DARE

DIVERSITIES ARE
REVIVING ENTERPRISES

Educators Guide 2025

Developed by Momentum, Ireland February 2025

DARE

www.**projectdare.**eu

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Useful Links

Co-funded by the European Union

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6 Modules, 22 Parts

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Part 1: Why D&I Matters for SMEs.
Part 2: Building D&I Competencies for SMEs.

MODULE 2
Inclusive Leadership Skills

Key Features: Develop inclusive leadership skills (e.g., Bias awareness and mitigation). Tap into the power of neurodiversity. Measure impact and build resilience.

Part 1: Prepare for Inclusive Change Through Leadership.
Part 2: Unlock Inclusive Leadership & Neurodiversity.
Part 3: Measure Leadership Impact & Build Resilience.

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Key Features: Inclusive advertising, recruitment and retention. Performance management and leadership succession planning.

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Part 2: Creating Inclusive Job Descriptions & Adverts.
Part 3: Inclusive Selection, Interviewing, and Offer Strategies.
Part 4: Employee Talent Development and Retention.
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Part 1: Foundations of Inclusive Community Engagement.
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Key Features: Embed inclusivity into branding. Understand the needs of diverse audiences. Craft strategic inclusive marketing campaigns.

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Part 3: Crafting Inclusive Marketing Campaigns.

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Key Features: Build an inclusive company culture. Design and deliver a strategic cultural change audit, review policies and practices and empower teams through reward and recognition.

Part 1: Understand and Build an Inclusive Company Culture.
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Part 5: Empower Teams Through DEI Collaboration, ERGs, and Recognition.

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Welcome to the Educators Guide

Welcome to the DARE Online Training Course Educators Guide.

The DARE online course is designed to empower Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) to embrace Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) as a strategic advantage, enhancing business operations and enabling progressive growth.

This course comprises six training modules providing practical tools, strategies, and insights to help SMEs nurture inclusive workplaces, attract diverse talent, and drive business success.

Designed for Key Inclusion Players

Developed primarily for Small Businesses and Vocational Education but also useful for other audiences.

- European SMEs
- HR Professionals
- VET Educators
- SME management and owners
- Business leaders
- Team leaders
- Marketing teams
- Community coordinators
- Social media managers

Powerful Self-Paced Learning Opportunity.

This course is tailored for SMEs or companies seeking to:

- Upskill their workforce
- Improve workplace inclusivity
- Build inclusive hiring practices
- Comply with workplace regulations
- Expand into diverse markets
- Engage with local communities

Key Features

- **Self-paced Learning:** Flexible, step-by-step guidelines with real-world applications and examples.
- **Interactive Modules:** Case studies, assessments, videos, exercises, and actionable toolkits.
- **Free Access & Downloadable Formats:** Materials available online for free, downloadable for desktop or mobile.
- **Multilingual:** Available in English, Polish, German, and Danish.

Course Overview

Introducing the Modules (6 Modules, 22 Parts)

Enjoy our learning blocks designed to help SMEs build diverse, equitable and inclusive workplaces. Unlock the power of how DEI to drive the sustainable success of your company. Our practical and interactive Modules deliver real-life insights and case studies from a European perspective – Join us in creating workplaces and communities where everyone can thrive!

Duration: Each module is designed to be completed in approximately 2 to 4 hours, with additional time for assessments, case studies, and practical exercises.

There are 6 Modules & 22 Parts
1. Module 1: Introduction: Diversities Reviving European Enterprises (2 Parts)
2. Module 2: Inclusive Leadership Skills (3 Parts)
3. Module 3: Inclusive Talent Management for SMEs (6 Parts)
4. Module 4: Building an Inclusive Company Culture in SMEs (5 Parts)
5. Module 5: Inclusive Marketing For SMEs (3 Parts)
6. Module 6: Inclusive Community Engagement for SMEs (5 Parts)

Each Module Includes
1. Index & Learning Objectives
2. Case Studies
3. Exercises
4. Resources & Supports
5. Step by Step Practical Instructions
6. Learning Outcomes

What You Will Need!

This is an online course which is interactive and provides downloadable resources so that learners can leverage its learning potential. To gain full learning benefit we suggest educators and learners use digital tools and materials essential for delivering a seamless, impactful, and engaging online learning experience:

Get Prepared!

- Reliable Internet Connection
- Devices for students e.g., laptop or computer

Technology and Equipment

- Collaboration Tools (e.g., Jamboard or Palet)
- Video Conference Tools (e.g., Zoom or Google Meet)

Digital Tools

- This Educator Guide
- Access to All Case Studies
- Access to All Exercises
- Access to All Videos
- Access to All Resources

Program Materials

- Get familiar with all 6 Modules, Resources and Exercises
- Prepare each lesson based on the Topics covered in each Module

Prepare Sessions

- Use the prompts, checklists and recaps to clarify understanding
- Use the Videos, Case Studies and Examples to deepen learning
- Use the implementation of the exercises to assess learning

Assess Learning

How it Works!

✓ **Free Online Access & Downloadable Formats:** Download modules via desktop or mobile for business or teaching needs.

✓ **Self-Paced Learning:** Flexible learning supported by facts, statistics, SME-focused solutions, expert-led content, and adaptable materials.

✓ **Interactive Learning:** Videos, practical exercises, toolkits, assessments, strategies, action plans, and frameworks.

Learning Objectives

- Understand and apply key D&I concepts in SME contexts.
- Develop competencies to lead D&I initiatives and nurture inclusive cultures.
- Enhance leadership skills, improve talent management, and create effective marketing strategies.
- Engage with local communities and create long-term inclusive engagement frameworks.

The strength of the team is each individual member. The strength of each member is the team

Phil Jackson

Diversity is not about how we differ. Diversity is about embracing one another's uniqueness

Ola Joseph

Module 1

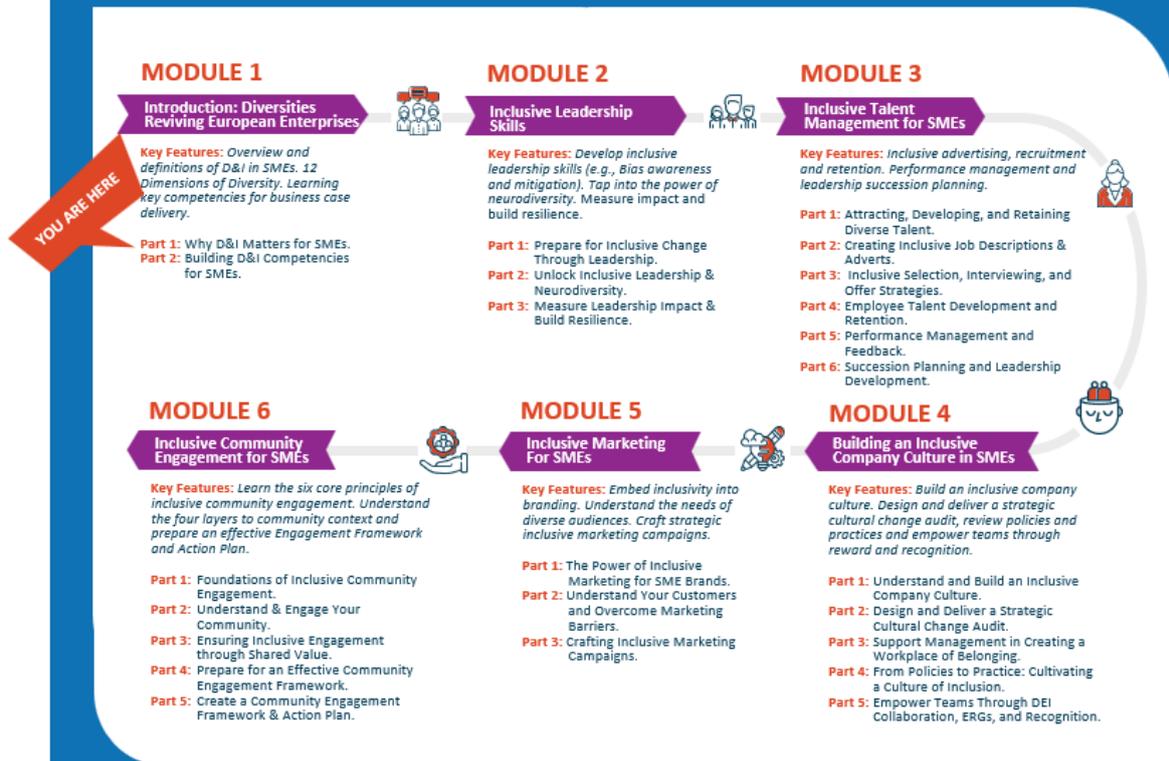Introduction: Diversities Reviving European Enterprises (2 Parts)

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YOU ARE HERE

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Part 5: Empower Teams Through DEI Collaboration, ERGs, and Recognition.

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Module 1 (2 Parts)

Introduction: Diversities Reviving European Enterprises

Key Features: Overview and definitions of D&I in SMEs. 12 Dimensions of Diversity. Learning key competencies for business case delivery.

Part 1: Why D&I Matters for SMEs. (Benefits & Understanding the Dimensions)

Understand Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) in the SME context with definitions, key concepts and examples. Discover the twelve Different Dimensions (e.g., gender, disability and neurodiversity) and How they apply to the SDGs. Understand the eight main benefits, impacts, and opportunities that D&I presents to European SMEs.

Part 2: Building D&I Competencies for SMEs. (Overcoming Challenges and Building Competences)

Learn how DARE tailors D&I solutions to suit SMEs, addressing key challenges like policy gaps, limited resources, resistance to change, and lack of experience. It focuses on the Seven DARE Competency Areas—such as leadership support, inclusive HR, and marketing—to integrate D&I into SME strategies. Consider perspectives from VET educators, SMEs, and employees, and how together we can enable a healthy, inclusive workplace culture.

Introduction to Module 1
(There are 2 Parts, 7 Sections)

Introduction DARE to Module 1

Unacceptable behavior is no longer acceptable in today's society and workplaces. There is a heightened awareness of inequality of opportunity related to people's background, identity, and circumstances this is especially evident in SME workplaces and communities. This module covers essential topics introducing European SMEs who would like to implement Diversity and Inclusion (D&I). It explains key learnings, including understanding and defining D&I in the European SME context, discovering the benefits, and opportunities, exploring different dimensions of D&I, recognising SME obstacles and challenges, understanding the seven DARE competency areas with examples of integration into SME strategies, and examining D&I from the perspective of VET educators, SMEs, and employees.

YOU ARE HERE

Part 1

01 The Need for European SME D&I Change

02 Understanding Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) in the **SME Context** (Definitions, Key Concepts, Dimensions and the DARE Framework)

03 Discover the **Different Dimensions of D&I** that Need to be Considered by SMEs

04 Discover the **Benefits, Positive Impact** and **Opportunities** of D&I for SMEs

Part 2

05 Recognise the D&I **Obstacles and Challenges** SMEs Face

06 Develop an Understand the **Seven DARE Competency Areas** Combined (with Examples of How to Integrate Competencies into SME Strategies)

07 Explore D&I from the **Perspective of VET Educators, SMEs, and Employees**

Module 1 (Part 1)

DARE
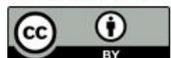DIVERSITIES ARE REVIVING ENTERPRISES

Module 1 (Part 1)

Part 1 Introduction: Need for SMEs to Be Diverse and Inclusive (D&I) (Benefits & Understanding the Dimensions)

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Module 1 Part 1

Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) is a key driver of success in today's business landscape, particularly for SMEs seeking innovation, growth, a positive workplace culture and expanding market opportunities. This section explores the necessity for D&I change in European SMEs, key concepts, and strategic approaches tailored to SMEs. You will gain insights into the different dimensions of D&I, the DARE Framework, and the numerous benefits and opportunities that come with embracing an inclusive business model.

01 **The Need for European SME D&I Change**

02 Understanding Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) in the **SME Context** *(Definitions, Key Concepts, Dimensions and the DARE Framework)*

03 Discover the **Different Dimensions** of D&I that Need to be Considered by SMEs

04 Discover the **Benefits, Positive Impact** and **Opportunities** of D&I for SMEs

Learning Objectives

- Understand the **current state** of D&I in European SMEs and the need for European SME D&I Change
- Understanding Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) in the **European SME Context**: Definitions, Key Concepts, Dimensions and the DARE Framework
- Discover the **Different Dimensions** of Diversity and Inclusion that Need to be Considered by European SMEs
- Discover the **Benefits, Positive Impact** and **Opportunities** of D&I for SMEs

01

The Need for European SME D&I Change

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Sample Slide

Importance of D&I for the European Union as a Strategic Driver

'The European Parliament is an inclusive employer, which values and seeks out a diverse talent pool. We foster a safe and respectful environment free of any form of discrimination for our entire staff, as reflected by our human resources policies and approaches.

European Union

EUROPEAN UNION

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Module 1 (Part 1) Section 2

02

Understanding Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) in the European SME Context

*Definitions, Key Concepts, Dimensions and the DARE Framework*

01 Why SMEs Need to Become Diverse and Inclusive

02 Defining D&I in the SME Workplace Context - Not 'Just for Some' but 'For All'

03 Defining DEI (Diversity, Equity & Inclusion)

04 Diversity is the Pathway to Innovation and Creativity

05 How D&I is a smart, sustainable, innovative, moral, profitable, and ethical pathway to success!

Sample Slide

Defining Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are three closely linked values held by many organizations that are working to be supportive of different groups of individuals, including people of different races, ethnicities, religions, abilities, genders, and sexual orientations. (McKinsey)

It's about creating working environments and cultures where every individual can feel safe and a sense of belonging, and is empowered to achieve their full potential. (CIPD)

Watch Video Simon Sinek
What Diversity and Inclusion is REALLY About!
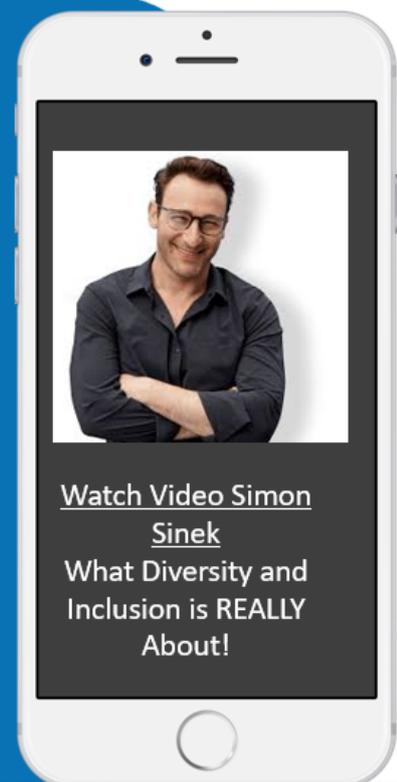
CLICK TO WATCH VIDEO

03

Discover the Different Dimensions of Diversity and Inclusion that Need to be Considered by European SMEs

01	Introduction & Integration of SDGs
1-3	Gender I Ethics & Culture I Age
4-5	Ability & Disability I Sexual Orientation I Gender Identity
6-8	Belief Systems I Language I Socio Economic
9-12	Educational I Cognitive & Neurodiversity I Geographical I Family Status

Sample Slide

Dimensions of Diversity & Inclusion

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) need to become more diverse and inclusive representing the world they live in today. Here we explain some of the main terms and types of the various dimensions of diversity and different aspects of human identity in the workplace.

Gender I Race I Culture I Age I Neurodiversity Ability & Disability I Religion and Belief Systems Nationality and Citizenship I Language I Family Status Socioeconomic Status I Sexual Orientation Educational Background I Ethnicity I Parental Status I Marital Status I Cultural Background and Heritage I Remote and Flexible Work Arrangements

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Module 1 (Part 1) Section 4

04

Discover the Benefits, Positive Impact and Opportunities of D&I for SMEs

01 Introduction

1-2 **Increased Innovation & Creativity**
Enhanced Employee Engagement & Morale

3-4 **Improved Decision-Making**
Broader Talent Pool & Recruitment Advantage

5-6 **Better Customer Understanding & Market Reach**
Enhanced Reputation and Brand Image

7-8 **Reduced Turnover and Increased Retention**
Legal and Compliance Benefits

Sample Slide

Benefits of DARE

Benefits of Embracing Diversity and Inclusion in the SME Workplace

Embracing diversity and nurturing inclusivity in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) can yield numerous benefits. DARE creates a more vibrant, innovative, and resilient company culture that has triple benefits for employees, customers, and the business.

The next two sections outline some of the benefits and advantages of becoming more inclusive and diverse in the workplace:

1 Increased Innovation and Creativity
2 Enhanced Employee Engagement and Morale
3 Improved Decision-Making
4 Broader Talent Pool and Recruitment Advantage
5 Better Customer Understanding and Market Reach
6 Enhanced Reputation and Brand Image
7 Reduced Turnover and Increased Retention
8 Legal and Compliance Benefits

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Module 1

Part 2 Need for European SMEs to Become Diverse and Inclusive (D&I) (Overcoming Challenges and Building Competences)

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Module 1 Part 2

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play a crucial role in the European economy, yet many struggle to implement effective Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) strategies due to limited resources, organisational culture, or a lack of expertise. This section explores the key obstacles SMEs face, providing practical solutions to integrate D&I into business operations. Learners will gain insights into the Seven DARE Competency Areas, understanding how to apply them to drive meaningful change. Additionally, we will examine D&I from the perspectives of VET educators, SME leaders, and employees to highlight the collective impact of inclusive workplaces.

05 Recognise the D&I **Obstacles and Challenges** SMEs Face

06 Develop an Understand the **Seven DARE Competency Areas** *(with Examples of How to Integrate)*

07 Explore D&I from the **Perspective of VET Educators, SMEs, and Employees**

Case Study: Signicat, Digital Identity, Norway
Competency 1 Executive Support Integrating DEI

Case Study: Klevu, Technology, Finland
Competency 2 Inclusive Human Resource Management

Case Study: Sidero, Global Logic, Ireland
Competency 3 Inclusive Leadership Management

Case Study: EOBA, Event Safety, Ireland
Competency 4 Diverse and Inclusive Cultural Engagement

Case Study: GSLS, Cash Logistics, Ireland
Competency 5 Diversity-Focused Internal Communication

Case Study: Bellamantia, Makeup, Ireland
Competency 6 Diversity and Inclusive-Centric Marketing

Case Study: Fairphone, Netherlands
Competency 7 Supporting Inclusion in Communities

Learning Objectives

- Recognize the **key obstacles and challenges** SMEs face in implementing D&I strategies.
- Develop an understanding of the **Seven DARE Competency Areas** and their role in fostering inclusion.
- Identify practical ways to **integrate DARE competencies** into SME business strategies.
- Analyze D&I from the **perspectives of VET educators, SMEs, and employees**.
- **Apply inclusive business practices** to create a diverse and equitable SME workplace.

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Sample Slide

Too Small To Invest in D&I

SMEs say they are too small, have no or a lack of dedicated D&I HR to manage and promote D&I. Have a lack of time, resources and budgets compared. Have a short-term focus prioritizing survival, profitability and growth and believe it is not impactful as the workforce is not diverse enough.

Challenges

'A commitment to D&I fosters a positive work environment, increasing employee satisfaction and retention. Lower turnover rates reduce recruitment and training costs, and a high-performance culture, contributing to overall cost savings and resource optimisation'. (DUJA Consulting)

Impacts

- Leverage **external resources** such as grants and funding.
- Engage with **consultants and experts** who specialise and tailor strategies for small businesses.
- **Online training** is often affordable and free to educate a company and its employees about D&I.
- **Encourage volunteers, interns** or employees to form a D&I group.

Solutions

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05

Recognise the D&I Obstacles and Challenges SMEs Face

01 Europe has a Diverse Workforce!

02 SME's Believe they are too Small to be Inclusive

03 Identification of SME's Main Issues and Plug Some Leaks

04 Too Small to Invest!

05 Lack of Awareness of the Benefits, Action Needed and Available Training

06 Resistance to Change

07 Difficulty in Measuring Impact

Sample Slide

EC Report - SMEs Believe they Are Too Small to be Inclusive

Many Operate Locally with Fewer than 10 Employees

In a survey of **1,200 SMEs** across **27 European countries,** the EC report found that a number of practical obstacles stand in the way of SMEs developing formal D&I approaches. Among the most frequently reported are **too small, low levels of staff time, few financial resources, economic insecurity** and the **absence of a formal HR management process**.

For a start, SMEs are mostly **local and operate regionally**, often engaging in cross-border trade. However, since COVID the need for online trading and e-commerce has grown. Most employ fewer than 10 people (often family members only), making them too small to incorporate a range of individuals with diverse backgrounds.

The pandemic forced many SMEs to rethink the way they do business especially being available online. Digital change is rapid and constant, the need for investment is greater than ever. SMEs must be agile and open to innovation. 50% have invested in their online presence highlighting a need for diversity in how to do business and deal with customers. Source Tipping Point

Source AB SMEs and the Inclusivity Challenge

06

Develop an Understanding of the Seven DARE Competency Areas

With Examples of How to Integrate D&I DARE Competencies into SME Business Strategies

01 **Competency 1** Top Level Support is Essential to Integrate D&I Successfully
Example: **Signicat**, *Norway (Digital Identity SME)*

02 **Competency 2** Inclusive HR & Talent Management
Example: **Klevu,** *Finland (E-Commerce SME)*

03 **Competency 3** Inclusive Leadership Management
Example: **Sidero**, *Ireland (Digital Engineering SME)*

04 **Competency 4** Diverse and Inclusive Cultural Engagement
Example: **EOBA**, *Ireland (Fire Engineering SME)*

05 **Competency 5** Embracing Diversity-Focused Internal Communication
Example: **GSLS**, *Ireland (Cash Logistics SME)*

06 **Competency 6** Diversity and Inclusive-Centric Marketing
Example: **Bellamianta**, *Ireland (Makeup SME)*

07 **Competency 7** SMEs' Supporting Diversity and Inclusion in Communities
Example: **Fairphone**, *Netherlands (Ethical Phones SME)*

Sample Slide

Competency 7, Fairphone

Fairphone, Netherlands
(70 Employees)

'Fairphone make fair(er) phones to change the industry from the inside. One step at a time, all over the world. Together with our community, we're changing the way products are made. We are disrupting the tech space. Inside every phone is a complex supply chain. We uncover industry practices and show you how your phone is made, and it's impact on the environment'.

https://shop.fairphone.com/about-us

Fairphone has a community of changemakers.
'Together we're disrupting the industry thinking that the world can no longer changing what it means to be "best."'
'We believe partnerships and like-minded communities are key to achieving systemic change. We work together to make our ambitions for fairer electronics a reality'.
Bas van Abel, Fairphone's Founder

We aim to craft the world's most ethical phone. Not just for people who share our values and mission, but for anyone who simply wants a great phone that does less harm. We're making a positive impact across the value chain in mining, design, manufacturing and life cycle, while expanding the market for products that put ethical values first. Together with our community, we're changing the way products are made.

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Module 1 (Part 2) Section 7

07

Explore D&I from the Perspective of VET Educators, SMEs, and Employees

01 Importance of the VET Education & Perspective in SME D&I

02 VET Are Well Positioned to Deliver SME D&I Education

03 How VET Educators Develop and Teach D&I Initiatives

04 Engaging in the VET Education Perspective
1. VET Ensure A Skilled Workforce
2. VET Enhances Employee Training and Development
3. VET Can Improve Diversity and Inclusion Integration
4. Access to Cutting-Edge Research and Innovation
5. Adhere to Compliance with EU Regulations and Standards
6. Enhanced Reputation and Employer Branding
7. Government and Funding Opportunities

Sample Slide

2. VET Enhances Employee Training and Development (Contd.)

Benefit Customised Skills Development: According to a Cedefop **report,** "The impact of vocational education and training on ___ce" states tailored VET programs ___ productivity by up to 20%.

https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications/5562
Ctrl+Click to follow link

Benefit Increased Employee Retention: Continuous professional development strengthens loyalty and reduces turnover, it also helps employees stay updated with industry trends and technologies, therefore cultivating innovation. **Research** by the (OECD) indicates that continuous training can boost a company's innovation capabilities by 25%.

