Inclusion and Diversity Implementation Guide and Toolkit

A support tool for organisations adopting the Culture Standard

Acknowledgement of Country

The Construction Industry Culture Taskforce (CICT) acknowledges that no matter where we are across the country, we are working on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lands. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and to all First Nations peoples. We acknowledge their ongoing connections to land, sea, sky and waterways and value their rich traditions, storytelling and diverse cultures.

The Construction Industry Culture Taskforce

The Construction Industry Culture Taskforce (CICT) is a collaboration between the Australian Constructors Association, representing the nation's largest construction firms, the governments of Victoria and New South Wales, and Australia's leading workplace researchers.

Acknowledgement of contributors

The authors would like to thank all the individuals and organisations who generously gave their time to being part of the steering committee and developing of this guide.

Disclaimer

This guide is intended for general information and guidance purposes only. It is intended to support delivery of the inclusion and diversity pillar of the Culture Standard and should not be relied on as a compliance tool.

Contents

Introduction

Inclusion and diversity in the construction sector

The construction industry is one of Australia's largest employers (7.8% of the workforce), and is growing.[1,2] It is also Australia's most male-dominated industry.[3] While awareness of this is increasing and policymakers are responding, progress is slow. At the end of 2024:

- Women made up 13.6% of the overall construction workforce[4] and only 3% of tradespeople[5]
- Men overwhelmingly occupied leadership, supervisory, trade and technical roles; women were concentrated in lower-level administrative positions, often without commensurate pay[6]
- Gender imbalance was reflected in construction company boards, with men holding 90% of board positions; 54% of construction company boards had no women at all[7]
- The construction industry had the nation's highest gender pay gap (28.3% – the national average is 21.7%). The gap is even worse in specific roles, reaching 35% for labourers and 30% for technicians and trades workers.[8]

Gender inequality in the construction sector is multi-dimensional. At a cultural level, it operates through values and behaviours.

- The hypermasculine* work culture can be hostile to women.[9] It frequently denies women access to job-related education and meaningful work aligned with their skills, which then limits their ability to pursue secure and supported career pathways.[10]
- Women in construction report widespread experiences of sexual harassment, discrimination and bullying. Their competence and professional legitimacy are often questioned.[11]
- Disrespectful, sexist or inappropriate behaviour towards women is delivered as banter or jokes. It often goes unreported by women who experience it as a norm.
- Despite their skills, women are commonly perceived as less experienced and are overlooked for leadership roles due to gender bias.[12]

At a structural level, gender inequality appears in both written and unwritten rules that affect women's retention, progression and interest in construction careers.

- Women in construction say that their workplaces lack safe ways to report inappropriate or illegal behaviour without fear of punishment, especially from those in leadership roles. Reporting is hampered by the complexity of onsite reporting structures and the industry's masculine culture.[13]
- Studies reveal a lack of organisational oversight and the absence of effective policies and procedures to address the harm faced by women.[14,15]
- Many sites lack adequate facilities tailored to women's needs, such as toilets, sanitary provisions and appropriate personal protective equipment.[16]
- Work practices in construction often hinder women's inclusion. Rigid schedules exceeding 50 hours per week, including routine weekend work,[17] significantly impact women's participation and career progression.[18,19]
- The project-based model, driven by tight deadlines and budgets, fosters a culture of competitive presenteeism. Long hours and full availability conflict with women's caregiving responsibilities.[21,22]
- Inadequate workplace support around parental leave reduces women's retention. Women who remain in the industry face disproportionate mental and physical health impacts.[23,24]

The persistent gender disparity in Australian construction means a comprehensive approach is needed to address deeply entrenched cultural, structural and practical barriers and create a truly equitable and inclusive industry.

*Hypermasculine cultures excessively emphasise and value traditional behaviours associated with masculinity, including aggression, dominance, competitiveness, physical strength and emotional suppression. They disregard behaviours perceived as feminine, such as empathy, collaboration or vulnerability. Hypermasculine cultures are often associated with industries that prize toughness and endurance, but they can also reinforce stereotypes and perpetuate discrimination, harassment or inequality.

Introduction (Cont.)

In recent years there has been significant investment by governments and industry employers alike to enhance diversity within the sector. A number of large scale initiatives have been launched to improve workplace inclusion, boost representations of women in trade and non-traditional occupation, eliminate gender pay gaps and remove obstacles the prevent women from entering or remaining within the sector.

This includes investment from State, Territory and Commonwealth Governments in programs and policies such as the Victorian Government's Building Equality Policy, NSW Government's Women in Construction and Industry Innovation Program and the Commonwealth Building Women's Careers Program. The Culture Standard has been deliberately designed to complement and align with the objectives of these programs to further enhance inclusion and diversity outcomes across the sector.

Culture Standard Pilot Project Research Finding – Culture Standard pilot projects had higher than average female participation rates. On average 32% of staff employed on the Pilot Projects identified as women, compared to 24% within the head contractors' workforce more generally.

