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io

# A DIVERSITY & INCLUSION TOOLKIT FOR THE INTERACTIVE DIGITAL MEDIA INDUSTRY

THIS TOOLKIT WAS CREATED BY INTERACTIVE ONTARIO WITH  
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# INTRODUCTION

While many of the findings in this report mirror the findings in other, more statistical studies on diversity and inclusion, this report identifies a specific perspective that is associated with content creators and in particular with IDM producers. Increased diversity and inclusion will help employers find the best possible talent, create better content and open up new markets. It also appears that efforts to create a more inclusive company result in a better managed workforce that is more efficient, feels more invested in the company and has less turnover.

It is important to note that while some of the IDM and associated content companies are large, most are small to medium-sized enterprises. Most of the resources available and literature assume that the companies involved are large companies with hundreds if not thousands of staff. It should not deter small and medium-sized companies from using these resources and adapting them to their own circumstances. Use the Tips on page 18 to help guide your exploration and experiment with what works for your company.

Canada is projected to have a skills shortage by 2031 of 2.3 million people<sup>1</sup>. IDM of course relies heavily on skilled talent. IDM is a high growth sector<sup>2</sup> with increasing skilled talent needs. One important strategy to help meet those needs is to reach out to underserved communities in recruitment and to learn how to be a more inclusive workplace to ensure that all employees feel able to reach their potential. It is important for IDM companies to develop these strategies now in order to manage their increasing need for skilled talent.

**Interactive Ontario ("IO")** is a not-for-profit industry trade association representing over 330 Interactive Digital Media ("IDM") companies in Ontario. The IO membership ranges from small to medium sized companies to large international corporations. They produce a wide range of IDM including video games, eLearning, mobile apps, augmented and virtual reality, web content and more. IO regularly commissions research into industry trends and tries to develop best practices that will help its membership grow and prosper.

There are no statistics on the degree to which the Interactive Digital Media ("IDM") industry in Ontario is diverse. There are many reasons for this including:

- No agreement on how to define diversity for measurement
- Little funding for statistical research on diversity
- Reluctance of underserved communities to self-identify based on past oppression.

It is even harder to obtain statistics on the diversity of the academic programs that feed young talent into the industry as many of the colleges and universities do not track that data or if they do, they aggregate it for the entire institution and do not release per program data. It is therefore impossible to measure the extent to which the available talent pool or talent pipeline is diverse enough to meet diversity goals and whether there are certain institutions or programs that may be doing a better job at recruitment than others.

1 "The Great Canadian Skills Mismatch", Miner Management Consultants, 2014.

2 "Measuring Success: The Impact of the Interactive Digital Media Sector in Ontario", Interactive Ontario, February 2017 <http://interactiveontario.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Measuring-Success-Final-Report-EN.pdf>

Despite the fact that detailed statistics do not yet exist, members of the Ontario IDM industry acknowledge that the industry is not as diverse as it should and could be. This is anecdotal evidence but it is pretty strong – the industry is to a large extent made up of white able-bodied men. This assumption was recently confirmed in part when IO's study on the economic impact of the IDM industry in Ontario, *Measuring Success*, assessed the number of female employees, a relatively easy statistic to measure, at 25% of the workforce, with 20% of Ontario's IDM companies having no women staff at all. Many studies have been released that draw links between employee diversity and economic success, suggesting that Ontario's IDM industry will be more successful if it can also become more diverse.<sup>3</sup>

IO therefore decided to initiate this study, with the financial support of the Ontario Media Development Corporation, Canada Media Fund, Ubisoft and Humber College, as a first step to a better understanding of the challenges to having a diverse and inclusive workplace and recommendations and resources to help Ontario IDM companies to improve their diversity and inclusion. IO engaged Kelly Lynne Ashton (the "Consultant", biography attached as Appendix "A") to conduct the study.



## DEFINITIONS

Early in conducting this research, the Consultant discovered that many people had different definitions of Diversity and Inclusion. The definition of diversity in particular could be influenced by the reporting requirements of Employment Equity legislation for federally regulated companies or by the political requirements of government funded programs. It is very important to keep in mind in Diversity and Inclusion conversations that for many people they have a definition that could be limited to:

- Women (or in other words, gender parity)
- Visible Minorities
- Visible Minorities, Indigenous, Women and Disabled (the four Employment Equity buckets)
- Visible Minorities, Indigenous, Women, Disabled and LGBTQ

<sup>3</sup> "Diversity brings boost to profitability", Oliver Ralph and Laura Noonan, Financial Times, April 4, 2017, <https://www.ft.com/content/1bc22040-1302-11e7-80f4-13e067d5072c?mhq5j-e1> ity brings boost to profitability", Oliver Ralph and Laura Noonan, Financial Times, April 4, 2017, <https://www.ft.com/content/1bc22040-1302-11e7-80f4-13e067d5072c?mhq5j-e1>

The most expansive view of diversity, and the one chosen for the purposes of this study, has been pulled from the Chubb Insurance Group:

*"Diversity is about recognising, respecting and valuing differences based on ethnicity, gender, colour, age, race, religion, disability, national origin and sexual orientation. It also includes an infinite range of individual unique characteristics and experiences, such as communication style, career path, life experience, educational background, geographic location, income level, marital status, military experience, parental status and other variables that influence personal perspectives. These life experiences and personal perspectives make us react and think differently; approach challenges and solve problems differently; make suggestions and decisions differently; and see different opportunities. Diversity, then, is also about diversity of thought. And superior business performance requires tapping into these unique perspectives."*<sup>4</sup>

The key aspect of the definition is that it is not limited to a number of specific characteristics that can be checked off in a survey. That is both inclusive, allowing for infinite variety and new developments of understanding of diversity, but also extremely difficult to measure in any meaningful way.

Inclusion is easier to define though more difficult to measure. Inclusion is the subjective sense to which an individual feels valued and included by an organization. Another way of putting it is that inclusion is an environment where each employee is able to reach their full potential.

## METHODOLOGY

The Consultant conducted research in three phases.

### PHASE ONE – ROUNDTABLES

There were four roundtable discussions with representatives of Ontario IDM industry, one with academics from universities and colleges with IDM programs and one with a diverse group of emerging professionals. Two IDM industry roundtables were held in Toronto, one in London and one by conference call to reach representatives outside Toronto.

Participation in the industry roundtables was by invitation to ensure that participants had the required experience to participate meaningfully (i.e. not a startup or single person company) and to try to get a cross section of company size, IDM formats and location. Lower than hoped for participation highlights one of the findings discussed in greater detail on page 10, that few IDM companies are making Diversity and Inclusion a priority at this time. Participation by the academics (also by invitation to ensure experience with IDM) and emerging professionals (conducted by outreach to organizations and contacts and open to all interested) was more robust. Please see Appendix "B" for a list of those who participated in the Industry and Academic roundtables. The Emerging Professionals spoke only after the assurance of anonymity. They were concerned that anything they shared could impact their current or future employment. The emerging professionals who participated were truly diverse with representation from a number of visible minority communities, neurodiverse<sup>5</sup>, newcomers, gender identity, age and of course women within the twelve participants.

