**Sample Terms of Reference for a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Working Group/Employee Network**

**Overview**

Developing a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DE&I) working group will ensure that conversations and implementation of diversity, equity and inclusion strategies are ongoing and embedded within your organisation. The group should have a Terms of Reference with a clear mission, goals and objectives and meet regularly. It is important that members are representative of diverse population groups and are able to bring their lived experiences to the development and implementation of the strategy.

In relation to Employee Networks, typically they have a Chair, Deputy Chair/s and Executive Sponsor that reports to the Board and Executive team.

The group or network could be tasked with the following:

* Promoting training and events to bring awareness to DE&I in the workplace
* Engaging co-workers in DE&I conversations and training
* Reviewing and developing policies and procedures that promote DE&I
* Communicating the DE&I plan and initiatives across the organisation

Below is an example of a Terms of Reference for a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion group across an aged care organisation. This example has been guided by **Uniting’s NSW.ACT Cultural Diversity Network Terms of Reference.**

**Example Diversity, Equity and Inclusion /Employee Network Terms of Reference**

At **<insert organisation’s name>** we embrace diversity, and we work purposefully towards being leaders of inclusive practice, so that all people from diverse backgrounds feel welcome, safe, supported and valued. As we strive for a world that’s safer, brighter and better, we’re consciously co-creating a diverse and inclusive environment for our clients, our teams and our communities.

**Our Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DE&I) vision is to: <Insert vision here>**

**Our priority identity groups are:** **<Insert special needs or identity groups here>.**

Examples are:

* *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people*
* *Culturally and linguistically diverse people (CALD)*
* *LGBTIQ+ people*
* *People living with disability.*
* *Forgotten Australians*
* *Veterans*
* *People who are homeless or at risk of homelessness*
* *Care Leavers*

We have key themes for targeted action across **<insert organisation name>** which are:

1. A whole-of-organisation approach and commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion
2. Communication
3. Workforce development and training
4. Client participation and engagement
5. Stakeholder partnerships, collaboration and advocacy
6. Data, planning, research and evaluation.

**How the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Working Group works**

The **<insert organisation name>** Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Working Group/Employee Network comprises up to **<insert number here>** employees who are committed to creating a safe, welcoming and

inclusive environment. They will draw on their experience and connections to guide the DE&I Working Group/Employee Network on how to best achieve the vision and goals and will apply the principles of an evidence-led best practice human rights approach aligning with World Health Organisation principles, the Aged Care Diversity Framework, the Aged Care Act 1997 and the Aged Care Quality and Safety Commission.

**Roles and responsibilities**

The DE&I Working Group/Employee Network provides direction on activities and opportunities to achieve the organisation’s vision. Members will actively help facilitate initiatives to help meet the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion principles and goals across the whole organisation.

**Specific goals of the DE&I Working Group/Employee Network**

* Work towards embedding inclusion across the organisation through policy and practice
* Workshop and support the implementation of a Diversity, Equity Inclusion Strategy
* Proudly support/co-ordinate events of cultural and religious significance
* Ensure that all our services are responsive to, and inclusive of, the diverse needs of our clients.
* Co-design training solutions, and monitor, encourage training and education strategies to ensure all staff understand the challenges that diverse communities, and the impacts of our conscious and unconscious biases on quality of care
* Identify priority inclusion projects and provide leadership and/or input as required
* Research and identify suitable development opportunities for the organisation

**Reporting**

The DE&I Working Group/Employee Network is accountable to the **<insert organisation name>’s** Executive and Board. The Working Group/Employee Network will advise leaders through regular reports on meeting **<insert organisation name>’s** commitment to a diverse and inclusive environment as it relates to the organisation’s diverse clients, our people and our communities. This includes reporting against the identify priority projects KPIs and goals.

**Membership**

Members of the DE&I Working Group/Employee Network are strong supporters, who can share their lived experiences and/or co-create innovative ideas to create equity for everyone.

Membership will include staff from across the organisation ranging from:

* Customer Relations
* Governance, Risk, Quality and Research
* Managers of Home Care, Residential care and CHSP programs
* Finance and Strategy
* People and Culture
* Recruitment & HR
* Communication and Marketing
* External organisations as invited guests when/if required
* Additional diversity subject matter experts and staff who have expressed interest in membership for specific projects or when expertise is required.

**Members of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Working Group/Employee Network commit to:**

* Being a supporter of diversity, equity and inclusion
* Role modelling **<insert organisation here>’s** values and calling out behaviours that are inconsistent with these
* Attending and actively participating in meetings
* Contributing to the development and implementation of diversity, equity and inclusion strategies and decisions
* Acting as a two-way conduit for communications with their relevant business area
* Acting as an advocate for the group’s recommendations as necessary

**Benefits of membership:**

* Members of the DE&I Working Group contribute to **<insert organisation here>**’s vision of co-creating a place where everyone feels safe and confident to be themselves and where diversity is valued. Members provide inclusion advice and support to help **<insert organisation here>**’s deliver leading inclusive practices for staff, clients and communities so that diverse people and their friends and their families, feel welcome, safe, supported and valued at **<insert organisation here>**.
* Active participation in the DE&I Working Group gives members the opportunity to make a positive difference beyond their usual role. It also offers personal development through enhanced knowledge, skills and experience, expanded networks and increased visibility to people and clients across all **<insert organisation here>’s** directorates.

**Members will expect**

* The agenda to be distributed at a minimum of 3-5 working days prior to the meeting
* The minutes to be recorded and distributed within two weeks of the meeting being held

**Members need to manage their workload to meet these specific obligations**

**<Insert hours here>** per month to participate in a DE&I Working Group/Employee Network video/teleconference/meeting. Additional time to contribute to specific pieces of work relevant to your region/service area or particular experience/expertise (possibly 1-2 hours per fortnight).

**In practical terms, management support may mean either slightly reducing usual workload, or building DE&I related commitments into work plans for the member.**

**Member exit and replacement**

It is important to maintain a DE&I Working Group/Employee Network presence across all business areas within **<insert organisation here>**. If an existing representative is no longer an active member, it is the responsibility of the manager from that business line to call for volunteers or nominate a new representative, or to have a secondary member act in their position during times when they are unavailable.

Every two years (or earlier) members will be asked if they wish to retain their position. Every two years (or earlier) the Chair and Deputy Chair/s will also be asked if they wish to retain their position.

**Evaluation and Review**

The DE&I working group will review the Terms of Reference annually to evaluate effectiveness through a continuous quality improvement methodology.

Last updated:

Review Due:

*Disclaimer: This resource has been developed by the Centre for Cultural Diversity in Ageing as a starting point for your organisation and should be tailored according to the organisation’s service type(s) and specific requirements. Every attempt has been made to ensure the accuracy and currency of this information, however it is not intended to be comprehensive, nor does it constitute legal advice. LAST UPDATED: October2022*

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