Culture Standard inclusion and diversity requirements

The Australian construction industry faces difficulty attracting and retaining a diverse range of people, especially women. The industry's work environment can be challenging, further deterring those considering it as a career path. These issues affect productivity and the industry's capability and capacity to deliver projects.

The Culture Standard focuses on implementing changes to address key obstacles and work towards creating a viable and inclusive industry. The goals of the diversity component of the Culture Standard are:

- The construction industry provides an inclusive work environment
- The construction industry is free from offensive material and language
- The construction industry provides amenities to support a diverse workforce
- Women are represented in the construction industry
- Women hold leadership positions in the construction industry
- The construction industry will close gender pay gaps
- The construction industry employs people without bias.

"I know that there's a zero tolerance for sexual harassment and bullying. That's made clear in your contract but also in the site inductions. So from a policy point of view there are things in place and I feel very comfortable that if somebody had done something that I could report that and something would be done about it."

– CICT pilot project participant

Introduction (Cont.)

Building strength in inclusion and diversity

Inclusion and diversity forms a pillar of the Culture Standard because a more inclusive industry is key to addressing capability and capacity constraints. The Culture Standard recognises that improving inclusion and diversity in the construction industry will benefit everyone, by providing a safer and more inclusive workplace.

- **For male workers:** Increased inclusion and diversity improves work practices, supports work–life balance and creates more time for life away from the construction site.[25] Inclusion and diversity can break down the stereotypes and norms associated with construction work, creating benefits for all workers.
- **For younger workers:** Research shows young people are more likely to join and stay in the construction sector if they experience a culture of gender equality, inclusion and diversity; feel their career goals are supported; and have a satisfactory balance between their work and non-work lives.[26]
- **For LGBTIQA+ workers:** While homophobia, bullying and discrimination may not be eliminated, research finds that greater inclusion and diversity in the construction industry brings changes in workplace attitudes and safety on site.[27]
- **For all workers:** All workers benefit if they have equal and equitable access to good quality jobs and career opportunities – and the benefit is particularly clear for women in construction. Feeling respected at work positively impacts workers' engagement and mental wellbeing.
- **For project teams:** Projects benefit when they introduce initiatives that drive inclusion and diversity. For example, the CICT pilot projects showed a shift towards inclusive and respectful behaviour.
- **For companies:** Workplaces that promote inclusion and diversity are more likely to meet their obligations under workplace safety legislation including the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004, Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 and the Sex Discrimination Act 1984.
- **For clients:** Improving diversity and increasing women's participation and leadership in construction addresses the sector's skills shortage,[28] which has been identified as a critical risk of national economic and social significance.[29]
- **For the industry:** Improving inclusion and diversity may help to improve the industry's image and attract more women to construction careers. Research suggests that young women are unlikely to actively seek a career in construction because they perceive they would be unsafe, not respected and not have a successful career.[30]

Improving inclusion and diversity will future-proof construction – creating an industry that is stronger, more inclusive and more productive.

> *"Just having female engineers in this team for me has made a phenomenal difference …It's just nice to feel supported by your fellow females. That's definitely a big difference for me."*
>
> *– CICT pilot project participant*

More information about the business case for inclusion and diversity can be found at the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA): https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/wgea-business-case-for-gender-equality_0.pdf

About this guide

Purpose of this guide

This guide supports construction industry organisations to deliver the inclusion and diversity pillar of the Culture Standard by:

- Providing a step-by-step approach to developing an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan
- Providing templates and guidance to help organisations develop their Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan
- Providing evidence to demonstrate the value that focusing on inclusion and diversity brings to the construction sector
- Identifying opportunities to embed inclusion and diversity within the workplace
- Explaining ways to track and monitor inclusion and diversity initiatives.

What is an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan? An Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan outlines how a project will deliver the Culture Standard's inclusion and diversity requirements. The process of developing an action plan will allow a project to establish clear goals, actions and accountabilities.

Who this guide is for

This guide is for all organisations in the construction sector that are implementing the Culture Standard.

It is designed for individuals who are responsible for planning and delivering on the requirements of the Culture Standard at the project level. This may include project managers, construction managers and those involved in project scheduling.

While the guide is tailored to larger projects and organisations, it can be applied to small or medium projects and organisations. This guide is designed to help all projects and organisations think about the journey towards a more inclusive industry.

Improving inclusion and diversity in the construction sector is a long and complex process. It is not possible to fix all issues immediately, but all organisations can take steps in the right direction.

What this guide does not cover

This guide focuses on the drivers of inclusion and diversity as described in the Culture Standard: targeting diversity, inclusive workplaces and remuneration. It focuses on women's participation in the construction sector, and does not address inclusion and diversity from the perspectives of race, class, sexuality and ability. However, gender intersects with these perspectives and you may want to consider them when developing your approach to inclusion.

This guide does not deliver on mandatory state, territory or commonwealth legislation or regulation. It is a practical implementation resource designed to support organisations as they deliver the Culture Standard's requirements.