Educational Research and Innovation

Measuring Innovation in Education
A NEW PERSPECTIVE

Centre for Educational Research and Innovation

OECD Report

Module 2

Inclusive Leadership Skills (3 Parts)

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Part 5: Empower Teams Through DEI Collaboration, ERGs, and Recognition.

Module 2 (3 Parts)

Lead Inclusivity with Top-Level Management

Key Features: Develop inclusive leadership skills such as Bias awareness and mitigation. Tap into the power of neurodiversity. Measure impact and build resilience.

Part 1: Prepare for Inclusive Change Through Leadership. Learn how D&I rewards and delivers competitive advantages to SMEs. Understand the impact of D&I across all levels and why leadership is an important prerequisite. Use the DARE assessment to evaluate how inclusive you are. Build a D&I Strategy to move SMEs from being reactive to strategic by assessing your current practices, reviewing policies, processes and practices, set clear goals and targets. Learn to successfully communicate and implement your strategy.

Part 2: Unlock Inclusive Leadership & Neurodiversity. Get an overview of the essential skills D&I leaders need to successfully run and manage inclusive companies. Key competencies include self-awareness, cultural intelligence and emotional intelligence. Using these skills learn how to start cultivating diverse teams that drive performance, enhance employee engagement and improve decision making. You will dive deep into understanding conscious and unconscious biases as well as strategies to mitigate them. Finally, you will learn how to tap into the power of Neurodiversity and understand the cognitive approaches so that they can contribute to company success.

Part 3: Measure Leadership Impact & Build Resilience. This part teaches you how to measure the impact of inclusive leadership using key metrics and methods used for monitoring and reporting D&I progress. Develop systems to track the effectiveness of inclusive leadership and create recognition and reward strategies for promoting inclusive practices. Using the SMART framework, learn how to set clear, measurable goals for leadership impact. Additionally, explore crisis management and resilience strategies that integrate D&I principles, and develop a comprehensive D&I Crisis Management Framework to strengthen your company's resilience planning.

Introduction to Module 2
(There are 3 Parts, 5 Sections)

Introduction DARE to Module 2

These five key sections show leaders how they can embed D&I into their management practices.

SECTION 1 highlights the role of top leadership in creating a competitive advantage through D&I. Use the DARE Assessment to inform your D&I strategy.

SECTION 2 focuses on creating a proactive, purpose-driven D&I strategy by setting measurable goals and ensuring company-wide buy-in.

SECTION 3 equips leaders with the skills to build inclusive teams by managing biases and embracing neurodiversity to drive team success.

SECTION 4 teaches you how to measure leadership impact on D&I using the SMART framework and develop crisis management strategies.

SECTION 5 revisits measuring D&I leadership impact and provides crisis management solutions to build SME resilience through inclusive leadership.

Inclusive Leadership Skills

YOU ARE HERE

Section		Part
Section 1	**Prepare for Real Inclusive Change Through Top Level Leadership** (Module 1: Part 1)	Part 1
Section 2	**Develop A Purpose Driven High Impact D&I Strategy** (Module 1: Part 1)	Part 1
Section 3	**Unlock Your Inclusive Leadership and Tap Into the Power of Neurodiversity.** (Module 1: Part 2)	Part 2
Section 4	**Measuring Leadership Impact on D&I** (Module 1: Part 3)	Part 3
Section 5	**D&I Crisis Management & Resilience Strategies** (Module 1: Part 3)	Part 3

Module 2 (Part 1)

Module 2 (Part 1)
Inclusive Leadership Skills

Part 1: Prepare for Real Inclusive Change Through Top Level Leadership

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Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Understand the **role and need for top level leadership** to drive real change and create inclusive workplaces.
- Recognise the **competitive advantages** of diversity and inclusion for SMEs.
- Identify **key leadership behaviors** that set the tone for an inclusive workplace.
- Set **clear, measurable D&I goals** aligned with business objectives.
- Develop a **strategic roadmap** to implement a sustainable D&I strategy.
- Move from a **reactive to a proactive approach** in embedding D&I within SME operations.

Sample Slide

The Need for Inclusive Leadership

78% of leaders understand how an inclusive workplace and diverse workforce can benefit their company.

21% of employees said leaders are not very committed, or not at all committed, to having a diverse workforce, and 17% are not committed to having an inclusive workplace.

21% of employers agreed that senior leaders just pay lip service to inclusion and diversity in their company, with 46% saying they don't.

23% of the senior decision-makers agreed with the statement that senior leaders wrongly believe they already have an inclusive and diverse company.

23% agreed that senior leaders feel uncomfortable talking about inclusion and diversity.

29% of companies have tangible action on inclusion and diversity as part of how senior leaders' performance is judged

Source CIPD Inclusion at Work

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M2: Part 1 Section 1

SECTION 1 explores the transformative role that top-level leadership plays in driving meaningful Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) change within SMEs. You'll learn how embracing D&I not only creates an inclusive culture but also delivers a competitive advantage, propelling your business toward greater innovation and success. Learn the profound impact of D&I across all levels of your company and why leadership commitment is essential for creating lasting change. You will have the opportunity to assess how inclusive your SME currently is by completing the DARE Assessment, which will provide valuable insights to guide your D&I strategy. This module will equip you to lead your company towards inclusivity.

Contents to Section 1

01 **Prepare for Real Inclusive Change Through Top Level Leadership**

How D&I Rewards and Delivers Competitive Advantage to SMEs

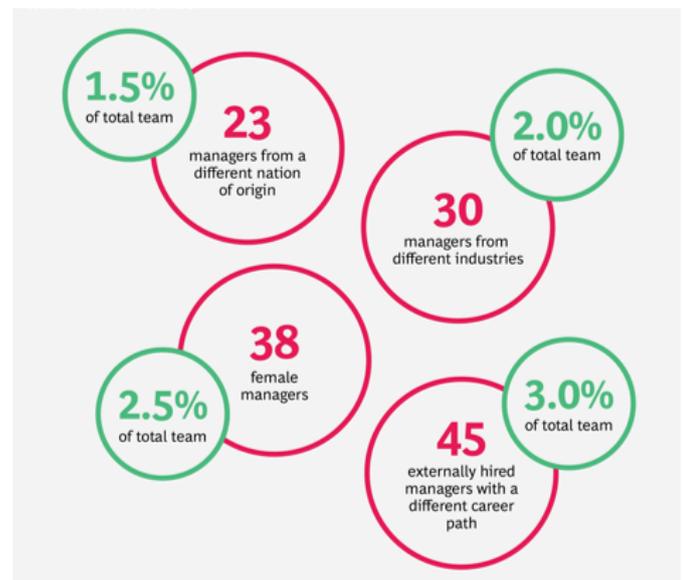The Impact of D&I Across All Levels and Why Leadership is a Prerequisite

Assess How Inclusive You Currently Are by Completing the DARE Assessment

Sample Slide

Exhibit 1 Companies with More Diverse Leadership Teams Report Higher Innovation Revenue

Companies with **below-average** diversity scores

26% average innovation revenue reported by companies

Companies with **above-average** diversity scores

45% average innovation revenue reported by companies

Source: BCG diversity and innovation survey, 2017 (n=1,681).
Note: Average diversity score calculated using the Blau index, a statistical means of combining individual indices into an overall aggregate index.

Exhibit 2 Changes in Leadership Can Lead to a Percentage Gain in Innovation Revenue

1.5% of total team

23 managers from a different nation of origin

2.0% of total team

30 managers from different industries

38 female managers

2.5% of total team

3.0% of total team

45 externally hired managers with a different career path

Source https://www.bcg.com/publications/2018/how-diverse-leadership-teams-boost-innovation

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Exercise 1

How Inclusive is Your Company?

See our Assessment to assess how inclusive your company is!

The assessment is a key component of the DARE Project supporting organizations in developing inclusive practices that drive innovation, competitiveness, and ethical business growth. By participating in this assessment, you will gain valuable insights into your organization's D&I maturity and receive tailored recommendations for improvement. The results aim to empower your organization to create a more inclusive, innovative, and sustainable workplace. The assessment will take you approx. 15-20 Minutes.

The DARE Assessment is a comprehensive tool designed to help SMEs evaluate their current D&I practices across five key areas:

1. Introduction to Diversity and Inclusion in SMEs
2. Organizational Readiness and Culture
3. Strategic Impact and Business Operations
4. Legal and Compliance Readiness
5. Workforce Diversity and Talent Management

DARE Assessment Eng Assessment

Sample Slide

D&I Delivers Competitive Advantage to Companies

People

❖ 82% of global HR leaders believe that the 'war for talent' will be a key business issue over the next 10 years

❖ 75% of employees who experience unfairness will not recommend or refer

❖ 67% of LGBT people believe it is important to work for a company that has equality and diversity policies

❖ 86% of millennials in Ireland research the culture of a company

❖ 72% of women in the workforce say diversity is important when evaluating job offers

Rewards

❖ +53% return on equity – Fortune 500 (Diverse Boards)

❖ 45% increase market share

❖ 80% improvement in business performance

❖ +15% financial returns

❖ 50% increase in team collaboration, creative agility & problem solving

❖ 20% increase in employee retention

Source Bord Bia Ireland

Module 2 (Part 1) Section 2

M2: Part 1 Section 2

SECTION 2 guides you through the process of creating a purpose-driven Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) strategy that shifts your approach from being reactive to proactive and strategic. You'll begin by assessing your current D&I landscape, review existing policies and practices to identify areas of improvement. From there, you'll learn to set specific, measurable D&I goals and targets that align with your business objectives, ensuring your strategy drives meaningful change. Finally, we'll focus on how to effectively communicate and implement your strategy to secure company-wide buy-in, ensuring that every level of your company is committed to the D&I journey.

02 Contents to Section 2

Develop A Purpose Driven High Impact D&I Strategy

Develop a Purpose Driven D&I Strategy to Move from Being Reactive to Strategic

Assess Your Current Landscape by Reviewing Your Current D&I Practices, your current policies.

Set Specific D&I Goals and Targets that Align with Business Objectives

Effectively Communicate and Implement Your D&I Strategy for Company Wide Buy In

Example: SME in Italy: How they Developed their D&I Strategy.

Example: SME in Finland: How they Developed their D&I Strategy.

Sample Slide

25 % Senior leaders feel uncomfortable talking about inclusion and diversity

40 % Senior leaders completely understand what equality (41%), diversity (39%) and inclusion (37%) mean

32 % Senior decision-makers said they didn't know what areas of D&I their company would be focusing on over the next five years

47 % Company does not have a formal D&I Strategy or Action Plan, nor stand-alone nor as part of the wider strategy

25 % Approach to D&I is entirely or mostly reactive

Source CIPD Report Inclusion at Work 2023

36 % Company CEOs are not planning to focus on any D&I areas in the next 5 years

Exercise 2

Assess Your Current D&I Strategy Landscape

❏ Do you have a D&I Strategy or an Action Plan that has been communicated and is accessible across your company?

❏ Are your managers and leaders communicating and actively promoting D&I through all areas and actions?

❏ What D&I data and evidence is your strategy or plan based on?

❏ How have you linked/aligned your D&I strategy up to the wider business strategy and priorities?

❏ How do you track progress and communicate that across the company?

Module 2 (Part 2) Section 3

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Module 2 (Part 2)
Inclusive Leadership Skills

Part 2: Unlock Your Inclusive Leadership and Tap Into the Power of Neurodiversity.

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Sample Slide

M2: Part 2 Section 3

SECTION 3 equips leaders with the skills to build inclusive teams that drive innovation, productivity, and organizational success. Leaders will understand how to effectively enable collaboration, understand unconscious biases, and manage emotions in ways that enhance team cohesion. Leaders get to understand and harness the power of neurodiversity and recognise that individuals with different cognitive approaches contribute to the overall success of teams. Inclusive leadership requires embedding D&I practices into leadership so leaders can create environments where all employees—regardless of cognitive differences—feel valued and can fully contribute their unique strengths.

Contents

03 **Unlock Your Inclusive Leadership and Tap Into the Power of Neurodiversity.**

Overview of Why **Leaders Need Inclusive Skills** to Cultivate Inclusive Teams

Strategies for Leaders to **Cultivate Inclusive Teams**

Inclusive Leadership Skills (e.g., empathy, self awareness and cultural intelligence)

Unconscious Bias and Bias Mitigation Skills and Strategies for D&I Leaders

Emotional Intelligence Skills and Strategies for D&I Leaders

How Leaders can Tap into the Power of **Neurodiversity!**

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Understand the importance of **inclusive leadership skills** for cultivating diverse, high-performing teams.

- Learn **strategies for creating an inclusive work environment** that embraces diverse perspectives and talents.

- Develop **critical leadership skills** such as empathy, self-awareness, and cultural intelligence to foster an inclusive team culture.

- Gain insight into **unconscious bias** and learn effective strategies for mitigating its impact on team dynamics and decision-making.

- Enhance **emotional intelligence** to lead teams with greater understanding, collaboration, and respect for individual differences.

- Explore how leaders can tap into the unique strengths of **neurodiverse individuals** to enhance creativity, problem-solving, and innovation within teams.

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Sample Slide - Section 3

7 Acts of Compassionate, Empathetic Inclusive Leadership

Whether you're just starting out or the leader of a company, engaging in these 7 intentional acts of inclusion and building the leadership competencies will allow you to reinvent relationships and strengthen your company. Full information on each act is here.

1. **DEEPEN** your self-awareness.
2. **FOSTER** social awareness.
3. **LISTEN** to understand.
4. **CREATE** connections.
5. **MAKE** a meaningful impact.
6. **LEAD** with courageous vulnerability.
7. **INVEST** resources in inclusion.

Center for Creative Leadership

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Source Inclusive Leadership: Steps to Take to Get it Right | CCL

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Exercise 1

Quick Check in
Inclusive Leadership Assessment

- ❑ Do I actively seek out and consider diverse perspectives in decision-making and meetings?

- ❑ How often do I engage with employees from underrepresented groups to understand their challenges and needs?

- ❑ Am I aware of my own biases, and do I take steps to mitigate them in my leadership approach?

- ❑ How inclusive is the language I use in meetings and communications?

- ❑ Do I create opportunities for all team members to contribute and be heard?

Exercise 2

Time to Take Inclusive Leadership Action!

- ❑ Identify areas where you can improve **inclusivity** in your leadership approach.

- ❑ Identify areas where you can improve on **bias mitigation** in your leadership approach.

- ❑ Identify areas where you can improve on your **emotional intelligence** in your leadership approach.

- ❑ Set specific goals to address areas or gaps

- ❑ Seek feedback from your team regularly

Module 2 (Part 3)
Inclusive Leadership Skills

Part 3: Measure Inclusive Leadership Impact and Build D&I Resilience

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Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Understand the key **metrics and methods for monitoring and reporting** leadership impact on diversity and inclusion (D&I).

- Develop systems to track the **effectiveness of inclusive leadership** and establish accountability mechanisms.

- Create **recognition and reward strategies** for inclusive leadership practices.

- Apply the **SMART framework** to measure leadership impact in D&I.

- Learn **crisis management** and **resilience strategies** focused on D&I.

- Develop a comprehensive **D&I crisis management framework** for SMEs.

- Identify inclusive leadership practices that build company resilience in times of crisis..

M2: Part 3 Section 4

SECTION 4 enables leaders to measure the impact of their leadership on D&I. This is essential so they can track their progress, identify areas for improvement, and ensure accountability. This module explores effective methods to monitor and report the impact of leadership on D&I, develop systems for recognizing inclusive leadership, and uses the SMART framework to measure success. Additionally, it provides a deep dive into crisis management and resilience strategies that incorporate D&I principles. By empowering leaders with inclusive crisis management tools, this module will equip them to navigate challenging situations while maintaining a commitment to diversity, inclusion, and organizational resilience.

Contents Section 4

Sample Slide

10 Examples How to Measure Leadership Impact Using the SMART Framework

Create a clear and actionable Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) strategy with company aligned objectives and goals are essential for driving meaningful D&I change within a company. These goals should align with the company's overall business objectives. For successful D&I integration, they should be measurable and tracked regularly with progress reports. The next section shows how to measure leadership impact using the SMART Framework. It presents popular SME D&I strategy goals and objectives.

S	M	A	R	T
SPECIFIC	**MEASURABLE**	**ACHIEVABLE**	**RELEVANT**	**TIME-BOUND**
You need to be clear on what you want to accomplish.	The goals should be quantifiable. For example, generate one lead per month.	The goals should not be too easy or too hard. Set ambitious, but realistic targets.	The target should align with your business goals.	Set a time frame and/ or a clear deadline for achieving your goals.

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Source How to Create SMART Goals

M2: Part 3 Section 5

SECTION 5: enables leaders to measure the impact of their leadership on D&I. This is essential so they can track their progress, identify areas for improvement, and ensure accountability. This module explores effective methods to monitor and report the impact of leadership on D&I, develop systems for recognizing inclusive leadership, and uses the SMART framework to measure success. Additionally, it provides a deep dive into crisis management and resilience strategies that incorporate D&I principles. By empowering leaders with inclusive crisis management tools, this module will equip them to navigate challenging situations while maintaining a commitment to diversity, inclusion, and organizational resilience.

Contents Section 5

05 **D&I Crisis Management & Resilience Strategies**

Develop a D&I Crisis Management Framework

Build Resilience Through Inclusive Leadership

7 Examples of SME Crisis Management Strategies with Solutions

Sample Slide

D&I Crisis 1 »

Racial Discrimination Incident in the Workplace

Context Employee reports experiencing racial discrimination from a colleague. The incident becomes known among staff, leading to tension within the team.

Tactic Immediate response by setting up an investigation led by an external, impartial D&I HR consultant. Establish open communication with all employees about the process.

1. Conduct a thorough investigation with input from the affected employee and witnesses via an external HR D&I consultant
2. Provide employee support (e.g., counselling), and feedback, communication channels (e.g., survey, company meeting or ERG).
3. Implement mandatory racial sensitivity training for all employees.
4. Develop a clear anti-discrimination policy and procedure for handling such incidents in the future.

Outcome The situation was resolved without further escalation. The training and new policy helped prevent similar incidents.

What Worked Transparency in the investigation and communication; involving external experts.

What Doesn't Work Downplaying the incident or delaying the response can lead to loss of trust and credibility.

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Module 3

Inclusive Talent Management for SMEs (6 Parts)

Introduction to Module 3 (6 Parts)

Discover the DARE Modules Learning Pathway:

Enjoy our learning blocks designed to help SMEs build diverse, equitable and inclusive workplaces. Unlock the power of how DEI to drive the sustainable success of your company. Our practical and interactive Modules deliver real life insights and case studies from a European perspective – Join us in creating workplaces and communities where everyone can thrive!

MODULE 1
Introduction: Diversities Reviving European Enterprises

Key Features: Overview and definitions of D&I in SMEs. 12 Dimensions of Diversity. Learning key competencies for business case delivery.

Part 1: Why D&I Matters for SMEs.
Part 2: Building D&I Competencies for SMEs.

MODULE 2
Inclusive Leadership Skills

Key Features: Develop inclusive leadership skills (e.g., Bias awareness and mitigation). Tap into the power of neurodiversity. Measure impact and build resilience.

Part 1: Prepare for Inclusive Change Through Leadership.
Part 2: Unlock Inclusive Leadership & Neurodiversity.
Part 3: Measure Leadership Impact & Build Resilience.

MODULE 3
Inclusive Talent Management for SMEs

Key Features: Inclusive advertising, recruitment and retention. Performance management and leadership succession planning.

Part 1: Attracting, Developing, and Retaining Diverse Talent.
Part 2: Creating Inclusive Job Descriptions & Adverts.
Part 3: Inclusive Selection, Interviewing, and Offer Strategies.
Part 4: Employee Talent Development and Retention.
Part 5: Performance Management and Feedback.
Part 6: Succession Planning and Leadership Development.

YOU ARE HERE

MODULE 6
Inclusive Community Engagement for SMEs

Key Features: Learn the six core principles of inclusive community engagement. Understand the four layers to community context and prepare an effective Engagement Framework and Action Plan.

Part 1: Foundations of Inclusive Community Engagement.
Part 2: Understand & Engage Your Community.
Part 3: Ensuring Inclusive Engagement through Shared Value.
Part 4: Prepare for an Effective Community Engagement Framework.
Part 5: Create a Community Engagement Framework & Action Plan.

MODULE 5
Inclusive Marketing For SMEs

Key Features: Embed inclusivity into branding. Understand the needs of diverse audiences. Craft strategic inclusive marketing campaigns.

Part 1: The Power of Inclusive Marketing for SME Brands.
Part 2: Understand Your Customers and Overcome Marketing Barriers.
Part 3: Crafting Inclusive Marketing Campaigns.

MODULE 4
Building an Inclusive Company Culture in SMEs

Key Features: Build an inclusive company culture. Design and deliver a strategic cultural change audit, review policies and practices and empower teams through reward and recognition.

Part 1: Understand and Build an Inclusive Company Culture.
Part 2: Design and Deliver a Strategic Cultural Change Audit.
Part 3: Support Management in Creating a Workplace of Belonging.
Part 4: From Policies to Practice: Cultivating a Culture of Inclusion.
Part 5: Empower Teams Through DEI Collaboration, ERGs, and Recognition.

Irish Employment Regulation

Inclusive practice at work is built into legislation in Ireland. Discrimination in recruitment processes and the workplace is prohibited under the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015, on the grounds of:

- ❖ Gender
- ❖ Marital status
- ❖ Family status
- ❖ Age
- ❖ Disability
- ❖ Sexual orientation
- ❖ Religion
- ❖ Race
- ❖ Traveller ethnicity

Source Inclusive Recruitment Toolkit

Introduction to Module 3 (6 Parts)

Module 3 (6 Parts)

Inclusive Talent Management for SMEs

Key Features: *Inclusive advertising, recruitment and retention. Performance management and leadership training for succession planning.*

Part 1: Attracting, Developing, and Retaining Diverse Talent. Discover how European SMEs can become diverse and inclusive workplaces. Learn how to conduct inclusive audits to develop inclusive recruitment strategies. Learn to navigate the benefits of both in-house and external recruitment approaches to attract and retain diverse talent.

Part 2: Creating Inclusive Job Descriptions & Adverts. Learn how to create and advertise inclusive job adverts, write job descriptions that attract diverse talent, and effectively broaden your diverse talent pool. Develop inclusive recruitment, onboarding, and retention strategies that ensure a welcoming and supportive environment for new employees, enabling an inclusive workplace culture.

Part 3: Inclusive Selection, Interviewing, and Offer Strategies. Discover how to formulate an inclusive selection process, screen candidates and shortlist effectively, prepare your interviewing panel and guide candidates through an inclusive interview experience. Learn different interviewing techniques that promote inclusivity, provide constructive and fair feedback, and extend job offers that reflect a commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Part 4: Employee Talent Development and Retention. Explore effective talent management and retention strategies. Begin with a thorough assessment of your current workforce, including onboarding processes and accessibility in the workplace. Learn how to evaluate skills and talents, design tailored career pathways and create professional development plans.

Part 5: Performance Management and Feedback. Develop fair and objective performance evaluations that are unbiased and focus on measurable outcomes. Establish channels for providing and receiving constructive feedback that respects diverse employees.

Part 6: Succession Planning and Leadership Development. Create a diverse employee talent pipeline so they can advance and move onto leadership roles. Develop programs to prepare and support diverse employees for successful leadership.

