

# Startups: Building Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) from the outset



The tech industry **needs** people like us.

[#TTCHackathon](#)

# Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging: DEIB how & why

**19%**

Companies with more diverse management teams have 19% higher revenues due to innovation.

**152%**

When at least one member of a team has traits in common with the end user, the entire team better understands that user.

A team with a member who shares a client's ethnicity is 152% likelier than another team to understand that client.

**26%**

It has been estimated that closing the gender gap would increase the global economy by 26%.

**33%**

Companies in the top-quartile for ethnic/cultural diversity on executive teams were 33% more likely to have industry-leading profitability.

## 5 habits of effective & inclusive leaders

- 1. Listen.** *really* listen to all of your employees.
- 2. Start conversations.** People *without* the lived experience need to start leading the conversation, not just delegating it.
- 3. Live your DEIB values** - leadership uptake is essential in order to drive change. Model what you want to encourage. If you want a workforce that works flexibly, work flexibly. If you support employees with families, openly be a family person at work.
- 4. Show your vulnerabilities.** Admit you don't have all the answers, and ask for employee input, then show that you value it and take action on their suggestions.
- 5. Look at what you *show* that you value in employees.** Create an environment where employees are valued for being their authentic selves and make sure it takes in their holistic input - not just their ability to hit objectives. Implement diverse panels for reviews, ditch the idea of a "meritocracy", pay attention to language used in reviews and whether you could be inadvertently penalising authenticity.



Watch: [How has DEIB improved your startup's performance?](#)

## Get comfortable talking about DEIB

**Get comfortable with the language** of DEIB. Find a lexicon you and others are comfortable with.

**Find your own personal "why"** for DEIB. It might be that you want to change the world - it may be to build and grow a better organisation - it may be both! There's a strong business case for DEIB so go with it - but go with it honestly. Be able to talk about your "why" fluently, both internally and externally.

**Seek out challenge,** disagreement and other opinions wherever you can, and use it to sharpen and hone your narrative.

### Get comfortable with debate.

Inclusion is all about welcoming different opinions; get used to being in an environment of constructive disagreement & different views.



Watch: [How to get comfortable talking about DEIB](#)

## The key to retention? An inclusive culture...

You've worked hard and recruited an Avengers-style team of diverse staff - well done!

Now you're focused on retaining them. So how do you do that? By building an inclusive culture.

Watch our startup leaders share their tips and tricks centred on creating a working environment where your team can speak up, be heard and feel both welcomed and celebrated.

### Watchouts!

As you'd imagine, there are some things to watch out for, namely things that may seem small, but if left unchecked, will hamper your inclusion efforts.

- [Naysayers & Detractors](#). Who supports diversity efforts and who is working against them?
- Focus on building [empathy](#) instead of sympathy
- [Microaggressions](#) - they send signals that hamper inclusion efforts



Watch: [Our startup leaders' top tips on recruiting & retaining diverse talent](#)

## 8 simple steps to inclusive recruitment

- 1 Use a skills-based (as opposed to experience-based) job description. Focus on the top 5-6 skills only.
- 2 Include information in your job advert about disability accommodations, flexible working, care leave and your other staff wellbeing policies.
- 3 Keep the language in your advert and job description simple and clear. Remove all gendered or ableist or racially biased terms.
- 4 Try to avoid asking for CVs. Instead use skills-based templates / questions.
- 5 Use work sample approaches for shortlisted candidates instead of standard interview questions (get people to show you what they can do, not just tell you).
- 6 Give shortlisted candidates the information they need to prepare for the process, to minimise surprises.
- 7 Think about who will add to your culture, rather than who will fit into your company culture.
- 8 Include diverse voices on your interview panel - ask for opinions and feedback from many different voices.

Company culture originates from the highest places of influence. When this group includes those from traditionally underrepresented groups, then company culture can begin to look diverse and feel inclusive.

To the right, you will find a list of things that can help your company become more diverse, equitable and inclusive, and ultimately create belonging. It doesn't have to be all at once! Start with creating a pledge that can be shared internally and can keep you accountable. Begin with a goal that's achievable in the short term, use our [All-Inclusive Startup Template](#) (p.4) to help you and gradually improve your DEIB progress over time.

Rather than worrying about replacing valuable current Board Members and Advisors, consider whether there's room to add a seat to the table. Can you create more room, rather than cut and replace?

## Watch our Startup Leaders' Guide to influencing DEIB & being an ally ...



Watch: [How to influence boards on DEIB, and how to be a great ally](#)

## 4 steps to influencing DEIB at Board level

- 1 Use the [All-Inclusive Startup Template](#) to create a DEIB pledge that you can circulate internally
- 2 Pledge a percentage of Board seats to be held by those from underrepresented groups- check out the [Rooney rule](#)
- 3 Add 1 new Board seat for a BIPOC or female representative every year (at first by adding a seat at the table).
- 4 Create a DEIB pledge you are comfortable sharing externally as part of your hiring process. Update this as you grow to reflect the positive results you've seen.

## We're all with you...

Join the [Tech Talent Charter](#) to access incredible free toolkits, advice and support

Join our community and baseline and monitor your progress with the [Global Equality Collective](#)

Join the [30% Club](#) for support on Diversity and Inclusion at the highest levels.

# Startup Diversity Equity Inclusion & Belonging Template

Use this template create your plan for how you will build diversity, equity inclusion & belonging into your startup from the outset.

## Our DEIB Leadership Commitment

I/ We will demonstrate that I'm/ we're committed to an inclusive, equitable culture and diverse workforce by:

## Inclusive Governance

We will influence inclusive, equitable practice within our company by building a board and a set of advisors who:

## Our DEIB Pledge

<Company> will do the following over the next year to honor our commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging:

## Inclusion

One thing we will do to build inclusion, equity and trust within our team is:

One thing we will do to retain our diverse team is:

## Customer Segments

Do we see our customers in us? (Y/N)

Characteristic of our key customer groups (including end users in case of B2B) are:

Is our company makeup representative of these customer groups?

The key gaps in reflecting our customer make-up are:

## Our Diversity Heroes

1-3 brands/companies we feel have strong DEIB values embedded in their brand:

What they do that we like:

The specific things they do that we can do too are:

## Hiring

We plan to add diverse candidates to our pipeline by: