DEI strategy, which could include other efforts such as modifying organizational policies, implementing accountability mechanisms for reducing bias, improving the process for reporting and addressing bias-related incidents, and offering opportunities for staff from marginalized communities to connect. The authors posited that an integrated training approach “communicate[s] the message that bias is malleable and can be changed over time, which can encourage individuals to adopt bias-management strategies” (p. 60).

## **Workplace policies**

Workplace policies can have a significant impact on the extent to which organizations are diverse, equitable, and inclusive. For example, clearly defining “inclusive behavior” and holding staff accountable for not adhering to these expectations may increase satisfaction with advancement and retention among Black employees (Center for Talent Innovation, 2019).

In their critique of the traditional discrimination and harassment complaint process found in many organizations, Dobbin and Kalev (2020) described how the current system (in which an employee files a complaint with human resources, and the employer investigates and implements disciplinary action if needed) often fails to adequately address the concern. The authors described how “complainants often face career-ending retaliation” (p.24), noting that half of complaints ultimately result in retaliation. In addition, employees accused of discrimination or harassment rarely experience consequences, such as being sanctioned or terminated. Policies also often include confidentiality clauses, prohibiting disclosure of the issue to other staff and allowing the accused employee to continue with discriminating or harassing behavior. Fidas and Cooper (2018) noted that one of the top reasons self-identified LGBTQ workers did not report negative comments about LGBTQ people was due to a lack of trust their employer would address the issue.

Dobbin and Kalev (2020) suggest employers provide alternative options, such as ombudsman programs, in which a neutral and independent party assists the employee in addressing the issue, and dispute resolution programs, in which a dispute resolution office uses arbitration and mediation strategies. Online reporting systems may also be helpful, allowing employees to submit anonymous complaints and employers to assess areas of concern.

While policy changes are often needed to ensure DEI efforts fulfill their potential, unintended consequences of these workplace policies should be considered. For example, although affirmative action policies can increase workforce diversity (Roberson et al., 2020), they may make beneficiaries of these policies question their own qualifications for the positions they have been promoted or hired into, which causes their confidence and motivation to suffer (Caleo & Heilman, 2019). Roberson and colleagues (2020) also noted that past research has yielded mixed findings regarding the efficacy of tying performance evaluations to diversity goals, concluding, “[these policies can] actually make the managers more biased, because they focus more on achieving the goal than on the processes for reaching it” (p. 45). We do not intend to suggest that these policies and practices should not be used at all; instead, we hope for organizations to consider unintended consequences that might follow new or existing policies and practices and take active steps to avoid negative consequences for the very groups these policies intend to benefit.

Unintended consequences have also been found in certain policies implemented to benefit women, who are often primary caregivers in addition to working outside the home; these include options to work remotely or participate in part-time work. The United States has typically led Western, economically advanced countries in female labor force participation, though its standing has been slipping in recent years (Blau & Kahn, 2013). A study of the effect of “female-friendly” policies and their economic outcomes found that these policies encourage women to work part-time and in lower-level positions than they might otherwise be employed in and may limit their opportunities for career advancement (Blau & Kahn, 2013). Organizations should examine female-friendly policies and ensure they do not disproportionately keep women from advancing in their organization for those that wish to do so.

Changes to organizational policies are best implemented when employers clearly communicate the purposes of the policies to their staff. In a study assessing the impact of a workshop aimed at educating faculty members on evidence-based, equitable hiring practices, Sekaquapetewa and colleagues (2019) found that those who attended the workshop had more favorable attitudes toward the implementation of such practices compared to faculty who did not attend the workshop.

## **Hiring and promotions**

Researchers have long identified the bias pervasive in traditional hiring practices. For example, men are generally perceived as more competent and receive higher starting salaries than equally qualified women (Moss-Racusin et al., 2012), and job applicants with “White-sounding” names are more likely to receive an interview request relative to equally qualified applicants with “Black-sounding” names (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004). Researchers have identified several strategies employers can use to address bias in the hiring process.