When developing your Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan, consider relevant legislation and policies in your jurisdiction. For example, Victorian Government projects may need to follow the Building Equality Policy and complete a Gender Equality Action Plan (known as the GEAP).

This guide is not a mandatory part of meeting the Culture Standard. It is a support resource that provides guidance and 'how to' information relevant to inclusion and diversity. Organisations are encouraged to use this resource in a way that suits their operations.

About this guide (Cont.)

How to use this guide

IMPORTANT NOTE: Users of this guide should first review the Culture Standard and consider its inclusion and diversity requirements. Organisations will need to understand what is required before using this guide to develop an action plan.

This guide covers 2 distinct phases in considering inclusion and diversity:

Phase 1: Developing an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan

Phase 2: Implementing an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan.

Each phase includes a series of steps that can be undertaken to ensure a robust plan is developed and delivered. These steps are outlined below.

PHASE 1:
Developing an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan

5 Step 5: Develop an approach for monitoring progress

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4 Step 4: Deliver programs and initiatives

3 Step 3: Build knowledge, awareness and positive attitude

2 Step 2: Communicate the Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan

1 Step 1: Produce an inclusion and diversity statement

A note on leadership: Leadership is essential at each step. Project leaders and managers should be accountable for developing and implementing the Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan in collaboration with workers, client representatives and human resources representatives (if available).

Developing an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan: A step-by-step approach

PHASE 1:
Developing an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan

Developing an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan: A step-by-step approach (Cont.)

Step 1: Establish leadership commitment and inclusive leadership practices

You might have heard the expression 'change starts at the top'. The first step in changing your inclusion and diversity culture involves leadership buy-in.

To drive inclusion and diversity, you will need inclusive leaders with a strong commitment to inclusion and diversity. Leaders need to demonstrate their commitment through their actions, words and policies.

Culture change takes time and ongoing commitment. While inclusive leadership is the first step in developing an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan, it's not a 'set and forget' activity. It's something that will need to be practised every day. You will need to involve and engage leaders through every step of designing and implementing your Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan.

Action to be taken

Leaders who successfully transform their organisation's inclusion and diversity culture do 2 things:

1. **Model inclusive behaviour** by actively promoting meaningful and sustained cultural change
2. **Steer strategic implementation** by confronting and correcting persistent biases.

Modelling inclusive behaviours requires an open mind and an interest in continuous learning and improvement. Leaders can assess their own progress by regularly assessing themselves against these statements.

Inclusive leaders:

- Continue to learn about inclusion and diversity to support informed decision-making
- Accept that inclusion and diversity requires personal growth and perseverance
- Proactively examine the business to identify sources of inequality and bias and opportunities for change – this could include recruitment, performance, strategy, business practices, job allocation and the physical environment
- Intervene to correct systematic bias, harassment and discrimination
- Foster a culture of accountability
- Mobilise stakeholders and colleagues around inclusion and diversity goals
- Adequately resource inclusion and diversity efforts
- Actively sponsor women and facilitate career opportunities for women
- Set the tone from the top
- Refuse to tolerate behaviours that undermine efforts to build an inclusive culture, even if they are high performers or well-liked by some colleagues.

Steering the strategic implementation of an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan involves:

- Identifying leaders who will be responsible for inclusion and diversity
- Providing relevant training for leaders to raise awareness and fill knowledge gaps
- Linking inclusion and diversity goals to leaders' performance metrics
- Securing stakeholder commitment for inclusion and diversity goals.

Developing an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan: A step-by-step approach (Cont.)

Outcome of this step: Leadership understanding of, and commitment to, the inclusion and diversity provisions set out in the Culture Standard.

Quick tip: To build inclusive leadership skills, involve leaders and team members in planning and implementing your Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan. Don't just present them with the finished product.

Quick tip: Add inclusion and diversity statistics to monthly or quarterly reports, alongside time, cost and safety metrics. For example, you could report on women's participation and retention rates, or sexual harassment incident statistics.

Quick tip: Set clear inclusion and diversity targets. Share success stories and reward good performers.

"I think there's just a general level of inclusiveness. We have a lot of female engineers here and even the onsite staff, there's good contingent of females there… I know there just is a good inclusion and participation level of women in this project, which has been good."

– CICT pilot project participant

Developing an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan: A step-by-step approach (Cont.)

Step 2: Assess current state and identify opportunities

Before diving into the design of your Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan, you need to understand the current state of inclusion and diversity across your projects and organisation. Assessing your current state establishes a useful starting point for monitoring and evaluation.

Assessing the current state of inclusion and diversity for your project or organisation is required by the Culture Standard.

Action to be taken

Assess your current state against the goals described in the Culture Standard including:

- Women's representation in critical workforce segments, decision-making roles and leadership
- Inclusive physical amenities and PPE (e.g., does your PPE fit the women you employ?)
- A work environment free of offensive materials, language and behaviours
- Work practices and processes that are free from bias (including recruitment, job allocation and promotion)
- Gender pay equity.