Introduction to Module 3
(There are 6 Parts, 14 Sections)

Introduction DARE to Module 3

In today's evolving business landscape, diversity and inclusion are more than just values—they are key drivers of innovation, productivity, and long-term success. This module equips European SMEs with the essential knowledge and tools to build a truly inclusive workplace.

From conducting inclusive audits and crafting equitable recruitment strategies to refining selection, interviewing, and onboarding practices, you will learn how to attract, support, and retain diverse talent.

Additionally, this module explores employee development, performance management, and leadership succession planning, ensuring that inclusivity becomes a sustainable and integral part of your organization's growth.

YOU ARE HERE

Inclusive Talent Management for SMEs

Becoming an Inclusive European SME Employer	Part 1
Creating Inclusive Job Descriptions & Adverts	Part 2
Inclusive Selection, Interviewing and Offer Strategies	Part 3
Employee Talent Development and Retention	Part 4
Performance Management and Feedback	Part 5
Succession Planning and Leadership Development	Part 6

Part 1

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Module 3: Inclusive Talent Management for SMEs

Part 1: Attracting, Developing, and Retaining Diverse Talent

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Part 1

Becoming an Inclusive European SME Employer

❑ Discover how European SMEs can become diverse and inclusive workplaces.
❑ Learn how to conduct inclusive audits to develop inclusive recruitment strategies.
❑ Learn to navigate the benefits of both in-house and external recruitment approaches to attract and retain diverse talent.

01 Learn the **Definition** of SME Diversity & Inclusion

02 Navigating **European HR Regulations**

03 Inclusive **Workplace Legislation** in Ireland

04 Becoming an **Inclusive SME Benefits** the Company and its Employees!

05 **Step 1: Start with an Audit**
Identify What Changes You Need to Create a D&I Workplace.

05 **Step 2: Create an Inclusive Recruitment Strategy**

Case Study: CD Project Red, Poland

Sample Slide

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Understand how European **SMEs can cultivate** diverse and inclusive workplaces.

- Learn how to **conduct inclusive audits** to evaluate and enhance recruitment strategies.

- Explore the **benefits and challenges** of both in-house and external **recruitment** approaches for attracting and retaining diverse talent.

- Develop practical knowledge on creating **inclusive recruitment strategies** that foster diversity in the workplace.

- Gain insight into **best practices** for enabling an inclusive company culture that supports long-term talent retention.

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Sample Slide

D&I Employers Focus on 3 Main Areas Recruit, Retain and Reach

Recruit understand and address barriers and opportunities to attracting and recruiting diverse talent. D&I recruitment processes are inclusive and accessible with improved diversity in applicants and shortlisted candidates.

Retain involves different approaches to making the workplace more inclusive and accessible and ensuring SMEs retain a diverse workforce. Most effective when SMEs have implemented appropriate steps in recruitment.

Reach ensures that SME's promotional activities are inclusive. How SMEs can adopt best-practice promotional and professional development opportunities to all employees. Most effective when SMEs have implemented the appropriate steps in recruitment and retention.

RECRUIT
1. Inclusive hiring
2. Bias mitigation
3. Accessibility

REACH
1. Mentoring
2. Equitable promotion
3. Pay parity

DIVERSE & INCLUSIVE WORKFORCE

RETAIN
1. Workplace safety and respect
2. Workplace culture
3. Policies and strategies

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Exercise

Audit Existing D&I

- ❑ Do you have an Inclusion and Diversity Policy?
- ❑ Do you have a reasonable Accommodation and policy?
- ❑ Has Senior Management, those responsible for recruiting and all other staff had opportunities for training in inclusive employment practices?
- ❑ Do you currently employ people with various backgrounds and abilities?
- ❑ How accessible are the building/website/work practices?
- ❑ Do you have information about the specific requirements of diverse potential candidates?
- ❑ Do you monitor for equality and/or survey employees on their perceptions of the company culture?

Source Employers for Change
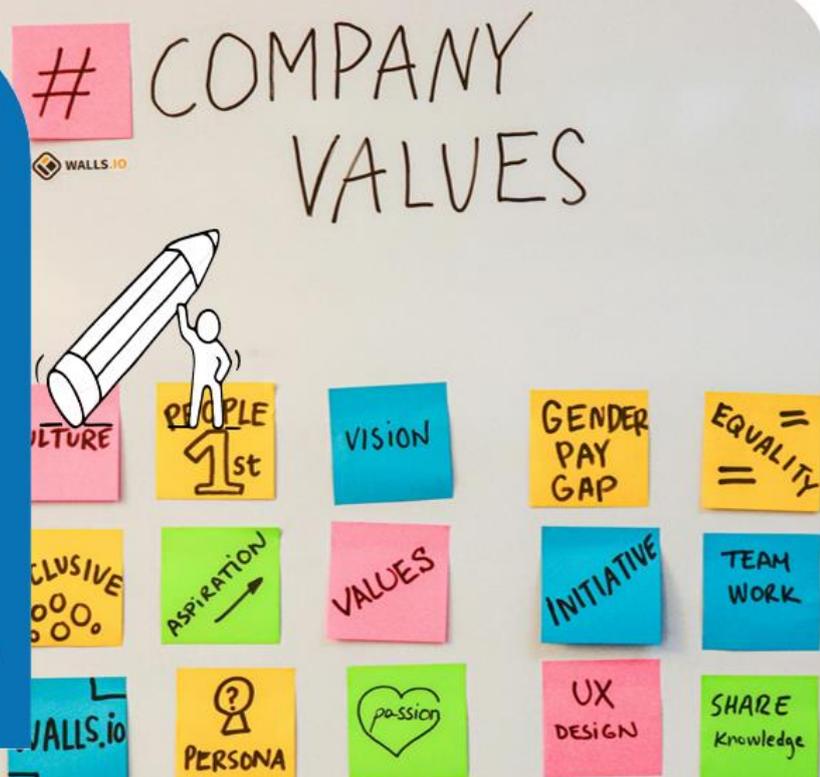
Module 3 (Part 2) Sections 7-8

Part 2

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Module 3: Inclusive Talent Management for SMEs

Part 2: Creating Inclusive Job Descriptions & Adverting

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Part 2

Inclusive D&I Talent & Recruitment Strategies

❑ Learn how to write job descriptions that effectively broaden your diverse talent pool.
❑ Learn how to create and advertise inclusive job adverts, that attract diverse talent.

07

Step 3: Write Inclusive Job Descriptions
Designed to attract diverse candidates through inclusive role requirements communication.

08

Step 4: Create Inclusive Job Advertisements
Attract diverse external candidates, emphasising commitment to diversity and inclusivity.

Case Study: CJK Engineering, Ireland

Case Study: Be My Eyes, Denmark

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Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

Learn how to **write inclusive job descriptions** that appeal to a wide range of candidates.

Understand how to **create and advertise job adverts** that attract diverse talent.

Develop **strategies for inclusive recruitment, onboarding, and retention** to foster an inclusive workplace culture.

Gain practical knowledge on how to ensure **job descriptions** reflect inclusivity and are free from bias.

Learn how to **establish supportive processes** that make new hires feel welcomed and valued, enhancing long-term retention.

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Sample Slide

Inclusive Job Descriptions
Remove Jargon

Jargon	Meaning	Alternative
Guru	It comes from the Buddhist and Hindu religions and refers to a spiritual leader held in high esteem. Using it casually can be interpreted as disrespectful.	Expert
Tribe	Historically used to marginalize indigenous communities	Team
Pow Wow	An indigenous ceremony historically banned in colonial law. It can be triggering for some.	Huddle
Nitty Gritty	Refers to the debris found at the bottom of a slave ship once human cargo was unloaded. Can also be triggering.	Essentials

Assess Your Attraction and Recruitment

❑ **How is your brand perceived in the market?**-Do you find it easy to attract talent? Are the images on your website and in your job advertisements diverse?

❑ **Do you use diverse mediums and channels to recruit?**

❑ **Do your job descriptions or postings reflect unintended biases** (such as having an advanced degree or specific language proficiency that might not truly be necessary)?

❑ **Do your website and job postings include D&I statements, goals, or priorities?**

Source Exude HR through the Lends of D&I

Part 3

DARE

Module 3: Inclusive Talent Management for SMEs
Part 3: Inclusive Selection Interviewing and Offer Strategies

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Part 3

Inclusive Selection, Interviewing and Offer Strategies

❑Learn how to write inclusive job descriptions that attract and broaden your diverse talent pool.
❑Discover how to create and promote inclusive job adverts that effectively reach and engage diverse candidates.
❑Develop inclusive recruitment, onboarding, and retention strategies to be welcoming and demonstrate a supportive environment, enabling an inclusive workplace culture.

09 **Step 5: Inclusive Candidate Selection**
To ensure fair evaluation when choosing candidates

10 **Step 6: Inclusive Interviewing**
Creating a fair and supportive environment for all candidates

11 **Step 7: Inclusive Selection Post Interview & Offer**
Ensure fairness in the final stages of recruitment with respectful feedback

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Learning Objectives

☐ Learn how to **design an inclusive selection process** that ensures fair and unbiased screening of candidates.

☐ Understand how to **prepare an interview panel** to ensure inclusivity and fairness in the interviewing process.

☐ Discover **effective interviewing techniques** that promote inclusivity and provide a positive experience for candidates.

☐ Learn how to **give constructive and unbiased feedback** to candidates, regardless of the outcome.

☐ Develop **strategies for extending job offers** that align with your commitment to diversity and inclusion.

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Sample Slide

STEP 5

Inclusive Selection: Screen Candidates and Create a Short List

Log all applications

Use the job description and person criteria to assess each CV

Decline all applications that don't meet minimum requirements with a timely response

Score remaining CVs against desirable criteria to create a top-ten list

Review the top ten and confirm CV and cover letter proofing and presentation are flawless

Invite selected candidates to interview as quickly as possible with optional slots

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Source Robert tWalters

Exercise

Assess Your Interviewing and Section

❑ **Do you have interview questions designed to measure diversity, cultural competence, and emotional intelligence?**

❑ **How do you define what qualifies someone as a "cultural fit"?** Are you thinking about how a candidate might offer a dimension that your culture is missing and how they effectively mirror your company values or is the qualification more of a gut feeling that someone "fits in"? (be careful of the latter!)

❑ **How successful are your recruitment efforts?** Do you track recruitment patterns for underrepresented groups? Do you have a high acceptance rate?

Source Exude HR through the Lends of D&I

Part 4

DARE
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Module 3: Inclusive Talent Management for SMEs
Part 4: Employee Talent Development and Retention

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Part 4

Employee Talent Development and Retention

☐ Explore strategies to nurture diverse talent, enable equitable growth opportunities, and retain top performers.

☐ Learn how to create inclusive career pathways and tailored development plans to support employee advancement and retention and, ultimately, companyal sustainability.

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Step 8: Employee Talent Development and Retention

Learn how to assess and analyse your current workforce. Learn how to develop retention strategies, design career pathways and develop plans.

Learning Objectives

☐ Learn how to assess the current workforce and **evaluate skills and talents** to identify growth opportunities.

☐ Understand how to create **inclusive onboarding processes** and ensure workplace accessibility for all employees.

☐ Explore strategies for designing tailored **career pathways and professional development plans** for diverse talent.

☐ Gain insight into how to **nurture and retain top performers** while ensuring equitable growth opportunities.

☐ Discover how to implement **talent development and retention strategies** that contribute to long-term company sustainability.

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Sample Slide

⟫⟫ **Step 8**   Employee Talent Development and Retention

⟫⟫ **Action 1** Assess and Analyse the Current Workforce

⟫⟫ **Action 2** Set Goals and Develop Strategies

⟫⟫ **Action 3** Design Career Pathways and Development Plans

⟫⟫ **Action 4** D&I Retention Strategies

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Exercise

Analyse your Inclusive Retention Rate?

- ❑ Who are you retaining?
- ❑ Is diversity decreasing or increasing?
- ❑ What are your employees saying in surveys, exit interviews, ERG meetings and in other feedback and communication formats?
- ❑ Where is your retention rate highest? Why are they staying?
- ❑ Where is your retention rate lowest? Why are they leaving?
- ❑ What is the trend in your employee retention rate?

The main causes of employee turnover

- ❑ Lack of meaningful work
- ❑ Feel excluded or mistreated
- ❑ No progression
- ❑ Unsustainable expectations
- ❑ Unreliable and unsupportive managers or co-workers
- ❑ Unethical behaviours

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Part 5

![DARE logo]

Module 3

Part 5: Performance Management and Feedback

Part 5

Performance Management and Feedback   13

❑ Learn how to implement fair and objective performance management systems that emphasise measurable outcomes while mitigating bias.

❑ Discover how to create performance evaluations that are transparent, equitable, and support the growth of diverse talent within your company.

❑ You will also explore strategies for establishing effective feedback channels that promote open, constructive communication and enable a culture of continuous improvement.

Step 9: Performance Management and Feedback

Develop fair and objective performance evaluations that are unbiased and focus on measurable outcomes. Establish channels for providing and receiving constructive feedback that respects diverse employees

Case Study: Tico Mail Works, Ireland

Multiple Other Case Studies (Slide 67 – 69)

Learning Objectives

❑ Learn how to design and implement fair, objective, and **unbiased performance evaluations** that focus on measurable outcomes.

❑ Understand how to **create performance management systems** that are transparent, equitable, and support the development of diverse talent.

❑ Explore **strategies for providing constructive feedback** that respects and supports the growth of diverse employees.

❑ Develop **effective feedback channels** that encourage open, transparent communication and foster a culture of continuous improvement.

❑ Learn how to **mitigate bias in performance assessments** and establish systems that promote fairness and growth for all employees.

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Sample Slide

6 Ways to Fix Performance Management

- 1 Facilitate manager-employee feedback throughout the year
- 2 Discuss ongoing performance outside of individual contexts
- 3 Provide a framework for assessing future performance
- 4 Help managers communicate to drive future action
- 5 Capture how employees add value to others' work
- 6 Foster a culture of feedback

gartner.com

Source Gartner
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Gartner.

SME D&I Performance Management Matters

For SMEs, integrating D&I into performance management ensures that employees are evaluated fairly, reducing the risk of favouritism, unconscious bias, or discrimination. This approach allows companies to enable an environment where diverse employees feel valued, which in turn increases engagement, productivity, and retention. Establishing fair evaluation systems helps build trust and motivates employees to reach their full potential, knowing their work is recognised based on merit.

Performance management has room to improve. According to Gartner research, 52% of chief human resource officers (CHROs) believe they are not rewarding the right behavior in employees, and only 32% of HR business partners believe performance management delivers what employees need to perform.

Source Gartner

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Part 6

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Module 3: Inclusive Talent Management for SMEs

Part 6: Succession Planning For Leadership Development

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Part 6

Succession Planning For Leadership Development   14

❑Explore strategies to build a diverse and sustainable leadership pipeline within your company.
❑Learn how to identify and nurture high-potential talent
❑Learn how to prepare employees to transition into leadership roles effectively.
❑Learn how to create structured programs, mentorship opportunities, and development plans that empower diverse employees to advance and succeed as leaders.

Step 10: Succession Planning For Leadership Development

Create a diverse employee talent pipeline so they can advance and move onto leadership roles. Develop programs to prepare and support diverse employees for successful leadership.

Case Studies: Slide 14 – 15
Case Studies: Slide 33 - 34

D I V E R S I T I E S A R E R E V I V I N G E N T E R P R I S E

Learning Objectives

❑ Learn how to **build a diverse talent pipeline** that supports the progression of employees into leadership roles.

❑ Explore strategies for **identifying high-potential talent** and nurturing their growth within the organization.

❑ Understand how to **create leadership development programs** that prepare diverse employees for future leadership positions.

❑ Learn to **develop mentorship opportunities** and structured development plans that empower employees to succeed as leaders.

❑ Discover best practices for **preparing employees to transition into leadership** roles effectively and sustainably.

Sample Slide

Succession Planning: Bolster Talent & Cultivate Teams

Diversity and inclusion play a pivotal role in bolstering talent retention through cultivating inclusive cultures, providing career advancement opportunities, and mitigating biases.

In the context of succession planning, they guarantee the existence of a diverse leadership pipeline, encompassing a wide range of skill sets and promoting adaptability. These practices significantly contribute to the resilience of companies, enable employee engagement, and effectively prepare for forthcoming challenges and opportunities.
https://engagedly.com/blog/the-role-of-diversity-and-inclusion-in-talent-management/

Supports & Resources

Step 1 — Supports

Reading

- ❖ The European Commission's **"Inclusive Talent Identification Practices"** discusses methods for building inclusive pipelines across EU-based companies.

- ❖ **"The Role of AI in Inclusive Succession Planning"** by the European Business Review offers insights into the advantages of using technology in diverse talent tracking.

- ❖ **"External Sourcing for Diverse Talent in SMEs"** by the European Diversity Forum provides actionable strategies for sourcing leadership candidates.

Tools

Use data-driven succession planning tools like **PerformYard** or **BambooHR** which use analytics to track employee performance, potential, and readiness for leadership roles, ensuring that the process is fair and inclusive.

Step 2 — Supports

Reading

- ❖ **"Leadership Development for a Diverse Workforce"** by the EU Commission's Diversity Directorate offers templates and best practices for leadership development programs.

- ❖ **"Mentoring for Diverse Talent in Europe"** by EURES provides a step-by-step guide for SMEs to set up mentorship programs focused on diverse talent.

- ❖ **"Job Rotations for Leadership Development in SMEs"** by European Business Review outlines the benefits and best practices for implementing such programs.

Supports & Resources

Step 3 — Supports

Reading

❖ **"Breaking Barriers to Leadership"** by EU Diversity Network offers in-depth insights into barriers and solutions for diverse leadership advancement in Europe.

❖ **"Leadership Bias Awareness Training"** by Forbes Europe details how to implement training programs in small to mid-sized enterprises.

❖ **"Leadership Development in the Remote Work Era"** by the European Remote Work Institute offers guidance on leadership programs for SMEs with remote teams.

❖ **"Measuring Diversity in Leadership for SMEs"** by the European Leadership Institute outlines steps for tracking diversity in leadership positions.

❖ **"Feedback Mechanisms for Diverse Leadership"** by EURES offers strategies for obtaining feedback on diversity initiatives from employees.

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Module 4

Building an Inclusive Company Culture in SMEs (5 Parts)

Discover the DARE Modules Learning Pathway:

Enjoy our learning blocks designed to help SMEs build diverse, equitable and inclusive workplaces. Unlock the power of how DEI to drive the sustainable success of your company. Our practical and interactive Modules deliver real life insights and case studies from a European perspective – Join us in creating workplaces and communities where everyone can thrive!

MODULE 1
Introduction: Diversities Reviving European Enterprises

Key Features: *Overview and definitions of D&I in SMEs. 12 Dimensions of Diversity. Learning key competencies for business case delivery.*

Part 1: Why D&I Matters for SMEs.
Part 2: Building D&I Competencies for SMEs.

MODULE 2
Inclusive Leadership Skills

Key Features: *Develop inclusive leadership skills (e.g., Bias awareness and mitigation). Tap into the power of neurodiversity. Measure impact and build resilience.*

Part 1: Prepare for Inclusive Change Through Leadership.
Part 2: Unlock Inclusive Leadership & Neurodiversity.
Part 3: Measure Leadership Impact & Build Resilience.

MODULE 3
Inclusive Talent Management for SMEs

Key Features: *Inclusive advertising, recruitment and retention. Performance management and leadership succession planning.*

Part 1: Attracting, Developing, and Retaining Diverse Talent.
Part 2: Creating Inclusive Job Descriptions & Adverts.
Part 3: Inclusive Selection, Interviewing, and Offer Strategies.
Part 4: Employee Talent Development and Retention.
Part 5: Performance Management and Feedback.
Part 6: Succession Planning and Leadership Development.

MODULE 6
Inclusive Community Engagement for SMEs

Key Features: *Learn the six core principles of inclusive community engagement. Understand the four layers to community context and prepare an effective Engagement Framework and Action Plan.*

Part 1: Foundations of Inclusive Community Engagement.
Part 2: Understand & Engage Your Community.
Part 3: Ensuring Inclusive Engagement through Shared Value.
Part 4: Prepare for an Effective Community Engagement Framework.
Part 5: Create a Community Engagement Framework & Action Plan.

MODULE 5
Inclusive Marketing For SMEs

Key Features: *Embed inclusivity into branding. Understand the needs of diverse audiences. Craft strategic inclusive marketing campaigns.*

Part 1: The Power of Inclusive Marketing for SME Brands.
Part 2: Understand Your Customers and Overcome Marketing Barriers.
Part 3: Crafting Inclusive Marketing Campaigns.

MODULE 4
Building an Inclusive Company Culture in SMEs

Key Features: *Build an inclusive company culture. Design and deliver a strategic cultural change audit, review policies and practices and empower teams through reward and recognition.*

Part 1: Understand and Build an Inclusive Company Culture.
Part 2: Design and Deliver a Strategic Cultural Change Audit.
Part 3: Support Management in Creating a Workplace of Belonging.
Part 4: From Policies to Practice: Cultivating a Culture of Inclusion.
Part 5: Empower Teams Through DEI Collaboration, ERGs, and Recognition.

YOU ARE HERE

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Defining Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity refers to the presence of differences within a given setting. This could include race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, disability, socio-economic status, and more.

Inclusion is the practice of ensuring that people feel a sense of belonging and support within the workplace. It is about creating an environment where all individuals feel valued, respected, and able to contribute fully.

'**80%** of employees say inclusion is an important factor in choosing an employer'.

Source Jump.eu

Module 4 (5 Parts)

Building an Inclusive Company Culture in SMEs

Key Features: Build an inclusive company culture. Design and deliver a strategic cultural change audit, review policies and practices and empower teams through reward and recognition.

Part 1: Understand and Build an Inclusive Company Culture. Highlights the importance of a DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) Culture in small and medium enterprises (SMEs). It covers the benefits and perspectives of DEI for individuals and businesses. It explores how SMEs can build an inclusive culture, starting with their Inclusivity and gauging where their inclusive workplace culture currently stands.

Part 2: Design and Deliver a Strategic Cultural Change Audit. Delve into designing and delivering effective cultural change audits tailored to a company's needs. Participants will learn to design surveys targeting four core business areas and delivery methods that engage employees and analyse results.

Part 3: Support Management in Creating a Workplace of Belonging. Explore solutions, looks for support and resources for:

Core Business Area 1 Employee Belonging and Safety

Core Business Area 2 Supporting Line Managers & Team Leaders

It examines how SMEs can support line managers and team leaders in building a workplace of inclusivity and belonging. It highlights the role of leaders in ensuring psychological safety and overcoming challenges in diverse teams.

Part 4: From Policies to Practice: Cultivating a Culture of Inclusion. Learn solutions, supports and resources for:

Core Business Area 3 Inclusive Policies and Practices

Core Business Area 4 Addressing Exclusive Workplace Behaviours

Part 4 enables SMEs to transform current policies into effective policies with practical strategies to support an inclusive workplace culture. Participants learn how to develop effective policies, challenge existing frameworks, address exclusive workplace behaviours and successfully embed D&I into daily operations for a sustainable, inclusive culture.

Part 5: Empower Teams Through DEI Collaboration, ERGs, and Recognition. Learn how to engage teams in DEI initiatives through collaboration further, Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), and recognition programs. It includes strategies to promote inclusive behaviour, build ERGs for cultural ownership, and reward D&I champions. Participants will also develop intercultural competence and trust, forming a deeper cultural understanding and team cohesion.

Introduction to Module 4
(There are 5 Parts, 5 Sections)

Introduction DARE to Module 4

Module 4 covers key areas when building an inclusive company culture in SMEs.

Part 1: Learn the benefits of DEI for SMEs and assess your workplace's inclusivity to create a strong foundation for belonging and equity.

Part 2: Design and implement tailored cultural audits, using surveys and engagement strategies to analyze workplace inclusivity and drive meaningful change.