Some researchers have suggested using technological features and tools to aid in selection, such as hiding demographic information and names from applications and partially basing decisions on an applicant’s performance on an assessment or tasks relevant to the position (Trindel et al., 2020). However, it is important to note that technology-based strategies are often biased. For example, algorithms are frequently trained on datasets of current and/or past employees, which may disproportionately include White people, men, and individuals of other privileged identities, ensuring the tool will perpetuate existing bias (Trindel et al., 2020). Trindel and colleagues (2020) suggest employers use the following strategies when employing technology-based solutions to address bias in hiring practices:

- Hide information that may indicate a candidate’s demographics
- Focus on assessments and tasks that are objectively relevant to the position and, if possible, predictive of success

- Assess bias in algorithms and all other hiring tools proactively, before using it to evaluate candidates
- Audit the hiring process and tools for bias after using them to evaluate candidates and adjust the process and tools accordingly

Another evidence-based hiring strategy employers can use to improve the diversity of their workforce is cluster hiring, in which multiple staff are hired at the same time. Kossek and colleagues (2017) recommend using cluster hiring to reduce tokenism and stigmatization of women in the workplace. Additionally, in a study of the impact of faculty cluster hiring on workplace climate and faculty diversity, Urban Universities for Health (2015) found evidence of this strategy's potential to increase diversity, even when increasing diversity was not the goal. The authors also identified several best practices that may be useful for employers from all sectors interested in using cluster hiring to increase the diversity of their workforce:

- Prioritize early engagement and buy-in from staff and leadership, which could include allowing current staff to provide feedback on the development and implementation of cluster hiring processes
- Provide clear communication about the practice to both current staff and staff hired through cluster hiring, such as the purpose and potential benefits of using cluster hiring
- Evaluate the impact of cluster hiring and communicate evaluation findings to all staff

Other practices and policies specific to hiring can play an integral role in achieving DEI-related goals. Araten-Bergman (2016) found that having an official hiring policy for people with disabilities has a stronger impact than managers' expressed intentions and interests on whether people with disabilities are actually hired. In an assessment of how hiring decisions are affected by the racial diversity of the hiring committee, Bowman Williams (2018) found that more diverse committees were more likely to hire and promote members of underrepresented groups, and members of more diverse committees were "more likely to value diversity, acknowledge structural discrimination, and favor inclusive promotion decisions" (p. 1593). In addition, research indicates that requiring job openings to be posted for current staff can increase the diversity of an organization's managers (Roberson et al., 2020).

In a review of evidence-based strategies to increase diversity and improve equity in hiring faculty members, Bhalla (2019) describes the critical role advertising plays. The author suggests maximizing the breadth of the advertisement to yield a high number of applicants and placing advertisements in locations most likely to be seen by individuals from underrepresented groups (e.g., racial, ethnic, or cultural group association job boards; sharing postings on Twitter using a relevant hashtag such as #BlackandSTEM). The author also recommends employers convey their commitment to DEI issues and "how the values and successes of candidates from underrepresented groups will contribute to this mission" (p. 2746). Other researchers have found that employers should go further than simply stating their organization encourages individuals from underrepresented backgrounds to apply; rather, employers should increase their proactive recruiting strategies by utilizing their networks and connecting personally with candidates (Peek et al., 2013).

Researchers have also identified clear pathways to advancement and unambiguous practices for promotions as crucial to the recruitment and retention of staff from underrepresented backgrounds (Peek et al., 2013; Roberson et al., 2020; Walton et al., 2015). Furthermore, employers should reduce ambiguity regarding how performance is assessed in performance reviews and for performance-based rewards (such as performance bonuses) to reduce bias against women in the workplace (Kossek et al., 2017). Additional research indicates the importance of providing performance feedback in a way that explicitly acknowledges that the reviewer holds high standards for the task, and that the reviewer believes the staff member can meet those standards (Walton et al., 2015). The authors note that this strategy reduces ambiguity and stereotype threat, a "situational phenomenon that arises

when people face the prospect of being viewed or evaluated in light of a negative stereotype about a group they belong to” (p. 524).

It is important to note the importance of having a diverse workforce in the recruitment and retention of staff from marginalized backgrounds. For example, individual women benefit from having women well represented within a workplace, so it is important to hire in a way that intentionally brings in more women (Kossek et al., 2017). Thomas (2018) discusses how long-term exposure to female role models (defined within this article as a year or more) has been found to reduce women’s own stereotypical beliefs about themselves. Similarly, Wilton and colleagues (2019) found that while Latinx and African American staff did not report greater levels of belonging in an organization that expressed values related to diversity, belonging increased when the organization demonstrated that they actually had a diverse workforce.

