

Inclusion Toolkit summary

Introduction

The Inclusion Toolkit for small businesses is designed to support small businesses to advance diversity, equity and inclusion in their organization.

What is Equity, Diversity and Inclusion?

Diversity is about ensuring that your small business reflects people of different backgrounds, qualities, attributes and experiences represented in the workplace. Equity is the fair and respectful treatment of all people that recognizes disparities in opportunities and outcomes; it acknowledges different needs and expectations. Inclusion takes it a step further by creating an environment where people's differences of thought and experience are appreciated and viewed as a business advantage.

Strategies	Consideration	Inclusion tips
Identify business values and commitment	What macro-level issues are most important to your business? What issue is your organization willing to act on? What people are you willing to advocate for?	Brainstorm a list of values and commitments. Recognition Strategy - Publicly recognizing employees who embody your business' values.
Put it in writing	Do you have a diversity statement? Does your diversity statement illustrate your business' commitment to fostering a welcoming workplace?	Your diversity statement must be reflected in all the business processes. Diversity statements are especially helpful throughout your hiring and recruiting efforts.
Create formal policies	What is your organizational structure and policies? Do your policies contribute to an equitable and diverse work environment?	Your policies must reflect all prohibited grounds of discrimination. An organizational policy should be a living document.
Offer training and education	Do your employees understand their EDI responsibilities and their roles in promoting an inclusive workplace? How can your small business provide education for employees on EDI topics?	Training and education must be reinforced by all members of your small business. Potential topics include active allyship, unconscious biases, inclusive language, LGBTQIA2S+, etc.
Improve hiring processes	Where is your job posting advertised? Do you use inclusive, unbiased, non-gendered language? Does your selection committee know about EDI best practices?	Consider levelling the playing field by removing names and other identifying factors when reviewing applications. Review your job descriptions to ensure they are as inclusive as possible.

Strategies	Consideration	Inclusion tips
Align language and communications with your EDI goals	Does the language reflect the diversity of the intended audience? Is the reference to a person's gender, culture, ethnicity or age relevant and necessary?	"They" is an acceptable singular pronoun and ensures that all individuals feel properly represented. Proactively increase self-awareness when speaking and writing.
Foster an inclusive organizational culture	Are you communicating your EDI goals and progress with your team? Do your policies and norms cultivate inclusion and align with your EDI commitments? Does your small business have an organizational culture that is inclusive to all people?	Support employees and encourage engagement. Ensure your business' policies support an inclusive culture and align with your EDI commitments. Build transparency by clearly communicating your EDI goals.
Community activism and leadership	Can your small business impact positive social change in your community through volunteering, donating, mentoring, offering pro bono services or engaging in activism? Are you actively supporting a cause that aligns with your business' core values, vision and commitments?	Make sure your personal beliefs align with your chosen cause. Do your research. As a business, you have a platform and therefore, it is your responsibility to conduct the necessary research about the cause you are supporting.
Engage in self-reflection	Whose identity is underrepresented, and whose voices are not heard? How knowledgeable and comfortable are you with the historical and current experiences of equity-deserving groups?	Self-reflection leads to cultural humility, which involves listening without judgment and being open to learning from—and about—others. Challenge yourself to learn and practice humble listening.
Use the workplace inclusion charter	The Workplace Inclusion Charter is a Kingston initiative designed to support businesses in advancing equity, diversity and inclusion in the workplace.	Interested businesses are encouraged to contact Inclusion@KEYS.ca to begin their journey towards achieving a more inclusive workplace!



To gain a deeper understanding and explore the full details of this toolkit, please refer to the comprehensive document available at **PossibleMadeHere.org/Employer-Toolkit**