Part 3: Equip line managers and team leaders with strategies to foster belonging, psychological safety, and inclusivity within diverse teams.

Part 4: Transform existing policies into actionable strategies to challenge exclusive behaviours, develop effective DEI frameworks, and embed inclusivity into daily operations.

Part 5: Empower collaboration through Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), recognition programs, and ~~sive~~ leadership to build stronger, more cohesive

Building an Inclusive Company Culture in SMEs

YOU ARE HERE

Understand and Build an Inclusive Company Culture — Part 1

Design and Deliver a Strategic Cultural Change Audit. — Part 2

Support Management to Deliver a Workplace of Belonging and Inclusivity. — Part 3

From Policies to Practice: Cultivating a Genuine Culture of Inclusion. — Part 4

Empowering Teams Through DEI Collaboration, ERGs, and Recognition — Part 5

> " When a company's culture is poor, toxic, or unethical, there can be significant ramifications, especially with the proliferation of the internet and social media. Thus, culture carries an inherent risk — and the keys to business success.
>
> Source Audit Board

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Module 4 (Part 1)

Building an Inclusive Company Culture in SMEs

Understand and Build an Inclusive Company Culture

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M4:Part 1

01

In today's dynamic business environment, embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) has become vital for innovation, building strong teams, and ensuring sustainable growth. For small and medium enterprises (SMEs), creating an inclusive culture begins with understanding the nuances of DEI and tailoring these principles to their unique company goals. This Module explores the external factors driving the need for cultural diversity, clarifies key DEI concepts, and outlines practical steps for conducting inclusive culture audits. By addressing these topics systematically, SMEs can align their values and practices with inclusivity, establish behavioral guidelines, and design measurable goals that enable belonging and collaboration.

Understand and Build an Inclusive Company Culture

❖ The Foundations and Importance of an Inclusive Company Culture
❖ Why DEI Matters in Modern SMEs and the Individual and Company Perspective
❖ Moving Towards an Inclusive Company Culture
❖ Understanding The Differences Between an Inclusive Company Audit Versus an Inclusive Culture Audit
❖ Inclusive SME Culture Groundwork and Practical Exercises for Your Audit Survey & Writing Your First Inclusion Charter

Learning Objectives

1. **Understanding the Foundations of DEI**: Explore the key concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and how they shape a company's culture from both individual and company perspectives.

2. **Why DEI Matters in Modern Businesses**: Understand the external factors driving cultural diversity and the benefits of an inclusive environment for innovation and growth.

3. **Preparing for Inclusivity**: Establish your SME's values, vision, goals, and practices to define what inclusivity means for your company and write an actionable inclusion charter.

4. **Moving Towards an Inclusive Culture**: Align your company's culture, values, and behavioural guidelines to promote collaboration, belonging, and an inclusive environment.

5. **Conducting Inclusive Culture Audits**: Learn the importance of cultural audits to assess your current DEI status and identify areas for strategic improvement.

6. **Practical Steps for SME Audits**: Use company and employee exercises, discussions and other tools

7. **Engaging Your Team**: Facilitate workshops and brainstorming sessions between all company levels to gain clarity on current company culture, gather actionable feedback and refine your audit survey.

8. **Bringing It All Together**: Compile insights from workshops to pinpoint improvement areas . Refine your questions for your first Inclusive Audit Survey to embark on an inclusivity roadmap for building an inclusive and equitable company culture.

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Sample Slide

What is a Great Company Culture?

"*A great place to work is one where you trust the people you work for, have pride in what you do and enjoy the people you work with.*"

We survey tens of thousands of employees across a wide variety of industries. Based on this large data set and Ireland's Best Workplaces, **a great company culture can be defined** from an employee perspective where:

https://blog.greatplacetowork.ie/blog/what-is-it-like-to-be-part-of-a-great-company-culture
Ctrl+Click to follow link

You Feel: That You Can Trust Those Around You,

You Feel: Fairly Treated, Regardless of Who You Are,

You Hear: That Your Suggestions and Ideas are Welcome,

You Hear: That Your Work is Valued.

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Source A Great Place to Work

Exercise 1

Assess Core Inclusive Business Areas

Here are some ways you can assess inclusivity in core business areas. The answers will tell you if you are inclusive or if there is still work to be done.

Diverse employee representation.

❏ Do you have demographic data across all levels, including leadership? Are there any barriers to diversity in hiring, retention, and promotions?

Equity in policies and pay.

❏ Review policies to ensure they are inclusive and non-discriminatory. Are there any pay disparities? Do you accommodate working arrangements for diverse needs

Psychological safety.

❏ Do staff feel safe sharing feedback and concerns? Do managers receive training in inclusive behaviours and active listening? Is there a high level of employee disengagement or turnover?

Inclusive leadership and decision-making.

❏ Do your leaders receive DEI training? Do they understand how to incorporate diverse perspectives into decision-making? Do employees express or complain about leadership and lack of inclusivity?

Employee empowerment and belonging.

❏ Do you create spaces for employees to provide unique contributions, collaborate or learn? How are your employee engagement satisfaction ratings? How is employee turnover? How happy are employees? Do employees eagerly put their hand up to participate and contribute?

Exercise 2

Checklist for Defining Inclusive Culture

By clearly defining these elements, companies can establish a framework that guides them toward an inclusive culture.

❏ **Values:** What values guide inclusivity in your company?

❏ **Vision:** How does inclusivity align with your overall mission?

❏ **Goals:** What outcomes do you want to achieve (e.g., increased diversity, reduced turnover)?

❏ **Practices:** What tangible actions will support inclusivity (e.g., mentorship programs, leadership diversity targets)?

❏ **Measurement:** How will success be evaluated (e.g., employee feedback, inclusion index)?

Exercise 3

Now Write Your Inclusion Charter

An **Inclusion Charter** is a formal document that outlines a company's commitment to an inclusive workplace culture.
It serves as a guiding framework that articulates the values, principles, and specific actions the company will take to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) are embedded in its operations and ethos.

It is important because it provides a clear statement for everyone, internal and external to your company, of your intent and the company's direction. It ensures accountability and responsibility. It demonstrates inclusivity commitment and serves as a foundation for your company's D&I strategy.

Example Diversity & Inclusion Charter

The Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) launched 'a Charter for competitive advantage and enhanced employee belonging'.

https://specificationonline.co.uk/articles/2021-11-26/ciob/charter-for-diversity-and-inclusion-in-construction-launched-by-ciob

Write Your Inclusion Charter

Write Your Inclusion Charter

Draft a clear and concise statement that reflects your company's commitment to inclusivity and how it is demonstrated in daily operations, decision-making, and behaviours. This is a fundamental step; it acts as a living document regularly reviewed and updated to reflect evolving goals and challenges in achieving inclusivity. This can be changed and updated. Here is an example:

"At [Company Name], we are committed to creating an environment where diversity thrives and inclusion is at the heart of everything we do. We recognise the value of diverse perspectives and pledge to provide equitable opportunities for all employees, customers, and partners. Our Inclusion Charter reflects our commitment to challenging biases, embracing differences, and ensuring everyone feels a sense of belonging."

Example

https://www.trilliumflow.com/tf-news/diversity-and-inclusion-charter/

Exercise 4

Brainstorm Exercise: Inclusion Clarity Workshop for SME Managers

Objective: First, define what an inclusive culture means for your company. This should align with your mission, values, and business goals. This is the planning phase, where the audit team will collect information and research from existing inclusion culture assessments, review prior culture-related documentation, and set the timeline and objectives for the audit.

Participants: Management

❑ What does inclusivity look like in our workplace?

❑ How do we want employees to feel (e.g., belonging, equity, fairness)?

❑ What behaviours and practices should be part of our culture?

Try and Define, example "Our inclusive culture is one where every employee feels valued, has equal access to opportunities, and is respected for their unique contributions."

Exercise: Review this article to see what documentation you should review e.g., statements about management styles, code of conduct and ethics, HR policies etc. https://www.auditboard.com/blog/culture-audits-3-tips-for-assessing-your-corporate-culture/

Exercise 5

Brainstorm Exercise: Inclusion Clarity Workshop (Employee Sample)

Objective: Define inclusion for your SME and outline steps to implement it.

Participants: Get a sample of your employees from all levels with a diverse representation encouraged.

Gather your team and discuss these prompts:

❑ What do you think inclusion means to us as a company?

❑ How do we ensure fairness and equity in hiring, promotions, and decision-making?

❑ What actions or behaviours currently make you feel supported, included and valued?

❑ How can we explicitly promote respect and inclusion in your daily operations?

❑ Do you feel safe and respected? That includes both psychologically and physically safe.

❑ Where are our weaknesses and where are our strengths?

Record all answers on a whiteboard or collaborative digital tool.

Map Current Practices: Inclusion Clarity Workshop for All Staff.

Break into small groups. Each group will:

❑ Identify existing inclusive practices in their team and elaborate on the good and the bad.

❑ Explain how is inclusivity ensured in decision making, career progression and team development?

❑ Highlight areas for improvement.

❑ Suggest how inclusion can be better aligned with company values.

❑ What have we not covered or talked about that we need to?

Define Inclusion for Your SME (15 minutes)

Consolidate the discussion into a single statement that reflects your SME's definition of inclusion. For example:

"Inclusion at [Company Name] means enabling a culture where every employee feels respected, valued, and empowered to contribute, ensuring fairness in all our practices and reflecting our commitment to equity and belonging."

BRING IT ALL TOGETHER: Pinpoint Areas for Improvement

Reflect on workshop outcomes to determine what needs to be included in your inclusive culture survey. Identify Key Themes: Review the discussions and feedback from the workshop. **What are the recurring themes or concerns raised by participants in key Cultural Change Business Areas?**

❑ **Environment:** Are employees experiencing psychological safety, mutual respect, and belonging?

❑ **Barriers:** Are there any specific obstacles (e.g., bias, lack of access to resources) hindering inclusivity?

❑ **Policy Effectiveness:** Do employees believe current policies and practices support equitable opportunities and outcomes?

❑ **Leadership:** How well do employees feel leadership demonstrates a commitment to diversity, inclusion, and equity (DIE)?

Note Strengths and Weaknesses: Highlight areas where the company excels and those that require immediate attention. Use these insights to frame questions that confirm or explore these observations further.

Supports & Resources

Resources

Charter Implementation Toolkit
A Framework for Action
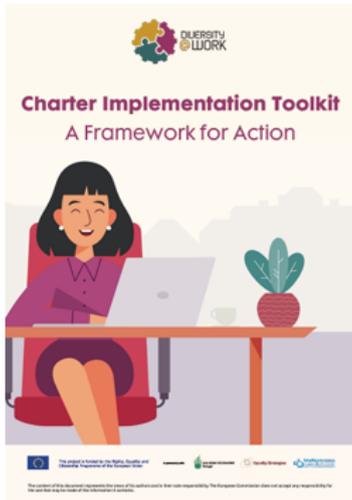
The CIT is the outcome of a consultative, collaborative approach involving ongoing discussion and detailed engagement with each of the Diversity Charter.

36% of managers say their diversity strategy doesn't include disability diversity (EY 2024)

45% of ethnic and cultural minorities don't feel optimistic about their career opportunities, compared with 36% of other employees (EY 2024)

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Module 4 (Part 2)

Building an Inclusive Company Culture in SMEs

Design and Deliver a Strategic Cultural Change Audit.

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M4:Part 2

02

In Part 1 you learned that in today's business landscape, a truly inclusive workplace goes beyond establishing policies and practices—it requires understanding and evaluating your company's culture and employee experiences through the lens of diversity and inclusion (D&I). Part 2 of this module equips participants with the knowledge and tools to conduct an effective inclusive company and culture audit. From designing the right survey, choosing strategic questions, and collection methods, engaging employees and leveraging data-driven insights, companies can identify strengths, address gaps, and create actionable plans for an equitable and thriving workplace. All leading to developing a comprehensive roadmap and targeted strategy for promoting a D&I-centered business culture.

Design and Deliver a Strategic Cultural Change Audit.

❖ **You Need to Do Both:** An Inclusive Company Audit and an Inclusive Culture Audit
❖ Benefits of a D&I Culture Audit
❖ How to Conduct an Inclusive Culture Audit
❖ Selecting the Right Survey Questions & Method(s) of Delivery
❖ Sample Inclusive Culture Audit Survey Questions Focusing on 4 Core Business Areas
❖ Communicate and Engage Employees in the Survey
❖ Analyze the Results

Learning Objectives

1. **Inclusive Company Versus Inclusive Culture:** You will learn how to differentiate between an inclusive company audit and an inclusive culture audit and explain their unique contributions to improving D&I outcomes.

2. **Inclusive Culture Audit Benefits:** You will be able to identify the key benefits of conducting a D&I culture audit, which will lead to higher employee satisfaction and retention and sustainable company growth and innovation.

3. **Design Audit Survey:** You will learn how to design and develop an effective inclusive culture audit which has the right survey questions tailored to your core business areas to gather actionable insights.

4. **Deliver Audit Survey:** You will learn the different delivery methods, tools and participatory strategies you can use to clearly deliver and communicate your survey to ensure you engage employees.

5. **Analyse Results:** You will learn what to do post-survey to further develop results and then analyze survey results, considering knowledge gaps, how to identify improvement areas, and how to prioritize actionable steps.

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Sample Slide

Benefits of a D&I Culture Audit

Improved reputation

Mitigation of bias and discrimination

Benefits of a diversity audit

Financial advantage

Avoidance of groupthink

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Source: Remote.com

Module 4 (Part 3)

Building an Inclusive Company Culture in SMEs

Support Management to Deliver a Workplace of Belonging and Inclusivity.

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M4:Part 3

03

Part 3 explores the foundations of workplace inclusivity and belonging, focusing on psychological safety as a cornerstone for collaboration and belonging. By exploring leadership practices, employee perceptions, and inclusive behaviors, this module equips participants with practical supports and strategies to close the inclusivity gap. Leaders will learn to promote open communication, implement inclusive policies, and drive diversity, equity, and inclusion. The resources and supports provide actionable solutions, insights and steps to guide leaders to create thriving workplace cultures that prioritise well-being, enhance team dynamics, and drive sustainable business success.

Support Management to Deliver a Workplace of Belonging and Inclusivity.

❖ Introduction and Importance of Creating a Workplace of Belonging and Inclusivity

❖ **Survey Results, Core Business Area 1: Employee Satisfaction & Inclusion.** Survey Insights and Strategic Solutions.

❖ **Role of Leaders:** Enabling Psychological Safety and Understanding the Challenges of Diverse Teams.

❖ **Survey Results, Core Business Area 2, Enable Line Managers and Team Leaders To Create Inclusive Workplaces.** Survey Insights and Strategic Solutions.

❖ **The Importance of Line Managers and Team Leaders in their Daily Activities and Behaviours:** Bringing a Team from Homogeneity to Inclusivity

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Learning Objectives

1. Define the concepts of **belonging, inclusivity, and psychological safety** in the workplace.

2. Identify the importance and **responsibilities of line management**, team leaders and employees in creating an inclusive culture that moves from homogeneity to inclusivity

3. Access **solutions, resources, tools and supports** to challenges identified in the survey and facilitate workplace culture and inclusion.

4. Understand how managers can **shape an inclusive culture** through daily actions and behaviours. Learn the different **techniques and tools** to help them achieve this.

5. Recognize and **address behaviours** that hinder collaboration in diverse teams.

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Sample Slide

4 Core Business Areas Addressed to Bridge the Inclusive Culture Gap

The next section delves into what to consider including in your DEI strategy and action plan. It reviews the survey responses in relation to 4 core business areas and helps you prioritise and address areas of concern with strategic solutions and suggestions. It also outlines how to provide the necessary support and resources to tackle challenges effectively and enable continuous improvement.

Section 1 Employee Belonging, Inclusive Perceptions & Feelings
Section 2 Leadership and Management
Section 3 Policies and Practices
Section 4 Workplace behaviours

35% of women feel a sense of belonging at work, compared with 40% of men
(EY 2024)

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Start Here: Facilitate Psychologically Safe Communication

Building psychological safety is a shared responsibility that requires the commitment of HR, executives and senior leadership, people leaders, and employees. Employee actions are a direct reflection of leadership behavior. People leaders must consistently model expectations for psychological safety and demonstrate accountability to build ownership at the individual level. The following are some key leadership communication practices to build psychological safety:

❖ Ask open-ended questions and listen intently to understand feelings, values, and facts.

❖ Demonstrate vulnerability by admitting mistakes and sharing personal challenges and constraints.

❖ Ask for team members' input in decision making and explain how it contributed to the final decision.

❖ Invite employees, regardless of position, to respectfully challenge opinions and perspectives of their colleagues and leaders.

See Resources **Psychological Safety:** Communication Tip Sheet for SME Leaders

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Next: Ask Questions to Employees to Build Psychological Safety

Use the following sample questions below to identify the team's current stage of psychological safety and areas for improvement:

❑ Do you feel that your **voice is being heard**? If not, what needs to change?

❑ How can I best support you in achieving your **learning and development goals**?

❑ Is there anything that **would be helpful** for me to explain or clarify?

❑ Do you feel comfortable **admitting mistakes**? If not, what needs to change?

❑ What are some barriers that are holding you back from **contributing to team meetings**?

❑ Do you feel comfortable **sharing your opinion** if it's different from the rest of the team's? If not, what needs to change?

❑ Do you have **any suggestions** as to what we should start doing as a team?

❑ Do you feel comfortable **raising issues/concerns**? If not, what needs to change?

See Resources for all questions **Psychological Safety:** Communication Tip Sheet for SME Leaders

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Supports & Resources 🖥️🌐

Supports & Resources

Supports 26 - 29
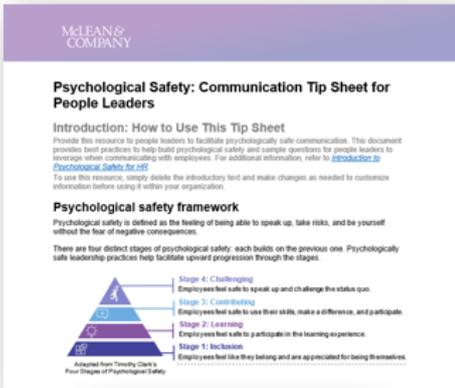
Psychological Safety: Communication Tip Sheet for SME Leaders

❖ Psychological Safety Framework
❖ Tips For Facilitating Psychologically Safe Communication
❖ 12 Best Practices When Communicating With Employees
❖ 9 Behaviours to Avoid When Communicating With Employees
❖ 16 Questions To Ask Employees To Build Psychological Safety
(Source Mclean & Company) (See resource on the course page)

How to Build an Inclusive Workplace
A fantastic handbook designed to help you start your journey towards building a culture of trust, respect and inclusion. It covers many topics such as;
❖ How do companys achieve inclusion?
❖ Understand and manage unconscious bias
❖ Key steps for an inclusive culture
❖ How to assess if you have an inclusive culture
(Source Jump) (See resource on the course page)

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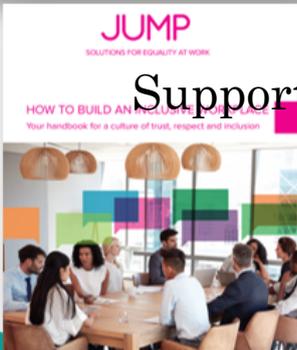
Supports & Resources

In this podcast, La Tonya (Change Coaches) discusses how she helps leaders create cultures of belonging.
1. Companies are undervaluing belonging—it's what employees truly want.
2. Current leaders are struggling to align their company's leadership agenda, personal goals, and DEI initiatives.
3. Achieving belonging and psychological safety takes effort but is worth it.
https://www.smestrategy.net/blog/creating-belonging-psychological-safety-at-work

Psychological safety exercises that build trust promote open communication, strengthen team connections and create a safe and high-performing group dynamic. Examples include icebreaker games, active listening exercises, reflective sessions, and conflict resolution activities. This resource also provides psychological safety tools.
https://www.spill.chat/company-culture/10-psychological-safety-exercises-for-building-a-stronger-team

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Supports & Resources

Session Guide: Build Psychological Safety in Your Team
A session guide to help create a safe environment by encouraging team members to bring their authentic selves to work.

Session Guide: Hive Learning talk about the Three building blocks for safe environments and **psychological safety.**
1. **Frame Failure Productively**
2. **Make Feedback Frequent Helpful and Easy**
3. **Make Speaking Up Worth It**

Helps businesses create a workplace where people feel comfortable taking interpersonal risks, such as speaking up or giving feedback they know will be tough to hear.
https://hivelearning.com/resources/psychological-safety/session-guide-build-psychological-safety-in-your-team/

Each person can share their authentic self

This article explains how to become an active listener, where you move from hearing to actually listening using different techniques, tools and methods:
https://online.mason.wm.edu/blog/active-listening-inclusive-workplace?.

It also includes a video about Inclusive Leadership. Highlights include why Leadership and Psychological Safety is essential for a positive workplace culture. (Link to Full Video)

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Interview: Active Listening And Empathy For Better Working Relationships

Interview: Forbes talks to Dylan Taylor, Chairman & CEO, of Voyager Space Holdings about how to
❖ Actively Listen During Conversations
❖ Active Listening Skills
❖ How to Build Bridges with Empathy
❖ The Synergy of Active Listening and Empathy
❖ Applying these Skills in the Workplace
https://www.forbes.com/councils/forbesbusinesscouncil/2023/07/28/active-listening-and-empathy-for-better-working-relationships/

Psychological Safety in Diverse Teams. A Cornerstone for Company Success.

This Resource talks about
❖ Understanding Psychological Safety
❖ The Challenges in Diverse Teams
❖ HRs Role in Cultivating Psychological Safety
❖ Practical Strategies to Enable Psychological Safety
❖ Implementing Change Steps for HR & Guide to Conflict Resolution
❖ Everyone's Role in Cultivating Psychological Safety
https://www.lumohealth.care/blog/fostering-psychological-safety-in-diverse-teams?

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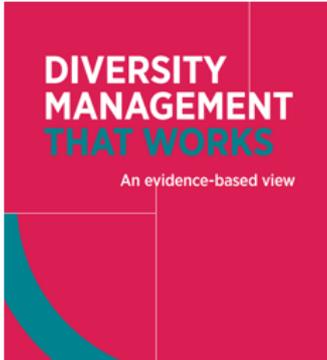
Guide: Diversity Management That Works developed by The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) to help facilitate businesses in D&I Management. Topics include;
- ❖ How to Plug Huge D&I Gaps
- ❖ How to Build an Inclusive Leadership Culture
- ❖ Different Training Interventions
- ❖ Effective Training Methods and What to Avoid

https://www.cipd.org/globalassets/media/knowledge/knowledge-hub/reports/7926-diversity-and-inclusion-report-revised_tcm18-65334.pdf

DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT THAT WORKS
An evidence-based view

Diversity and Inclusion in Focus
A Business in the Community Ireland Publication.

This Publication provides statistics to highlight stark inequalities that exist within the employment market. It explores barriers and opportunities employees and companies face along with a suite of tangible actions that can make a real difference in building inclusive workplaces.

https://bitc.ie/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/BITCI-Diversity-and-Inclusion-in-Focus-report.pdf

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The Elevate Pledge 2024 Annual Report
Bridging The Inclusion Gap

Report: Bridging the Inclusion Gap
Reports the diversity profile of 60 companies with over 150,000 employees providing key data on inequality in Irish society.
- Business Case for Inclusion (e.g., ROI and Reputation)
- Understand Key Performance Indicators
- Progress Against Commitments
- How to Progress into the Future

https://bitc.ie/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Elevate-Report-2024-v10-Updated-17-06-1.pdf

https://bitc.ie/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Elevate-Report-2024-v10-Updated-17-06-1.pdf
Ctrl+Click to follow link

CIPD
Championing better work and working lives

Reed

INCLUSION AT WORK 2022
Findings from the inclusion and diversity survey 2022

GUIDE: Company Findings on Diversity & Inclusion in the Workplace
- This survey report provides an overview of what employers are currently doing to improve inclusion and diversity in their workplaces and the practices they have found to be effective. It also highlights where more action is needed in terms of leadership and management and provides recommendations on how to address challenges.

https://www.cipd.org/globalassets/media/knowledge/knowledge-hub/reports/2023-pdfs/inclusion-at-work-exec-summary_tcm18-112951.pdf

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Supports & Resources

GUIDE: How to Facilitate Meaningful Conversations on Race
- Cross Culture Learning
- Aligning Policies & Processes
- Calling Out Inappropriate Conduct

(See resource on the course page)

HOW TO FACILITATE MEANINGFUL CONVERSATIONS ON RACE

GUIDE: Courageous Conversations
- How employees can have courageous conversations where they can informally share and provide constructive feedback

(See resource on the course page)

Courageous Conversations
Team Activity Tool

How to Create a D&I Strategy and Develop a Positive Work Environment

GUIDE: How to Create a D&I Strategy
- Learn how to create a D&I Strategy
- Develop a Positive Work Environment
- Develop Inclusive Practices

(See resource on the course page)

The Leader's Guide to Unconscious Bias

GUIDE: The Leaders Guide to Unconscious Bias
- Different Types and Examples
- Impact on Team Dynamics
- How to Mitigate

https://www.coffeepals.com/blog/the-leaders-guide-to-unconscious-bias

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Module 4 (Part 4)

Building an Inclusive Company Culture in SMEs

From Policies to Practice: Cultivating a Genuine Culture of Inclusion.

www. **projectdare**.eu

M4:Part 4

This module, Cultivating a Genuine Inclusive Workplace Culture goes beyond policies and practices. It emphasises that creating a genuinely inclusive workplace requires more than implementing policies—it demands cultural change. While policies provide a framework, authentic inclusivity emerges from employee behaviours, leadership commitment, and a shared company ethos. This module explores how to align diversity and inclusion (D&I) efforts with core business values, creating an environment where employees feel valued, respected, and empowered to contribute meaningfully.

04

From Policies to Practice: Cultivating a Genuine Culture of Inclusion.

❖ The Role of D&I Policies and Practices and Developing Practical Actionable D&I Policies.

❖ **Survey Results, Core Business Area 3, Inclusive Policies and Practices:** Survey Insights and Strategic Solutions.

❖ Challenging Existing Policies to Embed Inclusion into Company Culture

❖ **Survey Results, Core Business Area 4: Addressing Exclusive Workplace Behaviours.** Survey Insights and Strategic Solutions.

❖ Identify and Address Different Exclusive Workplace Behaviours

❖ Practical Implementation Strategies

Learning Objectives

- Understand the importance of embedding inclusivity into company culture.
- Identify the limitations of policy-driven approaches and address exclusionary practices.
- Recognise and mitigate unconscious biases and exclusive workplace behaviours.
- Develop and implement comprehensive discrimination and harassment policies.
- Promote inclusive behaviours through targeted training and employee engagement.
- Create a workplace culture where D&I is authentically practised and embraced.

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Sample Slide

Core Business Area 3
Inclusive Policies and Practices

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Only **20%** of employers say they critically review their **people management policies and company operations** to ensure they are fair and inclusive.

Just **30%** of the senior decision-makers who responded to the survey said that a **commitment** to a D&I workplace is articulated in their company.

Just **37%** of companys **use I&D data to change** their people management approach.

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Create a Safe Inclusive Workplace Culture

Key steps that you can take to encourage a safe, respectful, and inclusive workplace culture:

❑ Set the culture of your business by writing a **D&I policy** with values and a mission statement that reflects D&I values and equal opportunities and how you will embed them in the business moving forward.

❑ A well-crafted **mission statement** will help you make decisions that are consistent with these values. With this in place, efforts towards diversity and inclusion are more likely to be successful.

TIP: Include the diversity statement on your website describing your commitment, tell a story of an existing marginalised employee, highlight impacts to date, awards achieved etc., which can attract more diverse clients, collaborators and employees who share your values.

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Creating an inclusive culture requires involvement at all levels

❖ **Staff feedback is critical:** Involve employees to facilitate reflection on what inclusion means to them in their day-to-day role and how it reflects on business operations and company company values.

❖ **Get employee perspective on inclusivity:** Actively involve staff to reflect on what inclusion means in their roles and how it aligns with companyal values. *'People who feel recognised as different but equal, and feel able to be their true selves, are highly motivated and at ease, provided they experience solidarity from their peers'.*

❖ **Communicate D&I Policies:** Cleary communicate the policies in place to support diversity and inclusion at work, why they are important and support employees and managers to access and embed these policies.

❖ **Empower Line Managers:** Provide training and resources to help managers effectively implement D&I policies and practices. Assess managerial capabilities at all levels, identifying development needs to enhance their ability to foster inclusivity.

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Exercise 2

Develop a Discrimination and Harassment Policy

Developing and implementing discrimination and harassment policies is an essential step to prevent discrimination and harassment in the workplace. SMEs can adopt their own Discrimination and Harassment policies by

- Looking at other samples such as Sample Bullying and Sexual Harassment Policy or Workplace Harassment Policy Sample
- Writing their own by using the free Anti-Discrimination Policy Template

At a minimum, discrimination and harassment policies should include:

- ☐ A clear and unambiguous statement outlining the company's zero-tolerance approach to preventing discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment in the workplace.
- ☐ Definitions of discrimination and harassment.
- ☐ A summary of the legal obligations of employers and individuals.
- ☐ A summary of the responsibilities of all employees and leadership within the company.
- ☐ A clear process for reporting discrimination and harassment complaints.

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Source

Exercise 3

Establish a Complaints and Response Process

Employers must establish a process for receiving and responding to discrimination or harassment complaints.

For employees to feel comfortable raising issues of discrimination or bias in the workplace, processes must be in place that allow individuals to raise issues of discrimination and bias, and ensure these issues are heard and acted upon. Consider taking the following steps:

Establish a complaints process for employees to report discrimination. This process must be confidential, independent, and accessible to all employees. It must give at least two options for people to whom employees can report a complaint. The process should ensure that no victimisation can occur after a complaint has been made, and that the process has a defined timeline and is well-documented.

Nominate at least two staff members as D&H Contact Officers for employees to discuss D&H matters. Ideally, this should be someone other than the most senior leader of the business, to ensure staff are comfortable raising these matters. They should be trained and audited they are adhering to their role and guidelines.

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Source

Exercise 4

Support Inclusion: Establish a Complaints and Response Process

Provide access to information on support services for individuals to contact. A list of company's and resources that can provide assistance. In cases where an individual's needs cannot be met within the workplace, engage with specialist external support services, e.g., LGBTIQ+ and disability services.

Consider engaging an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). EAPs provide confidential support to employees and in some cases are specifically targeted for small and medium businesses. Most provide access to counselling and support for employees, and many offer more services including company assessment, management consultation and crisis support. **Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)**: Join or support ERGs (e.g., LGBT+, BAME, or disability networks) to provide a safe channel for voice and action.

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Source

Supports & Resources

RESOURCE: 22 Strategies and Tips for Creating Inclusive Workplaces

An inclusive workplace is a sure way to show respect for each employee and increase employee engagement. However, creating and maintaining an inclusive workplace culture requires efforts from all team members. Here are key strategies and tips for creating inclusive workplaces.

- ❑ **Encourage good leadership** to portray good example and demonstrate inclusive behaviours.
- ❑ **Encourage contributions from a diverse workforce** to strengthen their voices and enable inclusion.
- ❑ **Set up clear inclusion policy and guidelines** to show you are serious about inclusivity.
- ❑ **Nurture an empathetic workplace culture** so everyone feels they matter and are understood.
- ❑ **Provide inclusion training** to help employees become aware of any unconscious bias and its impact.
- ❑ **Regular research to understand your team's needs,** this data is pivotal to ensure you are aligned.
- ❑ **Invest in employee resource groups** (covered in the next section) to strengthen inclusivity
- ❑ **Provide diverse experience opportunities** to teach employees the importance of inclusion.
- ❑ **Introduce workers to inclusion policies** so it is easier to adapt to inclusive practices.
- ❑ **Implement inclusion standards** to ensure engagement, understanding and consistency.

Resource: Teambuilding.com: Full List and Detail.

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RESOURCE: 9 Examples of Inclusive behaviours in the Workplace

Learn about the nine inclusive behaviours you can put into action today.

- ❑ **Hiring from a variety of different backgrounds** to build a diverse team.
- ❑ **Survey employees regularly** to gauge satisfaction levels.
- ❑ **Develop a clear inclusive system** to address misunderstandings.
- ❑ **Give everyone a chance to speak during meetings** to hear different ideas and perspectives.
- ❑ **Create a safe space for employees** to feel respected.
- ❑ **Encourage mentorships across departments** to expose employees to new learning opportunities.
- ❑ **Celebrate multicultural holidays** so employees can learn more about each others backgrounds.
- ❑ **Continually re-evaluate pay structure and hiring requirements** so you are transparently promoting inclusivity.
- ❑ **Become aware of your unconscious biases** so that even the best leaders are aware and can establish a culture of inclusion in their teams.

Resource: Coach Diversity: Full List and Examples

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RESOURCE: Creating An Inclusive Workplace Policy: A Comprehensive Guide

Having an inclusive workplace where everyone feels valued, respected and able to be their true selves isn't just about being nice, it's about unlocking everyone's full potential so the whole team can succeed together. Creating an inclusive workplace policy is like building a foundation for a positive work environment where everyone can thrive. Whether you're just starting or looking to improve your current policies, this guide will show you how to create a place where everyone feels they belong. Start today by assessing your current practices, engaging with your employees, and implementing thoughtful policies that promote inclusion at every level.

Elements of Effective Inclusive Workplace Policy

- Fair Recruitment
- Equal Advancement
- Accessibility
- Anti-Discrimination Policies
- Flexibility in Work
- Cultural Understanding
- Supportive Environment
- Employee Networks
- Open Feedback
- Diversity Celebration

Resource: TruWorthWellness: Inclusive Workplace Policies

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RESOURCE: Inclusive Policies, Practices and Procedures

Workplace policies outline principles and responsibilities that both managers and employees need to adhere to. They ensure a consistent approach to procedure and help formalise what is expected of employees across the business. This resource focuses on four sample policies and procedures;

1. Non-discrimination policy

2. Accommodations and accessibility policy

3. Family, caring and parenting policy

4. Well-being policy

Resource: RICS Org

Non-discrimination policy

The purpose of a non-discrimination policy is to establish a framework to promote equal treatment, fairness and inclusivity in an organisation or a specific context.

In the UK, a policy would aim to prevent discrimination based on protected characteristics as defined under the Equality Act 2010.

What is discriminatory behaviour?

Bullying and harassment are when someone tries to intimidate or offend someone else. It can take verbal, physical, written or electronic forms. RICS' Rules of Conduct prohibit any member from bullying, victimising or harassing anyone.

Examples of these prohibited behaviours include undermining or picking on someone, denying someone training or promotion opportunities, spreading malicious or insulting rumours, sabotaging work or treating someone unfairly.

If you are based outside the UK, use the applicable law and regulations to help define your policy.

By setting out a zero-tolerance policy for harassment and discrimination, an organisation will give its employees confidence that all reports of poor behaviour will be taken seriously.

Harassing behaviour includes, but is not limited to:

- making employment decisions based on protected characteristics
- creating a hostile work environment based on protected characteristics
- retaliation against individuals who raise concerns related to discrimination
- failure to provide reasonable adjustments for individuals with disabilities, as required by law

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RESOURCE: Inclusive Examples, Benefits, Tools and Best Practices.

This resource explores how to create an inclusive workplace where everyone can thrive. Turning a garden of possibilities into a flourishing reality. It covers.

1. What is an inclusive workplace?
2. Why you should care about inclusion in the workplace
3. Benefits of inclusion in the workplace
4. Challenges of engaging an inclusive workplace
5. Effective ways to measure inclusion in the workplace
6. Inclusion in the workplace examples
7. Best practices for workplace inclusion
8. Necessary tools to achieve an inclusive culture
9. The path forward for inclusive workplaces

Resource: Talent Learning

INTERVIEWS / OPINIONS

Published on: 11 Jun 2024, 13 mins to read

Inclusion in the Workplace: Examples, Benefits & Best Practices

Elena Koumparaki, Content Writer

Inclusion in the workplace isn't just an abstract goal. It's the key to unlocking a vast garden of creativity and growth.

Inclusion embraces diversity in all its forms, cultivating a rich soil that nurtures unique ideas and

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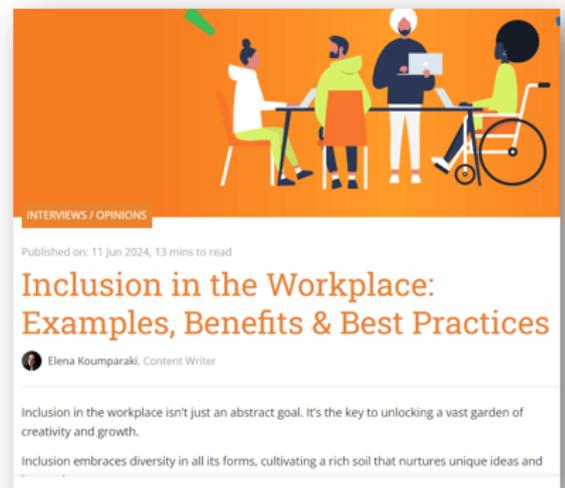
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GUIDE: Inclusive Language
- Understand offensive language
- How to talk about individual differences
- Learn different definitions

(See resource on the course page)

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE
Guidance, principles and examples

TOOLKIT: Exploring Allyship
- This resource provides a set of practical tools that will enable you to proactively champion and sustain best practices in diversity, equity, and inclusion within your company

(See resource on the course page)

TOOLKIT: EXPLORING ALLYSHIP

GUIDE: Supporting Transgender in the Workplace
How employers can create an inclusive work environment where trans employees can fulfil their potential. (See resource on the course page)

SUPPORTING TRANSGENDER INCLUSION IN THE WORKPLACE
Guidelines for Employers and Employees

TOOLKIT: Employer Disability Toolkit
This Toolkit provides employers with key information relating to accommodating and supporting disabilities and employment.
https://employersforchange.ie/Toolkits-for-Employers

Employers for Change
Employer Disability Information Service
Employer Toolkit

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Module 4 (Part 5) Section 5

Module 4 (Part 5)

Building an Inclusive Company Culture in SMEs

Empowering Teams Through DEI Collaboration, ERGs, Recognition and Rewards

www. **projectdare**.eu

Part 5

This Module, is about Empowering Teams Through DEI Collaboration, ERGs, and Recognition. It focuses on promoting a workplace where all employees feel respected, valued, and empowered. Encouraging inclusive behaviors is vital for DEI collaboration, driving innovation, and improving employee engagement. By understanding the importance of inclusive practices, supporting Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), and recognising D&I inclusivity and champions, companies can build a positive and cohesive culture. This Module also emphasises how leadership can cultivate an teams through behavioural management, helping teams from diverse backgrounds thrive together.

04

Empowering Teams Through DEI Collaboration, ERGs, Recognition and Rewards
- ❖ **Promoting Inclusive Employee Behavior:** Encouraging Collaboration, Addressing Biases, and Providing Inclusivity Training.
- ❖ **Empowering Teams with Employee Resource Groups (ERGs):** Enabling Employees to Take Ownership of an Inclusive Culture and Amplifying Voices From The Ground.
- ❖ **Recognizing and Rewarding D&I Champions:** Practical Strategies for Recognising and Rewarding Employees Who Actively Contribute an Inclusive Workplace Culture.
- ❖ **Developing Intercultural Competence and Trust:** Going Beyond Surface-level Diversity to Cultivate Deeper Cultural Understanding and Build Trust Within Teams.

Learning Objectives

1. **Promote inclusive employee behaviors** through collaboration, bias reduction, and effective inclusivity training.

2. **Empower teams to take ownership** of an inclusive culture by establishing and supporting Employee Resource Groups (ERGs).

3. Implement practical strategies for **recognising and rewarding D&I champions** to reinforce inclusive efforts.

4. Cultivate **deeper intercultural competence** and **build trust** to enhance cross-cultural collaboration and understanding.

Sample Slide

Encourage and Manage Inclusive Behaviours

Intercultural Competence	How to Encourage
Respecting Cultural Differences: Employees in an inclusive workplace appreciate and respect cultural differences. They understand that people from diverse backgrounds may bring different perspectives, and they are open to learning from one another.	❖ **Create Shared Values:** Inclusive employees work to align on shared moral principles that transcend cultural boundaries, ensuring everyone feels respected and that diverse cultural practices are honored.

Address Negative Behaviours:

- When employees exhibit negative behaviours such as racism, sexism, or homophobia, it's essential to intervene quickly. Managers can address these behaviours through training on cultural sensitivity, encouraging open discussions about diversity and inclusion, and implementing a zero-tolerance policy for discriminatory conduct.

Exercise 1

Start Your DEI Journey Today: Implement Actions for an Inclusive Culture.

Address all survey responses systematically. By addressing gaps systematically and leveraging resources, companies can create a truly inclusive workplace where all employees feel valued and supported.

❏ Use all survey responses to create an **Inclusive Culture Action Plan**, prioritising areas of concern and celebrating strengths.

❏ Reinforce inclusive commitment by adjusting policies and introducing new initiatives, address suggestions and concerns.

❏ Ensure **transparency and awareness of the issues** identified by sharing results and the planed actions with the company

❏ Provide **employee supports** where needed (e.g., Cultural Strategies, Supports and Resources and set up an ERG and create unbiased business processes and systems and provide space and listening meetings to the opinions and expertise of employees, HR, and outside experts

❏ **Employee training** (e.g., Unconscious Bias, Constructive Communication)

❏ **Leader training** (e.g., Inclusive leadership development, Unbiased Talent Management)

❏ **Reassess** progress quarterly or annually with follow-up surveys to measure improvement. Make sure to measure success through both metrics and communication between leadership teams, HR teams, and employees.

Supports & Resources

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Employee Resource Group Activities: AIHR | ACADEMY TO INNOVATE HR
10 Examples

Professional development workshops	Mentorship programs	Guest speaker series and lunch and learns	Cultural awareness events	Charity fundraisers
Book clubs	Scholarships	Volunteering	Collaborating with HR and DEI teams	Consulting on product development
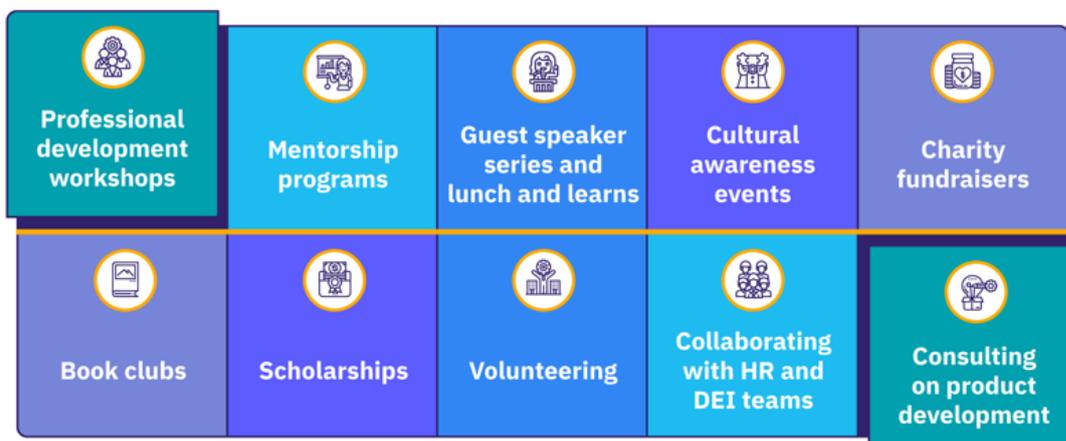
Source AHIR

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Resource: Employee Resource Group Toolkit: An Essential Guide

The employee resource group toolkit is a step-by-step guide for building, managing, and tracking worker-led teams tied to the DEIB goals of a company. As 90% of Fortune 500 companies invest in ERGs, having a blueprint that helps shape them into valuable initiatives that contribute to business success is essential.

Contents
- ❑ What is an employee resource group?
- ❑ How are ERGs impacting the workplace?
- ❑ Employee resource group toolkit: How to start and manage ERGs

Employee Resource Group Toolkit

How To Start & Manage ERGs

STEP 01 — Gauge employees' interest and participation in ERGs

STEP 02 — Get management's support & employees' buy-in

STEP 03 — Create a mission statement

STEP 04 — Draft an employee resource group policy

STEP 05 — Invest resources

STEP 06 — Develop a leadership structure

STEP 07 — Promote ERGs

STEP 08 — Measure the results

AIHR

https://www.aihr.com/blog/employee-resource-group-toolkit/

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The 9 Best Benefits of Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)

Employee resource groups: The ultimate guide for small businesses

A Comprehensive Guide to Employee Resource Groups (ERGs): Enhancing Workplace Culture and Diversity

55% of LGBTQIA+ employees give low scores for "ability to be my authentic self in the workplace", compared with 39% of other employees (EY 2024)

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Resource: How To Create an Effective Employee Resource Group Policy with Template

An employee resource group policy is key to formalizing your company's ERGs. It plays an essential role in outlining these groups' guidelines, objectives, and governance in line with the broader company goals.

