

## Houston Regional Equity & Inclusion Assessment

This assessment is for companies and organizations located in the following 12 counties: Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, San Jacinto, Walker, Waller, and Wharton.

Welcome to the Houston Regional Equity & Inclusion Assessment. This tool allows you to evaluate your diversity, equity and inclusion progress and create a roadmap to improve outcomes and increase community impact.

If you have not yet viewed the following document, please take time to read before beginning the assessment.

**[FAQs Document](#)**

The fillable PDF is designed to help you prepare to the complete the assessment and have easy access to your responses.

Multiple people within your organization can contribute to the assessment and we estimate that it will take 30 minutes to complete after you compile your responses.

Note: Items with an asterisk (\*) are required.

**Contact Information**

**Organization Name\***

**Local Address**

Street Address City County Zip Code

**Chief Executive or Top Regional Executive\***

Name Title Phone Number E-mail

**Equity & Inclusion Organization Assessment Contact\***

Name Title Phone Number E-mail

**Purchasing/Procurement/Supplier Diversity Contact**

Name Title Phone Number E-mail

**Organization Information**

**Organization Type\***

- For-profit, privately held
- For-profit, publicly held
- Non-profit
- Government/Public Entity

**Headquartered in Greater Houston Region\***

Greater Houston Region refers to the following counties: Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, San Jacinto, Walker, Waller, Wharton.

- Yes
- No

**Organization has a board of directors or governing body\***

- Yes
- No

**Board is appointed by public appointing entity**

- Yes
- No

**Organization is certified as (check all that apply)**

- MBE (Minority Business Enterprise)
- WBE (Woman-Owned Business Enterprise)
- LGBT
- Veteran-owned
- DBE (Disadvantaged Business Enterprise)
- Other (Please list other certification)

**Industry Segment (choose one)\***

- Administrative and Support Services
- Arts/Culture
- Construction
- Economic Development
- Educational Services (Non-Higher Ed)
- Energy
- Entertainment, Hotels and Restaurants
- Financial Institution
- Government
- Healthcare/Life Science
- Higher Education

- Law
- Manufacturing
- Media and Information
- Professional Service
- Real Estate and Rental Industries
- Retail
- Social Service, Advocacy or Civic/Social Organization
- Technology
- Utility
- Wholesale, Transport and Warehousing
- Other

**Organization Size (total employees, all locations)\***

- Large (> 1,000 total employees)
- Mid-size (250-1,000 total employees)
- Small (<250 total employees)

**Number of employees in Greater Houston Region only, as of December 31\* (You must have 5 employees to complete the assessment)**



**Senior Management Demographics (headcount for Greater Houston Region as of December 31)**

Senior Management

**Senior-Level Management**

Senior-level management employees are the most senior staff of an organization. Responsibilities require frequent interaction with the CEO. Examples are: chief executive officers, chief operating officers, chief financial officers, line of business heads, presidents or executive vice presidents of functional areas or operating groups, chief information officers, chief human resources officers, chief marketing

officers, chief legal officers, management directors and managing partners. At a minimum, this includes the chief executive/top leader and the direct reports of the chief executive/top leader. Organization structures vary widely, use your discretion when completing this section (adapted from the EEOC definition).

	<b>Senior Managers*</b>		<b>Senior Managers New Hires</b>		<b>Senior Managers Promotions</b>	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
White						
Black or African American						
Hispanic or Latino						
Asian						
Native American or Alaska Native						
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander						
Two or more races						

**Board Demographics (headcount for Greater Houston Region as of December 31)**

	Board members	
	Male	Female
White		
Black or African American		
Hispanic or Latino		
Asian		
Native American or Alaska Native		
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander		
Two or more races		

**Formal Diversity Program**

Does your organization currently have an initiative or policies in place to encourage a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion?

- Yes
- No

**Supplier Diversity Data**

Some organizations have implemented policies to increase the amount of products and services procured with minority-owned businesses (MBE's). Information collected in this section helps to assess the impact that supplier diversity initiatives have on the minority-owned businesses in the Greater Houston Region.