As part of your assessment, you could:

- Gather information about your current gender composition (include critical workforce segments, decision-making roles and leadership)
- Incorporate reporting data from the Workplace Gender Equality Agency, if applicable
- Complete the CICT Culture Maturity Scorecard and Current state assessment checklist
- Review feedback from employee surveys
- Review data collected by previous projects (this may be relevant for new projects)
- Gather information from workers – particularly from women. You may want to engage an independent consultant or researcher to do this.

Based on your current state assessment, you could start to:

- Consider possible high-impact interventions
- Map out areas for improvement and potential opportunities on the project (e.g., consider where inclusion and diversity challenges could occur or identify relevant organisation culture factors that affect inclusion and diversity)
- Consider what actions have been implemented by other projects and organisations, and whether you can learn from these.

Outcome of this step: A clear understanding of the current state of your inclusion and diversity efforts and effectiveness, and opportunities for improvement.

> **Quick tip:** You may find it helpful to refer to the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) guidance on developing strategies for gender equality.

Supporting tools and resources

3 resources are available to support this step:
- CICT Culture Maturity Scorecard
- How to undertake a current state assessment - Inclusion and diversity resource
- Current state assessment checklist – Inclusion and diversity resource

Developing an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan: A step-by-step approach (Cont.)

Step 3: Establish your inclusion and diversity vision and goals

This step involves defining what your Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan will achieve. It involves developing an overall vision and concrete goals. Refer back to the Culture Standard to ensure your vision and goals align with its requirements.

Action to be taken

- Establish a working group with a mix of project leaders and workforce representatives. This group will co-design your action plan
- Provide information and training to ensure the working group understands the current state, the Culture Standard, and the legal and policy requirements
- Develop and document your inclusion and diversity vision, which should be an ambitious and overarching statement. For example, your vision may be: To be a collegial and inclusive place to work, with more women in onsite construction roles than comparable projects
- Develop goals to support your vision. These could be broken into focus areas linked to the Culture Standard, such as women's participation, women's leadership, inclusive facilities and removing bias
- Establish short-, medium- and long-term outcomes for each goal
- Identify your priorities.

Outcome of this step: A clear vision and goals for the Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan with outcomes for the short, medium and long term.

Developing an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan: A step-by-step approach (Cont.)

Step 4: Develop your Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan

Develop a detailed action plan that shows how you will deliver against your vision, goals and outcomes. The plan may address:

- Diversity targets
- Gender pay gaps and pay equity
- Inclusive workplace environment
- Reducing bias in recruitment and work practices
- Amenities and PPE to support workforce diversity.

Actions to be taken

- Brainstorm possible actions and initiatives
- Select initiatives that will achieve the Culture Standard requirements and deliver on your vision
- Prioritise your proposed initiatives (you may decide to start with easy wins or high-impact initiatives)
- Develop concrete plans to deliver each initiative (e.g., dates for events, number of toolbox talks)
- Allocate responsibility for delivering each initiative
- Identify ways to monitor and evaluate each initiative (discussed in more detail in Step 5)
- Allocate necessary resources (budget and staff)
- Determine non-financial enablers needed for each initiative (such as leadership support).

Outcome of this step: An Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan that details the initiatives, resources, monitoring and enablers necessary for its delivery.

Quick tip: The Culture Standard pilot projects identified important focus areas for inclusion and diversity initiatives these are:

- Setting focus areas – such as women's recruitment, retention and career progression; respectful behaviour; and subcontractor support
- Integrating diversity into other practices – such as inductions, toolbox talks, project reporting, subcontracts and performance bonuses
- Evaluating work practises – such as working hours, flexible work and scheduling
- Tailored support – such as training managers in gender diversity, providing formal networks for women and providing support for subcontractors
- Reporting mechanisms – processes that ensure complaints are handled seriously and confidentially; regular reporting of inclusion and diversity outcomes.

Further quick tips:

- Combine activity-based and learning-based initiatives, with a mix of approaches to increase workers' knowledge, awareness and positive attitudes and encourage their active participation, uptake and appreciation of inclusion activities.
- Focus your inclusion initiatives on different groups. Include some initiatives for the broader workforce and some specifically for managers.
- Procurement is a valuable driver of cultural change. Consider how your subcontractors align with your inclusion and diversity goals and how you can encourage subcontractors to implement inclusion initiatives.

Developing an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan: A step-by-step approach (Cont.)

Supporting tools and resources

These two resources can be used to document your Action Plan

- Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan on a Page – Template
- Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan on a Page – Worked Example

The below resources provide information and guidance to support the development of your Action Plan.

- Strategies for recruiting, retaining and progressing women in the construction industry – guidance information
- Understanding gender pay equity and the gender pay gap – guidance information
- Assessing the gender pay gap – template
- Setting diversity targets in the construction industry – guidance information
- Setting diversity targets in the construction industry – template
- Inclusion and diversity success factors: Lessons from the Culture Standard pilot projects
- Site amenities checklist

Step 5: Develop an approach for monitoring progress

Establish measures to assess and track your inclusion and diversity initiatives. This will help you to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of your Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan. It will also help you to maintain accountability and foster trust and engagement with stakeholders, managers and workers.