Contents
- ❑ What does an employee resource group do?
- ❑ What is an employee resource group policy?
- ❑ What to include in an employee resource group policy
- ❑ How to write an employee resource group policy: Best practices

Employee Resource Group Policy What To Include

- Statement of purpose
- Guidelines on how to create an ERG
- Information on what is not allowed
- Reporting requirements
- Relationship with HR

Company-wide policy
Group-specific policy

- Mission and objectives
- Membership requirements
- Governance and leadership roles clarification
- Decision-making processes
- Bylaws

AIHR | ACADEMY TO INNOVATE HR

https://www.aihr.com/blog/employee-resource-group-policy/
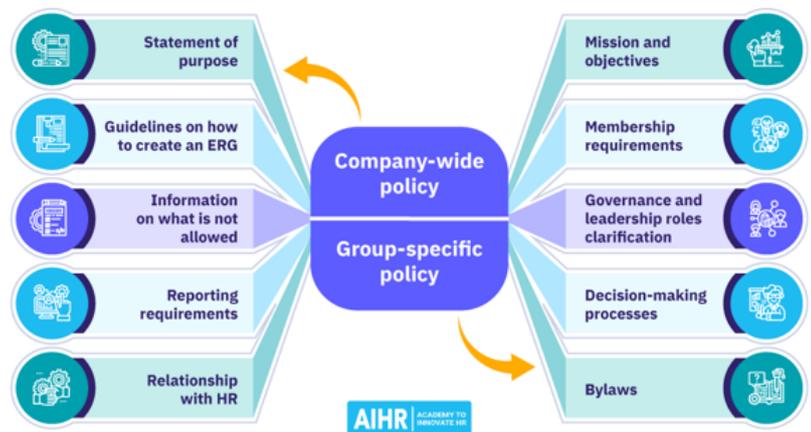
Module 5

Inclusive Marketing For SMEs (3 Parts)

Introduction to Module 5

Discover the DARE Modules Learning Pathway:

Enjoy our learning blocks designed to help SMEs build diverse, equitable and inclusive workplaces. Unlock the power of how DEI to drive the sustainable success of your company. Our practical and interactive Modules deliver real life insights and case studies from a European perspective – Join us in creating workplaces and communities where everyone can thrive!
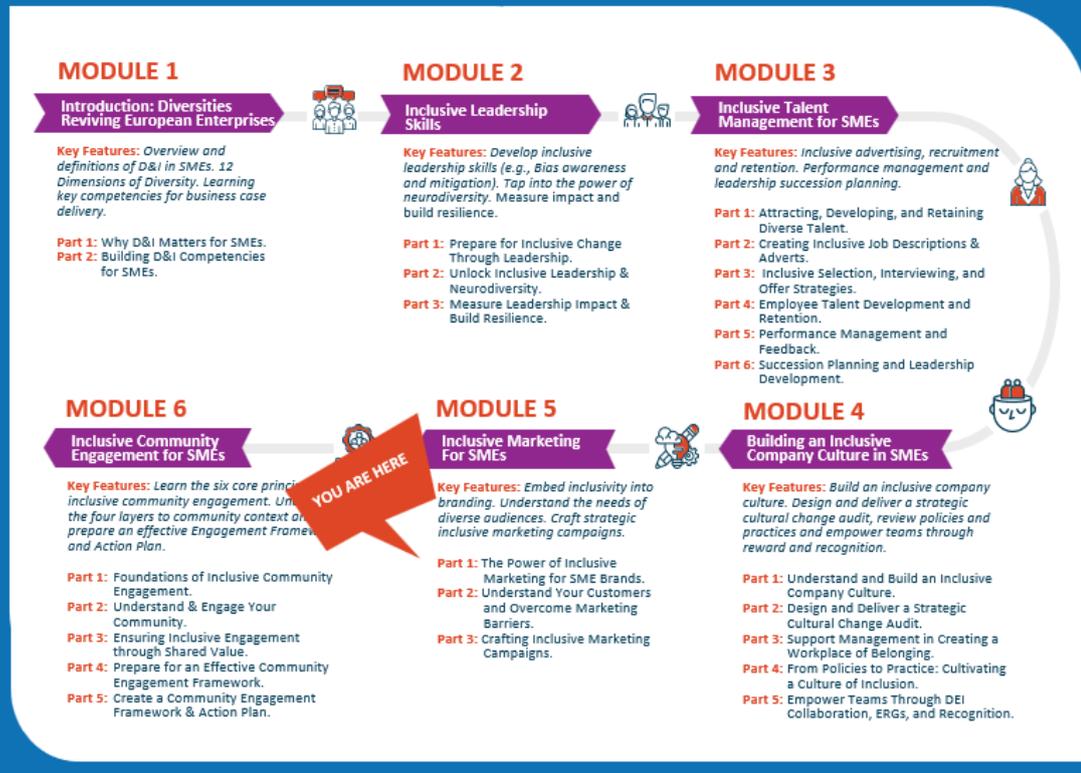
Module 5: (3 Parts)

Inclusive Marketing For SMES

Key Features: *Embed inclusivity into branding. Understand the needs of diverse audiences. Craft strategic inclusive marketing campaigns.*

Part 1: The Power of Inclusive Marketing for SME Brands. Learn how to harness inclusive marketing concepts and definitions so that they can grow their business, strengthen customer relationships, and create meaningful impact. It emphasises that inclusive marketing is not just a trend but a strategic approach that should be embedded into company values and brand objectives so they can connect with diverse audiences. Participants will learn to assess their brand health, build an inclusive brand, and get the most out of their people and connections.

Part 2: Understand Your Customers and Overcome Marketing Barriers. Explore how to understand not just their obvious customers but all their customers and their unique needs and experiences. This module explores common barriers SMEs face, such as lack of representation, cultural distance, and the risks of a one-size-fits-all approach, helping businesses better integrate inclusivity into their marketing efforts

Part 3: Crafting Inclusive Marketing Campaigns. Gain the tools and strategies for creating marketing campaigns that embrace diversity and align with inclusion principles. It covers six core elements essential for crafting authentic, accessible, and representative campaigns. By applying these elements, participants will learn how to build trust, engage diverse audiences, and drive long-term brand growth. It also covers monitoring and measuring techniques so that businesses can check the success of their campaigns and adapt inclusive marketing strategies accordingly

Introduction to Module 5
(There are 3 Parts, 3 Sections)

Introduction DARE to Module 5

Module 5 is designed to help SMEs leverage the power of inclusive marketing to grow their business, strengthen customer relationships, and make a meaningful impact to company, customers and society. It emphasises that inclusive marketing should not be viewed as a trend but as an integral part of company and brand values, positioning the business strategically when connecting with diverse audiences by recognizing and celebrating their unique identities values, and experiences.

Part 1: Learn how inclusive marketing drives business growth, and aligns with brand values to connect with diverse audiences authentically.

Part 2: Identify all customer segments and address common barriers like cultural distance and lack of representation to enhance inclusivity in marketing.

Part 3: Master six key elements for creating diverse, accessible, and impactful marketing campaigns.

YOU ARE HERE

Inclusive Marketing For SMES

Section 1 — The Power of Inclusive Marketing For SME Brands — Part 1

Section 2 — Understand All Your Customers and Inclusive Marketing Barriers. — Part 2

Section 3 — Essential Elements For Crafting Inclusive Marketing Campaigns — Part 3

M5:Part 1

Module 5 is designed to help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) unlock the power and potential of inclusive marketing to grow their business, build stronger customer relationships, and make a meaningful impact.

01

Understand the different definitions and that inclusive marketing goes beyond being a trend—it's a strategic approach to connecting with diverse audiences by acknowledging and celebrating their unique identities, values, and experiences.

Learn how to assess your brand health and embed inclusivity into your marketing strategies and campaigns. Learn practical solutions, and real-world examples to help you understand the value of inclusivity in your marketing efforts, overcome potential barriers, and implement impactful campaigns.

The Power of Inclusive Marketing For SME Brands

❖ **Introduction to Inclusive Marketing for SMEs:** Definitions and Concepts of Inclusive and Exclusive Marketing.
❖ **The Power of Inclusive Marketing for SME Brands**
❖ **How to Build a Brand using the 5C Framework:** Company Culture, Customer Intimacy, Circle of Influence, Customer Experience Design and Customer Experience Delivery.
❖ **Embedding Inclusive Marketing into** Business Values, Objectives Tracking and Measuring Metrics

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

Define Inclusive Marketing: Understand the definitions and concepts of inclusive and exclusive marketing and its relevance to SMEs in a diverse marketplace.

Explain the Business Benefits: Identify the key benefits of inclusive marketing for SME brands, including customer loyalty, brand trust, marketing differentiation and innovation.

Analyze Customer Diversity: Learn strategies and use tools to research and understand the diverse needs, preferences, and identities of their target audience.

Build an Inclusive Brand: Learn to build an inclusive brand using the 5C Framework: Company Culture, Customer Intimacy, Circle of Influence, Customer Experience Design and Customer Experience Delivery.

Identify Barriers: Recognise common challenges SMEs face in implementing inclusive marketing and explore practical solutions to overcome them.

Align with Business Objectives: How to align your inclusive marketing journey with business objectives, and the importance of monitoring and metrics.

Get the best out of your workforce: Learn how to build a healthy diverse inclusive workforce and tap into new markets and boost brand health.

DIVERSITIES ARE REVIVING ENTERPRISE

Sample Slide

Unilever Campaign:

Remove Word 'Normal' From Packaging

In 2021 Unilever removed the word "normal" from all their packaging and any promotional campaigns and communications for their personal products and beauty brands. After doing extensive research, they found that if people had to buy a product that wasn't "normal" it negatively impacted how they felt about themselves.

A 10,000-person study revealed more than 56% of people felt excluded by the beauty and personal care industry.

> Removing 'normal' from our products and packaging will not fix the problem [of harmful norms and stereotypes] alone, but it is an important step forward.

SUNNY JAIN
President, Unilever Beauty & Personal Care

https://www.packagingdigest.com/labeling/unilever-to-remove-the-word-normal-from-beauty-labels

Module 5 (Part 2)

Inclusive Marketing For SMEs

Understand Your Customers and
Inclusive Marketing Barriers

www. **projectdare**.eu

M5:Part 2

For small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), inclusive marketing is not just a social responsibility but a strategic advantage in today's diverse and competitive marketplace. To capitalize on this, companies must focus on understanding their customers and the diverse needs of all customer segments. By building meaningful, authentic connections that align with inclusive marketing strategies, business values, and objectives, businesses can better serve their audiences.A deeper understanding of customers' unique needs, experiences, and perspectives enables companies to address these needs more effectively and integrate inclusivity into their marketing strategies. This module explores common barriers SMEs face in inclusive marketing efforts, such as lack of representation, cultural distance, and the pitfalls of using a one-size-fits-all approach.

01

Understand All Your Customers and Inclusive Marketing Barriers

❖ **Understand All Your Customers and Diverse Market Segments:** Gaining insights into the diverse backgrounds and preferences of your audience.
❖ **Understand and Address Inclusive Marketing Barriers:** Example lack of representation, cultural distance, or reliance on a one-size-fits-all

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Identify and analyze the diverse needs, preferences, and expectations of all their target audiences.

2. Evaluate and adapt their marketing strategies to ensure long-term relevance and engagement with diverse audiences.

3. Recognize and address common barriers to inclusive marketing, including cultural insensitivity and tokenism.

DIVERSITIES ARE REVIVING ENTERPRISE

Sample Slide

Inclusivity is Important to Customers

Inclusivity is important to customers as it enables people to choose brands that align with their core values. It makes customers feel seen, heard and valued. When a customer feels resonance with a brand, they are more likely to share the brand or its products with other people in their community – as shown in inclusive marketing statistics below. This can give consumers a sense of pride and belonging, as well as enable them to experience products/brands that had previously been inaccessible.

Exercise 1

Exercise: Understand Your Target Audience

Exercise: Ask yourself: 'Who Am I Hoping to Reach?'
Consider the demographics then decide on the tactics and techniques you'll use to market your products or services to the people or groups you've identified. Not only will this help you create a more efficient and effective inclusive campaign, but it could also improve its chances of success and lead to more sales.

For example, your audience might consist of women aged 25 to 34. Some might identify as LGBTQ+, whereas others will identify as straight. Some might come from working-class backgrounds, whereas others are middle class, some might have a physical disability, or be a woman of colour, or have different religious beliefs. Women of all backgrounds and walks of life are likely to be included in your target audience.

Exercise 2

Exercise: Create an Inclusive Audience Persona

This exercise helps small businesses understand their audience in depth and ensures their marketing strategies are inclusive and resonate with diverse customer needs. Use tools to understand the diverse backgrounds, preferences, and needs of your audience.

Action: Use tools like surveys, focus groups, or social media analytics to collect data. Here are some survey questions;

❑ Ask customers about challenges, preferences, and barriers (e.g., "What makes it harder to engage with our product/service?").

❑ What factors are most important to you when choosing [product/service]?

❑ Are there barriers that make it hard for you to engage with businesses like ours?

❑ Are your products/services accessible to all personas?

❑ Is your messaging neutral, inclusive, and free from bias?

❑ Are there gaps in your offerings for any audience segments?

Exercise: Create an Inclusive Audience Persona

Social Listening: Monitor conversations about your industry on social media to spot gaps or areas of improvement. Example, a small coffee shop surveys its customers and discovers many prefer plant-based milk options and a quieter workspace.

Build an Inclusive Persona Create detailed audience personas that reflect diversity. Identify at least three personas that represent different segments of your audience. Include:

❖ **Demographics:** Age, gender identity, cultural background, ability status, etc.

❖ **Psychographics:** Preferences, challenges, values, and goals.

❖ **Barriers:** Any difficulties they might face in accessing or using your product/service.

❖ **Example Persona:** Name: Alex (They/Them)

❖ **Background:** 29 years old, freelancer, prefers sustainable and vegan products.

❖ **Challenge:** Finds it difficult to locate eco-friendly options in rural areas.

❖ **Value:** Supports businesses that prioritise sustainability and inclusivity.

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Supports & Resources

Resources

Inclusive Marketing: The Ultimate Guide

Inclusive Marketing: The Ultimate Guide

A comprehensive resource for understanding and implementing inclusive marketing strategies. It talks about the importance of inclusive marketing, challenges and strategies, customer experience and belonging and how to implement and measure your campaign.

How to Make Your Marketing More Accessible

How to Make Your Marketing More Accessible

This site offers practical advice for small businesses aiming to enhance the accessibility and inclusivity of their marketing efforts. Provides different approaches and tips for implementation e.g., representation matters, accessibility standards, engaging with diverse communities and being mindful of language and tone.

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Supports & Resources 🖥️

Resources

The European Advertising Standards Alliance (EASA)

easa

https://www.bazaarvoice.com/blog/authentic-marketing-guide/
Ctrl+Click to follow link

The European Advertising Standards Alliance (EASA) is the single authoritative voice on advertising self-regulation issues in Europe.

Advertising self-regulation helps ensure that ads are legal, decent, honest and truthful and by doing so helps create consumer trust in advertising and in brands.

WFA, the World Federation of Advertisers

WFA's Inclusive Marketing Hub

WFA, the World Federation of Advertisers, is a global peer-to-peer network with some of the world's best marketers, offering a unique source of expertise, inspiration and leadership. Are you looking to make the case for greater diversity & inclusion in your organisation? Are you looking for good practices & case studies in the workplace and creative execution? Or are you looking for something specific, such as on racial or sexual diversity?

DIVERSITIES ARE REVIVING ENTERPRISE

Research shows inclusive marketing and **diverse advertising campaigns are 25% more effective** at driving engagement and purchase intent compared to non-diverse campaigns.

Brands with high diversity scores witness a 83% increase in consumer preference.

Source

Module 5 (Part 3)
Inclusive Marketing For SMES

Essential Elements For Crafting Inclusive Marketing Campaigns

www. **projectdare**.eu

M5:Part 3

This module focuses on equipping participants with the knowledge, tools, and strategies necessary to develop marketing campaigns that embrace diversity, and align with Inclusion principles.

It covers the six core elements which are the foundation for creating marketing campaigns that are authentic, accessible, representative, and respectful of all individuals. Each element plays a vital role in building trust, driving engagement, and ensuring the inclusivity of your marketing efforts. By exploring the essential elements of inclusive marketing, participants will learn how to create impactful campaigns that resonate with diverse audiences, while also building trust, authenticity, and long-term brand growth.

Essential Elements For Crafting Inclusive Marketing Campaigns

❖ Essential Elements for Crafting Inclusive Marketing Campaigns
❖ How to Monitor and Measure Your Inclusive Campaign To Check Effectiveness
❖ The Future of Inclusive Marketing
❖ Useful Resources and Tools

Module 5 (Part 3) Section 3
Learning Objectives

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. **Define the six core elements** of inclusive marketing and explain their importance in campaign design.
2. **Authenticity:** Internal (workplace) and External (marketing)
3. **Content:** Tone, Language, Imagery, Context
4. **Diversity & Representation** (Core Message)
5. Accessibility
6. **Cultural Sensitivity & Cultural Competence**
7. **Removing Bias**

Develop authentic, culturally sensitive marketing campaigns that target diverse audiences, reflect your workplace values and represent the society we live in today.

Identify and remove unconscious biases, insensitive cultural content and mishaps in marketing strategies and materials.

Apply tools and techniques to ensure accessibility in all marketing efforts.

Utilize feedback and performance data to refine and improve inclusive marketing campaigns.

DIVERSITIES ARE REVIVING ENTERPRISE

Sample Slide

Brands Supported for Creating Inclusive Societal Change.

A 2022 study by Sprout Social found that 70% of Europeans believe it is important for brands to take a public stand on inclusion and social issues. Customers support their efforts by being loyal and purchasing their products and services. (Source)

54% of European consumers say that they would stop buying from a company if they were found to have been misleading in their sustainability and inclusivity claims. They would boycott such brands they perceived as non-inclusive or tone-deaf. (Source KPMG)

Exercise 1

Exercises

- **Check Current Language Usage:** The first step towards inclusive marketing is to check the language you're using and whether or not it alienates anyone. Without even realising, it's likely that your tone of voice will naturally have a more masculine or feminine slant.

Use Gender Decoder: If you're using a lot of masculine words and phrases, will this put off female customers? This interesting Gender Decoder has been designed to find subtle gender bias in job adverts and can check if your marketing copy is inclusive or not.
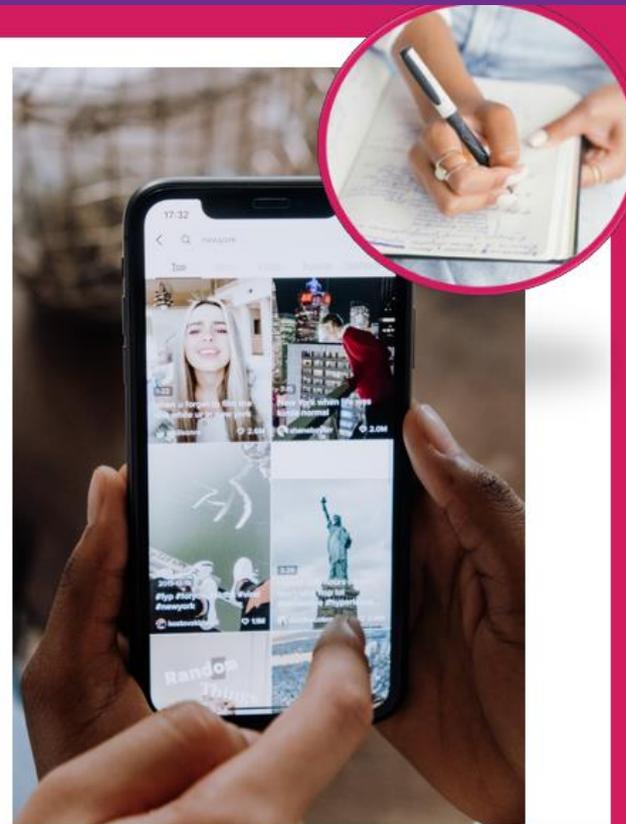
Exercises

- **Check Your Writing Tone:** What about the tone of your writing and the actual words you use? If your style is very informal and uses many slang words and internet abbreviations, this may alienate older people. Likewise, if you use more formal, academic language, this may put off younger people or those who don't come from university-educated backgrounds. For the majority of small businesses, I'd recommend falling somewhere in the middle of these two extremes to make sure your language is accessible to as many people as possible.

- **Check for any ableist, sexist or racist language.** However subtle or unintentional it might be, any language like this will instantly alienate a whole group of people. For example, the saying "falling on deaf ears" is a very commonly used phrase. But it does not take into account the feelings of those who are deaf or hard of hearing. This Conscious Style Guide is a fantastic website full of resources, articles and advice to help ensure the language you use is inclusive and respectful.

LET'S GET SOCIAL

Exercises

- **Check Your Imagery:** When it comes to the photos and graphics you use to market your business, how diverse are they? Find FREE Inclusive Photos Unsplash or Pexels

- Do they tend to feature people of just one group (for example, white middle-aged males) or do you have a variety of genders, ethnicities, ages and abilities representing your business?

- **Diversity and Representation:** Before publishing an advertisement or hosting a panel, for example, ask — does this reflect society? Am I elevating diverse voices?

DIVERSITIES ARE REVIVING ENTERPRISE

4. **Accessibility** (Exercise)

☐ **Accessible Print Materials**: Flyers, brochures, and posters should use large fonts, high-contrast colors, and clean layouts. Avoid overly decorative fonts that can make text difficult to read.

☐ **Multilingual and Simple Language:** As we know all audiences are diverse, nobody is the same, offer marketing materials in multiple languages. Use plain, straightforward language to ensure that people with varying levels of literacy can understand your message.

☐ **Customer Support:** Provide multiple ways for customers to reach you, including email, phone, and live chat. Train staff to communicate effectively and respectfully with individuals with disabilities.

By making accessibility a priority, you are essentially creating a welcoming environment for all potential customers. Completing this exercise will make your marketing more accessible and improve the customer experience FOR EVERYONE, which will engage loyalty, meaningful connections, break barriers, and reflect your commitment to diversity and inclusion.

DIVERSITIES ARE REVIVING ENTERPRISE

4. **Accessibility** (Exercise)

☐ **Website Design:** Make sure your website follows WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines). Features like screen reader compatibility, text resizing, keyboard navigation, and alt text for images are essential. Avoid flashy or moving graphics that could be disruptive for people with sensory sensitivities.

☐ **Inclusive Visual Content:** Provide captions or subtitles for all video content to support people with hearing impairments. Offer transcripts for podcasts and webinars. Use high-contrast color schemes and large, legible fonts in graphics and text.

☐ **Social Media Accessibility:** Write descriptive alt text for social media images so screen readers can describe them to users with visual impairments. Avoid using excessive emojis or text in images that cannot be read by accessibility tools. Create simple, clear captions for all posts.

DIVERSITIES ARE REVIVING ENTERPRISE
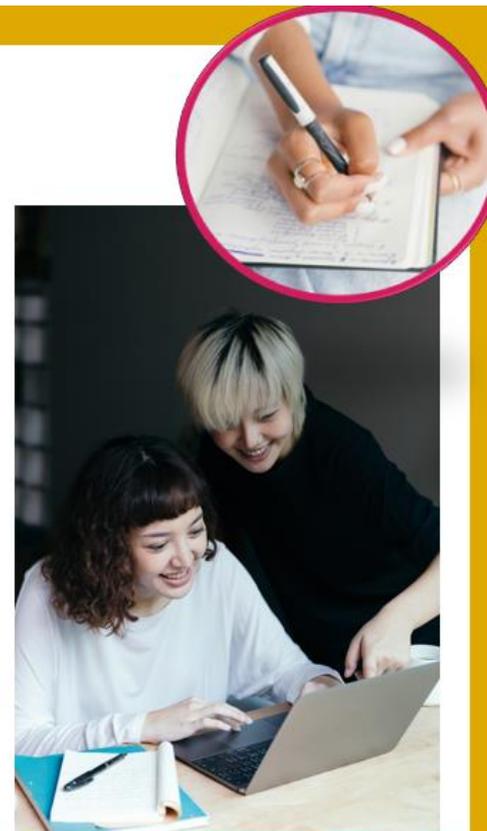
Exercises

- ☐ **Practice Empathy Marketing:** At the centre of inclusive marketing is an empathetic understanding of who your customers are, their circumstances, and an accurate portrayal of them in your marketing materials. First analyse your existing marketing materials, identify which groups are not included, and work out how you can adjust to better reflect the entirety of your target audience.

- ☐ **Align your Content and Campaign to Emotions:** Emotional responses can be essential to how customers engage with marketing. They can influence customers' perceptions of a brand and their interactions with it. If less represented groups are credibly included in your marketing materials, positive emotional responses such as pride, delight, or happiness can be triggered. In your next marketing copy, try to include an emotional connection with your customers. This can help strengthen brand loyalty. Go a step further, get your customers to be empathetic to other marginalised or diverse communities.

https://mrs.digital/blog/best-inclusive-marketing-campaigns/

Exercises

- ☐ **Develop an Inclusive Marketing Plan:** Once you are satisfied with your inclusive marketing campaign and it represents all the elements of diversity you want it to – it's now time to take it to the next step and develop a plan for the launch. Create a timeline and set deadlines for stages of the launch such as video shoots, web updates, and product designs to ensure all elements are delivered on time. Everyone involved in the campaign should have access to the plan and be kept updated on developments to ensure successful delivery.

- ☐ **Make Your Marketing Copy Inclusive:** As part of your research into your customer base and target audience, learn how they want to be addressed, how they discuss specific topics, and how audiences can be represented authentically, visually, and textually. You could even consider building a keyword and visuals library that you can provide to marketing agencies and teams to ensure that copywriting and imagery used in your marketing is representative.

https://mrs.digital/blog/best-inclusive-marketing-campaigns/

Start Your Inclusive Marketing Journey Today!

Remember Throughout Your Journey Think about all Customers and Their Entire Customer Journey With You.