*Click below for a definition of MBE*

- Minority Business Enterprise (MBE)

**Please provide data for the previous calendar year (use basic numeric values only - i.e. \$100,000.00 = 100000.00)**

	Total	MBE
Spend - Entire Organization		
Spend - Greater Houston Region		
Number of Vendors - Greater Houston Region		

**Minority-owned Business/Minority Business Enterprise (MBE)**

A business that is at least 51 percent owned and ultimately controlled by one or more of the person(s) belonging to the following groups: Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Native American, or Asian.

**If your organization set a goal for any or all of these spend categories, please indicate the percentage goal below.**

	MBE Spend Goal (%)
Spend - Entire Organization	
Spend - Greater Houston Region	
MBE vendors - Greater Houston Region	

**Is third-party certification is required for your supplier diversity reporting?**

- Yes
- No

## Assessing Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Best Practices

In the next section you will be asked a series of questions related to your current diversity, equity and inclusion practices. The assessment is a tool for improvement and we strongly encourage you to use it for this purpose. There is no benefit in inflating the answers. If a particular category does not currently apply to your organization, no selections need to be made.

The benchmarks in the assessment are based on and taken with permission from The Global Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Benchmarks: Standards for Organizations Around the World (GDEIB).

For each category included in the assessment, the benchmarks are divided into five levels that indicate progress toward best practices in that category. The levels are defined as follows:

### **Level 5: Best Practice**

Demonstrating current global best practices in DEI; exemplary.

### **Level 4: Progressive**

Implementing DEI systemically and showing improved results and outcomes beyond what is required or expected.

### **Level 3: Proactive**

A clear awareness of the value of DEI; starting to implement DEI systemically. This is what is required and expected of all organizations.

### **Level 2: Reactive**

A compliance-only mindset; actions are taken primarily to comply with relevant laws and social pressures. Doing the bare minimum.

### **Level 1: Inactive**

There is no current work being done in this category.

Read below for more information on each topic.

- Global Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Benchmarks Model
- Permission
- What size organization can benefit most from working with the GDIB?

### **Global Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Benchmarks Model**

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) have emerged as worldwide practices that are critical to an organization's success and its sustainability. As with other disciplines, such as quality and safety, standards are needed to establish criteria to measure and monitor progress.

The GDEIB is designed to guide organizations to achieve best practices. The model with its 15 categories helps leaders and DEI professionals implement strategies that work as an integrated system. Achieving many of the benchmarks in any given category is dependent on the achievement of benchmarks in other categories.

The full GDEIB and supporting information can be found at [centreforglobalinclusion.org](http://centreforglobalinclusion.org)

**Permission**

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**What size organization can benefit most from working with the GDIB?**

Large and medium organizations would benefit most because they potentially have more resources to deploy the staff, programs, and activities needed to achieve the benchmarks. That said, we believe small organizations will also find these useful, although more customization may be required. It should be noted that small organizations may be just as capable of reaching the higher-level benchmarks as medium and large ones.

## Best Practices Category 1: Vision, Strategy, and Business Impact

*Select all that apply. If this category is not applicable to your organization, you can proceed to the next category.*

### Level 2: Reactive

- A basic DEI vision, mission, and strategy have been developed and communicated to all employees.
- DEI is defined broadly to include some dimensions beyond gender, race, and ethnicity.
- Compliance with basic legislation is in place.

### Level 3: Proactive

- A DEI vision, mission, strategy, and business impact statement has been developed and communicated to all employees.
- DEI is defined broadly to include visible, non-visible, inherent, and acquired dimensions.
- DEI qualitative and quantitative goals that include input from a variety of internal and external stakeholders are being developed.
- Compliance with legislation that protects human rights and ensures safe workplaces is included in the strategy.

### Level 4: Progressive

- The organization's DEI vision and goals to embed equity, prevent harassment, and reduce or eliminate discrimination and oppression are part of the organizational strategy.
- The majority of stakeholders acknowledge that DEI is important to the success of the organization.
- DEI competencies that help achieve the DEI strategy are demonstrated by most leaders and a majority of employees.
- The organization has examined its organizational culture and created strategies to eliminate inequities and reduce barriers to inclusion.
- DEI qualitative and quantitative goals are developed with the help of new technologies and algorithms that include input from a variety of stakeholders.
- The organization invests in ethical artificial intelligence to ensure that barriers to inclusion and equity are minimized.

