



DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ON BOARDS – A TOOLKIT

To help Queensland Government agencies increase participation and representation of all Queenslanders on government boards, committees and other bodies



Queensland
Government

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Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (DCYJMA) acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands across the State of Queensland, and pays our respects to the Elders past, present, and emerging. We pay our respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ancestors of this land, their spirits and their legacy. The foundations laid by these ancestors—our First Nations peoples—gives strength, inspiration and courage to current and future generations, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, towards creating a better Queensland.

Acknowledgment of Partnership

This Toolkit was developed by the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs through research of existing toolkits and resources and in collaboration with the Queensland Government Departments of: the Premier and Cabinet; Justice and Attorney-General (Office for Women); Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships; and Environment and Science (Office for Youth).

Thanks to the individuals and agencies who gave their time and feedback to make this toolkit a unique resource on how to support, promote and nurture diversity and inclusion on Queensland Government boards.

More information




The Queensland Government is committed to providing accessible services to Queenslanders from all cultural and linguistic backgrounds. To talk to someone about this toolkit in your preferred language call 1800 512 451 and ask to speak with the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs.

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INTRODUCTION



The Queensland Government is committed to increasing diversity on the boards, committees and other bodies that govern our public sector entities and advise decision makers. This toolkit is your go-to guide on how to increase diversity and inclusion on Queensland Government boards and other bodies. It contains ideas and practical steps to build the participation and representation of:

- > Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- > people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- > people with disability
- > women
- > young people
- > seniors
- > people who are LGBTIQ+.

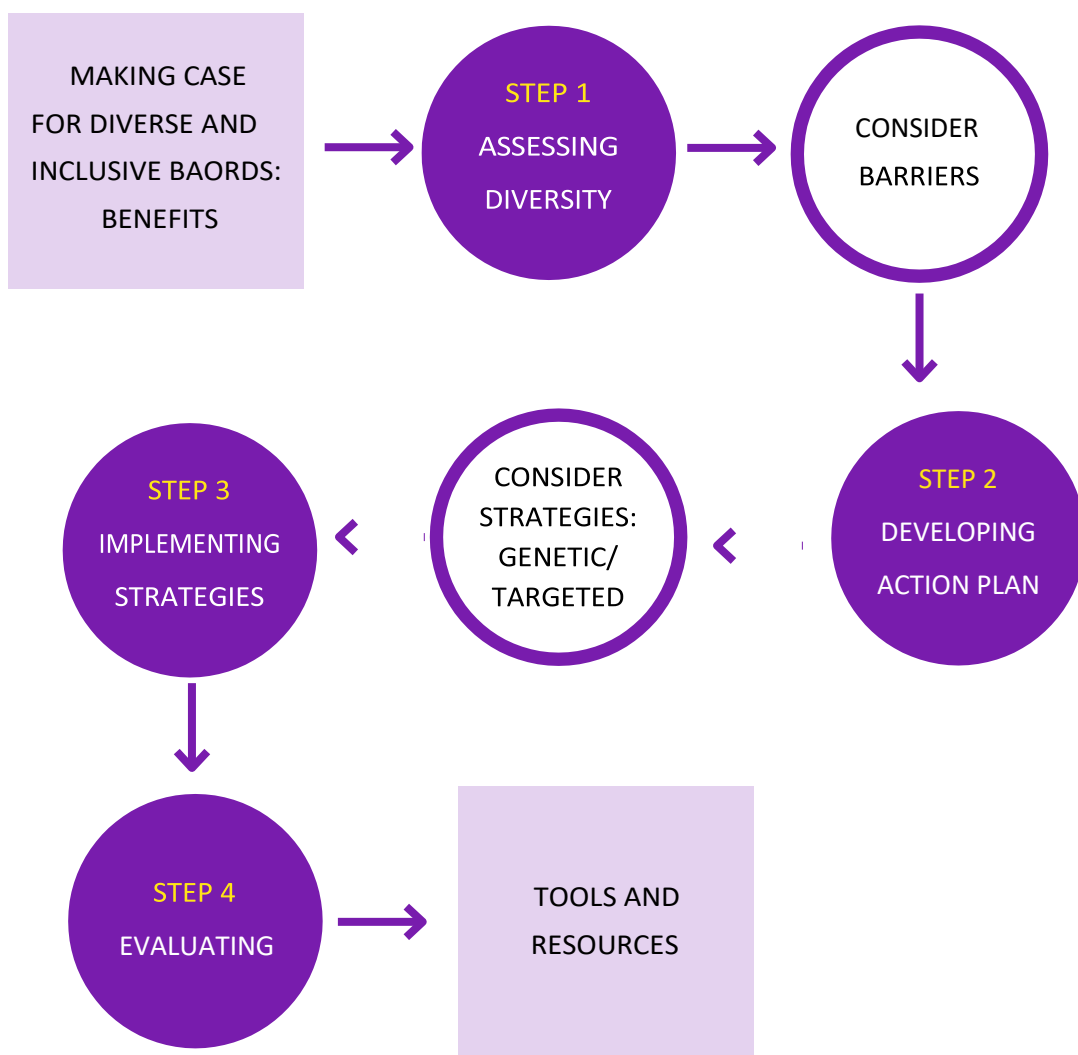
Scope

This toolkit gives practical guidance on how to recruit qualified applicants from diverse backgrounds. It will be useful for:

- > government officers involved in recruitment and selection of new board members
- > external board recruiters supporting recruitment and selection
- > current board chairs and members looking to increase the diversity of their boards and model inclusive behaviours
- > The toolkit complements the [Queensland Government Women on Boards](#) online resources.

How to use this toolkit

- > Part 1 summarises the benefits of diversity and inclusion, and barriers to participation
- > Part 2 details practical steps you can take to increase, sustain and nurture diverse boards
- > Part 3 gives targeted strategies for different diversity groups
- > Part 4 provides tools and resources for implementing the steps



There is no 'one size fits all' model for diversifying boards or making them more inclusive. We encourage you to adapt this toolkit and add your own ideas to meet your board's specific circumstances, priorities and knowledge about diverse groups.





INTRODUCTION

Background

Government boards are usually established by or under an Act of Parliament or by Ministers. Ministers are generally responsible for board appointments, with Cabinet considering significant appointments. The membership of Queensland Government boards should broadly mirror the diversity of Queensland communities, with best practice recruitment and selection processes being:

- > merit based – appointees selected on merit
- > fair – the selection process managed consistently for all candidates
- > open – vacancies advertised publicly to attract a strong and diverse range of candidates.