<sup>4</sup> As quoted in Deloitte, "Only Skin Deep?: Re-examining the Business Case for Diversity", 2011, page 5

<sup>5</sup> Neurodiverse refers to a diversity of human brains and minds and can specifically refer to those on the Autism spectrum and those with learning disabilities (i.e. non-neurotypical) as well as the 'neurotypical', or those with brains and minds that reflect the dominant norm.

## PHASE TWO – INTERVIEWS

The Consultant conducted several one on one interviews with representatives of larger companies in the IDM sector, in affiliated sectors and in unrelated sectors, to gain an understanding of how companies with extensive experience in Diversity and Inclusion were developing and implementing strategies. Though bigger and with more resources than most IDM companies, the interviews were conducted with an eye to finding strategies that could be adaptable to Ontario's IDM sector. The Consultant also conducted a number of one on one interviews with IDM producers who had scheduling conflicts with the roundtables but wanted to share their experiences. There were a total of ten interviews. Please see Appendix "C" for a list of those interviewed.

## PHASE THREE – THIRD PARTY RESEARCH

The Consultant reviewed publicly available literature on developing a Diversity and Inclusion strategy with a view to identifying resources that could help IDM companies to take initial steps towards either developing a strategy or adapting elements of a strategy. While much has been written about diversity and inclusion, the emphasis was on finding resources that were more applicable to the IDM sector. These resources, with explanatory notes, have been included in the Resources section of the study on page 21.

Finally, after conducting the research set out above, the Consultant aggregated the data and identified a list of steps that IDM companies could consider to assist them to develop more diverse and inclusive workplaces. These Top Tips on page 18 are not exhaustive and are not meant to be a substitute for a comprehensive Diversity and Inclusion strategy but is in recognition that many IDM companies do not have the staff resources or funds for an outside consultant to be able to develop such a comprehensive strategy. These tips are meant to provide guidance and a starting point.



# IDM PRODUCERS ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

As several IDM producers spoke on the condition of anonymity in order to protect competitive hiring and retention practices, all comments have been stripped from their applicable speaker with only demographic data included where appropriate. Participating producers represented companies from small two-person studios working with freelancers all the way up to 600 permanent staff.

## DEFINITION OF DIVERSITY

Producers were asked to define diversity to ensure that everyone in the room was using the same definition. Consistently, IDM producers took a very broad perspective on what diversity meant to them, similar to the definition set out above on page 4. Diversity means different perspectives so that there are different viewpoints and a range of ideas. Diversity is more than gender parity or visible minorities and includes neurodiversity, marital status, age, country of origin, socio-economic status, political views and everything else that makes one person different from another.

Some producers saw diversity as the end product of working towards inclusion while others felt that a policy of inclusion would result in a diverse team.

Another term that was discussed was the meaning of equity and the thought that perhaps we should be talking about equity rather than diversity. Diversity is about representation but equity is about whether people are being treated fairly. Women are 50% of the workforce so can they fulfill the definition of 'diverse' or is it a question of equitable access to employment?

It should be noted however, that a few participants used the word diversity when they meant gender parity. Their preference for focusing on increasing the number of women became apparent in conversation.

## DEFINITION OF INCLUSION

Inclusion was defined by the producers more from the perspective of how it was implemented than what it actually is. Inclusion is:

- giving everyone involved in the project a voice, regardless of their specific position (e.g. admin, marketing, sales have opportunities for creative input as well as programming and design);
- having a solution-oriented approach that is open to whatever people can bring to the problem;
- being collaborative and creating a safe place to be heard;
- bringing people together and respecting what everyone has to offer.

Empowerment is central to the modern workplace and key to creating a truly shared workplace with common goals, ambitions and opportunities. One producer pointed out that it wasn't enough to create an inclusive workplace. The content has to be inclusive as well. If you create offensive content it will be difficult to maintain an inclusive workplace and people who value that will not stay.

## WHAT IS THE BUSINESS CASE FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION?

Being a creative industry, not everyone is comfortable with the concept of a 'business case'. One producer objected to the question and suggested that companies should be more diverse and inclusive because it is the right thing to do, not for any financial reasons while another producer was motivated to be inclusive because of his own experience being excluded as a kid.

However, most discussions were about how diversity and inclusion in companies leads to better content which then leads to more business opportunities. Some were uncomfortable with calling 'creating better games' a business case while others saw a direct correlation between creating content that is more engaging or reaches a wider market or is more responsive to a niche market and greater revenues.

Specifically, diversity in your staff can provide you with:

- A global perspective
- Different ideas based on different lived experiences
- Better insight into your target market (as an example, VR technology was developed primarily by white men so they were not aware till it hit the market that women and Asians are more prone to motion sickness<sup>6</sup>)
- Business opportunities within their extended network
- Happier, more fulfilled staff whose needs are being met so therefore are more likely to stay
- Having an inclusive work environment values everyone's ideas and can become the competitive advantage for a new or smaller company as they create content that is unique
- Splintering audiences and market shares means that there are business opportunities for companies that can create for niche audiences around the world. Diversity allows the company to reach more of those niche audiences.
- Demonstrating with access to a market a competitive edge that a larger company that relies on market research might not have

## INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION


If an IDM company is big enough to have HR staff, those staff will be responsible for many of the strategies required to implement diversity and inclusion. However, producers of all sizes of companies made it clear that regardless of size, diversity and inclusion needed to be led by the studio leadership. If the leadership understands the need for diversity and inclusion then they will ensure that throughout the company it is done and implemented. Perhaps more importantly, if the leadership is behind it, then diversity and inclusion programs will become part of the company culture and stay persistent through the ups and downs of the business. Leadership commitment can also mean a commitment to training and mentorship so that middle managers learn to avoid bias and reduce barriers and so that all employees can advance in their careers.

If the leadership is itself diverse then the leadership also acts as role model, demonstrating that the company should be a welcome place for a variety of people to work.

Leadership is not enough however. Producers shared their experience of wanting to hire for diversity and be more inclusive as a core value but not knowing how to communicate that publicly or actually make it happen. One producer said that too often people forgot about ensuring that the middle managers who actually do the hiring are on board with diversity and inclusion.

<sup>6</sup> Virtual Reality Has a Motion Sickness Problem", Science News, by Betsy Mason, March 7, 2017, <https://www.sciencenews.org/article/virtual-reality-has-motion-sickness-problem>





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## DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION STRATEGIES

Few of the small and medium-sized companies that attended the roundtables or were interviewed had a clearly defined Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. Most felt they were too small to have any kind of human resources or management policies and run their studio on a well-intentioned or ad hoc basis. Smaller companies generally need all of their staff to focus on generating revenue and have little time left over for management issues. However, even many of the larger companies did not have formal Diversity and Inclusion strategies, sometimes intentionally, sometimes not.

Some companies are subject to federal regulation under the Employment Equity Act (as federal legislation it only governs companies that are federally regulated such as broadcasters and telecommunications companies and therefore not independent production companies) and therefore have to report on employment of women, people with disabilities, Indigenous people and visible minorities. That legislation requires the employer to have employment equity practices and plans but has no standards for what those practices and plans should be. Some regulated companies do the minimum while others see diversity as part of their core values and go beyond the legislated requirements. In one company, they focus on creating a culture that fosters talent rather than creating quotas or specific strategies. Instead they work to train managers to create inclusive environments, reduce barriers, find the best talent and be a welcoming employer. Another interviewed is currently updating its Diversity and Inclusion strategy, which previously had focused on required reporting and advancing women. They have decided that they need to go beyond required reporting because the company does not reflect the audience that they are trying to reach.