### Level 5: Best Practice

- DEI strategy is an integral part of the overall organizational strategy and is reflected in vision, values, policies, and practices.
- DEI is embedded in organizational culture as a core value, a source of innovation, and a means to belonging, sustainability and success.
- The organization is frequently acknowledged, cited, and benchmarked by others for its DEI accomplishments.
- The organization is proactive and responsive to DEI challenges that are faced by society, including but not limited to political and economic trends, and recognizes that organizations are microcosms of the societies in which they operate
- The organization continues to strive for excellence and is known for its pioneering DEI initiatives that help change the patterns which perpetuate systemic oppression.
- The organization's strategy includes numerical goals resulting in equitable representation of underrepresented groups across functions and levels.



## Best Practices Category 2: Leadership and Accountability

*Select all that apply. If this category is not applicable to your organization, you can proceed to the next category.*

### Level 2: Reactive

- Leaders are generally unfamiliar or uncomfortable with DEI.
- Although leaders accept some responsibility for DEI, the focus is mainly on complying with regulations.
- Leaders defer regularly to HR or Legal when concerns regarding DEI are observed or reported.

### Level 3: Proactive

- DEI is an essential leadership competency and leaders are rated on it.
- Leaders engage in DEI issues important to employees and prevalent in the societies in which they operate.
- To increase their knowledge and competence, leaders seek coaching in DEI and provide coaching, sponsoring, and mentoring to others.

### Level 4: Progressive

- Leaders promote DEI initiatives, communicate the strategy, and provide recognition for DEI champions and advocates.
- The leadership and board of directors are diverse, engaged in DEI issues, and accountable for achieving the DEI strategy.
- Leaders are competent in applying conflict resolution skills to resolve DEI-related grievances and challenges.
- Leaders are rewarded for demonstrating high competency in DEI.

### Level 5: Best Practice

- Leaders are change agents and role models for DEI. They inspire others to take individual responsibility and become role models themselves.
- A large majority of employees across a wide array of diversity dimensions rate their leaders as trustworthy, citing equitable and inclusive treatment.
- Leaders and board members publicly support DEI-related initiatives, even if they are perceived to be controversial or come with personal risk.
- Leaders ensure that DEI is systemic, sustainable, and involves cross-functional collaboration.
- Leaders take accountability for DEI, help create both a psychologically and physically safe workplace, and accept consequences for their actions.

## Best Practices Category 3: DEI Structure and Implementation

*\*Select all that apply. If this category is not applicable to your organization, you can proceed to the next category.*

### Level 2: Reactive

- DEI is simply an additional duty of the human resources, legal, or other department.
- Diversity networks and DEI committees may exist, but they have no real power, influence, or resources.

### Level 3: Proactive

- The organization has a DEI champion/leader with responsibility for DEI.
- Departments have their own DEI councils/committees.
- A budget has been allocated to cover DEI implementation, including support for diversity networks.
- If the organization has labor unions or similar groups, they are engaged and included in DEI efforts.
- Members of the DEI department or function are called upon for advice, counsel, and expertise.

### Level 4: Progressive

- The board of directors has a committee dedicated to DEI.
- The organization provides resources, staffing, and support to help ensure implementation of its DEI strategy.
- The DEI function is headed by an influential leader who is knowledgeable about and committed to DEI.
- An organization-wide DEI council/committee, which includes line and staff employees, is given visible and meaningful support by leaders.
- Diversity networks are recognized as credible, influential, and valued resources to the organization. They sometimes coordinate in recognition of their intersectionality.
- All departments/business units collaborate to ensure a holistic and integrated approach to DEI.

### Level 5: Best Practice

- The most senior person responsible for DEI is an equal and influential partner on the senior leadership team.
- DEI is integrated into core organizational structures, policies, systems, and practices.
- Diversity is reflected equitably in all levels and functions.
- Inclusive/universal design of buildings, products, services, and emerging technologies helps ensure accessibility for all.
- The organization's governance structure is supported by inclusive practices to mitigate concentrations of power and dominance.
- The organization ensures that structures for elected positions (for example in unions and diversity networks, and community/political positions) are fair and equitable.

## Best Practices Category 4: Recruitment

*\*Select all that apply. If this category is not applicable to your organization, you can proceed to the next category.*

### Level 2: Reactive

- Recruitment is based primarily on representation to meet numerical goals or targets.
- Recruitment practices do not include sourcing diverse candidates from underrepresented groups.
- Interviewers do not consider how people from different cultures and backgrounds may respond to interview questions and methods.