Action to be taken

- Determine the best measures for tracking your actions (e.g., a Culture Standard workforce survey).
- Determine the frequency of data collection and reporting (e.g., you could survey the workforce every 6 months). Consider whether you expect to see changes in the short, medium or long term, and plan reporting to suit.
- Decide how to report on outcomes. Consider internal reporting and your obligations for external reporting. Think about how to ensure that both the workforce and stakeholders are informed about your progress.

Outcome of this step: An approach to monitor and measure your inclusion and diversity goals, so you will know how you are tracking against the Culture Standard requirements.

> **Quick tip:** Establishing transparent measures for monitoring and evaluation will encourage accountability and increase engagement throughout the workforce. Make sure that all workers understand how the project is being monitored.

Supporting tools and resources

- Establishing processes for reporting poor workplace behaviour – guidance information.

Implementing an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan: A step-by-step approach

PHASE 2:
Implementing an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan

Implementing an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan: A step-by-step approach (Cont.)

Step 1: Produce an inclusion and diversity statement

By this stage, you will have developed an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan with a clear vision, goals, planned initiatives and evaluation measures. Your plan should have the necessary support from leaders.

The first step in implementing your plan is to communicate your intentions to all workers and stakeholders through an inclusion and diversity statement.

An inclusion and diversity statement is a project-specific statement that signals your commitment. It should be displayed in prominent and visible locations to:

- Publicly demonstrate your commitment to inclusion and diversity and the Culture Standard
- Show that inclusion and diversity are important to the entire workforce
- Communicate the Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan's vision and goals.

Action to be taken

Create a project inclusion and diversity statement to display in prominent and visible locations across the site and office.

Outcome of this step: A public statement that can be displayed across the site and office to share the inclusion and diversity vision.

Supporting tools and resources

Inclusion and diversity statement – template

Implementing an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan: A step-by-step approach (Cont.)

Step 2: Communicate the Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan

The Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan can only be effective if people know about it and work to implement it. Effectively communicating about the plan will ensure everyone understands the project's commitment to inclusion and diversity. Clear communication will help to ensure the plan is introduced and explained to stakeholders, its initiatives are well promoted and its progress is regularly reported.

Key messages to communicate include:

- The plan's role in creating a safe and inclusive workplace for everyone
- Links to the Culture Standard, organisational values and project goals
- Inclusion and diversity initiatives available – and how workers can access them
- Opportunities to provide feedback
- Leadership commitment.

Action to be taken

You may choose to communicate your inclusion and diversity initiatives through some of these communication channels:

- Site/workplace inductions
- Onboarding materials for new workers
- Subcontractor information packs
- Diversity toolbox talks
- Noticeboards
- Displaying the inclusion and diversity statement in prominent locations.

You could also communicate to subcontractors and suppliers, and encourage them to develop their own plans using this guide.

Outcome of this step: Inclusion and diversity vision, goals and initiatives will be understood by the workforce.

> **Quick tip:** An official launch of your Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan will create interest and momentum. A launch will also emphasise the project's commitment to inclusion and diversity.

Implementing an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan: A step-by-step approach (Cont.)

Step 3: Build knowledge, awareness and positive attitudes

Education is key to improving awareness and involvement in building a more inclusive workplace. Consider how education can be delivered in a way that promotes a positive outlook and highlights the benefits of greater diversity.

Action to be taken

Consider these methods to engage and educate stakeholders and workers about the Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan.

- **Onboarding and induction:** Include inclusion and diversity training and information as part of the onboarding and induction process for new workers and subcontractors.
- **Toolbox talks:** Integrate discussions on inclusion and diversity into regular toolbox talks.
- **Awareness campaigns:** Use posters, newsletters, postcards and digital signs to promote inclusion and diversity initiatives, share success stories and describe inclusive behaviour.
- **Regular updates:** Share progress and achievements through meetings or communication platforms to keep everyone informed and engaged.
- **Reporting mechanisms:** Establish a trauma-informed reporting process that ensures complaints are tracked and handled seriously and confidentially.
- **Guest speakers:** Invite speakers from diverse backgrounds or with expertise to discuss relevant issues in the workplace.
- **Spotlight success:** Invite teams that are successfully implementing inclusion and diversity initiatives to share what they have done, how they did it, and the outcomes.
- **Online resources:** Provide access to online training, resources or e-learning modules on inclusion and diversity topics.

Outcome of this step: Workers will increase their knowledge and understanding of inclusion and diversity issues and develop positive attitudes about change.

Quick tip: The myth busters resource challenges and debunks some of the common myths that persist around women in the construction industry.

Supporting tools and resources

4 resources are available to support this step:

- Inclusion and diversity myth busters – tool to support workplace conversations
- Using project inductions to enhance gender safety and promote inclusive workplace behaviours – guidance information
- Checklist for gender safety and inclusive workplaces inductions – template
- Toolbox talks on sexual and gender-based harassment at work – tool to support workplace conversations.