Members of the public with relevant experience or expertise may be considered for membership of government boards when a new government board is established, when casual vacancies arise and when a board or member's term of office is due to expire.

It is essential that originating agencies (seeking to recruit board members) fully consult with other interested or affected agencies, including in accordance with the requirements of the Queensland Cabinet Handbook.

PART ONE
BENEFITS AND BARRIERS

BENEFITS AND BARRIERS

The diversity dividend – everyone benefits

The latest evidence shows clearly that decision-making, service delivery and organisational legitimacy are all improved when governing bodies genuinely reflect the diversity of communities and stakeholders:

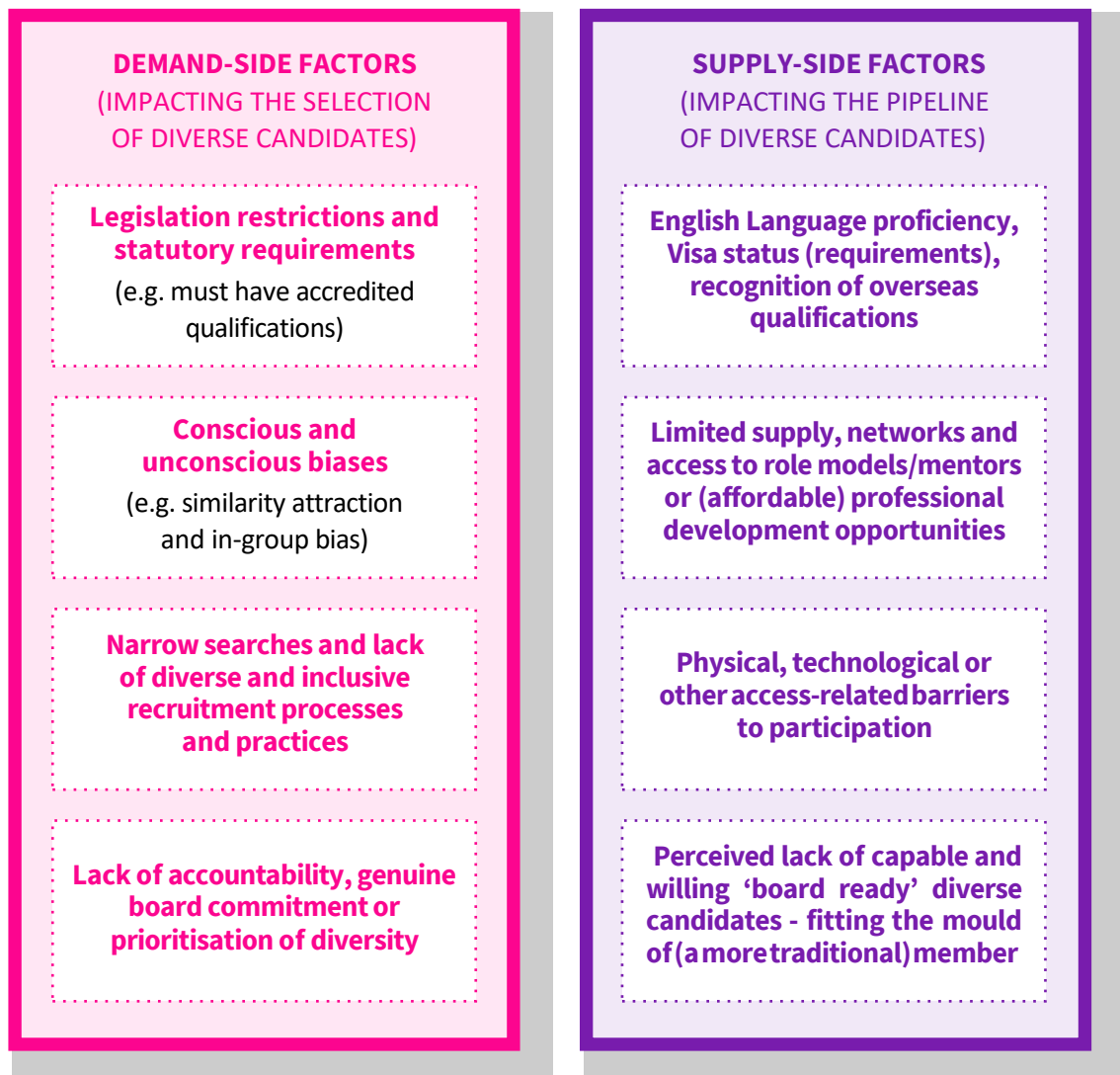
- > the Institute of Community Directors Australia showed that having diverse and inclusive boards can bring about better organisational performance—both financial and non-financial (<https://communitydirectors.com.au/tools-resources/board-diversity>).
- > Deloitte found that diverse and inclusive boards are higher performing and more innovative (<https://www2.deloitte.com/au/en/pages/economics/articles/toward-gender-parity-women-on-boards-initiative.html>).

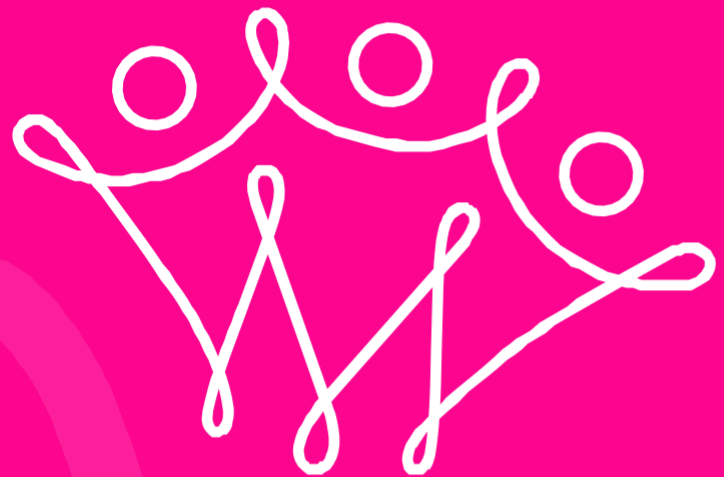
Diverse boards bring together diverse experiences, which allows issues to be examined from different perspectives, leading to new ways of thinking about problems and solutions. High performing boards are also inclusive, where all members are treated fairly and have genuine opportunities to contribute.



The barriers to participation

Barriers to inclusion and participation can be broadly categorised as demand-driven (impacting the selection of diverse candidates) or supply-driven (impacting the pipeline of diverse candidates):





PART TWO

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN FOUR STEPS

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN FOUR STEPS

You can easily promote diversity and inclusion on boards using four practical steps. These can be used by board chairs, board members, recruitment and selection staff, and external board recruiters.