## **Staff programming**

Employers often implement staff programming as part of their DEI efforts. Informed by a series of case studies and interviews, the Public Policy Institute of the AARP (Trawinski, 2016) suggests several programming efforts employers can implement to address age diversity issues in the workplace, including:

- Employee resource groups
- Cross-generational mentoring programs to encourage the sharing of information and knowledge
- Programs designed to assist employees reentering the workforce

Similarly, facilitating conversations about race, such as workplace forums, may increase satisfaction with advancement and retention among Black employees (Center for Talent Innovation, 2019).

Mentoring initiatives may help improve DEI, by providing a safe space to network, share experiences, reduce isolation, and receive career guidance. In a recent survey of professionals in North America regarding their experience with mentoring, women and individuals from underrepresented racial and ethnic minority groups were most likely to report that their mentoring relationship was important to their career, and the latter were most likely to report satisfaction with formal mentoring programs they had participated in (Emrich et al., 2017). Other research indicates participants of mentoring initiatives aimed at individuals from underrepresented groups report positive outcomes and experiences (Corcoran et al., 2020; Han & Ariri Onchwari, 2018).

Employers may also wish to provide or support leadership development programs aimed at staff from marginalized backgrounds. In an evaluation of a program aimed at increasing the representation of people from marginalized sexual orientations and racial and ethnic backgrounds in leadership positions within HIV/AIDS service organizations, Quinn and colleagues (2020) found that the program increased leadership skills and confidence among participants, but also noted the need for broader changes in areas such as hiring and promotion practices. While pipeline programs and pipeline program research are mostly limited to those that focus on students and/or the health care workforce, research suggests their potential to increase the representation of underrepresented groups (Formicola et al., 2009; Mason et al., 2016; Mason et al., 2017; Patel et al., 2015).

While little research exists that assesses the impact of employee resource groups on the diversity of organizations, researchers have found they can strengthen the visibility and the voices of staff from marginalized backgrounds (Colgan & McKearney, 2012; McNulty et al., 2018). In addition, Green (2018) found they provide a space for participants to share their experiences, discuss difficult topics, and “consider how best to integrate their cultural ways of being and value systems into what they described as corporate American culture, which, for some members,

was in direct contradiction to their own” (p. 640). Participants also use the spaces to educate their organization’s broader workforce on issues relevant to their group’s identity, and some have even focused on leadership development activities to create a more informal version of a leadership pipeline program (Green, 2018).

For staff with disabilities, mental health concerns, or chronic health issues, employers often provide return-to-work coordination. Evidence suggests these efforts are most effective when they involve coordination between the employee, health care providers, and the workplace, and when they target multiple domains, including accommodations and modifications (e.g., modified working hours or tasks), service coordination (e.g., communication between a workplace and a health care provider to develop a return-to-work plan), and facilitation of the delivery of health services (e.g., physical therapy provided at a workplace; Cancelliere et al., 2016; Cullen et al., 2017).

Employers should ensure information about available accommodations is readily accessible. For individuals with mental health needs, this may be particularly important, as research suggests low levels of knowledge among both employees and employers regarding workplace accommodations and disability discrimination legislation as they relate to mental health (McDowell & Fossey, 2015).

Employers should also ensure the cultural responsiveness of their DEI programming efforts. For example, in their assessment of a mentoring program aimed at staff of color, Han and Ariri Onchwari (2018) describe several strategies used to ensure cultural responsiveness, such as providing the opportunity for individuals from the targeted group to provide input on the design and implementation of the program and focusing on strengths within the program, particularly viewing one’s cultural identity as a strength.

In addition to the potential benefits of staff programming, organizations should consider potential unintended consequences. In their review of research on the unintended consequences of DEI initiatives, Dover and colleagues (2020) note these efforts “can lead to the inference that targeted groups need help to succeed because they lack competence” (p. 167). Similarly, Cundiff and colleagues (2018) found both women and men reported greater levels of discomfort and a weaker sense of fit with a company that provided professional development opportunities aimed specifically at women compared to programming with a broader scope. The authors found that the focus on providing opportunities to women encouraged women to anticipate stereotypes and bias, while it alienated men, reducing their likelihood of engaging in gender equity work.