Implementing an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan: A step-by-step approach (Cont.)

Step 4: Deliver programs and initiatives

This step focuses on delivering the initiatives described in your Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan, while establishing processes to monitor and report on outcomes.

It is important to acknowledge that workplace conversations about inclusion and diversity may receive pushback or resistance. For this reason, it's important to actively communicate the value of a safe and inclusive workplace for everyone.

Effectively delivering your Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan will require resources, perseverance, enthusiasm and regular communication.

Action to be taken

Plan and deliver the programs and initiatives outlined in your Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan.

Outcome of this step: Programs and initiatives will support workers' discussions about inclusion and diversity. Over time, inclusion and diversity will become a recognised and accepted part of workplace culture.

> **Quick tip:** Transforming workplace culture takes time and dedication. Inclusion and diversity initiatives need time to bring about significant change. In the first 6 months of implementation, you may see minor improvements, such as enhanced knowledge and awareness of inclusion and diversity. Sustained effort will lead to greater impacts over time. Your Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan should be seen as a long-term investment, not a cost.

Implementing an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan: A step-by-step approach (Cont.)

Step 5: Evaluate and review your Inclusion Action Plan

Measuring and evaluating your Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan should be part of a continuous cycle of review. Ongoing assessment will help with:

- Evaluating whether the plan is achieving it desired impact
- Determining if an initiative has been implemented as intended
- Identifying areas for improvement
- Documenting progress
- Assessing the cost–benefit.

Action to be taken

The Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan can be reviewed using a cyclical or milestone approach, or a combination of both:

- **Cyclical approach:** Review the plan at an agreed frequency – such as every 6 months
- **Milestone approach:** Review the plan at agreed project milestones or in line with project phases. This approach helps to ensure that inclusion initiatives are appropriate for each project stage and helps mitigate the risk that peak periods will challenge inclusion and diversity commitments.

Evaluate the effectiveness of the Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan against the plan's vision and goals. Remember that, in the short term (the first 6 months), the changes may be small and linked to improvements in knowledge and understanding. In the medium term (6 to 12 months), you may be able to measure changes in behaviour. Major changes, such as gender pay equity and improvements in retention, may be noticeable over the long term (>12 months).

As part of monitoring and evaluation, assess workforce engagement data and gather feedback from workers about their experiences with inclusion and diversity in the workplace.

> **Quick tip:** The workforce is one of your best sources of evaluation and insight. You may like to conduct workplace surveys (such as the Culture Standard workforce surveys) or pulse checks to monitor workers' opinions and experiences over time.

Outcome of this step: Reportable outcomes about your inclusion and diversity progress.

Supporting tools and resources: 3 resources are available to support this step:

- Amenities Checklist for site establishment – template

> *"I think they made a good effort in that space [with PPE]... they noticed that all the nightshift, the whites and even the orange were just a sort of one size fits all ready-made design for men, so they made an effort to go their supplier and get specific items tailored to women."*
>
> *– Pilot project participant, reflecting on an effort to provide nightshift PPE in women's sizes*

Support resources & templates table

The CICT website provides a range of implementation support resources and templates designed to help construction industry organisations to develop and implement their Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan. A summary of available resources are listed in the table below.

Phase & Step	Support resources
Phase 1: Developing an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan	
2: Assess current state and identify opportunities	• CICT Culture Maturity Scorecard • How to undertake a current state assessment – Inclusion and diversity resource Current state assessment checklist – Inclusion & diversity resource
4: Develop your Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan	These two resources can be used to document your Action Plan • Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan on a Page – Template • Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan on a Page – Worked Example The resources below provide information and guidance to support the development of your Action Plan. • Strategies for recruiting, retaining and progressing women in the construction industry – guidance information • Understanding gender pay equity and the gender pay gap – guidance information • Assessing the gender pay gap – template • Setting diversity targets in the construction industry – guidance information • Setting diversity targets in the construction industry – template • Inclusion and diversity success factors: Lessons from the Culture Standard pilot projects • Site amenities checklist
5: Develop an approach for monitoring progress	• Establishing processes for reporting poor workplace behaviour – guidance information
Phase 2: Implementing an Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan	
1: Produce an inclusion and diversity statement	• Inclusion and diversity statement – template
3: Build knowledge, awareness and positive attitude	• Inclusion and diversity myth busters – tool to support workplace conversations • Using project inductions to enhance gender safety and promote inclusive workplace behaviours – guidance information • Checklist for gender safety and inclusive workplaces inductions – template • Toolbox talks on sexual and gender-based harassment at work – tool to support workplace conversations.
5: Evaluate and review your Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan	• A Checklist for site establishment – template

Case Studies

The below case studies provide examples of initiatives that support delivery on the requirements of the Culture Standard. Further Case Studies are available on the CICT website.