- > Step 1 – Assess the level of diversity and inclusion on your board
- > Step 2 – Develop an action plan to achieve diversity goals and overcome barriers
- > Step 3 – Implement strategies that support diversity and inclusion
- > Step 4 – Evaluate your efforts by measuring and reporting your initiatives.

STEP 1 –

Assess diversity and inclusion

Considerations

- > Understand your board's current diversity and reflect on potential barriers to address.
- > Look deeper than the surface and avoid labels—not all diverse boards are inclusive and not all inclusive boards are diverse.
- > Tokenistic appointments of diverse (but not suitably qualified or engaged) candidates can undermine the benefits and perceptions of diversity.
- > Resources to help you understand and assess the diversity of your board include:
 - ▶ Diversity and Inclusion on Boards – Maturity Matrix (Attachment 1)
 - ▶ Workplace Cultural Diversity Tool (<https://culturaldiversity.humanrights.gov.au/>).

STEP 2 –

Develop an action plan

Considerations

- > Think of your action plan as a roadmap to embed diversity and inclusion in the board's culture, systems and processes.
- > Focus on actions in the following three areas:
 - ▶ Attract, select and retain diverse talent
 - ▶ Create a diverse, inclusive and engaged culture
 - ▶ Develop and support diverse talent to achieve their full potential.
- Seek out lessons learned and best practices of other agencies.

- > Use the action plan template (Attachment 2), based on the [4As Framework](#), to help decision-makers become agents of change.
- > Examples of transformative initiatives are grouped below.

Leading the way (embedding policies, systems and culture)

- > Integrate diversity and inclusion goals and metrics into all aspects of your board's performance — recruitment planning, monitoring actions, measuring outcomes and celebrating successes.
 - > Avoid treating diversity groups as separate 'issues' to be addressed — recognise the compounding effects of different types of diversity.
 - > Professionally develop board members with an understanding of diversity and inclusion, [unconscious bias](#) and [inclusive leadership](#) — provide them with cultural capability training, and ask them to complete the [Harvard Implicit Association Test](#) and discuss their results.
 - > Embed inclusive language and thinking into all board practices and processes — see the Diversity Council of Australia's guide, [Words At Work – Building inclusion through the power of language](#).
 - > Provide pathways to board membership — such as mentoring opportunities for individuals from diverse backgrounds.
 - > Encourage recognition of diversity — such as NAIDOC Week, Harmony Day and International Day of People with Disability, to demonstrate your commitment to diversity and inclusion.
- > See the Responsible Gambling Advisory Committee case study from the Department of Justice and Attorney-General (Attachment 3).

Attracting, selecting and retaining diverse talent

- > Search the Queensland Register of Nominees for suitable diverse candidates.
- > Consult relevant government agencies when faced with specific challenges identifying nominees from diverse groups.
- > Think about how applicants enter your recruitment pipeline and consider a wider variety of hiring paths to address gaps, such as:
 - ▶ using non-traditional advertising avenues or specialist employment service providers
 - ▶ linking with networks and forums, such as [Women in Technology](#) or LinkedIn
 - ▶ using media targeted at diverse demographics
 - ▶ using 'blind' applications and CVs (removing bias triggers, such as names, age and gender) when shortlisting.
- > Ensure your interview panel includes diverse viewpoints and people of diverse backgrounds.
- > Consider guaranteeing an interview for candidates of diversity groups who meet minimum requirements.
- > Promote and support flexible workplaces that are inclusive of all family structures and circumstances.
- > Introduce feedback mechanisms to understand how your board is viewed by its members and key stakeholders.



MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN FOUR STEPS

- > Ensure your online content and correspondence is compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 AA and accessible for people with disabilities.
- > Refer to Part three for strategies tailored to particular diversity groups. Part four has useful links.
- > See Key considerations for board recruiters (Attachment 4) for a quick checklist on recruiting for diversity and inclusion.

STEP 3 – Implement actions

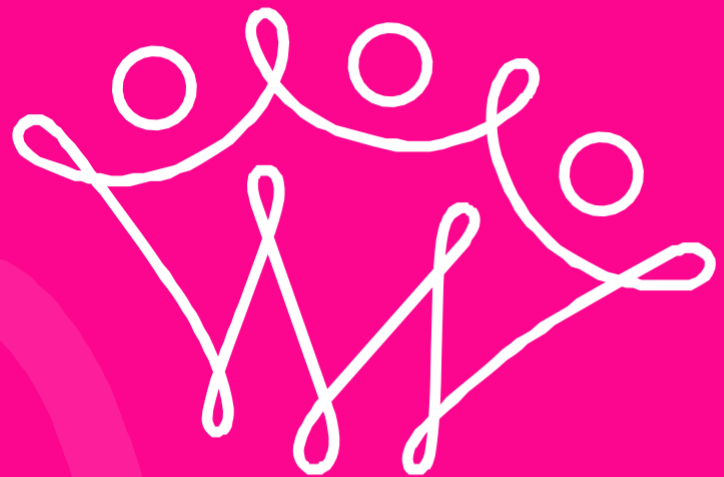
- > Emphasise to all involved that sustainable change requires collective commitment and deliberate actions.
- > Embed diversity and inclusion outcomes into the board's strategic and performance systems.
- > Celebrate and share positive outcomes.

STEP 4 – Evaluate

- > Identify how you will measure and evaluate your efforts and outcomes:
 - ▶ Develop appropriate performance indicators.
 - ▶ Consider using surveys, interviews, workshops, focus groups or consultations.
- > Try using a range of quantitative and qualitative methods to collect evidence.
- > Document an evaluation report and communicate your findings.
- > Reflect on change achieved and compare outcomes with desired changes.
- > Remember that one person cannot represent diversity for everyone — people need to be recognised for all the skills and talent they can contribute.

- > Question how successful your initiatives are at improving diversity and inclusion:
 - ▶ How are my initiatives being implemented?
 - ▶ Are diverse candidates/applicants being reached as intended?
 - ▶ How well did the initiatives work?
 - ▶ Are there aspects that could have been improved?
 - ▶ How are the initiatives contributing to a more diverse applicant pool?
 - ▶ What are the features of the initiatives that made a difference?
 - ▶ Did the initiative produce any unintended outcomes (positive and negative)?
 - ▶ Is the board more diverse and inclusive as a result? If not, why not?
 - ▶ What has helped/hindered our efforts?
- > For (additional) useful links and resources on developing an action plan see Attachment 5.