❑ **Understand Your Audience:** Conduct surveys and community outreach to identify the diverse needs of your target market.

Example: If you are a craft shop, ask local artists for input on products and workshops to ensure inclusivity.

❑ **Audit Marketing Content:** Review campaigns for potential biases or stereotypes.

Example: If you are a fitness studio, ensure that your promotional images include people of all ages, genders, and abilities.

Understand Your Minority Audience
Ensure you and your business are aware of the struggles that minority groups face instead of just featuring them in your advertisements

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❑ **Invest in Accessibility:** Make digital and physical spaces accessible to people with disabilities.

Example: If you are a small, bookstore installs ramps and provides audiobook options for visually impaired customers.

❑ **Use Inclusive Language:** Avoid jargon or phrases that might exclude specific groups.

Example: If you are organizing a community event uses gender-neutral language and invites people from all backgrounds.

If you are a restaurant offering Mother's Day promotions use phrases like "celebrating all types of mothers" to include foster moms, stepmoms, and caregivers.

Empower Your Audience
Empower underprivileged and underrepresented groups, while abolishing stereotypes and prejudices

Be Inclusive In Your Workplace
Be inclusive both in your marketing strategies and in your workplace

Supports & Resources

Resources

Your Complete Guide To Authentic Marketing

Your Complete Guide To Authentic Marketing

This guides shows how the most successful brands are reaching and converting customers by developing authentic marketing campaigns that build trust, boost brand awareness, and drive revenue by making an impact on the issues that matter. It outlines the steps you can take to build and improve your brand transparency, and inspire you with some of the best examples of authentic campaigns out there.

Inclusive Marketing Digital & Web Accessibility Guide For Marketers

Digital & Web Accessibility Guide For Marketers

A comprehensive resource for digital marketers aiming to understand and implement web accessibility in their strategies. It talks about web accessibility and its importance, legal frameworks, implementation strategies and provides recommendations for user friendly approaches.

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Readers love

THE *Conscious* STYLE GUIDE

A FLEXIBLE APPROACH to LANGUAGE that INCLUDES, RESPECTS, and EMPOWERS

KAREN YIN

Conscious Style Guide

Is the first FREE website devoted guide to conscious language, created by award-winning editor and writer Karen Yin. Learn how you can use language to include, respect, and empower, explore the topics below. Includes loads of resources and tools, articles and other guides on how to be inclusive and use conscious language. For example, browse by: Ability & Disability, Age, Appearance, Gender and more.

The Gender Bias Decoder

Gender Decoder

The Gender Decoder is a free online tool designed to help users identify gender-biased language in marketing copy, job advertisements or other types of text. It analyzes the text you input and highlights words that may subconsciously appeal more to men or women based on research into gendered language.

DIVERSITIES ARE REVIVING ENTERPRISE

Module 6

Inclusive Community Engagement for SMEs (5 Parts)

Introduction to Module 5
(There are 3 Parts, 3 Sections)

Introduction DARE to Module 5

Module 5 is designed to help SMEs leverage the power of inclusive marketing to grow their business, strengthen customer relationships, and make a meaningful impact to company, customers and society. It emphasises that inclusive marketing should not be viewed as a trend but as an integral part of company and brand values, positioning the business strategically when connecting with diverse audiences by recognizing and celebrating their unique identities, values, and experiences.

Part 1: Learn how inclusive marketing drives business growth, and aligns with brand values to connect with diverse audiences authentically.

Part 2: Identify all customer segments and address common barriers like cultural distance and lack of representation to enhance inclusivity in marketing.

Part 3: Master six key elements for creating diverse, accessible, and impactful marketing campaigns.

Inclusive Marketing For SMES

YOU ARE HERE

Section 1 — The Power of Inclusive Marketing For SME Brands — **Part 1**

Section 2 — Understand All Your Customers and Inclusive Marketing Barriers. — **Part 2**

Section 3 — Essential Elements For Crafting Inclusive Marketing Campaigns — **Part 3**

M5:Part 1

01

Module 5 is designed to help small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) unlock the power and potential of inclusive marketing to grow their business, build stronger customer relationships, and make a meaningful impact.

Understand the different definitions and that inclusive marketing goes beyond being a trend—it's a strategic approach to connecting with diverse audiences by acknowledging and celebrating their unique identities, values, and experiences.

Learn how to assess your brand health and embed inclusivity into your marketing strategies and campaigns. Learn practical solutions, and real-world examples to help you understand the value of inclusivity in your marketing efforts, overcome potential barriers, and implement impactful campaigns.

The Power of Inclusive Marketing For SME Brands

❖ **Introduction to Inclusive Marketing for SMEs:** Definitions and Concepts of Inclusive and Exclusive Marketing.
❖ **The Power of Inclusive Marketing for SME Brands**
❖ **How to Build a Brand using the 5C Framework:** Company Culture, Customer Intimacy, Circle of Influence, Customer Experience Design and Customer Experience Delivery.
❖ **Embedding Inclusive Marketing into Business Values, Objectives Tracking and Measuring Metrics**

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

Define Inclusive Marketing: Understand the definitions and concepts of inclusive and exclusive marketing and its relevance to SMEs in a diverse marketplace.

Explain the Business Benefits: Identify the key benefits of inclusive marketing for SME brands, including customer loyalty, brand trust, marketing differentiation and innovation.

Analyze Customer Diversity: Learn strategies and use tools to research and understand the diverse needs, preferences, and identities of their target audience.

Build an Inclusive Brand: Learn to build an inclusive brand using the 5C Framework: Company Culture, Customer Intimacy, Circle of Influence, Customer Experience Design and Customer Experience Delivery.

Identify Barriers: Recognise common challenges SMEs face in implementing inclusive marketing and explore practical solutions to overcome them.

Align with Business Objectives: How to align your inclusive marketing journey with business objectives, and the importance of monitoring and metrics.

Get the best out of your workforce: Learn how to build a healthy diverse inclusive workforce and tap into new markets and boost brand health.

DIVERSITIES ARE REVIVING ENTERPRISE

Sample Slide

Unilever Campaign:

Remove Word 'Normal' From Packaging

In 2021 Unilever removed the word "normal" from all their packaging and any promotional campaigns and communications for their personal products and beauty brands. After doing extensive research, they found that if people had to buy a product that wasn't "normal" it negatively impacted how they felt about themselves.

A 10,000-person study revealed more than 56% of people felt excluded by the beauty and personal care industry.

> Removing 'normal' from our products and packaging will not fix the problem [of harmful norms and stereotypes] alone, but it is an important step forward.

SUNNY JAIN
President, Unilever Beauty & Personal Care

https://www.packagingdigest.com/labeling/unilever-to-remove-the-word-normal-from-beauty-labels

Module 5 (Part 2)

Inclusive Marketing For SMEs

Understand Your Customers and Inclusive Marketing Barriers

www. **projectdare**.eu

M5:Part 2

01

For small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), inclusive marketing is not just a social responsibility but a strategic advantage in today's diverse and competitive marketplace. To capitalize on this, companies must focus on understanding their customers and the diverse needs of all customer segments. By building meaningful, authentic connections that align with inclusive marketing strategies, business values, and objectives, businesses can better serve their audiences.A deeper understanding of customers' unique needs, experiences, and perspectives enables companies to address these needs more effectively and integrate inclusivity into their marketing strategies. This module explores common barriers SMEs face in inclusive marketing efforts, such as lack of representation, cultural distance, and the pitfalls of using a one-size-fits-all approach.

Understand All Your Customers and Inclusive Marketing Barriers

❖ **Understand All Your Customers and Diverse Market Segments:** Gaining insights into the diverse backgrounds and preferences of your audience.
❖ **Understand and Address Inclusive Marketing Barriers:** Example lack of representation, cultural distance, or reliance on a one-size-fits-all

Discover the DARE Modules Learning Pathway:

Enjoy our learning blocks designed to help SMEs build diverse, equitable and inclusive workplaces. Unlock the power of how DEI to drive the sustainable success of your company. Our practical and interactive Modules deliver real life insights and case studies from a European perspective – Join us in creating workplaces and communities where everyone can thrive!

MODULE 1
Introduction: Diversities Reviving European Enterprises

Key Features: Overview and definitions of D&I in SMEs. 12 Dimensions of Diversity. Learning key competencies for business case delivery.

Part 1: Why D&I Matters for SMEs.
Part 2: Building D&I Competencies for SMEs.

MODULE 2
Inclusive Leadership Skills

Key Features: Develop inclusive leadership skills (e.g., Bias awareness and mitigation). Tap into the power of neurodiversity. Measure impact and build resilience.

Part 1: Prepare for Inclusive Change Through Leadership.
Part 2: Unlock Inclusive Leadership & Neurodiversity.
Part 3: Measure Leadership Impact & Build Resilience.

MODULE 3
Inclusive Talent Management for SMEs

Key Features: Inclusive advertising, recruitment and retention. Performance management and leadership succession planning.

Part 1: Attracting, Developing, and Retaining Diverse Talent.
Part 2: Creating Inclusive Job Descriptions & Adverts.
Part 3: Inclusive Selection, Interviewing, and Offer Strategies.
Part 4: Employee Talent Development and Retention.
Part 5: Performance Management and Feedback.
Part 6: Succession Planning and Leadership Development.

MODULE 6
Inclusive Community Engagement for SMEs

YOU ARE HERE

Key Features: Learn the six core principles of inclusive community engagement. Understand the four layers to community context and prepare an effective Engagement Framework and Action Plan.

Part 1: Foundations of Inclusive Community Engagement.
Part 2: Understand & Engage Your Community.
Part 3: Ensuring Inclusive Engagement through Shared Value.
Part 4: Prepare for an Effective Community Engagement Framework.
Part 5: Create a Community Engagement Framework & Action Plan.

MODULE 5
Inclusive Marketing For SMEs

Key Features: Embed inclusivity into branding. Understand the needs of diverse audiences. Craft strategic inclusive marketing campaigns.

Part 1: The Power of Inclusive Marketing for SME Brands.
Part 2: Understand Your Customers and Overcome Marketing Barriers.
Part 3: Crafting Inclusive Marketing Campaigns.

MODULE 4
Building an Inclusive Company Culture in SMEs

Key Features: Build an inclusive company culture. Design and deliver a strategic cultural change audit, review policies and practices and empower teams through reward and recognition.

Part 1: Understand and Build an Inclusive Company Culture.
Part 2: Design and Deliver a Strategic Cultural Change Audit.
Part 3: Support Management in Creating a Workplace of Belonging.
Part 4: From Policies to Practice: Cultivating a Culture of Inclusion.
Part 5: Empower Teams Through DEI Collaboration, ERGs, and Recognition.

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Introduction to Inclusive Community Engagement
Definitions & Concepts

Inclusive community engagement is a critical process that ensures equitable participation, representation, and decision-making for all individuals, particularly those from marginalised or underserved groups. To effectively practice inclusive engagement, it is essential to understand its foundational definitions—such as equity, inclusion, diversity, and accessibility—and how they interconnect to create fair and empowering community-building initiatives.

Introduction to Module 6

Module 6 (5 Parts)

Inclusive Community Engagement for SMEs

Key Features: Learn the six core principles of inclusive community engagement. Understand the four layers to community context and prepare an effective Engagement Framework and Action Plan.

Part 1: Foundations of Inclusive Community Engagement. Explore key inclusive community engagement definitions and concepts such as equity, inclusion, and accessibility. It explains what it is not e.g., tokenism and exploitation. It explores the benefits e.g., innovation and economic equity. Finally, it introduces the Six Core Principles: Shared Values, Representation, Accessibility, Transparency, Respect, and Empowerment.

Part 2: Understand & Engage Your Community. Learn how to identify and understand your community's diverse groups by examining the Four Layers of Community Context: residents, culture, sectors, and resources. Gain strategies for building trust, encouraging participation, and fostering community pride.

Part 3: Ensuring Inclusive Engagement through Shared Value. Focus on creating shared value through diverse perspectives, mobilizing collective action, and empowering local champions. Learn effective engagement through active listening, honest communication, and participatory decision-making to ensure long-term community empowerment.

Part 4: Prepare for an Effective Community Engagement Framework. Follow a step-by-step guide to preparing an inclusive engagement framework: clarifying objectives, building teams, refining strategies, and ensuring every voice is heard in the engagement process.

Part 5: Create a Community Engagement Framework & Action Plan. Develop a community engagement framework by identifying stakeholders, purpose, and outcomes. Learn to blend formal and informal methods, create a participatory action plan, and embrace continuous planning for sustainable engagement.

Introduction to Module 6
There are 5 Parts

Introduction DARE to Module 6

This module is designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of inclusive community engagement ensuring that every voice is heard and respected.

Part 1: Explore the Principles: Shared Values, Representation, Accessibility, Transparency, Respect, and Empowerment.

Part 2: Identify diverse community layers—residents, culture, sectors, and resources. Develop strategies encourage participation, and build community pride.

Part 3: Create shared value by integrating diverse perspectives, mobilizing collective action.

Part 4: Build engagement teams, refine strategies, and facilitate inclusive conversations that ensure all voices are heard.

Part 5: Learn to design a sustainable Community Engagement Framework with clear objectives, stakeholder involvement, and measurable outcomes, ensuring long-term impact and adaptability.

YOU ARE HERE

Inclusive Community Engagement for SMEs

Foundations of Inclusive Community Engagement: Principles, Practices, and Benef	Part 1
Understand & Engage Your Community: Foundations for Inclusive Impact.	Part 2
Ensuring Inclusive Engagement through Shared Value and Community Empowerment.	Part 3
Prepare for an Effective Community Engagement Framework: Step-by-Step Guide.	Part 4
Create a Community Engagement Framewor & Develop a Collaborative Action Plan	Part 5

Sample Slide

What Makes a Community Context – Unfold the Layers to…
Integrate with Company Goals & Values to Create Shared Value

Discover the Layers	Shared Value
People *Who makes up the community?* This includes different demographics, such as age groups, cultures, and underrepresented groups.	❖ A **clothing shop** might notice a large immigrant population and create products celebrating their cultural heritage.
Needs and Challenges *What are the key issues people face?* These could be economic struggles, a lack of resources, or limited opportunities.	❖ A **tech SME** might identify a digital literacy gap and offer free IT workshops for seniors.
Strengths and Assets *What makes the community unique?* This could include traditions, talents, or local resources.	❖ A **bakery** might partner with local farmers to use fresh, seasonal ingredients, strengthening the local economy.

Module 6 (Part 1)

Inclusive Community Engagement for SMEs

Part 1: Foundations of Inclusive Community Engagement: Principles, Practices, and Benefits.

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M6:Part 1

Community Engagement Definitions & Concepts. Covers definitions and concepts from the SME workplace and community perspectives e.g., Equity, Inclusion, Diversity and Accessibility.

What IS inclusive engagement? This section covers active participation, collaboration, creating access, removing barriers, building trust through transparency, creating and nurturing inclusive environments, and empowering vulnerable groups.

What Inclusive Community Engagement is NOT. Covers tokenism, exclusion, ignoring marginalised voices, one-way communication, exploitation, manipulation

Benefits such as driving innovation, expanding community impact and enhancing economic equity.

01 Introduction to Inclusive Community Engagement, Definitions and Concepts

02 What IS Inclusive Community Engagement

03 What IS NOT Inclusive Community Engagement

04 The Benefits of Inclusive Community Engagement

Case Study: 3fe Coffee, Ireland

Case Study: Small Businesses, Big Hearts!

Case Study: DHR Communications, Ireland

Section Overview

Introduction to the 6 Key Principles or Core Values of Inclusive Community Engagement: Shared Values, Representation, Accessibility, Transparency, Respect, and Empowerment.

05 Foundational Principles & Core Values of Inclusive Community Engagement

Case Study: TEG Engineering, Ireland

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. **Understand Key Definitions & Concepts** – Learn about equity, inclusion, diversity, and accessibility in community engagement and SME workplaces.

2. **Understand What Is Inclusive Community Engagement** – Explore how to ensure your engagement is inclusive focusing on active participation, collaboration, transparency, and removing barriers.

3. **Recognise What is NOT Inclusive Engagement** – Understand and differentiate between genuine engagement and harmful practices like tokenism, exclusion, or manipulation.

4. **Analyze the Benefits of Inclusive Engagement** – Examine how inclusive engagement drives innovation, expands community impact, and enhances economic equity.

5. **Apply the 6 Key Principles** – Learn how to implement shared values, representation, accessibility, transparency, respect, and empowerment in community engagement efforts.

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Proud Sponsors of County Football Club

TEG takes its commitment to the local community very seriously in four main fields (excuse the pun 😊)

❖ **Support Local Teams:** We take our commitment to the local community very seriously. We achieve this in a tangible way by financially supporting local companies that offer team-based sports. We support soccer, Gaelic, and rugby clubs because we admire their work. Our youth will be better adults in the future because of Westmeath GAA which is why we are now the main sponsor for Cusack Park. It will be called TEG Cusack Park. We applaud what Westmeath GAA has achieved and believe it is making our community a better place to live.

❖ See TEG Sustainability Report in Resources

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https://teg.com/company-news/teg-proud-sponsors-of-westmeath-gaa/

Sample Slides

Case Study

Small Businesses Big Hearts.

Research from the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) revealed that 80% of FSB members in the UK contributed to their local community between 2016 and 2019.

Of these small businesses, 38% of them donated time and 32% donated skills to their community.

Not only was this community engagement a great opportunity to give back to their local area and support their initiatives, but they also reaped the rewards, see next slide.

https://www.fsb.org.uk/resource-report/small-business-big-heart-communities-report.html

Module 6 (Part 2)

Inclusive Community Engagement for SMEs

Part 2: Understand & Engage Your Community: Foundations for Inclusive Impact.

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M6:Part 2

Identify & Understand Your Community. Learn 'who' exactly makes up your community, so you know exactly who you are serving and how you need to interact differently with different groups.

Understand the Four Layers to Community Context. Learn to unfold the layers and integrate with your company values and enable shared value.
1. Residents, Culture, and History
2. Business, Government, and Nonprofit Sector(s) and Coalitions
3. Programs, Policies, Plans, & Systems
4. Resources, Environments, and Location

Strategies to Build Trust and Connection. Covers key strategies such as creating a safe and inclusive space, adapting to community needs, encouraging active participation and enabling pride in community and place.

01 Identify & Understand Your Community

02 Understand the Four Layers to the Community Context

03 Strategies to Build Trust and Connection

Exercise: Identify and List Your Community

Exercise: Prepare Framework for Community Context

Exercise: Start Researching & Talking to Your Community

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Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

1. **Identify & Understand Your Community –** recognise the diverse groups that make up your community and tailor engagement strategies to effectively serve and interact with them.

2. **Analyze the Four Layers of Community Context** – Unfold the different layers of community dynamics and integrate them with your business values to create shared value.

- Residents, Culture, and History

- Business, Government, and Nonprofit Sectors & Coalitions

- Programs, Policies, Plans, and Systems

- Resources, Environments, and Location

3. **Apply Strategies to Build Trust & Connection** – Implement key strategies for creating meaningful relationships, such as creating an inclusive space, adapting to community needs, promoting participation, and strengthening community pride.

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Sample Slide

Communities Can Include.

In inclusive marketing and community engagement, various groups of people and organisations are involved, each playing a distinct role in promoting diversity, equity, and inclusivity. Here's a breakdown of the different people involved, along with definitions and examples:

1. Consumers (Target Audience)

Definition: Consumers are individuals or groups who purchase goods and services. They are at the heart of any marketing campaign, and their needs, preferences, and cultural contexts drive the inclusivity efforts of brands.

❖ **Example:** A brand targeting a diverse audience, such as Dove, ensures that their marketing materials and products reflect various body types, ethnicities, and ages, ensuring that their message resonates with all consumers.
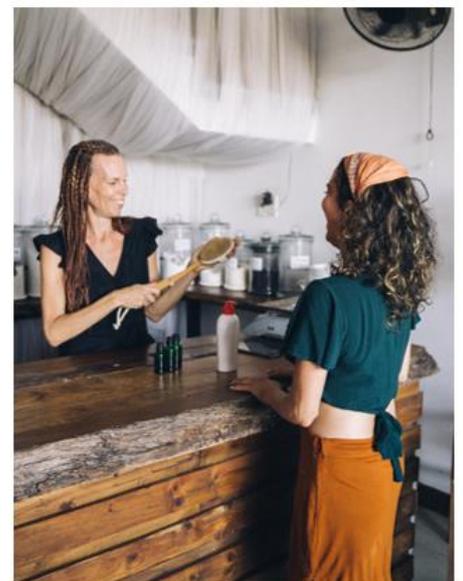
DIVERSITIES ARE REVIVING ENTERPRISE

Exercise 1

Exercise. Identify and List of Who is Your Community;

1. **Local Residents**: They live and work in the community, so their input is essential.
2. **Community Leaders & Champions**: Religious, cultural, or grassroots leaders who represent larger groups.
3. **Local Businesses and Entrepreneurs**: like tourism, technology, farmers, services and retail.
4. **Youth Groups and Schools**: Young people bring fresh ideas and energy.
5. **Government agencies and business support:** e.g., those who support SMEs and economic development.
6. **Nonprofits and Advocacy Groups**: companies working on social or environmental issues e.g., youth centers, refugee centers, community centers.
7. **Underrepresented Groups**: Marginalised individuals or groups who often lack a voice in decision-making e.g., those with disabilities, unemployed, or immigrants.

Exercise: Prepare Framework for Community Context

Before engaging, a comprehensive understanding of the community context and needs, set up your framework or the things you need to do to develop a plan before you start researching and taking to the community:

☐ **Define Your Scope**: Are you engaging with local residents, small businesses, artisans, schools, or a mix?

☐ **Formal Research:** To understand needs, challenges and priorities and the impact of your business. Look at local history and use surveys, public records, and social media to gather information.

☐ **Cultural and Social Analysis**: Ensure the engagement process aligned with the community's values and context.

☐ **Stakeholder Mapping:** Identify key players, key individuals and groups who could influence or benefit from the initiatives.

Exercise: Prepare Framework for Community Context

- **Direct Engagement:** Spend time talking to community members informally—host a local coffee hour or attend existing community events.

- **Observation:** Walk through neighborhoods to observe daily life and understand how the business might fit into and serve the community.

☐ **Talk to Key People:** Meet local individuals, diverse groups, leaders, youth groups, or companies to have a conversation and reveal insights.

☐ **Understand Demographics:** Consider factors like age, cultural background, employment, and interests.

☐ **Research existing networks:** Identify community companies, cultural groups, and influencers.

> The next exercise goes into more detail how to understand, explore and research the key areas.

Exercise 3

Exercise. Start Researching and Talking
The Foundation of Inclusive and Impactful Engagement

This exercise will help guide your community context research and provide the foundation for inclusive and impactful community engagement. "Understand the Community Landscape" will help you understand the importance of gaining a deep understanding of the local context before initiating engagement efforts. You will need to;

❖ **Assess Unique Characteristics** such as the social, cultural, geographical, historical, economic, and environmental factors that shape the community. SMEs should actively learn about their community's unique characteristics.

❖ **Identify key stakeholders,** understanding their needs, priorities, and challenges, and Recognising existing resources and dynamics. Combining informal research (e.g., conversations with local residents and key stakeholders) with formal methods (e.g., analyzing local data or reports).

❖ **Explore the community's history, and assets.** Communities are shaped by a complex web of social, cultural, economic, safety, environmental, and historical factors. Conducting qualitative community research sheds light on the lived experiences of residents, helping identify unique needs, assets, and challenges. It helps you understand the nuances so you can create shared values and equitable solutions. Research enables your engagement impact to discover how to be inclusive and impactful.

❖ **Understand social factors** such as culture, race, ethnicity, education level, language fluency, physical abilities, and environmental conditions all play a role in shaping perspectives.

