

CHANGE INITIATIVE: EDI

WHAT IS EDI?

EDI educator Verna Myers, 'diversity is being asked to the party, inclusion is being asked to dance and equality is having an accessibility ramp to the door.'

Equality, diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) are three closely linked principles held by many organisations to be supportive of different groups. It refers to the fair treatment and opportunity for all, regardless of an individual/groups protected characteristics.

1. Diversity: Acknowledging and celebrating each other's differences including but not limited to gender, ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status.
2. Inclusion: Ensuring all groups are valued and welcomed, encouraging them to making meaningful contributions.
3. Equality: Ensuring everyone is being treated the same regardless of their differences and has fair opportunities as their peers. Equity is different from equality as it takes into consideration a person's unique circumstance and adjusts treatment accordingly, so the result is equal.

WHY IS EDI IMPORTANT?



EDI is important because it creates a great working culture and environment, where people regardless of their social and economic background feel happy, safe, and valued to achieve their full potential. This makes employees motivated, improving their wellbeing and access to equality of outcome.

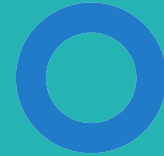
Furthermore, a workplace encouraging EDI builds different perspectives and ideas to the board, improving ideas and problem solving - leading to better serving of diverse groups in society and more robust decisions being made.

In grant making, having a diverse team can help build support towards minority led organisations. These minority led organisations play a fundamental role in rebuilding communities and regenerating social and economic infrastructure. But many funders fail to recognise their work and prioritise fundings that advance minority groups. Therefore, it may be difficult for these groups to be sustainable. Having a diverse board can improve and better serve communities they represent, taking a more participatory approach to grant making.

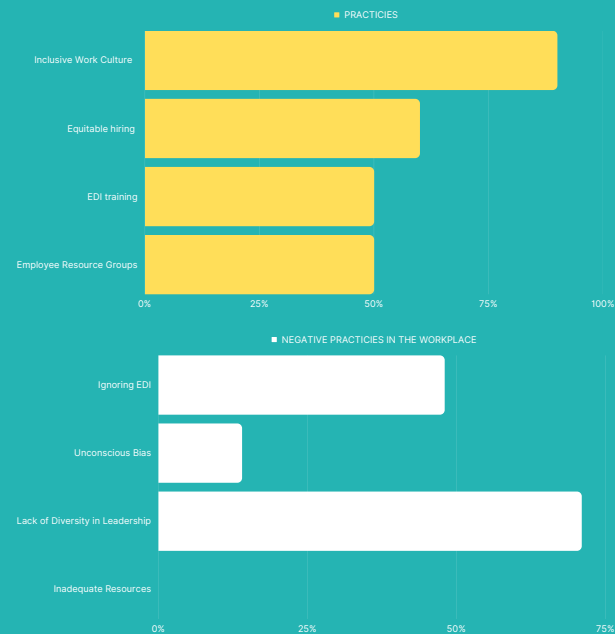
EDI IN THE WORKPLACE SURVEY

We surveyed variety of professionals within the grant making sector that fund a wide range of areas: Health and Medicine, Education, Social Services and Community Development, Environmental and Conservation, Animal Welfare, Health research, CYP, NEET, people with disabilities, youth employment and seamen.

HOW IMPORTANT IS EDI IN THE WORKPLACE?
100% AGREED



EDI has a different meaning for everyone, however the majority listed equity, rights, undoing, non-discrimination, freedom, justice, and equality as their one word to describe it.



There continues to be a challenges and barriers to implementing EDI within the workplace however progress is being made as we continue to keep it in focus.



ACF published a report with the pillars of stronger foundation practice. Where they provided recommendation areas to foundations on where there are improvements needed in EDI in the current time in grant-making.

The report mentions various aspects of recommendations. To summarise this leaflet will include some of those which we feel are the most important in alignment to our survey results.

One way workplaces could implement an inclusive culture is through Diversity and Inclusion training which typically looks at ways foundations can deliver inclusive practice as an explicit aspect of their strategy.

Education and awareness is also a great way to raise concerns around diversity, equity and inclusion issues within the grant sector and beyond. Furthermore, continuous learning is also key as it encourages grant organisations to engage in ongoing learning and adaptation to improve their practices over time.

Equitable Grant Making is important to ensure that a foundation's grant-making processes are fair and equitable, avoiding bias or discrimination. City Bridge Trust talks about embedding an equitable approach to grant-making so that voices, expertise and experience within the field are diverse, especially in positions of power. To re-address the issue of lack of equity in the sector, one of City Bridge's DEO Action Plan is a commitment to re-evaluate their recruitment practices and ensure a diverse staff team in both demographics and lived experience which is why since 2020 City Bridge has been committed to partnering up with the 2027 Talent Programme which is designed to place working class individuals within decision making roles within the grant making sector.

Grant organisations are encouraged to diversify their leadership, staff and grant recipients to reflect a wider range of perspectives and experiences. For example, The National Lottery Community Fund has made efforts to diversify its leadership team and board of directors. They have actively recruited individuals from different backgrounds, including people from underrepresented communities, to ensure a broader range of perspectives in decision making processes.

HOW CAN WE IMPLEMENT EDI?

It is possible to follow and implement 'Good' EDI practices:

- Participatory methods / collaborations with grant applicants, colleagues and funders
- Long-term commitments
- Ask yourself questions to reflect on and to challenge implicit bias
- Panel training on what is considered 'good' grantmaking and changing the language used

OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS REPORT (2021)

How to ensure you are implementing EDI practices, including:

- Developing a portfolio strategy - use of intersectional power and privilege analysis - EXAMPLE: 2027 collaborates with organisations and working-class people to bridge the gap between the funder and applicant in the grantmaking sector.
- Building relationships with organisations - EXAMPLE: Essex Community Foundation (ECF) is a place-based grantmaking organisation - they have a clear understanding of the area they support geographically and are trusted within Essex to provide valuable support and guidance.
 - ECF are using their Community Listening Project (CLP), which is a series of interviews, focus groups and surveys to determine how grantmaking can be effective to the applicant. They have provided an open space for charitable groups' voices to be heard = building on those relationships and building trust!

**REMEMBER:
POWER OVER < POWER WITH**

FOUNDATION PRACTICE RATING:
An initiative started by a group of charitable foundations whose aim is to improve practices on three domains:
-DIVERSITY
-ACCOUNTABILITY
-TRANSPARENCY

Each foundation assessed receives a rating for each domain, plus an overall rating: A, B, C, or D

The control of philanthropic resources predominantly rests in the hands of older, white men, often appointed through informal networks. Lived experience, whilst valued in effective project funding and programme design, is not consistently extended to charitable foundation boards. As such, the FPR was established, where participating foundations and various independent UK trusts are assessed on the above three domains. The ratings are published annually for multiple years

"The emphasis lies not on the funded projects but how funding is distributed"

Benchmarks:

Tyne & Wear and Northumberland CF sets a great example for the use of benchmarks, which allows for the CF to ensure they are consciously considering diversity and checking how reflective their trustees and staff are of the communities they serve and are from.

- Aim to have a diverse team with lived and learned experience, relevant to their job roles.
- Standards and procedures to ensure open staff recruitment – e.g. being a living wage employer (this works for the groups funded tool)
- Aim to have a Board with diverse lived and learned experience. Appoint trustees through open nominations and elections, take positive action to attract under-represented groups.