PART THREE
TARGETED STRATEGIES

TARGETED STRATEGIES

This section provides practical advice, useful resources and additional links that help you increase representation and participation of particular diversity groups on a board:

- > Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- > People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- > People with disability
- > Women
- > Young people
- > Seniors
- > People who are LGBTIQ+.

Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples

- > Seek to better understand Aboriginal culture and Torres Strait Islander culture and recognise the rich diversity between and within communities.
- > Recognise the many barriers to equitable participation in decision-making.
- > Respect social and kinship systems and engage respectfully within cultural and community protocols.
- > Work to identify and eliminate recruitment bias with cultural training and adapting communication methods to meet the needs of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- > Seek out the diverse views and lived experiences of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including as potential members of other diversity groups.
- > Use multiple channels and a mix of mainstream and Indigenous media channels for promoting board vacancies, including culturally specific elements.
- > Use local voices to deliver information, noting that most Indigenous languages are verbal and may not be able to be translated into written form.
- > Use regional Queensland Government staff to gain local knowledge, access community leaders and identify local communication preferences and channels.
- > Consider specific recruitment strategies, such as:
 - ▶ engaging directly with peak bodies, communities and Elders
 - ▶ offering an interview to any person who meets minimum requirements
 - ▶ allowing applications in audio format

TARGETED STRATEGIES

- ▶ engaging specialised employment agencies, such as [First People Recruitment Solutions](#)
- ▶ ensuring your selection processes are not cost prohibitive.
- > Identify and promote case studies and good news stories.
- > Include events that acknowledge and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in your internal calendar of events, such as NAIDOC Week.

Useful resources and links

- > The Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships' cultural capability training — to strengthen your organisation's understanding of First Nations culture (<https://www.qld.gov.au/firstnations/education-training/cultural-capability>)
- > Know Your Community — community profiles with key insights into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders using Australian Bureau of Statistics data (<https://statistics.qgso.qld.gov.au/datsip/profiles>)

People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

- > Publicly communicate your commitment to supporting Queensland's migrant and refugee communities and the benefits they bring to Queensland.
- > Incorporate cultural diversity principles in all board policies and procedures, including cultural competence training for board members.
- > Make your communication material more accessible for people from non-English speaking countries, including translating information.

- > Seek the views of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds about whether they need anything in particular (e.g. religious considerations) to participate on your board.
- > Recognise that a person from a culturally or linguistically diverse background does not represent the views of all people from a particular community.
- > Consider simple and inexpensive improvements, such as providing access to a prayer room.
- > Support board members to observe cultural traditions, and community and family obligations.
- > Review policies and practices (including recruitment processes) to ensure they do not inadvertently discriminate against people from culturally diverse backgrounds.
- > Consider specific recruitment strategies to reach diverse communities, such as:
 - ▶ engaging directly with communities and peak bodies, such as the [Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland \(ECCQ\)](#)
 - ▶ engaging specialised employment organisations, such as [Refugee Talent](#) or [CareerSeekers](#)
 - ▶ offering an interview to any person who meets minimum requirements
 - ▶ including lived experiences, community insights and networks in the board's skill matrix
 - ▶ ensuring your selection processes are not cost prohibitive.
- > Identify and promote case studies and good news stories.
- > Include events that acknowledge and celebrate cultural diversity, such as Harmony Day.



Useful resources and links

- > Search Diversity Queensland — an online tool containing data from the 2016 Census (<https://www.cyjma.qld.gov.au/multicultural-affairs/multicultural-communities/search-diversity-queensland>)
- > Queensland Multicultural Resource Directory — a listing of key organisations with multicultural community focus in Queensland (<https://www.qld.gov.au/community/your-home-community/groups-in-your-community/multicultural-resource-directory-search>)
- > Deloitte's 2018 research report Seizing the opportunity: Making the most of the skills and experience of refugees (<https://www.cyjma.qld.gov.au/multicultural-affairs/programs-initiatives/research-report-multicultural-affairs-queensland>)
- > SBS's Cultural Competence Program — online cultural awareness training (<https://cultural-competence.com.au/course-background>)

People with disability

- > Seek the views of people with disability about what they need to participate on your board or committee, such as flexible working arrangements and virtual meetings.
- > Encourage your board to undertake awareness training (available at www.disabilityawareness.com.au).
- > Ensure senior leaders act as role models, demonstrating respectful behaviour and challenging inappropriate language and attitudes.
- > Review policies and practices (including recruitment processes) to ensure they do not inadvertently discriminate against people with disability.

- > Identify executive champions to promote the importance of people with disability in decision-making and leadership roles.
- > Ensure advertising and other communication material is available in accessible formats, such as Word or RTF so people can use text-to-audio software.
- > Recognise that a person with disability does not represent all people with disability.
- > Build an inclusive and safe environment so board members can identify as having disability.
- > Become a disability advocate, inspiring others.
- > Identify and promote case studies and good news stories — promote Queensland Government boards as 'employers of choice' for people with disability.
- > Consider specific recruitment strategies to reach people with disability, such as:
 - ▶ engaging directly with disability service providers and peak bodies, such as the [Australian Network on Disability](#)
 - ▶ engaging specialist employment organisations, such as [Disability Employment Services](#) or [National Disability Recruitment Coordinator](#)
 - ▶ offering an interview to any person who meets minimum requirements
 - ▶ allowing applications in audio format
 - ▶ including lived experiences, community insights and networks in the board's skill matrix
 - ▶ ensuring your selection processes are not cost prohibitive.



Useful resources and links

- > Reasonable adjustments in the workplace for people with disabilities — Australian Human Rights Commission (<https://humanrights.gov.au/quick-guide/12084>)
- > Reasonable adjustment policy — Australian Government (<https://www.apsc.gov.au/about-us/working-commission/what-we-offer/diversity-policy/reasonable-adjustment-policy>)
- > Reasonable adjustments in the workplace — Australian National University (<https://services.anu.edu.au/human-resources/respect-inclusion/reasonable-adjustments-in-the-workplace>)
- > Queensland Government resources on recruitment, onboarding, employment and the value of lived experience (<https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/people-disability>)

Women

As part of the Queensland Women's Strategy, the Queensland Government established two targets for gender representation on Queensland Government Boards and Bodies:

- > The government committed to 50% representation of women on government bodies by 2020, and this target was achieved early in September 2019.
- > The second target is that at least 50% of all appointments are to be women. This is an ongoing target, measured and reported on an ongoing basis.