### Level 3: Proactive

- Interviewers conduct culturally competent interviews.
- Staff are hired for their competence and their ability to bring diverse perspectives to the work and not only because they are from an underrepresented identity group.
- The organization's advertisements and/or diversity networks reach broad pools of diverse talent.
- External search firms are selected based in part on their expertise in diversity recruiting.

### Level 4: Progressive

- The organization effectively recruits from representative labor markets.
- Recruitment includes advertising on DEI-focused websites and in a variety of other media.
- Recruitment and selection panels are diverse and knowledgeable about recruiting processes and in mitigating biases.

### Level 5: Best Practice

- The organization's attraction and hiring processes result in measurable, transparent, and equitable recruitment.
- The organization's reputation for quality DEI efforts enhances its ability to attract diverse and underrepresented employees.
- When technological solutions are used for recruitment, the organization implements practices to minimize or remove algorithmic bias.
- The organization conducts regular evaluations of recruiting practices to ensure that candidates from different groups and identities are given equitable opportunities.
- There are clear measures of success throughout the recruitment process, such as the percentage of diverse and underrepresented applicants at each stage.

## Best Practices Category 5: Advancement and Retention

*\*Select all that apply. If this category is not applicable to your organization, you can proceed to the next category.*

### Level 2: Reactive

- Advancement and promotion processes are based primarily on representation to meet numerical or equity goals or targets.

### Level 3: Proactive

- An onboarding process is beginning to show effectiveness at integrating underrepresented employees into the organization.
- The workforce is beginning to reflect the diversity found in the organization's labor markets.
- Turnover is actively and regularly tracked with exit interviews to understand DEI issues and remove barriers to retention.
- The organization offers a variety of advancement opportunities responsive to diverse needs.
- The organization addresses conscious and unconscious bias in its entire talent development processes.

### Level 4: Progressive

- The organization's talent management plan emphasizes retention of underrepresented employees at most levels and in most functions.
- All employees are encouraged to consider advancement opportunities and positions outside their current functional, technical, or professional area.
- The organization counteracts bias in advancement and develops practices to overcome inequities.
- The organization has established mentoring and/or coaching processes to help ensure advancement and retention.
- The organization conducts regular stay and exit interviews to understand its culture of inclusion and belonging.

### Level 5: Best Practice

- The organization's talent management, advancement, and retention processes result in equitable treatment of employees.
- Diverse employees hold positions at all levels and functions to ensure equitable representation.
- The organization's reputation for quality DEI initiatives enhances its ability to retain and advance diverse employees.
- The pool of candidates in the organization's succession plan is diverse along multiple dimensions and prioritizes underrepresented groups.
- Turnover is at an acceptable rate. Adverse impact, unfairness, and discrimination are not the primary cause of turnover.
- The onboarding process results in all new employees feeling valued and included.

## Best Practices Category 6: Classification, and Compensation

*\*Select all that apply. If this category is not applicable to your organization, you can proceed to the next category.*

### Level 2: Reactive

- Some written procedures exist for classifying jobs and determining compensation, but these are frequently determined by supervisors' personal preferences.
- Pay equity is measured and audited only if required by law.
- The organization adheres to locally agreed upon minimum wage levels.
- Based on stereotypes involving language, gender, age, race, culture or disability, some jobs are thought to be a "better fit" for members of certain groups.

### Level 3: Proactive

- The organization pays wages that exceed the legal minimum for the local marketplace.
- Work and job roles are designed to align individual talents and needs with organizational requirements.
- Job classification and compensation systems are understood by most employees.
- The organization has standardized job designs to minimize subjectivity and ensure equity.

### Level 4: Progressive

- Classification and compensation systems are regularly reviewed to address inequities.
- There are measures in place to ensure that the role, authority, decision making, and benefits of a job do not change when a member of an underrepresented group is hired.
- Employees are paid for performance and outcomes rather than attendance.
- Job requirements and descriptions are clear and not confused with non-job-related factors, especially those based on preferences and biases.
- Job design accommodates employees' need for part time or flexible work, working non-standard hours, working remotely, and taking leave for personal or other reasons.