Example, a **grocery store in Spain** may discover through research that a significant portion of the local population values access to organic produce but struggles with affordability.

❖ **Research transportation, environment and accessibility influences.** Look at linkages to transport for the community or accessibility barriers which could affect how people interact with your business and proposed programs.

Example, a **farm in France** planning a community-supported agriculture program could map transportation barriers to ensure equitable delivery options.

Exercise. Start Talking to the Locals!

Next start talking to the locals, marginalised and diverse communities.

Use this People Centered Approach: This ensures you are being collaborative, transparent and authentic to work alongside community stakeholders to identify issues and co-create solutions. Gather narratives from community members to understand the impact of the social, built and economic environments.

Hear the stories, the traditions, what works, what hasn't worked and learn why. Ask them their challenges, frustrations, hopes and dreams. Be specific talk about important factors like unemployment, crime, socioeconomic status, education, and health, determine their challenges and engagement needs.

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Exercise. Start Talking to the Locals!

Initial Engagement: Visit public spaces, such as local businesses, community centers, cafes, or other gathering spots. If appropriate, organize direct outreach like door-to-door visits or pop-up events to introduce the company and your inclusive community engagement mission.

Introduce the Company: Start the conversation by introducing yourself, explaining why you're in the area, and sharing details about the company's inclusive community engagement goals. Allow the community member to share their own story and experiences with the area.

Let the community lead the conversation: Guide the conversation highlighting key areas that you think need to be addressed e.g., unemployment, youth support, intercultural exchange. But listen you might be surprised that there are other priorities.

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Exercise. Start Talking to the Locals!

Document Insights: After each conversation or observation, make sure to document key findings, challenges, and potential opportunities for your inclusive community engagement program. These notes will help shape the development of your inclusive engagement initiatives.

Reflect and Report Back: Gather the team together to share observations and insights. Reflect on the feedback gathered from the community, identifying common themes and specific needs. Use this information to guide the next steps in the development of inclusive projects that are responsive to the community's needs and inclusive in nature.
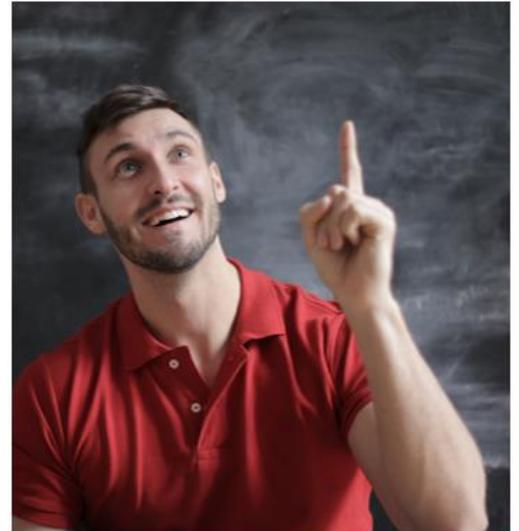
Exercise. Start Talking to the Locals!

Informal Focus Groups: A **restaurant in Italy** could host focus groups with locals to explore how seasonal dishes can reflect the community's culinary traditions.

Walkaround Tours: Walk with your community from different backgrounds to explore and observe daily life, take photos, and identify community dynamics. This might uncover underutilized spaces and spark new ideas for inclusive initiatives.

Example: An **IT consultancy in the Netherlands** could study how infrastructure projects have affected digital access in underserved neighborhoods.

Informal Workshops: A **craft business in Denmark** might interview artisans about how urban development has influenced their trade, using these insights to host relevant workshops.
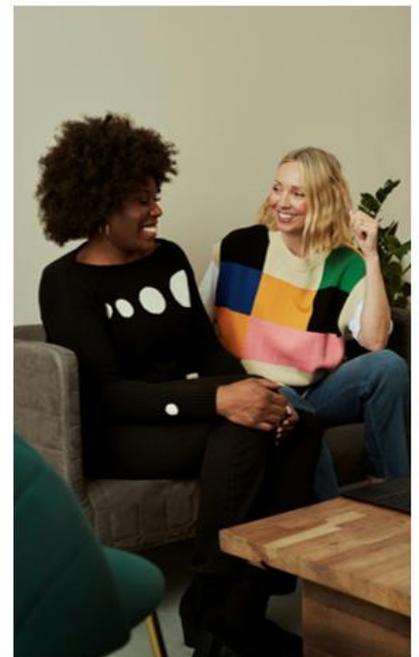
Questions to Engage in Open Dialogue with Communities

Engage in Open Dialogue: Have open-ended conversations. Rather than structured interviews, let the conversation flow naturally. Questions could include:

- "What challenges do you feel the community is facing right now?"

- "What local issues would you like to see addressed?"

- "What do you value most about this neighborhood?"

- "How could local businesses, including our company, contribute to the wellbeing of the community?"

Module 6 (Part 3)

Inclusive Community Engagement for SMEs

Part 3: Ensuring Inclusive Engagement through Shared Value and Community Empowerment.

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M6:Part 3

Dig Deeper: Creating Shared Value. Learn how to enable long lasting shared value, incorporate diverse perspectives, mobilise for collective action and empower local champions.

Dig Deeper: Effective Inclusive Engagement. Learn about using active listening and representation to ensure everyone is heard and understood. Learn how to be open and honest with communication and collaborate to share, learn and grow together.

Dig Deeper: Empowering Inclusive Communities. Learn about participatory engagement and involving communities in decision making. Learn about capacity building, economic and social empowerment, advocacy and infrastructure support measures.

01 **Dig Deeper:** Creating Shared Value

02 **Dig Deeper:** Effective Inclusive Engagement

03 **Dig Deeper:** Empowering Communities

Case Study: Frazer Bakery, Finland (Diverse Perspectives)

Case Study: Mavi Jeans, Turkey (Mobilisation)

Case Study: Hand in Hand, Sweden (Participatory Planning)

Case Study: Doolin Hotel, Ireland (Empowering Communities)

Case Study: Tico Mail, Ireland (SDG Implementation)

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Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- **Understand the Principles of Shared Value** – Explain how businesses can create long-lasting value by integrating community needs and diverse perspectives.

- **Apply Effective Inclusive Engagement Techniques** – Utilize active listening, representation, and transparent communication to build meaningful collaboration.

- **Empower Local Champions & Mobilise Action** – Identify strategies to support community leaders, encourage collective action, and drive sustainable impact.

- **Facilitate Participatory Decision-Making** – Implement methods that involve community members in shaping initiatives that affect them.

- **Promote Economic & Social Empowerment** – recognise the role of advocacy, capacity building, and infrastructure support in strengthening communities.

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Sample Slide

Shared Value	What to Do	How?	What Not to Do	Example
Incorporate Diverse Perspectives	Actively seek out and value different viewpoints. Use these insights to address gaps and refine your initiatives. Consider families, single people, children	Organize brainstorming sessions and listening forums where all community members can contribute ideas.	Avoid dismissing feedback from smaller or less influential groups. Don't impose external solutions without considering local input.	In Germany, Bio-Lebensmittel Manufaktur engages local farmers, environmentalists, and consumers to shape its sustainable organic food initiatives. They collaborate closely with regional farmers to source high-quality, organic foods. They regularly ask to connect and participate in various venues to assist with their sustainability efforts.

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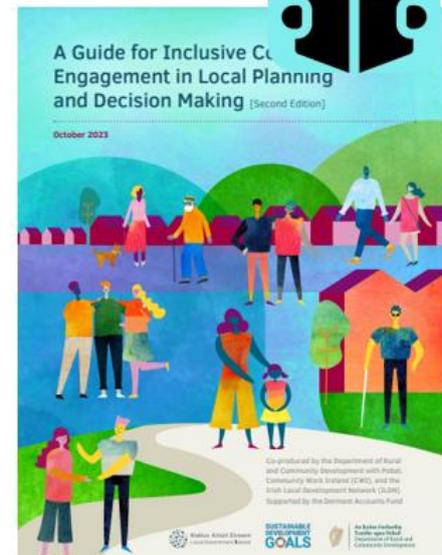
Supports & Resources

01

Create Shared Value: Incorporate Diverse Perspectives

Incorporate Diverse Perspectives: Your goal should be to engage and listen to a wide range of perspectives and viewpoints to better ensure that concerns or gaps are addressed in the planning process. By engaging a wide range of community members, you can listen to and gain valuable insights and varied viewpoints, solutions and perspectives. This will help shape your ideas or initiatives to be more relevant, inclusive, and effective. This approach ensures that every voice is heard and that your efforts will reflect the true needs and aspirations of the community, leading to stronger, more impactful shared value outcomes.

Resource

A Guide for Inclusive Community Engagement in Local Planning and Decision Making [Second Edition]

October 2023

DIVERSITIES ARE REVIVING ENTERPRISE https://assets.gov.ie/274611/a547919e-0cf5-412b-8983-f260c8ed66ed.pdf

02

Create Shared Value: Mobilise the Community

Mobilise the Community: Through inclusive engagement, you mobilise more people by ensuring they are informed, activated, and motivated to participate. This process not only broadens the base of support but also enables greater diversity in participation, which is key to creating meaningful, community-driven initiatives. As more people get involved, the collective impact grows, leading to stronger, more sustainable outcomes that benefit the entire community. By engaging and empowering a wide range of voices, we create lasting shared value that drives progress and enables a sense of ownership among all stakeholders.

Resource

Strategies for Effective Community Mobilisation
- ❖ Identify and engage key stakeholders
- ❖ Develop a clear and compelling message and objective
- ❖ Build relationships and trust
- ❖ Empower community members
- ❖ Evaluate and adjust strategies

DIVERSITIES ARE REVIVING ENTERPRISE https://fastercapital.com/topics/strategies-for-effective-community-mobilization.html

03 Create Shared Value: Empower Community Champions

Empower Community Champions.
Engagement creates and empowers connections between SMEs and the community, this creates a foundation for share values where both the business and community thrive. Through active collaboration, you should aim to enhance visibility, build credibility, and ensure accountability, making sure that the solutions you implement are owned by those they impact. For example, in the engagement process, create opportunities for community members to step up as leaders and advocates for our projects. This strengthens the sense of partnership and ownership and lays the groundwork for the long-term sustainability of your initiatives. The more champions there are for a plan or an idea, the more likely it is to become a reality.

Resource

Learn How To Create Empowered Community Champions
❖ Identify your champions
❖ Develop a championing program
❖ Use a Champion Program Canvas

❖ **Learn how to engage with communities** so everyone benefits creating, greater resilience, stronger trust, productive partnereships, repeat busiess and develop community infrastructure and services.

DIVERSITIES ARE REVIVING ENTERPRISE https://www.beazley.com/en-US/esg-centre/articles/community-engagement-and-small-businesses-a-winning-combination/

04

Participatory Planning:

Most importantly, participatory planning enhances the substance and impact of your SME initiatives. It requires responding to present-day needs and priorities while incorporating a valuable range of perspectives and expertise. When an effort has been supported by community engagement, this means they have a permanent seat at the table, it helps the people it affects raise their voices to influence outcomes and will more accurately reflect their ideas, needs, and priorities. This approach ensures that efforts are responsive to present-day challenges while incorporating a wide range of perspectives and expertise. By actively involving the people affected, participatory planning creates initiatives that are more relevant, inclusive, and effective, enabling a sense of shared ownership and long-term commitment.

Resource

Community Engagement Toolkit

Building Purpose and Participation

The **Community Engagement Toolkit** is a comprehensive guide designed to help companies effectively engage with their communities in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of development projects.

DIVERSITIES ARE REVIVING ENTERPRISE https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Community-Engagement-Toolkit.pdf

Supports & Resources

05

Pride of Community and Place:

Your engagement efforts should be designed to help nurture and reinforce a strong connection between the community, their place, and their sense of identity. By working together on shared initiatives, people experience a collective energy, commitment, and purpose that strengthens their bond with the community. This connection brings a deep sense of pride and belonging, making involvement in your projects both rewarding and exciting, building your reputation and valuing your role. As communities witness the potential for positive change and progress, their engagement becomes a powerful motivator, this creates lasting impact and a shared vision for a sustainable future. Community collaboration builds this shared value, increasing visibility, credibility, buy-in, accountability, and ownership of the solutions and ideas that emerge.

Resource

Learn About Community and Belonging
Learn how belonging enables trust and collaboration. Empathy is essential for a true sense of belonging and the role of leaders.

Think Kit: Pride in Place
❖ Learn how to research, plan and prepare for pride in place.
❖ Learn place-based approaches and best practices for understanding, reflecting and evaluating.

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Module 6 (Part 4)

Inclusive Community Engagement for SMEs

Part 4: Prepare for an Effective Community Engagement Framework: A Step-by-Step Guide

M6:Part 4

Step 1: Define Your Community Engagement Purpose & Objective
Clarify the purpose and objectives of your community engagement, consider your 'why' reflect on your core values and align to engagement activities. Learn how a clear purpose aligns all stakeholders and guides your process toward impactful results.

Step 2: Set Up Your Community Engagement Team (Internal & External)
Learn how to assemble effective community engagement teams (internal staff) and (external stakeholders) and develop an inclusive plan with the fundamental actions necessary for effective engagement.

01 **Step 1:** Define Your Community Engagement Purpose & Objective

02 **Step 2:** Set Up Your Community Engagement Team (Internal & External)

03 **Step 3:** Refine Your Engagement Approaches

04 **Step 4:** Start Initiating Inclusive Community Engagement

05 **Step 5:** Develop Engagement Framework and Action Plan

Exercise: Identify Your Purpose

Exercise: Identify Your Impact & Improve Engagement

Case Study: VivaGreen, Cleaning Products, Ireland

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M6:Part 4

Step 3: Refine Your Engagement Approaches Tailor engagement strategies to the community's needs, using community driven methods like surveys or workshops. Adapt approaches to suit your community.

Step 4: Start Initiating Inclusive Community Engagement. Understand how to start and manage inclusive conversations with your community ensuring every voice is heard and understood.

Exercise: Refine Community Engagement Approach

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Understand the **purpose and objectives** behind community engagement.
- Learn how to assemble and manage both **internal and external engagement teams**.
- Identify and **refine engagement strategies** for diverse community contexts.
- **Learn to initiate** and maintain inclusive community engagement practices.

Exercise 1

Exercise: Identify Your Purpose

Ensures your community engagement actions and strategies align with your foundational principles, creating authenticity.

❏ **Reflect on Core Values:**

Core values are the guiding principles that shape how a business operates and interacts with the world. Reflecting on them ensures you remain authentic and consistent in your actions. This exercise helps define the SME's unique identity and purpose.

What principles/core values guide the business? For example, sustainability, innovation, or community empowerment, education, supporting diversity and inclusion.

❏ **Consider Your "Why"**

Understanding the "why" uncovers the purpose behind the business. It differentiates the SME from competitors by highlighting its deeper mission beyond making a profit. Inspires possible stakeholders hearing your story and aligns daily operations with your meaningful purpose.

- Why did you start your business?
- What problems does it aim to solve?
- What opportunities does it address?

Exercise 2

Exercise: Identify Your Impact & Improve Engagement

❏ **Assess Areas of Impact**

Assessing impact areas identifies how your business contributes value to its ecosystem. It ensures you are aware of your social, economic, and environmental footprint and how to improve it, which is essential for long-term sustainability and stakeholder loyalty. You get to pinpoint strengths, identify opportunities for improvement. Highlight your role in addressing community challenges an reinforce our accountability and responsibility to your stakeholders and community.

- How does the SME positively influence customers, employees, and communities?

- For instance, does it promote local craftsmanship or provide eco-friendly solutions?

❏ **Engage Stakeholders:**

Stakeholder feedback ensures your purpose aligns with the expectations and needs of the people you serve and impact. Engaging stakeholders builds strong relationships, provides informed decision making and you become more resilient and adaptable. This encourages collaboration shared ownership, uncovers blind spots and overlooked opportunities. It ensures you maintain trust by demonstrating you care and listen.

- Gather insights from employees, customers, and partners to understand what they value about your role.

Exercise. Refine Community Engagement Approach

This exercise helps SMEs assess and develop their approach to inclusive community engagement by exploring different levels of involvement: **Community-focused, Community-centered, Community-led, and Community-empowered**.

Step 1: List their current community engagement activities (e.g., sponsorships, local events, partnerships).

Step 2: Identify key community stakeholders (e.g., residents, local businesses, nonprofits, local government). Map how each group is currently engaged and where gaps may exist.

Exercise. Refine Community Engagement Approach

Step 3: Break into small teams (or individual reflection) and brainstorm practical actions for improving engagement at each level:

☐ **Community-focused:** How can you **better inform and involve** community members? (e.g., host a survey, attend town hall meetings)

☐ **Community-centered:** How can you **collaborate more** effectively? (e.g., partner with local groups for an event)

☐ **Community-led:** How can you **empower leaders**? (e.g., support training or mentorship programs)

☐ **Community-empowered:** How can you **encourage full ownership**? (e.g., co-create a long-term project with local organizations)

Module 6 (Part 5) Sections 1 - 7

Module 6 (Part 5)

Inclusive Community Engagement for SMEs

Part 5: Create a Community Engagement Framework & Develop a Collaborative Action Plan

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M6:Part 5

- Start with including **"Who/Stakeholders,"** **"What/Purpose,"** and **"Priority Outcomes"** in your community engagement framework to ensure inclusivity, clarity, direction, and measurable impact.
- Blend **informal and formal community led engagement methods**; to empower community leaders, to enable deeper, meaningful relationships that create a strong, active, and inclusive community base.
- Ensure **participatory engagement** to actively involving community members in the decision-making process and co-creating solutions. It is a collaborative approach where the community is not just consulted but plays an integral role in shaping outcomes.

01 Identify the **'Who'**, **'Purpose'** and **'Priority Outcomes'**

02 Use a Blend of **Informal and Formal Engagement** Methods

03 Ensure Active **Participatory Engagement** and Co Creation

04 Identify the **Challenges,** Recognise the **Opportunities** & Implement **Solutions**

Case Study: GORM, Intercultural Consultancy, Ireland

M6:Part 5

- **Identify challenges, recognise opportunities,** and **implement solutions,** so SMEs can effectively enable inclusive community engagement that benefits both the business and the community.
- **Sample Action Plan,** a detailed roadmap that outlines the steps needed to manage and track progress and achieve the defined inclusive engagement purpose.
- **Practical Examples Creating Shared Value:** Learn different inclusive community engagement methods that ensure long lasting value for both SMEs and communities.
- **Its an Iterative Process:** How SMEs can adapt an Iterative process focusing on continuous planning, implementation, assessment, and adaptation to ensure inclusive community engagement is relevant, effective, responsive and sustainable.

05 Develop Your **Action Plan** to Support Your Engagement Framework

06 Practical **Long Lasting Shared Value** Examples Any SME can Incorporate

07 Adapting an **Iterative Process** to the Journey

Exercise: Set Up An Inclusive Visioning Workshop with Your Community

Case Study: Østerbro Urban Farming & Gardens (Denmark)

Case Study: The Burren, Eco Tourism Network (Ireland)

Case Study: Ikea, Europe

Learning Objectives

By the end of this module, participants will be able to:

- Understand the **key components** of a community engagement framework, including stakeholders, purpose, action plan, and priority outcomes.
- Learn to blend **formal and informal engagement methods** to empower community leaders.
- **Develop a collaborative approach** that ensures active community participation in decision-making and solution creation.
- Identify **challenges, opportunities, and implement solutions** that benefit both businesses and communities.
- **Understand the iterative nature** of community engagement, ensuring continuous improvement based on feedback.

Activity: Set Up A Visioning Workshop

Activity: Set Up An Inclusive Community Visioning Workshop

In the previous 'Exercise Discover Your Purpose and Objective' you discovered what you can do. Now its time to put your objective into practice

Objective: To co-create a vision for the community's future.

Icebreaker: Ask participants to share a positive story about their community.

Mapping Exercise: Use a large map of the area and sticky notes to highlight strengths, challenges, and opportunities.

Future Goals: Break into small groups to brainstorm initiatives that address identified challenges.

Prioritise Aims: Discuss and vote on the top 3 initiatives to focus on.

Action Planning: Develop a timeline and assign responsibilities for the next steps.

DIVERSITIES ARE REVIVING ENTERPRISE

Results

Practical European Examples of the Potential Impact of this Exercise

❖ **Østerbro** Urban Farming & Gardens (Denmark)

The **project's mission** is to improve cooperation between researchers and businesses, in order to boost agricultural production in an urban environment.

The **project aims** to ensure long-term food security, while preserving the environment as much as possible.

Community: A farm called Østerbro runs a 40-member community-supported agriculture (CSA) program, where the members support the farm financially and by tending to the plants.

Outcomes: Community workshops transformed vacant lots into urban gardens. Leaders engaged youth and schools to ensure long-term upkeep. Started garden therapy to help seniors and provide a social outing. Brought herbs and vegetables to customers costing little and reducing food waste.

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Exercise 1

https://www.burrengeopark.ie/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/B.E.N.-Information-Leaflet-2013-14.pdf

Results

Practical European Examples of the Potential Impact of this Exercise

❖ **Burren Network** (Eco-Tourism in Rural Areas) Ireland

The **Network's aim** is to be a recognisable network of enterprises in the Burren that demonstrate ecotourism 'best practice'.

Networks Mission: To obtain independent ecotourism certification and promote the Burren as a premier ecotourism destination.

Community: The Network was founded by a group of tourism providers who have worked together over an extended period.

Outcome: Tourism businesses within the network are committed to local produce, conservation and the community, as well as to continuing high standards of sustainability, and offer a range of accredited, nature-based experiences. Our shared vision is that providing genuine ecotourism travel experiences in the Burren will ensure the sustainable development of its communities, environment and heritage.

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Exercise 2

Module 6 (Part 5)

Exercise

Part 5: Create a Community Engagement Framework & Develop a Collaborative Action Plan

Step 5

Develop Engagement Framework and Action Plan

The **Engagement Framework** is covered in part 1 of this section and the **Action Plan** is covered in part 2. Both tools are important to ensure that your engagement remains **inclusive, relevant, strategic, measurable, and sustainable**. Without these tools your efforts may become inconsistent or lack long-term impact. You will learn how to outline clear **goals, activities, timelines, engagement methods, come up with solutions to challenges and understand success indicators**. Be ready to assign team members to specific tasks and ensure regular evaluation.

Exercise 2

Sample: Community Engagement Framework

Including **"Who/Stakeholders," "What/Purpose," "Action Plan," and "Priority Outcomes"** in a community engagement framework ensures inclusivity, clarity, direction, and measurable impact.

Who/Stakeholders (Who are you Inviting)	What/Purpose (What do you aim to do? What is your company purpose?)	Action Plan & Expected Outcomes What priorities need to happen (Outcomes), and how will they happen (Action Plan)?
		Priority Outcomes Action Plan

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Community Engagement Challenges & Solutions

By identifying **challenges, recognising opportunities**, and **implementing solutions**, SMEs can effectively enable inclusive community engagement that benefits both the business and the community.

Challenges (Identify and Address)	Opportunities (Identify and Include in Priorities)	Solutions (Identify and Include in Actions)

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Action Plan: Outcome Priorities, Challenges, Opportunities & Solutions

Challenges	Opportunities	Solutions
Outcome Priority 1: xxx		
Outcome Priority 2: xxx		

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Sample Action Plan (Put Priority 1 into an Action Plan)

Priority Outcome	Objective	Actions	Timeline	Responsible
Priority 1 xxx				

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See our
Competency Framework
and Curriculum for more
information

For example, the
Curriculum provides
example teaching
approaches, timelines
and schedules, learning
pathways, objectives,
expected results, lesson
plans and more.

https://projectdare.eu/resources/competences-framework-and-curriculum/

Thank you for engaging in our project and resources. We hope they have proved useful on your educational diversity and inclusivity journey!

www.**projectdare**.eu

Follow our journey