The studios who participated in the roundtable discussions or responded to interview requests all recognized that improving diversity and inclusion was an issue and many had been striving to make improvements without a clear direction. A few felt that they were too small to make a difference given that they do not hire full time very often. On the other hand there were very small studios trying to hire freelancers from underserved communities even though they could not hire full time. One small company saw themselves as a gateway company for new, diverse grads as they could not pay well but could provide training and help them build their resume and find better paying permanent jobs in other companies. That sets up a situation where the junior staff are diverse while the management is not but until the company grows to the point that it can afford to retain the junior staff to grow into senior positions there are few other options.

The bulk of the research participants wanted to do better but need guidance on how to do it. There were numerous discussions between producers about what had been tried and what failed or succeeded and the more successful steps have been incorporated in the Top Tips (page 18).

Studios recommended putting thought and effort into their hiring practices and not just repeating the usual procedures and hoping for change. Hiring managers need to rethink how they draft their job descriptions as well as where they post them, using a variety of formal and informal networks to reach a wider and deeper talent pool. Too often people are hired because of someone they know but many younger talent do not have built-in networks. It is important for hiring managers to not just rely on their existing networks but to go outside them to provide new talent with opportunities. As one interviewee said 'Yes, there is a tech shortage - but is there really . . . Look outside the box and take the time to find the talent. They are there.'

If studios are open to different work styles (e.g. working part time or full time from home, different schedules) they will attract talent that they would not otherwise. If work places make reasonable accommodations to respect people's differences in how they work as well as when they want to work they will be more inclusive. Producers have noticed that as staff at young startups start to settle down and have kids, these offices become more flexible about work hours and work location and stop emphasizing after work activities as part of office team-building. However, it is still acceptable to set limits on accommodation based on what is required for the job.

For example, if staff are required to spend a percentage of their time in collaborative activity then they cannot work remotely or in a conflicting schedule for more than an appropriate percentage of time. The goal should be to accommodate to promote inclusion without sacrificing the work that needs to be done.

It should be noted as well that under provincial and federal Human Rights legislation there is a 'reasonable duty to accommodate' for protected classes of persons. In the roundtables there were a number of discussions about how to determine what is a reasonable accommodation and what is not and where to look for guidance given that reasonableness is such a subjective test. Smaller companies without in-house human resources staff were most likely to feel the need for assistance in this area, including in particular access to human resources consultants.

One recommendation for fostering inclusion was to look at the True Colours (see under Resources on page 25 for more information) communications style assessment. It is a way of thinking about individual styles of communication and how they interact with each other that removes value judgment and de-personalizes any conflicts. A conflict is not about two people not getting along but about how their communication styles are conflicting. The producer recommending it had found the process very useful in improving workplace dynamics and encouraging people with different styles to feel equally valued.

Outside Toronto it can be harder to find visible minority talent. Some studios in London and Hamilton, for example, found it challenging to find visible minorities in their communities and equally problematic if they tried to hire Toronto residents and ask them to commute. Other studios did not find it as hard to hire diverse talent outside Toronto and suggested that if studios looked outside their usual networks they would find a larger, more diverse, talent pool.



## SUPPORT TO IMPROVE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Many producers were unsure about what would help them to be more diverse and inclusive but there were a few ideas. They were interested in the results of this research and particularly the Top Tips and Resources as they often just do not know where to start. There was a general feeling that studio heads were often lacking in management training including diversity and inclusion so would benefit from management workshops that included diversity and inclusion rather than focused on those issues.

Studios that hire interns and co-ops knew that colleges and universities were graduating a wider diversity of students. It was suggested that the relationship between industry and academia needed to be strengthened to ensure that these students made it into the talent pipeline and not just internship and then dropped. Relationships with community organizations should also be strengthened to build networks. It would be helpful if there was funding for industry to partner with academia and/or community organizations to run events that could bring industry, academia and community organizations together to promote opportunities for talent coming from underserved communities.

Several producers suggested that studios should take the long view and get involved with their local high schools and community youth groups to demonstrate how IDM careers are well-paid, interesting and evolving career options. If a studio gets involved with a wide range of youth not only do they increase the diversity of the future talent pool they also strengthen the perception of the studio as an inclusive work environment.

The long view also requires a focus on the talent pipeline. It is much easier for a large company to see gaps in their management and work on retaining and training junior talent to move into leadership over time than to hire for those middle management positions. Small and medium sized companies do not have the same level of resources or depth of staff. However, even smaller companies pointed out a need to train and mentor emerging talent if they are going to fill the ranks of middle and upper management. Mentorships such as those recently announced by Interactive Ontario in partnership with Ubisoft Toronto, TFO and DHX Media, which are targeted to underserved communities (women, franco-ontarians and underrepresented youth respectively) are a way for the industry to help grow the experienced talent pool. Another strategy suggested was for industry training for up and coming talent to help them develop the skills they need to advance.

It was also suggested that when people from underserved communities were hired in middle management positions, they tended to hire more diversely. They seemed themselves to understand the value of differences. One producer suggested that a focus on hiring for those middle management positions would therefore have a ripple effect of creating more diversity throughout the company or project.

One studio suggested that there were a lot of talented people out there so the problem was not a lack of diversity in the talent but that talent from underserved communities had fewer opportunities than the mainstream. It was part of their company's values that they wanted to create those opportunities as a way of reaching more fantastic talent. It may require more effort on their part but they would be rewarded with a more creative team.

Producers had the following ideas for supports that would help them increase their diversity and inclusion. Note that many of these ideas are related to project financing as it was recognized that access to funding is the biggest motivator for small and medium-sized enterprises:

- Funding for networking events that bring together studios and diverse talent in a way that allows the studios to see the talent at work
- Financial incentives to find and retain talent from underserved communities, provided that the incentives are not tied to specific categories (i.e. gender, ethnicity, sexual identity)
- Tax credit based on salaries for talent coming from equity-seeking groups to ensure that talent are not only hired but also retained long term.
- Funding for mentorships for talent coming from underserved communities
- Require that a Diversity and Inclusion strategy is part of project applications for funding
- Additional funding or a separate envelope for projects with demonstrated diverse teams
- Diversity and inclusion training as a precondition for receiving project funding
- A checklist from the government (provincial and federal) of what a small business needs to do, to be compliant to applicable legislation like pay equity, human rights, accessibility, access to funding

# ACADEMIC ROUNDTABLE

Academics prepare the next generation of IDM employees and, particularly in Toronto, those students tend to be very diverse. We spoke with academics representing a number of Toronto-area institutions with IDM Programs to get their perspective on the issues of Diversity and Inclusion in the sector and how they prepare their students for their careers.

Each academic institution has its own definition of diversity which governs their policies, however the academics were all of the opinion that the definitions deserved to be broader than they tend to be. As one put it "Ethnicity, sexual identity, age, learning ability, medical accommodations, mental health issues – there's a range of complexity. Diversity is an effort to embrace the complexity". Diversity is too complex to be able to be boiled down into a series of checkboxes.