### Level 5: Best Practice

- The organization maintains equitable job design, classification, and compensation practices.
- Jobs are designed to ensure that roles and responsibilities support work/life integration and decent work for all.
- Regular reviews of pay differentials are conducted and discrepancies between underrepresented groups and dominant groups are eliminated.
- Performance, pay, bonuses, and promotions are tied to a variety of DEI measures.

## Best Practices Category 7: Work-Life Integration, Flexibility, and Benefits

*\*Select all that apply. If this category is not applicable to your organization, you can proceed to the next category.*

### Level 2: Reactive

- Benefit programs generally are “one-size-fits-all” and their value or relevance to employees is not monitored.
- Work schedules are generally traditional, inflexible, or compliance driven.
- Flexibility may be applied inconsistently or perceived as favoritism.

### Level 3: Proactive

- The organizational culture equitably treats those who work flexible schedules.
- Religious practices, cultural celebrations, and holidays are accommodated, even when they are not the practices of the dominant culture.
- Flexibility in personal appearance and designing one's workspace are accepted if done in a non-offensive manner and under an agreed upon policy.

### Level 4: Progressive

- Policies and practices guard against favouritism and are communicated and applied equitably across the organization in a culturally sensitive way.
- An inclusive concept of family that is multicultural and non-patriarchal guides family-friendly policies including childcare and eldercare, emergency care.
- Paid leave beyond what is legally required is provided and used. The definition of family is inclusive. This may include caregiving for partners, children, and adult dependents or bereavement for extended families.
- Using flexible work arrangements does not negatively impact employee performance, evaluation, advancement, or benefits.
- Facilities and accommodations for meditation, religious practices, lactation, and other needs are provided.
- Technology support for mobility, disabilities, mental health, and flexible work arrangements are available for employees.

### Level 5: Best Practice

- The organization's policies and practices regarding benefits, work-life integration and flexibility meet the organization's commitment to decent work, psychological safety, and respect for human rights.
- A comprehensive range of flexible benefits and services, including education, counseling, and physical and mental health services are provided equitably to all employees whether permanent or temporary.
- The organization gives benefits to part-time and temporary employees.
- All leaders model and encourage work-life integration.
- Working part-time, job sharing, working remotely, and other flexible work arrangements are available for all appropriate positions and levels.

## Best Practices Category 8: Assessment, Measurement, and Research

*\*Select all that apply. If this category is not applicable to your organization, you can proceed to the next category.*

### Level 2: Reactive

- Representation of groups of some diversity dimensions are monitored, but only if required by law.
- Measurements are primarily based on past indicators, such as turnover, lawsuits, and complaints.

### Level 3: Proactive

- Employees regard DEI measurements as credible and they participate willingly in assessment, measurement, and research.
- Cultural audits, assessments, and surveys take into account such issues as language, education levels, complexity, and accessibility.
- Data are sorted by self-identified characteristics and diversity dimensions to increase an organization's learnings about employee groups.
- The organization regularly conducts a census of employee demographics and monitors representation throughout the organization.
- The principles of self-identification for use in collection of employee information is clear, applied ethically, and agreed-upon by all impacted parties.

### Level 4: Progressive

- Integrated, multiple approaches to monitoring and evaluating DEI goals are implemented to track their impact, outcomes, and effectiveness.
- The organization invests in research to study DEI for both internal and external purposes.
- DEI measurement is integrated into assessment tools, such as engagement surveys or cultural audits.
- All employees are measured on their performance, which includes DEI goals.
- Information from all assessments from employees, former employees, and customers shape future DEI initiatives.
- Culturally competent artificial intelligence is used to identify and minimize bias in assessment tools.
- All organizational assessments have been reviewed from a DEI perspective and work to counteract bias.

### Level 5: Best Practice

- In-depth DEI assessments are regularly conducted on the overall organization and within departments, and the results are incorporated into strategy and implementation.
- The organization regularly reports and reviews progress against benchmarks and has consistently demonstrated significant improvements in meeting DEI goals over several years.
- The organization is known for its investment in DEI research and the impact of research on organizational performance.
- A reputational risk assessment including several DEI issues, such as racism, sexism, homophobia, harassment, disability discrimination, and other forms of discrimination, is regularly conducted.
- The organization ensures that the design of its assessment, measurement, and research incorporate DEI perspectives.

## Best Practices Category 9: DEI Communications

*\*Select all that apply. If this category is not applicable to your organization, you can proceed to the next category.*

### Level 2: Reactive

- DEI communication is done solely to remind or educate employees about adhering to policy and compliance requirements.
- Most DEI communication is disseminated by councils/ committees or diversity networks rather than through regular organizational channels and therefore is sometimes seen as not officially endorsed by the organization.
- Language translations are only provided when legally required.

### Level 3: Proactive

- The organization integrates DEI into many aspects of communication.
- The organization encourages employees to discuss DEI and provide input to the organization's initiatives.
- The organization enables employees to indicate gender pronouns, if desired, on email signatures and other written communication.
- Translations and other accessible formats are provided when needed. Communication is location-sensitive across countries, dialects, and languages, including braille, sign language, and closed captioning.

### Level 4: Progressive

- The purposes of DEI initiatives are clearly stated, and communication strategies are adapted for different stakeholders.
- Information on DEI is sent frequently and systematically through a variety of channels to employees and other stakeholders.
- Communications professionals and speechwriters are knowledgeable about DEI and they include DEI messages in general communications.
- The organization has a framework to leverage social media in both internal and external communication platforms.
- The organization proactively addresses socially-charged issues and events related to DEI internally and externally, including on social media.

### Level 5: Best Practice

- The organization is known for its high-quality DEI initiatives that are regularly communicated internally and externally enhancing the organization's reputation.
- DEI content is easily and quickly located on the organization's websites. Information is thorough, regularly updated, and fully accessible.
- The organization has made and communicated a policy on the use of inclusive language on race and ethnicity, gender, gender identity, and gender expression, sexual orientation, disability, and other dimensions.
- The organization uses bold and transparent communication in naming and dealing with challenging issues such as racism, sexism, homophobia, privilege, toxic masculinity, and white supremacy.
- The organization uses live and accurate translation services to ensure accessibility and linguistic inclusion.



## Best Practices Category 10: DEI Learning and Development

*Select all that apply. If this category is not applicable to your organization, you can proceed to the next category.*

### Level 2: Reactive

- DEI learning is brief and focused only on educating employees about policies, meeting legal requirements, or addressing inappropriate language or labels.
- DEI programs are primarily packaged and are not tailored for local and specific cultural needs and issues.
- Learning programs may be offered in reaction to special dates such as women's or pride month, with no linkage to strategy.

### Level 3: Proactive

- Employees are exposed to and actively seek engagement across organizational functions, as well as externally with diverse markets and stakeholders.
- Experiential learning, including virtual reality and simulations, is used to help employees experience different identities and learn how to best respond to DEI situations.
- The organization ensures that all staff are able to fully participate in virtual meetings, innovative learning methods, and the use of technology.
- All employees and, if needed, their families, receive cultural awareness training when relocating internationally, and when working with international teams.
- The organization encourages cultural celebrations and organization-wide activities that combine social interaction with DEI learning.
- When possible all training sessions are populated with a diverse group of learners to offer an experience of working with others who represent different diversity dimensions.

### Level 4: Progressive

- DEI professionals, experts in learning methods and intercultural education, members of diversity networks, and organizational leaders are involved in the design, development, delivery, workplace application, and evaluation of DEI learning and education.
- DEI content is adapted and customized to the local environment, cultural nuances, languages, and social and political realities.
- DEI learning and education involves ongoing, multi-year, developmental curricula.
- All employees and key external stakeholders are educated on the importance of equity and ways to mitigate and remove discrimination and bias.
- The organization provides training to both current and new suppliers on how to engage and access supplier opportunities.
- A variety of innovative DEI tools including micro-learning, chatbots, gaming, social media, blended learning, coaching, physical classrooms and virtual platforms, and instructor-led learning, are accessible to all employees regardless of level, location, or function.

### Level 5: Best Practice

- DEI is integrated into all learning offered internally and externally.
- DEI learning programs result in behavior change that advances the organization's strategy and enhances inclusion and equity.
- Learning and education addresses racism, anti-racism, sexism, white supremacy, privilege, internalized oppression, classism/casteism, homophobia, transphobia, religious bias, disabilities, mental health awareness, and other issues.
- Development through involvement in high-profile projects is transparent and encouraged for underrepresented groups.