Regardless of the type of programming, employers should be mindful of placing burden on individuals from marginalized backgrounds, as they are often disproportionately asked to participate on committees, workgroups, and mentoring programs (Peek et al., 2013).

## **Workplace culture**

To improve recruitment and retention of staff from underrepresented backgrounds, employers need to ensure their workplace culture values DEI. Workplace cultures have largely been created by and designed to reward the values and practices of individuals with privileged identities, including those that identify as White, men, cisgender, heterosexual, and able-bodied. This can prevent employees of marginalized backgrounds from succeeding and feeling welcome in their work environments. For example, in a national survey of self-identified LGBTQ people, Fidas and Cooper (2018) found unwelcoming environments led to a variety of negative consequences regarding employee engagement and retention, such as employees feeling distracted, unhappy, or depressed; staying home from work; avoiding social work events such as happy hours; and leaving their organization altogether. The authors also noted that one in four LGBTQ workers have remained in their position primarily because of an accepting work environment.

For staff with disabilities and mental health concerns, workplace culture can impact their decision whether to disclose a disability or mental health need, a necessary step to obtaining accommodations. Staff who report having supportive relationships with supervisors and co-workers and perceive their employer having higher levels of dedication to disability inclusion are more likely to feel comfortable disclosing a disability (Peterson et al., 2017; von Schrader et al., 2014).

Leadership commitment is crucial to improving workplace culture and the success of DEI efforts (Peek et al., 2013). Academic institutions with greater levels of representation of staff from marginalized communities describe how leaders of these institutions are “visionaries with an explicit commitment to workforce diversity, ... enhancing recruitment and retention through proactive recruitment, mentoring and active communication, and a culture that promotes faculty diversity, and resource allocation” (Peek et al., 2013, p. 7). Peek and colleagues (2013) also note that leadership commitment is crucial to allocating funds and staff time to DEI efforts.

The ways in which current leaders interact with their employees and their prioritization of inclusive leadership can play a significant role in how employees experience the workplace. Jin and colleagues (2017) conducted an assessment in the public sector of the impact of inclusive leadership, defined as the extent to which staff perceive leadership as respectful; supportive; sensitive to the needs of all staff; and committed to open communication and a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workforce. The authors found that inclusive leadership predicted employee performance more strongly for BIPOC staff relative to White staff, while strong diversity policies predicted employee performance more strongly for White staff relative to BIPOC staff. Similarly, other research has found that perceptions of inclusion among employees are greater when leaders prioritize building strong relationships and ensuring high quality interactions with their employees, such as conveying respect and trust (Brimhall et al., 2017).

Additionally, Kossek and colleagues (2017) suggest that workplaces should adjust their cultures to be more inclusive of women, including focusing more on relational elements of the work, promoting a more collaborative than competitive culture, rewarding teamwork and “helping behaviors,” and encouraging mentorship to foster women’s careers. They also suggest that leaders within the workplace model good work-life balance, rather than rewarding overwork, and not using “face time,” or the extent to which staff are physically present in the office, as a measure of performance.

Encouraging positive relationships, social support, and knowledge sharing in the workplace can also yield positive benefits. Dover and colleagues argue, “one of the most well-established strategies for reducing prejudice and fostering positive intergroup relations involves no training...the key to positive intergroup relations is equal-status, cooperative, and interdependent contact with outgroup members” (p. 173). In a study of veterans with posttraumatic stress symptoms, Harris and colleagues (2017) demonstrated that social support predicts job satisfaction, and Lysaght and colleagues (2012) found that social support can help facilitate the process of returning to work after an absence related to a disability. Research also indicates positive intergenerational contact and knowledge sharing across generations can reduce ageism and improve attitudes toward older adults (Iweins et al., 2013; Lagacé et al., 2019; Yaghoobzadeh et al., 2020).

## **Oversight and assessing impact**

Research demonstrates the importance of ensuring there is oversight for an organization’s DEI efforts, and that the team or individual responsible for oversight has sufficient resources, support from leaders, and adequate authority to implement changes (Roberson et al., 2020). Additionally, researchers agree that employers should identify clear, measurable goals for their DEI initiatives, and they should regularly assess progress toward those goals.