Their perspective on inclusion was a little different from the producers based on their role to prepare students for the workforce. They see inclusion as breaking down barriers and levelling the playing field for all. Identify what is excluding people and remove it. It was felt that often their role as educators was to explain to students that common barriers are just part of life rather than equipping the students with the tools to break down the barriers themselves. While colleges have courses on professional development or preparation for work placements, they do not specifically address the common barriers that many students will face nor are they taught about their rights under employment equity or human rights legislation or how to advocate for themselves.

Traditionally in media programs colleges and universities emphasize the need to network but the academics were aware that many students are challenged by traditional networking activities (i.e. walk into a room of strangers and introduce yourself). Visible minority students have negative experiences associated with being the only non-white person in the room, or they have experienced too many micro-aggressions (e.g. 'What are you?', 'Good for you for getting this far.') and are reluctant to open themselves up for more. Those with neuro-diversity may have difficulty talking to strangers or could be overwhelmed by the setting. There was a lot of discussion about looking for different formats of networking that would allow people to get to know each other through activities rather than cocktail conversation.

The academics have discovered that it is not enough to have diverse representation, since many of the schools have achieved that. They now drill down to see who is succeeding and who is struggling and why. For example, students from certain socio-economic groups might be struggling because they need to work while at school or manage family responsibilities so will not have the same time for assignments as other students. The question as a teacher is 'how can I help the student get to where they need to be.' Too many teachers are teaching for one kind of student without consideration for the possibilities for creating a more inclusive learning environment. For example, a female Muslim student from a conservative family may not be allowed to leave the house in the evening to attend events such as a networking opportunity or a screening, making it important to offer a wider variety of opportunities. They advised that accommodations should be seen as not giving advantages to certain students but to providing them with an equitable situation. Some students are reluctant to self-identify non-visible diversity (i.e. gender identity or neurodiversity) because of negative responses in the past, making it harder to support them.

When asked if there were gaps in diversity, different schools identified that by programs or faculties there were gaps in representation. Some programs seemed to attract one or two ethnicities while others were more diverse. No schools were targeting recruitment from specific underserved communities though one found that once they had included specific protections for transgender people, more students identified as transgender. That in turn led to a need for sensitivity training among staff and they brought in specialists to help them. Some teachers individually are working with programs that work with underserved communities, such as Techsdale, which



teaches youth in Rexdale how to code, and that helps high school students to consider careers in IDM, however all agreed that more can be done to develop that talent pipeline.

Some schools also felt that there were family pressures on new immigrant or first generation students to follow more traditional careers (law, medicine, accounting), which resulted in fewer visible minority students in undergrad programs. Post-grad courses do not see this as much since by that stage in education students are following their passions rather than listening to family dictates. It helps to understand the challenges that these students are facing as they also then have a lot of pressure to get a 'good' job after graduation and not take risks to be freelance or start up their own companies.

As well, some schools are exploring strategies to reduce barriers for students. For example, it was felt at one school that interviews as part of the admissions process tended to reinforce unconscious bias as the interviewers were more likely to select students like them or who they felt were most likely to succeed. They have decided to eliminate interviews to try to increase the diversity of their programs. On the other hand, interviews at another college were seen as a way for the co-ordinator to ensure that the program was the right fit and to see the student's potential when they might struggle with objective testing. In that situation it was felt that interviews worked because the decision-makers can understand and appreciate the different perspectives of students. There often is no clear answer to reducing barriers as each school tries different strategies.

Computer science is a very in demand program and has diversity issues based on that success. At University of Toronto, for example, the demand is so high that they turn down students with an 82% average. Class sizes are often at 1200 students. With that volume, the admissions process has been completely marks-based and math-based, which attracts a particular kind of student. However, they have discovered that there is a correlation between high English marks and success in the program so they are revisiting the admissions policy. The big struggle though is how to create an admissions policy that takes into consideration subjective criteria such as creativity and that can also be scaled to that volume of students and applications. On the other hand, smaller college programs seemed to have greater flexibility to ensure that the fit is right and more subjective aspects of the student, such as creativity, empathy or perseverance, can be considered.

Across the board the schools have identified that it is a problem that their faculty is not as diverse as their student bodies. Many are at or close to gender parity but they are otherwise not very diverse. It will take time for today's students to become tomorrow's teachers but it is an issue that is top of mind for the schools. In the meantime, teachers need more diversity training to accommodate and support diversity in their classrooms.

Humber was inspired by their need to accommodate a deaf student in their Media Foundations Program to develop a course to teach Accessible Design in Media. The online course, launching in September, will be free to the public as well as available to students in Media Studies. The course will increase accessibility skills in the school, with graduates and eventually the general public with the goal of not only creating a more inclusive learning environment for students with disabilities but also more inclusive work environments and entertainment opportunities. Humber hopes that the course will break down some of the systemic barriers limiting the participation of those with disabilities in public and private life.

The academics were optimistic that while diversity and inclusion is not an easy problem to solve, as long as those who are committed to it continue to challenge barriers and work to be more inclusive, change will occur over time.



## EMERGING PROFESSIONALS

The emerging professionals were initially reluctant to speak up during their roundtable but once they understood that it was a safe space they opened up and shared a lot of their experiences, both positive and negative, and ideas for improvement.

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The diverse group of emerging professionals were the group least inclined to list what constitutes diversity. Their definitions were all about representation of differences and covering the full range of voices, tone and experiences out there.

When talking about inclusion they took a different approach as well. Their focus was on inclusion in the content, which many felt would make the studio a welcoming workplace. Is it representative of its audience or does it exclude communities? Is the content accessible by accessibility standards? Does it tokenize or stereotype certain people? Are everyone's ideas being considered in the development of the content? Rather than the perspective of most employers that if they created an inclusive workplace it would generate diverse and inclusive content, many felt that a focus on inclusive content would provide an environment where they could be themselves and provide different points of view to the creation of that content.

Common barriers to employment that had been experienced by the group included:

- A good phone interview turning into a negative in person interview and the perception that it was the result of discovering that the applicant was a visible minority
- Lack of support in finding the next job once out of school. Schools often help with internships or even first jobs after graduation but while recognizing that jobs in IDM are often short term contracts do little to support the student after that first job
- Foreign-born professionals with English as a second language often take longer to form their ideas but encounter impatience in employers when they speak or simple bias against those who speak with an accent
- Afraid to identify learning disability or neuro-diversity and request accommodations because it could prevent them from getting a job or prevent advancement
- After a number of rejections, they stop applying

Some talked about the perception that an employer would be welcoming to those coming from marginalized communities. Many employers use the statement that they are an equal opportunity employer in job ads but that was perceived as insufficient. Instead, prospective employees reviewed the company's activities for inclusive behaviour. Can they tell from the website if the staff are diverse? Does the company do outreach into communities through events or training opportunities to solicit applications? Have they partnered with community organizations that work with people from marginalized communities to help them find work? Do they prioritize one or a few education paths for prospective employees rather than a more general assessment of skills and experience? Do they appear to have the intention to hire diverse candidates but absolutely no clue about how to do it?

It was recommended that if a studio is homogeneous it should consider diversity and inclusion training so that when they do hire for diversity, those new hires enter a more open and understanding environment. Biases will not be very noticeable in an environment that does not test them.<sup>7</sup>

One participant pointed out that diversity needs to be valued from the top leadership all the way down to the most junior person. A studio isn't inclusive unless all of the team members value each other's contribution and treat everyone with respect. Some of the best work experiences came from working on diverse teams where they felt that they could be themselves. On the other hand, a negative environment can reinforce negative stereotypes as the employee is not working to their full potential. "You're not being your best self when you can't be yourself."