CPB Contractors Women in Trades (Construction) Program

Construction firm CPB Contractors developed its Women in Trades (Construction) Program to encourage and empower women to work in construction. Through this industry-first program, CPB Contractors aims to recognise and remove barriers to entry and support women to start a new career in construction. The program provides full-time pay to alleviate financial stress for participants while training. It also removes risk by guaranteeing full-time employment when the program is completed.

The program is endorsed by senior managers, the resourcing team, and the training and operations teams at CPB Contractors. It places women in both direct positions with CPB Contractors and positions with subcontractors. Targeted positions are identified through consultation with subcontractors and project teams.

The program offers:

- A comprehensive 3-week pre-employment program
- A 12-month apprenticeship pathway in Certificate III Civil Construction – Plant Operations, with one dedicated training day per month
- An opportunity to work in various project roles, including general labourer, dump truck operator, store person and stores assistant
- Competitive pay
- Mentoring
- Employment flexibility.

Since its launch in New South Wales in 2022, the program has expanded into Victoria and Queensland, with plans for further roll out in Western Australia, South Australia and New Zealand. Applications grew from around 200 in 2022 to more than 800 in 2023. Since 2022, more than 60 women in New South Wales have completed the program and been placed in full-time roles.

The success of the Women in Trades (Construction) Program shows that women are genuinely interested in a career in construction and that support programs can create concrete results.

Case Studies (Cont.)

Calling all bystanders: A toolbox talk promoting allies in inclusive workplace cultures

It's widely accepted that the construction industry faces a persistent gender imbalance. Attracing, retaining and supporting women in trade roles remains a significant challenge. Women face ingrained biases, poor workplace culture and a lack of visible role models.

Construction firm Fulton Hogan developed an initiative to challenge this problem. Fulton Hogan partnered with Jo Farrell, the person behind Build Like a Girl and 2024 ACT Australian of the Year.

They invited Jo to deliver a series of toolbox talks at the Brunt Road Level Crossing Removal Project. Jo shared her stories from 29+ years in the construction industry, and highlighted opportunities and obstacles she has encountered in the male-dominated field.

Jo's talks emphasised the importance of allyship. She encouraged participants to actively support their female colleagues challenge inappropriate behaviour and language. The sessions also adressed the slow growth of female participation and the role everyone plays in driving positive change.

With Jo Farrell's expertise and personal story, the project successfully engaged 130 workers in crucial conversations about gender equality and inclusion. The toolbox talks fostered a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by women in construction and empowered participants to become active agents of change.

Case Studies (Cont.)

Case study: Women in Construction on Sydney Children's Hospital redevelopment project

On behalf of NSW Government client Health Infrastructure, the John Holland team is constructing a new children's hospital and cancer research centre building, creating an integrated facility to transform paediatric health care locally, nationally and globally.

The project is one of 19 NSW Government infrastructure projects participating in a pilot to increase the number of women employed on site.

This initiative, funded by the NSW Government Women in Construction Program, is trialling increased targets for women in trade (doubling from 2% to 4%) and the introduction of a new non-traditional role target (7%).

To achieve these targets, a dedicated Project Officer (Female Participation Advisor) was hired to work on initiatives that attract and retain women on site, identify upskilling opportunities for those already in the industry, as well as building networks between women across the industry. As a result, the project is currently exceeding female participation targets across the workforce.

Opportunities have been created for women through recruitment into targeted apprenticeships and non-trade positions, by and through various engagement events with community and not-for-profit organisations and schools. In addition to hitting these targets, more than 200 women have worked on the project, including those in traditional roles.

Case Studies (Cont.)

Case study: Gender safety on-site contacts

The Major Roads Project Victoria now requires an on-site gender safety contact as part of its minimum gender equity standards for project planning.

Each site must have at least one gender safety contact person who has received training in relevant legislation and topics such as privacy, disclosure, responsible referrals, bullying, harassment, discrimination, victimisation and gender-based violence.

The on-site gender safety contact provides support and advice to workers. When needed, they help workers navigate the internal and external processes for managing formal complaints across different site contractors. They also help complainants to escalate formal complaints and work with project managers. Their contact details are displayed in both prominent and discreet locations onsite.

For more information, see the information on contact officers in the Victorian Government's Respect Code Building and Construction Industry.

Major Road Projects Victoria: Gender equality checklist

In 2023-24, Major Roads Projects Victoria (MRPV), in collaboration with the Victorian National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC), hosted a series of workshops with senior representatives from 21 civil construction contractors in Victoria.

These workshops were designed to raise awareness about the challenges and opportunities for increasing women's participation in the industry and develop an industry-wide approach to gender equity.

These sessions led to the development of:

1. MRPV Towards gender equality roadmap 2024-2027, which outlines the goals and priorities to support increased gender equity, which must be implemented across all MRPV projects, which focus on:

2. Minimum standards and requirements for gender equity, which must be implemented across all MRPV projects, which focus on:

   a. Workplace design – ensuring facilities and amenities are inclusive and fit for purpose
   b. Policies and procedures – embedding gender equity into company policies, hiring practices and leadership accountability
   c. Training and education – requiring targeted training on topics such as unconscious bias, sexual harassment prevention and inclusive leadership.