Whilst gender parity has been reached across Queensland Government boards and bodies as a whole, not all boards and portfolios have achieved gender parity. Government's shared focus moving forward is also on ensuring gender parity on each individual body.

Government departments, chairs and board members need to remain vigilant and continue the process of encouraging women's participation on government boards. They also need to ensure that women are supported with respectful board environments, where their contributions and diversity are valued, and board processes are free from discrimination.

Useful resources and links

- > About the Queensland women's strategy (<https://www.justice.qld.gov.au/about-us/services/women-violence-prevention/women/queensland-womens-strategy/about>)
- > Women on boards – information, resources and case studies on gender parity and becoming board ready (<https://www.justice.qld.gov.au/about-us/services/women-violence-prevention/women/boards>)
- > Gender analysis resources and tools – a step-by-step guide for how to conduct gender analysis (<https://www.justice.qld.gov.au/about-us/services/women-violence-prevention/women/queensland-womens-strategy/gender-analysis/resources>)



TARGETED STRATEGIES

Young people

- > Identify and address misconceptions and conscious and unconscious biases about young people's capacity and motivations to join your board.
- > Review your recruitment strategy to reflect young people's motivations, such as the opportunity to have a say, develop new skills and meet new people.
- > Become an advocate of the value of young people's participation and contributions.
- > Tailor your recruitment and board information for young people by:
 - ▶ using a variety of social media and alternative press
 - ▶ consider multiple communication avenues, such as magazines, student bodies, shops, venues or specific services
 - ▶ use local press, posters, flyers and public/recreation spaces
 - ▶ connect with school groups, TAFE and university groups, and student associations and clubs
 - ▶ approach services that young people access to advertise and seek nominations
 - ▶ promote word of mouth opportunities
 - ▶ seek young people's advice about the best time and channels to advertise.
- > Consider a less formal interview process and include a young person on your selection panel.
- > Once appointed, ensure young people receive the support they need to get involved and stay engaged — make it clear if they will receive assistance to attend meetings.

- > Consider any legal restrictions/ requirements that apply to young people's participation on your board.
- > Identify and promote case studies and good news stories.
- > Connect with prominent community youth organisations such as Youth and Family Service (YFS), Police-Citizens Youth Clubs (PCYC) and local councils.
- > Connect with the Queensland Family and Child Commission's Youth Advisory Council.

Useful resources and links

- > Young People on Boards and Committees: A Handbook for Organisations Working with Young People (<https://www.yacvic.org.au/assets/Documents/2.-Young-People-on-Boards-and-Committees.pdf>)
- > Queensland Youth Engagement Charter: Listening to the voices of young Queenslanders (<https://www.des.qld.gov.au/youth/how-qlg-govt-is-helping-youth/youth-engagement-charter>)
- > Taking Part: Young people on boards and committees (<https://yerp.yacvic.org.au/taking-part/involve-young-people/young-people-on-boards-and-committees>)
- > Youth: Action Plan to Improve WA Public Sector Employment Outcomes 2020-2025 (<https://www.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-09/Youth%20Action%20Plan%202020-2025.pdf>)



Seniors

- > Look out for stereotypes or myths about seniors, their capabilities and their capacities.
- > Make it clear to board members that negative attitudes and ageism in any form are unacceptable and have negative effects.
- > Identify and address barriers to participation, including physical, technological and language.
- > Understand that seniors are as diverse and complex as any other individuals and may identify with other diversity groups.
- > Acknowledge the value to a board of a senior member's unique perspective on issues, informed by previous work experience, lived experiences and community knowledge.
- > Consider specific recruitment strategies to reach seniors, such as:
 - ▶ advertising through local radio and newspapers
 - ▶ connecting with local recreational clubs, seniors groups and organisations, such as the [Council on the Ageing \(COTA\) Queensland](#)
 - ▶ ensuring information uses plain language and is clear, concise and presented in an easy-to-read format — such as large print
 - ▶ including lived experiences, community insights and networks in the board's skill matrix.
- > Identify and promote case studies and good news stories.
- > Measure and evaluate the effectiveness of your initiatives to engage with seniors and support their participation on your board, and report regularly on progress.

Useful resources and links

- > Supporting Queensland Seniors — Queensland Government (<https://www.dsdsatsip.qld.gov.au/our-work/seniors>)
- > Queensland: an age-friendly community factsheets, toolkits and other resources (<https://www.dsdsatsip.qld.gov.au/our-work/seniors/queensland-age-friendly-community>)
- > Age-friendly toolkit (<https://www.dsdsatsip.qld.gov.au/our-work/seniors/queensland-age-friendly-community/age-friendly-toolkit>)

People who are LGBTIQ+

- > Embed LGBTIQ+ issues, objectives and language in the board's agenda, policies and plans.
- > Incorporate LGBTIQ+ awareness raising into training, induction and on-boarding processes.
- > Actively communicate to board members that homophobia and transphobia are unacceptable and have negative effects.
- > Build the knowledge and capability of your board in sexual and gender diversity by:
 - ▶ providing resources about how to support LGBTIQ+ communities
 - ▶ holding informal and peer-led education sessions on LGBTIQ+ inclusion, including sexual orientation, gender diversity and intersex issues
 - ▶ identifying intersections between the LGBTIQ+ community and other diversity groups.
- > Be open to non-gendered language — provide non-gendered options for titles, such as 'Mx', and offer the use of non-gendered pronouns, such as 'they' and 'their'.



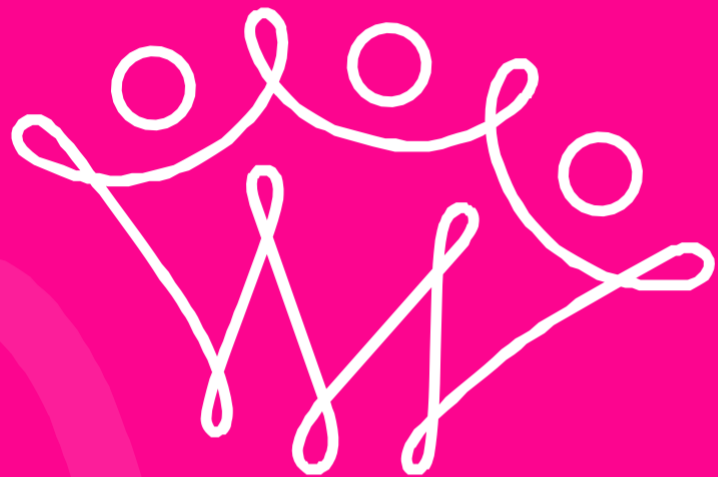
TARGETED STRATEGIES

- > Identify and use non-LGBTIQ+ allies to advocate and drive cultural change.
- > Identify and promote case studies and good news stories relating to board members and other people who are LGBTIQ+.
- > Celebrate LGBTIQ+ awareness days, such as International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia, Wear it Purple Day, Transgender Day of Visibility and Intersex Awareness Day.