## Best Practices Category 11: Connecting DEI and Sustainability

*\*Select all that apply. If this category is not applicable to your organization, you can proceed to the next category.*

### Level 2: Reactive

- There is a superficial effort to connect DEI and the organization's sustainability goals.

### Level 3: Proactive

- The sustainability strategy proactively and specifically calls for the integration of diverse voices and perspectives.
- DEI and sustainability professionals receive learning and education to keep up to date with developments both in sustainability and DEI.

### Level 4: Progressive

- Innovative digital technologies contribute to the organization's commitment to ESG and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.
- The organization has a sustainability strategy, which recognizes the link between DEI and sustainability.
- DEI leaders partner with the organization's sustainability initiative. Likewise, sustainability leaders partner with the DEI initiative.
- The organization's sustainability data are analyzed and sorted to enable reviewers to determine the impact on diverse groups.
- The organization financially supports DEI and sustainability initiatives, whether global, regional, or local.

### Level 5: Best Practice

- DEI is seen as integral to the sustainability of the organization and its stakeholders. Sustainability is fully integrated into DEI strategies/initiatives.
- The organization has evidence that its sustainability and DEI initiatives benefit from their alignment with each other and show more meaningful impact than if they were separate and unconnected.
- The organization takes a leadership role in influencing and supporting the connection of DEI and sustainability initiatives locally and globally including being a champion of ESG and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.
- The organization adapts its sustainability strategy, policies, and practices based on collaboration with diverse stakeholders.
- The organization's public reporting on sustainability integrates its performance on DEI and includes an accurate assessment of its challenges.

## Best Practices Category 12: Community, Government Relations, and Philanthropy

*\*Select all that apply. If this category is not applicable to your organization, you can proceed to the next category.*

### Level 2: Reactive

- There is some involvement in or support for societal DEI issues but only if considered non-controversial.
- There is some support for the community, schools, and/or local government projects, primarily for public relations purposes.

### Level 3: Proactive

- The organization partners with other organizations that work to advance the rights of underrepresented groups in the community.
- The organization supports DEI publicly when exclusionary and discriminatory actions occur in the community or society at large.
- Individuals who have made a significant difference with DEI in their communities are recognized and honored by their organization.

### Level 4: Progressive

- The organization's philanthropy and social responsibility strategies promote DEI.
- The organization's community investment supports those most in need.
- The organization supports scholarship, paid internship programs and/or apprenticeships for underrepresented populations, which result in a positive impact on the community and society at large.
- Employees are encouraged to volunteer in their community. In some cases, the organization "loans" them to work for community organizations or matches their volunteer hours with monetary contributions.
- Long-range community development plans are designed in collaboration with diverse groups, including local governments, civil society organizations, and community leaders, including those from underrepresented or marginalized groups.
- The organization uses objective criteria to fund nonprofit organizations to ensure that bias in philanthropy is mitigated.

### Level 5: Best Practice

- The organization is explicit in living its DEI values and actively supports, invests in, and advocates for DEI-related initiatives in the community, government, and society at large.
- The organization takes bold stands in word and action on societal issues related to achieving equity and justice for marginalized people, such as #BlackLivesMatter, #MeToo, #Genderbasedviolence, #UnitedAgainstRacism, and #Standup4humanrights.
- The organization has addressed and atoned for any past behaviors and policies with regard to the mistreatment of people.
- The organization helps its community by promoting economic growth, addressing income inequality and groups that have been historically disadvantaged.
- The organization encourages employee volunteerism in community projects by providing time off and/or compensation and rewards where appropriate.

## Best Practices Category 13: Services and Products Development

*\*Select all that apply. If this category is not applicable to your organization, you can proceed to the next category.*

### Level 2: Reactive

- There is limited interest in developing or altering products and services based on customer preferences, needs, or demographics.
- Only when required by law is there adaptation of services and products for accessibility.

### Level 3: Proactive

- Products and services are analyzed for their value to current and potential customers and are tailored appropriately.
- Staff and/or consultants with expertise in DEI are involved in products and services development.
- Research and product testing help analyze how different customer/stakeholder groups and cultures may perceive, value, and use the organization's products and services.
- Accessibility for persons with disabilities is routinely considered in the development and delivery of products and services.

### Level 4: Progressive

- Changes in demographics, values, and consumer behaviors are researched, anticipated, and addressed.
- Culturally responsive products and services, such as engaging a traditional healer in a hospital, Sharia-compliant financial products, and products for left-handed users, are accepted and provided.
- The organization leverages diverse teams to improve the quality and innovation of products and services.