There were many dimensions of 'being yourself'. When a studio is predominantly white male then their method of interaction is white male. Softer spoken men and women and those from cultures where they are raised to be deferential to authority, found it hard to compete for air time with their more aggressive colleagues. Members of marginalized communities found themselves at times reluctant to speak up for fear of jeopardizing their job. If they weren't aggressive they were deemed to agree with the majority view. Their ideas were not taken as seriously. One participant noted that she spent several years in one job 'trying to learn to talk like a white guy' but was much happier in her current position where different styles of communication are valued.

Echoing some of the things said in the producer roundtables, some of the participants had discovered that good managers were inclusive managers. They created safe places to work to a person's full potential. It was recommended though that managers should consider hiring based on potential as well as experience to provide opportunities for a wider variety of people. It was pointed out that frequently those who pursue IDM as a second career can bring a wealth of relevant experience from their first career even though junior in their IDM careers but they often do not get credit for that earlier experience.

Participants felt that studios that create children's content may be most able to practice inclusion as they already need to put themselves into the mindset of someone (the child) unlike who they are. Producers of children's media need to practice empathy, a key skill in an inclusive workplace.

One recommendation made to their fellow emerging professionals was to spend time at organizations like Dames Making Games that encourage people to work together inclusively on projects in their spare time (for more information see Resources on page 24). That kind of experience provides opportunities to work with good people and practice being yourself and can balance out a less welcoming work experience that you may be in.

All have considered giving up on working for others and instead opening their own studio. Not only will they then be able to do the work they want to do but then they can hire the diverse staff that they want to work with. For them change is not happening fast enough. On the other hand, being an entrepreneur is risky so only a few had taken that step.

<sup>7</sup> This perception was backed up by an interview with a studio head who only discovered that one of their staff was abusive to women, once women were hired.



# WHAT CAN IO DO?

All participants were asked what Interactive Ontario could do to help increase diversity and inclusion in the IDM industry:

IO can and should support new startups that are coming from diverse communities through speaking opportunities, networking events or invitation-only events

Run networking events that are activity based such as hackathons or board game nights, in order to create a low-barrier, stress-free entry point for emerging professionals

Organize a skill swap so that people with different skill sets can learn about others as it fosters collaboration and empathy

Host management workshops that include diversity and inclusion skills in the context of being a better manager

Have a skills matching tool on the IO website, which would help job seekers identify the IDM jobs for which they are qualified

Provide toolkits with worksheets that include expected time lines for implementing Diversity and Inclusion strategies so that companies have clear direction on how to operationalize these strategies and how long this will take

Engage a diversity and inclusion specialist who could provide consulting services to members at a discount. Most studios feel that they cannot afford to engage specialist help on their own

Provide a forum for discussion of best practices so that companies can work together to achieve results

Arrange for access to a diverse pool of playtesters to allow IDM companies to have access to different perspectives, especially for very small companies that do not have a large number of full-time staff

# TOP TIPS

The following Top Tips for producers to increase their diversity and inclusion were pulled from the roundtables and interviews and have been formatted here as a document that can be pulled from the report and used as a standalone resource. They are not listed in order of priority and may not work for each IDM company. We encourage IDM companies to implement the tips that work for them and their particular circumstances.

## // 01

### PATIENCE

Do not expect immediate results. Improving diversity and inclusion in a studio and in the industry will take time. Find short term wins to stay motivated (e.g. next hire, attend a workshop) while working on long term change.

## // 04

### TRAINING

Attend workshops on unconscious bias, diversity and inclusion strategies, inclusive workplaces, communication skills and managing talent. These workshops will help you be a better manager as well as improve your diversity and inclusion skills. Have both the leadership and the middle managers attend workshops.



## // 02

### BUILD TRUST

Be aware that existing staff may be wary of changes as a result of new diversity and inclusion strategies. Build trust by including them in the development of strategies, demonstrating how the strategies will positively impact them (working with new voices, building better content), and moving slowly to implement the plan.

## // 05

### LEADERSHIP

Diversity and inclusion need to be seen to be supported by the leadership of the company and not just seen as an HR function. Diversity and inclusion strategies are more successful when the underlying principles are embedded in the values of the company and all staff understand the 'business case' or 'value proposition' to diversity and inclusion. Diversity and inclusion are seen as factors in the company having the best possible talent, which can be a competitive differentiator for smaller companies.

## // 03

### RECOGNIZE BIAS

Recognize your own biases to hire within your network or hire people similar to you. Be 'purposeful' in going outside your networks to find talent and exercise 'conscious inclusion'.

## // 06

### RESEARCH

Don't make assumptions based on 'common wisdom'. Research, interview, assess your own hiring practices and retention statistics to confirm or refute assumptions. For example, one company thought women were leaving mid-career to start families so created family-friendly policies but women continued to leave. They are still trying to identify the cause so they can respond to it.

## // 07

### ACCOUNTABILITY

Make managers and senior leadership accountable for implementing diversity and inclusion strategies. Set goals and reward accomplishment. Adjust the goals for the size of your company but demonstrate commitment.

## // 08

**DEMONSTRATE COMMITMENT**

If your company is not diverse, consider not putting your team photos on your website as that perpetuates the perception of a lack of diversity. Even those with invisible differences, such as the neuro-diverse, will feel that they will not fit into a homogeneous company. Find ways to communicate on your website your commitment to diversity such as showcasing the diversity of your content or volunteer work in different communities. If your company is diverse, promote it with photos of your team on your website. People will be attracted to companies where they feel they will be welcome and your website communicates that.

## // 11

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH**

Develop ongoing relationships with underserved communities so that over time they will see your company and your sector as realistic opportunities.

## // 14

**JOB ADS**

Review job ads for words that reflect bias (e.g. ninja warrior or rock star). Be open to evidence of skills rather than formal qualifications, which can at times act as barriers to talented candidates unable to afford formal education, or specific years of experience which may not reflect talent. Be realistic about years of experience required, particularly in evolving technologies. See Resources and Appendix "D" for assistance in crafting job ads.

## // 09

**DIVERSE STAFFING**

If you are having a hard time finding programmers or designers who are from underserved communities, consider hiring a wider variety of talent in job categories that are easier to fill such as admin, marketing or sales. In an inclusive workplace they will be able to provide different perspectives that will inform the development of the content and help the studio promote the core value of diversity and inclusion.

## // 12

**INCLUSION**

It is not enough to hire for diversity. Your studio must also be inclusive. If it is inclusive then you will attract a wide variety of talent and they will stay. Monitor advancement and retention to see if staff from particular communities are not advancing at the same rate as others or are leaving the company at a higher rate as this may indicate inclusion issues.

## // 15

**JOB AD POSTING**

Use multiple sources to post job ads. Use the extended networks of existing staff, community organizations, traditional and non-traditional job boards, social media networks etc. Employees can act as advocates within their community.