Useful resources and links

- > Queensland public sector LGBTIQ+ inclusion strategy 2017–22 (https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0029/183926/lgbtiq-inclusion-strategy.pdf)
- > ACT Government LGBTIQ+ Inclusion resources (<https://www.cmtedd.act.gov.au/employment-framework/inclusion-programs/lgbti-inclusion>)
- > Australian Human Rights Commission Face the Facts: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex People (<https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/education/face-facts-lesbian-gay-bisexual-trans-and-intersex-people>)
- > Victorian Government LGBTIQ+ Inclusive Language Guide (<https://www.vic.gov.au/inclusive-language-guide>)
- > Australian Government LGBTIQ+ glossary of common terms (<https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/lgbtiq-communities>)
- > Australian Government Style Manual on inclusive language relating to gender and sexual diversity (<https://www.stylemanual.gov.au/format-writing-and-structure/inclusive-language/gender-and-sexual-diversity>)
- > Queensland Government LGBTIQ+ inclusive workplaces resources (<https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/lgbtiq>)
- > Australian Government Actions to support for LGBTI Elders (<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/actions-to-support-lgbti-elders-a-guide-for-aged-care-providers>)
- > Support for young people who identify as LGBTIQ+ (<https://www.qld.gov.au/youth/family-social-support/support-lgbti-young-people>)
- > LGBTI carers (<https://carersqld.com.au/about-us/equality-and-inclusion/lgbti/>)
- > LGBTIQ+ days of significance (https://www.forgov.qld.gov.au/search-pages/events?queries_search_query=lgbtiq)





PART FOUR

KEY RESOURCES

- > Attachment 1: Diversity and Inclusion on Boards – Maturity Matrix
- > Attachment 2: Board Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan
- > Attachment 3: Responsible Gambling Advisory Committee case study, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General
- > Attachment 4: Key considerations for board recruiters
- > Attachment 5: Useful links and resources on developing an action plan
- > Attachment 6: Definitions of key diversity and inclusion terms

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ON BOARDS – MATURITY MATRIX

(TO ASSESS AND TRACK YOUR BOARD'S PERFORMANCE)

YOUR BOARD'S PERFORMANCE

REACTIVE – Emerging interest

Mainly compliance-focused actions. Largely ad hoc and unplanned activities.

ACTIVE – Getting in the game

Understanding barriers that prevent diverse boards and the need to take actions. May demonstrate some planned action.

ALIGNMENT

We believe in need to change the status quo and value to be gained.

- > There is an awareness of the government's commitment to diversity and inclusion on boards but no data to support change.
- > The barriers to diversity and inclusion for boards are not subject to examination or review.
- > There is a general understanding of the business case for diversity and inclusion on boards but there are no plans in place for change.

- > Barriers to achieving diversity have been recognised but addressing these is still largely unstructured.
- > Feedback is sought from recruiters, key decision makers and boards on statutory, policy and constitutional requirements that may be unnecessarily narrowing the talent pool.
- > The business case for diversity and inclusion has been considered and changing the status quo is generally supported.

ARTICULATION

We advocate for diversity and inclusion in an authentic and engaging way.

- > The level of diversity on the board has been identified.
- > Some consultation regarding the importance of diversity and inclusion has been conducted with board members/staff and stakeholders.
- > Diversity is generally discussed as a topic when required but not actively promoted.

- > Consultation occurs internally to improve diversity and inclusion outcomes.
- > There is active communication that supports real action for diversity and inclusion on boards.
- > Promotion, marketing and correspondence relating to board appointments articulate the business case for diversity and inclusion.

ACTION

We prioritise diversity and inclusion with inclusive behaviours and systems.

- > There is some action being taken to achieve diversity and inclusion on boards but there is no documented plan for this.
- > For recruitment purposes, a diverse candidate list is actively considered but there is no plan for attracting board members from diverse backgrounds.
- > Inclusive behaviours for boards and how they might be affecting board diversity and retention are not actively identified.

- > Action plans are documented and implemented by relevant officers but there is no agency-wide plan in place.
- > Prior to each board appointment, a skills and diversity profile and formal recruitment strategy is developed and implemented.
- > New sources of diverse board candidates are identified and implemented.
- > Expectations for inclusive behaviours for boards have been identified and board members informed.

ACCOUNTABILITY

We hold ourselves and others accountable for achieving diversity and inclusion goals.

- > There is some accountability for diversity and inclusive behaviour on boards.
- > Progress and accountability for action is not formally monitored.

- > Prior to each new appointment, diversity goals and actions are reviewed, identifying gaps and opportunities for increased diversity.
- > Success measures for diversity and inclusion initiatives are identified.



PROACTIVE – Getting serious

Understanding and ownership of diversity and inclusion agenda.

- > A business case for change is identified, goals have been set, documented and has organisational/agency support.
- > A structured review of barriers to diversity and inclusion, including policy and legislation, has been considered and there are clear plans to act.

- > Formal internal and external consultation occurs with individual and organisational stakeholders.
- > A public pledge has been made to support the achievement of diversity and inclusion.
- > There are documented strategies to increase the profile of board nominations and build networks that support diversity and inclusion.

- > An organisation/agency action plan to drive change and address barriers to diversity and inclusion on boards has been developed, documented, endorsed and implemented.
- > Initiatives to connect with and support aspiring board members from diverse backgrounds, such as mentoring, board shadowing and networking opportunities, are in place.
- > There are systems and policies in place to ensure boards understand and agree to inclusive behaviour.

- > Progress against diversity and inclusion is monitored, measured and reported.
- > There is a strategy to measure and monitor inclusive behaviour and barriers affecting attraction and retention of diverse board members.
- > Plans are reviewed regularly.

LEADING – Sustaining change

Advocacy and independence of activities that have a long-term focus and are designed to influence industry and cross-sector bodies.

- > The board/organisation builds board/staff capacity around the business case and strategies to address diversity and inclusion.
- > The business case for board diversity and inclusion is documented and implemented as part of organisational diversity action plans.
- > Strategies to achieve change are reviewed regularly and promoted internally and externally.