### Level 5: Best Practice

- The organization successfully leverages diverse teams, including diversity networks, customers, partners, the community, and other stakeholders, to improve its products and services.
- The product and service development cycles prioritize diversity and accessibility from the start. The organization doesn't merely adapt products first developed for the dominant group or culture.
- The organization contributes to equity by creating services and products that advance social and economic progress.
- Humane and ethical technology is used to ensure access and equity, for example in inclusive facial recognition systems.
- Voice and facial recognition software is sensitive to accents, dialects, gender, race/ethnicity, age, and other characteristics.

## Best Practices Category 14: Marketing and Customer Service

*\*Select all that apply. If this category is not applicable to your organization, you can proceed to the next category.*

### Level 2: Reactive

- The organization only recognizes broad differences among its customers, such as young and old or men and women.
- Even if products and services are marketed differently to different groups, the advertising is not culturally sensitive.
- Customer service and marketing are accessible for persons with disabilities only where required by law.

### Level 3: Proactive

- Diverse groups of customers and potential customers are surveyed to help shape marketing, sales, distribution, and customer service strategies.
- Market testing includes diverse groups.
- Inclusion of various diversity dimensions is a strong consideration in staffing marketing and customer service.
- Marketing collateral print and digital materials represent and reflect diverse markets.

### Level 4: Progressive

- The organization successfully incorporates marketing, sales, and distribution strategies to meet the needs of diverse customers.
- All marketing materials, including images and language are reflective of the organization's commitment to DEI.
- Marketing, advertising, public relations, and all customer contact methods promote positive role models and do not perpetuate stereotypes.
- The marketing and sales force is interculturally competent and can adapt and work effectively with customers from many backgrounds.
- All marketing and customer service processes are fully accessible.

### Level 5: Best Practice

- The organization uses advanced and unbiased analysis techniques to understand and respond to the diversity of its customer base, including nuances of intersectionality.
- Artificial intelligence-based customer service applications, such as personal assistants, are programmed to speak to people in ways they prefer and can understand, such as gender, language, accent, and dialect.
- Marketing strategies developed for specific communities are tracked to ensure they are culturally relevant and valued.
- While outside DEI expertise may also be sought, the organization leverages the marketing, sales, distribution, and customer service expertise of its diverse staff.

## Best Practices Category 15: Responsible Sourcing (formerly Supplier Diversity)

*\*Select all that apply. If this category is not applicable to your organization, you can proceed to the next category.*

### Level 2: Reactive

- Engaging in DEI may be a supply proposal criterion, but it is given minimal importance.
- There is some attempt to include a few underrepresented suppliers, but primarily for small, one-time, or low-fee contracts or because it is required by law.

### Level 3: Proactive

- All staff responsible for sourcing are provided with DEI education and are held accountable for achieving responsible sourcing goals.
- The organization's supplier database includes information about the diversity of owners and employees that supply goods or services.
- The organization uses the services of organizations globally/nationally/locally that certify or accredit businesses owned by underrepresented suppliers and that regulate Fair Trade.
- The organization seeks opportunities to engage with and inform underrepresented suppliers that their business is welcomed.

### Level 4: Progressive

- The organization allocates a specific amount of what it spends on essential and non-essential goods and services from underrepresented suppliers.
- The organization is proactive in seeking and attracting underrepresented groups by informing both potential and established suppliers about business opportunities.
- DEI criteria are included in the supplier selection process and given weight in decision-making.
- Checks and balances are built into the responsible and ethical sourcing process to counteract the impact of unconscious bias and discrimination.
- Educational support and coaching is provided to underrepresented suppliers to help them be competitive.
- The organization publishes information about its annual expenditures with underrepresented suppliers including progress against goals, and successful contracting rates.

### Level 5: Best Practice

- The organization has embedded DEI in its responsible and ethical sourcing as evidenced by its policies, systems, and inclusive practices.
- The organization treats its suppliers with respect and dignity, pays them in a timely manner and collaborates with them to make the supply process work for all.
- The economic benefit of responsible sourcing to the community is measured and reported.
- The organization's suppliers provide evidence that both they and their suppliers achieve their own DEI goals.