Before implementing DEI efforts, Carter and colleagues (2020) suggest first collecting information to understand DEI issues within their organization to inform the prioritization of DEI efforts and identify areas of concern to target. Employers may want to collect and analyze data on staff changes, such as recruiting, hiring, promotions, pay, and retention (Hirsh & Tomaskovic-Devey, 2020). Additional metrics could include assessing staff engagement and the sense of connection staff have to the organization, staff perceptions of how well their organization currently addresses DEI issues and of their organization's DEI efforts, and how DEI efforts impact the productivity of the organization as a whole.

Hirsh and Tomaskovic-Devey (2020) also suggest prioritizing transparency to maximize accountability and, if possible, comparing the data to similar organizations. Dashboards and scorecards may be useful to ensure transparency and easy access to findings, and organizations should set clear guidelines regarding how results will be used to ensure accountability (Hubbard, 2004).

## Key takeaways

We provide the following key takeaways from the literature for leaders and others in decision-making roles who aim to implement policies and procedures at their workplaces to support leaders from under-represented groups.

### Bias and cultural competence training

- Be aware that bias and cultural competence training is not sufficient. The literature is unclear about whether or not these trainings lead to shifts in attitudes or behaviors. In fact, these trainings have been found in some studies to actually increase the amount of stereotyping and bias in the workplace.
- Increase the effectiveness of trainings by covering a variety of topics, focusing on self-efficacy and empowerment, integrating interactive components, and ensuring sufficient duration and intensity to yield positive outcomes.
- Utilize training as one component of a larger approach to shifting attitudes and behavior in the workplace to be more inclusive and equitable, which could include multiple training sessions interwoven with changes in policies and practices.

### Workplace policies

- Understand that current discrimination and harassment complaint processes often do more harm than good for those lodging complaints, and that those who perpetuate discrimination and harassment rarely face consequences through these systems. Alternative options should be explored, including ombudsman programs and anonymous online complaint reporting systems.
- Define “inclusive behavior” clearly for your organization and hold staff accountable if they are not following these expectations.
- Clearly communicate the purpose of workplaces policies regarding DEI efforts.

## Hiring and promotions

- Consider technological approaches to reducing bias in the hiring process, including hiding demographic information and names from applications. However, employers should note that technology-based strategies are often biased themselves, so proceed with caution and in an informed way.
- Utilize cluster hiring, in which multiple staff are hired at the same time. This has been found to increase diversity of new hires and reduce tokenism and stigmatization.
- Create an official policy for hiring people with disabilities, rather than relying on managers' expressed intentions or interests alone.
- Advertise open positions broadly and place advertisements in locations that are likely to be seen by individuals from underrepresented groups.
- Be explicit about your organization's commitment to DEI in job postings.
- Commit to proactive recruiting strategies in underrepresented communities.
- Identify clear pathways for promotion and advancement within your organization and reduce ambiguity in performance reviews and performance-based rewards.

## Staff programming

- Provide or support mentoring initiatives and leadership development programs aimed at and tailored for staff from underrepresented communities. These programs should be complemented by continuous assessment of hiring and promotion policies and practices to identify and remove systemic barriers.
- Create and support employee resource groups for staff from communities currently underrepresented in leadership.
- Be mindful of the burden placed on individuals from underrepresented backgrounds to participate in committees, workgroups, and mentoring programs, as these often fall outside of the stated expectations for their positions and create additional work (emotional and otherwise).

## Workplace culture

- Be explicit about your organization's commitment to DEI.
- Allocate resources, including funds and staff time, to DEI efforts.
- Prioritize relationship-building with and among staff and convey respect for and trust in their employees.
- Focus more on relational aspects of your organization's work, promote a more collaborative than competitive culture, reward teamwork, and encourage mentorship within your organization.
- Model good work-life balance and instill an expectation that employees also adhere to a good work-life balance.

## Oversight and assessing impact

- Ensure sufficient oversight of DEI efforts and prioritize accountability and transparency.
- Identify clear and measurable goals, continuously track progress, and ensure evaluation efforts involve assessing unintended consequences of all DEI efforts.

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