## // 10

**ADVISORY BOARD**

If your company is not diverse, and is too small to easily become more diverse, consider putting together an Advisory Board that is diverse and use them to bounce ideas off of, market test your content, and use their networks when hiring. A diverse Advisory Board can help to demonstrate a commitment to diversity when existing staff do not (see Tip #8 above). Compensate the Advisory Board for their time to be respectful of their time commitment and ensure active participation. Another option is to reach out to underserved communities on gaming forums to attract a diverse range of playtesters. Find a way for people with different perspectives to review your IDM content.

## // 13

**HIRING**

Consider different assessment strategies when hiring. Some people do not interview well, particularly the non-neurotypical, but can be very skilled and hard-working employees. Can applicants be given a task or test to assess skills? Consider standardized questions in interviews, a defined set of skills required and assessment against a rubric to ensure that the interviewer is not unconsciously, or consciously, incorporating their biases into the interview.

## // 16

### INTERNAL BARRIERS

Review your common staff practices and consider if they create barriers for anyone. If team-building activities are after work does it then exclude anyone who would prefer to spend that time with their families? Does socializing with alcohol exclude anyone? Is your office fully accessible? Can staff reasonably adapt their work environment to their needs, i.e. work with headphones or with lots of opportunity for movement. The goal is not to change all practices to fit the needs of a minority but to find reasonable accommodations to be inclusive of the most people.

## // 19

### MEASUREMENT

While measurement is an important aspect of assessing progress there is a risk that an over-reliance on checkboxes can leave people out, not account for intersectionality (someone being a member of more than one underserved community) or not be fully representative due to an unwillingness to self-identify. Statistical measurement of progress should only be one of the goals of a Diversity and Inclusion strategy and should be looked at within the context of a more subjective assessment of inclusivity progress (e.g. pulse checks on employee satisfaction).

## // 17

### DEVELOP THE TALENT POOL

If the available talent pool is not diverse enough then work to make it more diverse. Develop relationships with colleges, universities, community organizations and high schools to find and develop talent. Ensure that there are no barriers to diverse talent being hired and being trained and promoted. Ensure that managers are not accidentally creating inherent barriers.

## // 20

### AFFINITY GROUPS

If a company is big enough (100+), consider supporting the development of affinity groups. An affinity group is a group of employees who share a community of identity (i.e. gay, parents, black etc.). Affinity groups can be an effective tool to share concerns and affect change provided that management supports and engages with the affinity groups. If a company is smaller it could support staff to join industry-wide affinity groups, such as Dames Making Games, or create one. Company support can include things such as meeting during work hours, a budget for refreshments, meeting space, a budget for participating in events or training or reimbursing membership fees.

## // 18

### VALUES STATEMENT

Even a small company can create a values statement and corporate policies relating to diversity and inclusion. They do not have to be long and involved but state the policy to hire and work with the best talent possible, desire to have an inclusive workplace and refusal to tolerate any form of harassment. Brief policies and values posted to a company website will attract talent who value that kind of a work environment and send a message about the kind of employer you intend to be. Create more detailed guidelines as the company grows and the need develops. See Appendix "E" for examples of brief values statements that include diversity and inclusion.

# RESOURCES

The following list of resources has been developed from a review of existing literature and recommendations from interviews, however it is not intended to be exhaustive nor to act as a recommendation or endorsement of a specific service provider. Instead, the following is intended to be a starting point for a producer's investigation into how they can improve the diversity and inclusion at their company. Note that frequently authors and consultants have developed their own criteria, grid, system or vocabulary but may be otherwise very similar in style and outcome.

## GENERAL RESOURCES

### Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion ("CCDI") - <http://ccdi.ca>

- CCDI helps companies become more diverse and inclusive through a number of services including:
  - Consulting services
  - In person workshops across the country
  - Webinars
  - Commissioned research

CCDI has developed case studies, toolkits, reports, blog posts and articles freely available on their website.

In particular note the 20 page Toolkit for Developing a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy at

<http://ccdi.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/20140910-CCDI-Report-DI-Strategy-Toolkit.pdf>

- They work with Centennial College to offer a Certificate in Leadership and Inclusion
- Offers the Maturity Meter, a tool to assess the maturity of an organization's diversity and inclusion strategy, are your efforts having an impact

### Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmarks (GDIB)

<http://diversitycollegium.org/downloadgdib.php>

- The GDIB is a set of benchmarks that can be used to assess how diverse and inclusive an organization is and give some guidance for next steps. It has been developed with the assistance of diversity and inclusion professionals from around the world and regularly updated.
- While the full document is 80 pages with 266 benchmarks in 14 categories, a one-page sample of best practices can be found here: [www.diversitycollegium.org/GDIB\\_Benchmarks\\_Sampler\\_031816.pdf](http://www.diversitycollegium.org/GDIB_Benchmarks_Sampler_031816.pdf)
- Note that the GDIB was developed primarily for larger companies but can still provide guidance for small to medium sized companies

**"The Inclusion Dividend: Why Investing in Diversity and Inclusion Pays Off"**, Mason Donovan, Mark Kaplan, Bibliomotion, (2013), available on Amazon.ca

- Provides advice to employers to help improve the bottom line through inclusive practices

**"Why Diversity Matters"**, Vivian Hunt, Dennis Layton, Sara Prince, McKinsey & Co., (January 2015),

[www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/why-diversity-matters](http://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/why-diversity-matters)

- Excerpt of data from McKinsey report "Diversity Matters" with statistics that demonstrate that companies that are in the top quartile for racial and ethnic diversity do 35% better financially than the median and companies that are in the top quartile for gender diversity do 15% better financially than the median.

**"Why is Silicon Valley so Awful to Women"**, Liza Mundy, The Atlantic, April 2017,

[www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/04/why-is-silicon-valley-so-awful-to-women/517788](http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/04/why-is-silicon-valley-so-awful-to-women/517788)

- Article on the continued gender imbalance in major tech companies and strategies to counteract them, which will generally work to improve diversity across the board

**Information and Communications Technology Council ("ICTC")**

<http://wit.ictc-ctic.ca/diversity-inclusion-readiness-scale>

- Self-assessment grid to identify a company's position on diversity and inclusion and readiness to move to the next stage
- Created as part of the Women in Technology initiative and reflects an emphasis on gender balance
- Note also a Readiness Quiz, which is also focused on gender balance

**#HackDiversity**

<http://betakit.com/hackdiversity-documentary-calls-on-canadas-tech-leaders-to-foster-diversity-and-inclusion-in-their-community>, documentary from StackAdapt aimed at raising awareness of barriers to diversity in the tech sector

**"Change Together"**, a Diversity Guidebook for Startups and Scaleups, a collaboration between Techgirls Canada and TWG, [www.changetogether.io](http://www.changetogether.io)

- Techgirls Canada worked with technology company TWG to develop a set of strategies for the company to increase its diversity and inclusion and shared their recommendations in the open source report
- Note that the focus of the project was on gender parity rather than full diversity, though there are references to strategies for underrepresented groups within the report

## TRAINING

See CCDI's workshop and webinar schedule for programs such as **"The ROI of D & I"** – [www.ccdi.ca](http://www.ccdi.ca)

- Indigenous Inclusion
- Gender in the Workplace

**"Don't Give Up on Unconscious Bias Training – Make It Better"**, Joelle Emerson, Harvard Business Review, April 28, 2017 – <https://hbr.org/2017/04/dont-give-up-on-unconscious-bias-training-make-it-better>

- Guidance on what to look for in good unconscious bias training including stats on how effective it can be when it is done well

**Bhasin Consulting** - <http://bhasinconsulting.com/home/e-learning>

- E-learning modules on cultural competence, inclusive recruitment and leadership and development
- Toronto

**Diversipro** - [www.diversipro.com](http://www.diversipro.com)

- Workshops on diversity and intercultural competence
- Toronto

**Graybridge Malkham** - <http://graybridgemalkam.com>

- Workshops and training on topics such as unconscious bias, positive and respectful workplace, intercultural awareness
- Research and consulting
- Ottawa



**Diversity Solutions** - [www.diversitysolutions.net](http://www.diversitysolutions.net)

- Workshops on diversity and inclusion, anti-oppression techniques
- E-learning
- Consulting
- Toronto

**Kaleidoscopic** - [www.ksopic.ca/diversity-inclusion](http://www.ksopic.ca/diversity-inclusion)

- Self-assessment tool, workshops on diversity and inclusion topics, leadership topics
- Toronto

**Ready Willing and Able** - [www.readywillingable.ca](http://www.readywillingable.ca)

- Free online training for employers to help them adapt their recruitment practices, see value in hiring workers with intellectual disabilities or on the autism spectrum.
- National

**The 519** - [www.the519.org/education-training](http://www.the519.org/education-training)

- Workshops and training on creating LGBTQ inclusive and Trans inclusive work environments
- Toronto

**Native Canadian Centre of Toronto** - <http://ncct.on.ca/indigenous-cultural-competency-training>

- Indigenous Cultural Competency Training
- Toronto

**London Economic Development Corporation ("LEDC")** - [www.ledc.com](http://www.ledc.com)

- hosts a series of workshops for small and medium sized companies on issues such as recruitment strategies, performance and communications
- Digital creative is a target sector
- London

**"Making Accessible Media: Accessible Design in Broadcast Media"** by Humber School of Media Studies, September 1, 2017 - <http://humber.ca/makingaccessiblemedia>

- 6 module course free to the public on topics such as how to write inclusive language re disabilities, captioning, creating alt text, making machine readable Word and PDF documents

## CONSULTANTS

### **Bhasin Consulting** - <http://bhasinconsulting.com/home/e-learning>

- Offers consulting services on diversity and inclusion and other leadership issues
- Toronto

### **Change Dezin Consulting** - [www.changedezign.com](http://www.changedezign.com)

- Offers diversity and inclusion consulting and research services
- Program design and evaluation
- Leadership coaching in cultural competency
- Toronto

### **Diversipro** - [www.diversipro.com](http://www.diversipro.com)

- Diversity and intercultural competence consulting services
- Toronto

### **Eghon Zender** - [www.egonzehnder.com](http://www.egonzehnder.com)

- Consulting on diversity and inclusion and corporate leadership with an emphasis on gender
- Offices around the world including Toronto, Montreal and Calgary

## COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

### **Mozilla Hive Toronto Learning Network** - [www.hivetoronto.org](http://www.hivetoronto.org)

- Provides hands on learning opportunities in digital media and digital literacy for youth, in partnership with educators and community-based youth organizations
- Toronto

### **Ready Willing and Able** - [www.readywillingable.ca](http://www.readywillingable.ca)

- Free online training for employers to help them adapt their recruitment practices, see value in hiring workers with intellectual disabilities or on the autism spectrum.
- Resources on the business case of hiring workers with intellectual disabilities or on the autism spectrum
- National

### **Every1Games** - [www.every1games.ca](http://www.every1games.ca)

- Provides training for neurodivergent youth to transition to life after high school including game development workshops to help them succeed in post-secondary media programs
- Toronto, Niagara

### **Dames Making Games** - <https://dmg.to>

- Workshops, meetups, game jams, intensive programs to help women to make games
- Consulting, policy development, speaking
- Toronto

### **Project Include** - <http://projectinclude.org>

- Group of tech women in the U.S. aimed at improving the diversity of the tech start up community through sharing best practices
- Crafted set of customizable recommendations for CEOs
- U.S.-based



**TXDL (Techsdale) - [www.techsdale.ca](http://www.techsdale.ca)**

- Workshops to help underprivileged youth develop coding skills
- Rexdale

**Girl Force - [www.girlforce.ca](http://www.girlforce.ca)**

- Teaches game development to girls, women and non-binary folk
- Ottawa

**Ladies Learning Code - <http://ladieslearningcode.com/about>**

- Teaches women and youth to code in chapters across Canada

**Pinnguaq - <http://pinnguaq.com/teach>**

- Teaches youth in Nunavut how to use computers and code

**Women in Technology, Communitech****[www.communitech.ca/how-we-help/talent/women-in-technology-2](http://www.communitech.ca/how-we-help/talent/women-in-technology-2)**

- With funding from Status of Women Canada, developed programming to bring more women into leadership positions in technology
- Kitchener

**Gammaspace - [www.bentomiso.com](http://www.bentomiso.com)**

- Co-working space for those who make, play and talk about video games
- Events and workshops to advance skills and knowledge
- Aims to be women/queer/trans-positive, diverse and physically accessible space
- Toronto

## EMPLOYER TOOLS

**"The Human Equity Advantage: Beyond Diversity to Talent Optimization"**, Trevor Wilson, Jossey-Bass, (2013) available at Amazon.ca

- Employee management book with good self-assessment tools for employers to identify unconscious bias

**True Colours****<https://truecolorsintl.com/about-us/what-is-true-colors>**

- Assess people on one of four communication styles to de-personalize interactions as an inclusivity tool

**"Wanted – A Way With Words in Recruitment Ads"**, by Jane Wild, Financial Times, March 7, 2017,

**[www.ft.com/content/9974boce-e7bb-11e6-967b-c88452263daf](http://www.ft.com/content/9974boce-e7bb-11e6-967b-c88452263daf)** See Appendix D for examples.

**Textio**, augmented writing platform that analyzes job ads, compares them to those in their database and recommends how to improve them to increase qualified applicants and remove hidden gender biases,

**[www.textio.com](http://www.textio.com)**

**Matter**, a Diversity Dashboard app to provide insights, graphs, tracking of Diversity and Inclusion at a company, **[www.matterapp.io](http://www.matterapp.io)**

**World Education Services**, free Degree Equivalency Tool to assess internationally educated applicant's degree, [www.wes.org/employers/prescreening.asp](http://www.wes.org/employers/prescreening.asp)

**Inclusive HR Toolkit, Work in Culture**,

[www.workinculture.ca/Resources/Inclusion-in-the-Creative-Workplace/Inclusive-HR-Toolkit](http://www.workinculture.ca/Resources/Inclusion-in-the-Creative-Workplace/Inclusive-HR-Toolkit),

created for non-profit arts and culture institutions but still a lot there that is useful

**"Structured Interview Questions: Tips and Examples for Hiring"**, by Nikoletta Bitá, Workable,

<https://resources.workable.com/tutorial/structured-interview-questions-guide>

See Workable for a recruiting app but also a number of free to use guides and tutorials related to recruitment and HR policies.