A suite of resources is available to help contractors deliver the minimum standards and requirements, including a tender equality on-site checklist for Key Area 1 – Workplace Design. The checklist, which builds on NAWIC's Site establishment checklist, helps ensure the right amenities are provided on-site to support women and gender diverse people.

More information is available at Victoria's Big Build: Women in construction.

Glossary

Glossary of terms	
Action plan	An action plan sets out a clear pathway for delivering a project's ambitions and goals, as required by The Culture Standard. The CICT has developed 3 action plans to support implementation of the Culture Standard: 1. Wellbeing Action Plan 2. Time for Life Action Plan 3. Inclusion and Diversity Action Plan.
CICT	The Construction Industry Culture Taskforce (CICT) is a collaboration between the Australian Constructors Association, which represents the nation's largest construction firms, the governments of Victoria and New South Wales, and Australia's leading workplace researchers.
Client	The Culture Standard uses the term 'client' to refer to an entity that procures construction works and has adopted the Culture Standard in its procurement processes.
The Culture Standard	The Culture Standard is a framework for clients and contractors to work together to address significant challenges facing the construction industry. It was developed by the CICT.
Discrimination	Discrimination happens when a person, or a group of people, is treated less favourably than another person or group because of their background or certain personal characteristics. This can include direct or indirect discrimination on the basis of sex, gender or sexuality.
Gender safety	Gender safety is the practice of creating safe environments for people of all genders and respecting their needs and experiences.
Head contractor	The head contractor is an entity that provides construction services and has been engaged to deliver a project. It holds the head contract and is responsible for engaging and managing the project supply chain.
Hostile working environment	The Culture Standard uses the term 'hostile work environment' to describe any work environment that is offensive, intimidating or humiliating to a person because of their gender or characteristics linked to their gender.*
Inclusion and diversity pillar	The third pillar of the Culture Standard focuses on attracting and retaining a diverse workforce, particularly women. The goals of the inclusion and diversity pillar of the Culture Standard are: • The construction industry provides an inclusive work environment • The construction industry is free from offensive material and language • The construction industry provides amenities to support a diverse workforce • Women are represented in the construction industry • Women hold leadership positions in the construction industry • The construction industry will close gender pay gaps • The construction industry employs people without bias.
Organisation	The Culture Standard uses the term 'organisation' to refer to an entity delivering on the requirements of the Culture Standard. The Culture Standard applies to organisations involved in project delivery, including both head contractor and subcontractors.
Pilot projects	To strengthen the evidence base, the Culture Standard was piloted across 5 infrastructure projects in New South Wales and Victoria. The pilot projects assessed the benefits and impact of the Culture Standard.

Glossary (Cont.)

Glossary of terms	
RDO	Rostered day off
Salaried workers	Workers paid on a salary basis
Sexual harassment	Sexual harassment is any unwelcome sexual advance, unwelcome request for sexual favours or other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, in circumstances where a reasonable person would anticipate the possibility that the person harassed would be offended, humiliated or intimidated.*
Sex- or gender-based harassment	Sex- or gender-based harassment is any unwelcome conduct of an offensive or demeaning nature based on the person's gender, sex or sexuality, conducted in circumstances where a reasonable person would anticipate the possibility that the person harassed would be offended, humiliated or intimidated.*
Subcontractor	A subcontractor is an entity engaged by the head contractor to provide goods or services related to project delivery. This definition encompasses both design and trade subcontractors.
Time for life pillar	The second pillar of the Culture Standard focuses on creating a healthy work–life balance for the workforce. The goals of the time for life pillar of the Culture Standard are: • Construction workers work 5 days in 7, no more than 50 hours per week and have access to 2 consecutive days of rest each week • All construction industry workers have access to flexible work options.
Trauma-informed approach	A trauma-informed approach aims to inflict no harm. It prioritises safety, trust and understanding the potential impact of trauma on individuals, and aims to create a supportive environment where people feel safe to report incidents without fear of being retraumatised.
Waged workers	Workers paid on an hourly basis
Wellbeing pillar	The first pillar of the Culture Standard focuses on workforce wellbeing. The goals of the wellbeing pillar of the Culture Standard are: • The construction industry supports the mental health of its people • Worker wellbeing is prioritised when setting the project schedule.
Worker	Anyone who performs paid work in any capacity for an employer, business or organisation is considered a worker.
Workforce	The individual workers engaged to deliver a project and perform tasks directly related to project delivery. This definition encompasses workers employed by the contractor and subcontractors, and includes all occupations (blue and white collar) and employment structures (waged and salaried).

*Definitions of sexual harassment, sex-based harassment and hostile working environments are based on definitions in the Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth). Legal definitions may vary in each state and territory.

For more information about gender- and sex- based harassment refer to Safe Work Australia: https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/safety-topic/hazards/sexual-and-gender-based-harassment/overview

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