- > Opportunities are actively sought to speak publicly about support for diversity and inclusion.
- > Wide consultation with industry and organisational stakeholders occurs and commitment to long-term structural change is articulated.
- > Success stories are actively collected and promoted.

- > There is a documented and agreed commitment to increase all forms of diversity in appointments to agency boards.
- > Plans are regularly monitored and reviewed for diversity and inclusion, including short, medium and long-term actions.
- > Strategies and mechanisms for building a talent pool of diverse candidates are regularly reviewed and updated.
- > Diversity and inclusion initiatives are prioritised and integrated with other strategic initiatives.

- > There is public accountability and ownership of diversity and inclusion through industry forums.
- > Board diversity and inclusion outcomes are recorded and reported as success measures.
- > Measures extend beyond immediate actions and support long-term sustainability of diversity.



ATTACHMENT 2:

BOARD DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE

- > Use the Maturity Index Tool (Attachment 1) to assess your board's current position and use it to develop an Action Plan using the template below.
- > Identify and prioritise the actions that will have most impact in your context.
- > When action planning, think about actions for self, team and board.
- > Diversity includes: Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, seniors, young people, women, people with disability, and people who are LGBTIQ+.



AGENCY/DEPARTMENT/BOARD:

DATE:

4A'S FRAMEWORK						
AREA OF IMPACT	ACTION (Self / Team / Board)	TIMEFRAME (Short / Medium / Long term)	STAKEHOLDERS	RESOURCES	PRIORITY (Low / Medium / High)	STATUS (Commenced / Tracking / Completed)
ALIGNMENT Believe in need for change						
ARTICULATION Actively advocate for inclusive and diverse boards						
ACTION Prioritise diversity by focusing on inclusive behaviours and systems						
ACCOUNTABILITY Hold self and others accountable for achieving more inclusive and diverse boards						



RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING ADVISORY COMMITTEE CASE STUDY,

THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND ATTORNEY-GENERAL (DJAG)

Responsible Gambling Advisory Committee Case Study

Action on inclusive government bodies takes centre stage at DJAG

The Queensland Government is committed to improving diversity and inclusion on Queensland Government boards, committees and other government bodies. There are many ways to achieve representative and more inclusive boards. Here is one example illustrating an innovative, systematic and long-term approach to achieving excellence in decision making, service development and delivery. Watch this space!

Thinking outside the box

DJAG is a diverse department which works towards justice for all Queenslanders through safe, fair and responsible community outcomes. DJAG provides services directly to the community; support services behind the scenes; and support for a range of independent justice bodies.

DJAG is responsible for over 30 boards and committees that make valuable contributions to Queensland, including through the Responsible Gambling Advisory Committee (RGAC). The RGAC provides advice and makes recommendations to the responsible Minister on policies, strategies and regulatory arrangements to address gambling harm. It has representatives from government, industry and community.

DJAG is leading the way in thinking outside the box, testing innovative and inclusive processes to achieve increased representation and diverse voices in their work.

Here is a little about their recent efforts in supporting the RGAC.

Be deliberate in seeking diversity

Diversity and inclusion was put on the agenda. DJAG was intentional about cultivating representative voices into the work of the RGAC. They looked at its Terms of Reference and identified ways to 'open up' membership — from requiring a balance of community and industry members and removing open-ended terms, to actively reaching out to diverse groups. The aim was to broaden connections and representation while balancing the practicalities of participation on a Committee requiring specific expertise and commitment.

Beyond specifically targeting new stakeholders and organisations as part of the new Committee process, DJAG set expectations through clear statements about its intent for diverse and representative boards and recognised other pathways were also needed to ensure community voices were heard. Officers reached out to other areas in government, such as the Office for Women, for assistance in looking at new ways to encourage and support participation.

“As a starting point, it was important to be upfront about any inherent barriers in our existing policies, instruments and tools, and to ensure those were adequately addressed. It was also important that all involved understood the importance of inclusion and diversity by including explicit diversity statements in communications when seeking nominations”.



Create structures that support inclusion

Prior to commencing the process to establish a new Committee, it became evident that the RGAC's structure itself could not adequately include all the voices necessary to have genuine diverse representation. DJAG will now be including working groups in the RGAC structure to enable broader participation, for example, including people with lived experience or expanding not-for-profit community representation, or including specific target groups where required. Regional participation will also be a focus by directly linking in with local responsible gambling networks across the State.

This new structure came about through reflecting on:

“What can we (as an organisation) do to support and encourage participation and engagement? And what else can we do to involve diverse cohorts in our decision making or policy development?”

Other structures could also be put in place. For example, one option includes adopting shadowing and mentoring programs for advancing diverse talent into leadership roles. These programs are designed to increase the confidence of people to take on board roles. In DJAG's experience, a great deal of thought needs to go into what we are asking of community organisations or members who have to balance competing priorities and tight resources. Insufficient resources may limit the ability of community organisations to actively engage and participate in government committees.

“A key to future success may be in supporting candidates and their organisations with tangible resources (time and financial) to increase participation and representation. We need to think in terms of supporting stakeholder relationships to ensure their sustainability in the long term. There are no quick fixes”.

Lessons learned

To become more representative and inclusive, DJAG is not only focusing on attracting, selecting and retaining diverse membership, but also on identifying and utilising inclusive ways to reach out and consider diverse perspectives, aspirations and needs by improving their stakeholder engagement and consultation — to ensure local insights and knowledge, including those with lived experiences, are genuinely engaged and included.

Going forward, there will be continued effort to broaden the search for potential new Committee members and working group participants. By promoting the work of the Committee to new channels, a broader demographic will be reached. This will, in turn, increase the diversity of nominations that the RGAC will receive.

Words must match actions. We can always go broader and do better!

- > Diversity is broader than labels — it is a way of thinking and is driven by inclusive board cultures.
- > Tokenistic appointments of diverse candidates who are not suitably qualified or adequately supported may undermine the benefits of diversity.



- > Recognise that diversity brings new perspectives, drives collaboration and innovation, and influences our relationships with one another and the community.
- > Visible representation of diverse cohorts on boards is just one way of ensuring diverse perspectives — genuine, timely and respectful stakeholder consultations and collaborative engagements result in diverse view points and improved (better informed) decision making, more effective policy responses and targeted and responsive service delivery.
- > A real intent to improve inclusion and diversity in our boards and committees requires commitment, effort and a learning approach from both the boards and the administrators.



KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR BOARD RECRUITERS



CONSIDERATION 1 – Champion diversity and inclusion

- > Share benefits of diversity and inclusion on government bodies with those who nominate potential candidates.



CONSIDERATION 2 – Diversity cohorts

- > Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people with disability, women, young people, seniors, and people who are LGBTIQ+.



CONSIDERATION 3 – Craft a targeted role description

- > Ensure selection criteria include lived experiences, not-for-profit board experiences and demonstrated commitment to diversity and inclusive behaviours
- > Encourage underrepresented groups to apply (e.g. include 'we strongly encourage Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people to apply').



CONSIDERATION 4 – Accessible and inclusive advertisements

- > Advertisements and expressions of interest:
 - ▶ are free of biased language, gender neutral and inclusive
 - ▶ include a statement about the board's commitment to diversity and inclusion
 - ▶ are available in accessible formats (e.g. Word or RTF).



CONSIDERATION 5 – Deliberately search for diverse applicants

- > Conduct Queensland Register of Nominees searches to identify diverse candidates
- > Cast a wide net to reach non-traditional candidates
- > Promote vacancies through various media channels (including social media) and websites as well as targeted media outlets and networks.



CONSIDERATION 6 – Seek expert advice

- > Engage a specialised recruitment service provider, if needed or appropriate.

CONSIDERATION 7 – Mitigate biases

- > Use blind resumes (removing visible or inherent personal traits) when short listing applicants and encourage applications in a written format or an audio format.



CONSIDERATION 8 – Inclusive and diverse interview panel

- > Ensure interview panel is diverse and or with demonstrated record of commitment to diversity and inclusion
- > Include board members in the interview process or panelists from diverse cohorts.



CONSIDERATION 9 – Aim for diversity

- > If there is little to no diversity in the initial schedule for interview, consider adding a candidate from diverse groups who meets at least all minimum requirements.



CONSIDERATION 10 – Share learnings and address gaps

- > Monitor and evaluate efforts, share learnings, and address gaps.



ATTACHMENT 5:

USEFUL LINKS AND RESOURCES ON DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN

- > Resources on inclusive leadership behaviours and inclusive recruitment:
 - ▶ Deloitte’s Inclusion, Diversity and Leadership newsletter (https://landing.deloitte.com.au/dni-registration.html?_ga=1.154646840.1616113512.1460095579) — free subscription
 - ▶ AICD’s Which 2 heads are better than 1? — accessed through AICD Director Tools (<https://aicd.companymen.com.au/resources/director-tools>)
 - ▶ The six signature traits of inclusive leadership (<https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/topics/talent/six-signature-traits-of-inclusive-leadership.html>)
 - ▶ A toolkit for recruiting and hiring a more diverse workplace (https://diversity.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/recruiting_a_more_diverse_workforce_uhs.pdf)
 - ▶ Harvard’s Implicit Association Test (<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>)
 - ▶ Workplace Diversity Through Recruitment: A Step-By-Step Guide (<https://ideal.com/workplace-diversity/>)
 - ▶ SBS’s Cultural Competence Program (<https://cultural-competence.com.au/>)
- > Information from the Queensland Human Rights Commission:
 - ▶ A step-by-step guide to recruitment and termination (<https://www.qhrc.qld.gov.au/your-responsibilities/for-employers/recruitment>)
 - ▶ Guidelines for writing and publishing recruitment advertisements (<https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/guidelines-writing-and-publishing-recruitment-advertisements>)
 - ▶ Guide to preventing discrimination in recruitment (<https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/employers/step-step-guide-preventing-discrimination-recruitment>)
 - ▶ QHRC Unconscious Bias course (https://www.qhrc.qld.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0018/24660/QHRC_trainingoverview_UnconsciousBias.pdf)
- > Examples of diversity and inclusion planning:
 - ▶ ABC Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2019–2022 (<https://about.abc.net.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/ABC-Diversity-Inclusion-Plan-201922.pdf>)
 - ▶ Workforce Diversification and Inclusion Strategy for WA Public Sector Employment 2020–2025 (<https://www.wa.gov.au/government/publications/workforce-diversification-and-inclusion-strategy-wa-public-sector-employment-2020-2025>)



DEFINITIONS OF KEY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION TERMS

Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people:

A person who identifies as an Aboriginal person and/or Torres Strait Islander person.

People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds:

Includes people from migrant or refugee backgrounds, as well as people who are born in Queensland and who self-identify as 'being from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds', including Australian South Sea Islanders.

Diversity groups:

Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, seniors, young people, women, people with disability and people who are LGBTIQ+.

Diversity:

Refers to the presence of people who, as a group, have a wide range of characteristics, seen and unseen, with which they were born, or they have acquired. It includes less visible aspects such as education, socioeconomic background, faith, marital status, family responsibilities, thinking, experience and work styles.

Inclusion:

Inclusion relates to a work environment where all people are treated fairly and respectfully, with equal access to opportunities and resources. It is not about treating everyone exactly the same all of the time. It is about demonstrating culture, values and behaviours so that everyone has the same opportunities to contribute and thrive.

Inclusion is comprised of perceptions of (1) fairness and respect, and (2) value and belonging. The highest level of inclusion is when people feel safe to speak up even when they have a different point of view to the majority (psychological safety).

Gender identity:

Defined as a person's gender related identity, appearance or mannerism or other gender related characteristics of a person (whether by way of medical intervention or not) with or without regard to the person's designated sex at birth. This includes one's deeply held internal and individual sense of gender.

People with disability:

A person who has or has had a disability of a type: physical, sensory (hearing, speech or vision) which cannot be corrected by appropriate aids such as hearing aids or glasses, intellectual or learning, or psychiatric.

The *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwlth)* defines 'disability' as meaning a disability:

- > which is attributable to an intellectual, psychiatric, cognitive, neurological, sensory or physical impairment or a combination of those impairments
- > which is permanent or likely to be permanent
- > which may or may not be of a chronic or episodic nature
- > which results in substantially reduced capacity of the person for communication, social interaction, learning or mobility and a need for continuing.



DEFINITIONS OF KEY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION TERMS

The United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disability (2006) adopts a social model of disability. It recognises that disability is an evolving concept and that disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

People who are LGBTIQ+:

Term stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer/questioning, and the + represents other identities not captured in the letters of the acronym. There is a great deal of diversity within LGBTIQ+ communities. Every LGBTIQ+ person or community has terms and language they prefer when describing their own sex, gender and sexual orientation.

Seniors:

A person 65 years old and over.

Young person:

A person aged 18-25 years
(note: the Youth Advisory Council recruits young Queenslanders aged 14-25 years).