**ETeki** - [www.eteksi.com](http://www.eteksi.com) Online third party technical interviews to avoid bias inherent in internal interviews

**"Making it Work! How to Effectively Manage Maternity Leave Career Transitions"**, Canadian Education and Research Institute for Counselling, 2016,

<http://ceric.ca/resource/making-work-effectively-manage-maternity-leave-career-transitions-employers-guide/>

- Example of a Powerpoint presentation to a generic IDM company to communicate to staff the process of development of a Diversity and Inclusion strategy, prepared by the Consultant. – Appendix "F"

# APPENDIX “A”

## Kelly Lynne Ashton – Consultant

Trained as an entertainment lawyer, Kelly Lynne Ashton has been working in the Canadian film, television and digital media industries for over twenty years. She has worked as a business affairs executive in several Toronto television production and distribution companies, including Atlantis Films Limited and the Owl Group of Companies. Kelly Lynne then entered the world of digital media to act as Senior Producer at children’s web studio Big Orbit Inc. While at Big Orbit she also developed, managed and marketed the online youth research company Reactorz. She has also worked in government relations and media policy as Director of Policy at the Writers Guild of Canada, where she also developed, launched and managed the Bell Media Diverse Screenwriters Program. Kelly Lynne is currently bringing together the different strands of her career in the Canadian media industries - legal, business, marketing and research - and providing consulting services to clients in all areas of the industry including Interactive Ontario, the Bell Fund, Shaw Rocket Fund, and acting as Programming Consultant for CMPA’s Prime Time in Ottawa 2015 and Conference Curator at Interactive Ontario’s GameON: Ventures 2016 and iVentures 2017. Kelly Lynne recently completed the Centennial College Certificate in Leadership and Inclusion.

# APPENDIX “B”

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## Roundtable Participants

Tony Walsh – Phantom Compass  
Vanessa Chia – Cococucumber  
Carole Nkoa – Groupe Média TFO  
Lydia Sani – Redwood Performance Group  
Jennie Faber – Dames Making Games (DMG)  
Jason Canam – Household Games Inc.  
Sasha Boersma – Sticky Brain Studios  
Madalina Hubert - Lofty Sky Entertainment  
Damir Slogar - Big Blue Bubble  
Brittany Medeiros – London Economic Development Corporation  
Candace Campbell – London Economic Development Corporation  
Evan Jones - Stitch Media  
Titus Ferguson – UnLondon  
Miriam Verburg – Bloom Digital  
Thomas Cermak – PoMoFo Entertainment  
Jaclyn Smith – University of Toronto  
Zoë Adesina – Centennial College  
Guillermo Acosta – Humber College  
George Paravantes – Humber College  
Mark Jones – Seneca College  
Sarah Saucier – Every1Games

# APPENDIX “C”

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## Interview Participants

Karen Schulman Dupuis – Women in Technology (London)  
Mona Ghiami – PwC  
Jessica Moore – Ethics in Video Games consultant  
Cheryl Fullerton and Bianca Williamson – Corus Entertainment  
Alicia Xavier – Ready Willing and Able  
Carole Nkoa – Groupe Média TFO  
Colin Ferguson – SHG Studios  
Jan Leavens – Blue Ant Media  
Heather Steele – Ubisoft Toronto  
Daniela Mahac – Uken Studios  
Anne Zbitnew – Humber College

# APPENDIX “D”

## Help with Job Descriptions

The following job descriptions were pulled from a variety of actual IDM job descriptions in Canada and the U.S. and demonstrate more inclusive language under the Yes column and less inclusive language under the No column.

**YES**

**NO**

Programmer, Developer	Warrior/Ninja/Rockstar
<p>Goal in position, i.e.:</p> <p>Someone with a great eye for organizing visual information in a modern, compelling, interesting way. You understand the opportunities and limitations of HTML5 in web design, and can collaborate with a developer to make a beautiful, engaging, moving experience accessible on both desktop and mobile browsers. This is a hands-on role, where the designer is also responsible for asset and layout design.</p>	<p>Long list of duties:</p> <p><b>Responsibilities include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Create mockups of landing pages, microsites, and develop them into functional &amp; responsive digital experiences</li> <li>* Lead and create assets and layout designs for email marketing campaigns</li> <li>* Ensure creative meets brand standards and follows design system rules</li> <li>* Work with creative team and clients to interpret and translate their needs and ideas into concepts and develop them into effective communication on web and social media</li> <li>* Keep corporate design at forefront of web design experiences (working in conjunction with development team)</li> <li>* Propose new concepts and ideas while respecting brand vision and guidelines.</li> <li>* Perform regular maintenance updates to areas of corporate website (and other business line's sites).</li> <li>* Partner with other creative team members to brainstorm creative concepts</li> <li>* Design content for social media (based on content calendar) and lead customized development as needed</li> <li>* Ensure final deliveries meet all guidelines and specifications</li> <li>* Support organization print design requirements on an 'as-needed' basis</li> </ul>

## YES

## NO

<p><b>Shorter list of required skills, list of bonus skills, e.g.:</b></p> <p>We look to our developers to recommend the best tools for the job, which may be C+, Objective C / Swift, C++, and/or Java (and no, we don't expect applicants to be experts in all). You'll have experience deploying on the iOS and Android stores, and know how to handle various screen sizes and resolutions for the best user experience.</p>	<p><b>Long list of required skills, such as:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• C++</li> <li>• Game Development</li> <li>• 5 years of professional development experience</li> <li>• Client side development of multi-tiered product</li> <li>• Development on top of scene graph or game engine SDK's</li> <li>• OpenGL or Direct3D - STL/Boost</li> <li>• 4+ years developing games for PC or Console</li> <li>• 2+ years building mobile apps</li> <li>• Familiar with Cocos2d</li> <li>• Casino gaming experience</li> <li>• Experience with Java and/or Objective-C</li> <li>• JSON</li> <li>• Cross platform development</li> <li>• iOS</li> <li>• Android</li> <li>• JNI</li> </ul>
<p>Experienced in Y</p>	<p>X+ years of experience in Y</p>
<p>Leadership</p>	<p>Strong voice</p>
<p>Bachelor's degree or diploma in Computer Science, or related field; or two to four years related experience and/or training; or an equivalent combination of both</p> <p>Post-secondary degree in Computer Science, Information Systems or related field or equivalent work experience.</p>	<p>Bachelor's or Masters degree in Computer Science or Engineering.</p>
<p>Perks such as flex time, training, proximity to public transit, gym membership, learning opportunities, professional development.</p>	<p>Bro culture perks such as foosball, candy, a stocked kitchen of beer, munchies and treats, ping pong room, happy hour.</p>
<p><b>About The Work Environment:</b> Friendly, non-threatening, and non-political environment. We are a great environment for both outgoing people and those who are very shy and introverted (applicable to non-client facing positions).</p>	<p>Work with an awesome team of smart, motivated people on cool and unique projects that are used by millions of active users every day. Admin badge for your avatar and rockstar status with our community.</p>

## YES

**D & I statement such as:** We are committed to recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce and encourage applicants from a diversity of backgrounds to apply.

OR

X is an Equal Opportunity Employer encouraging diversity in the workplace. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, national origin, gender identity/expression, age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, genetics, veteran status, marital status or any other characteristic protected by law.

OR

We are an equal opportunity employer that promotes a diverse, inclusive and accessible workplace. By embracing diversity, we build a more effective organization that empowers our employees to be the best that they can be. We are committed to creating a working environment that is barrier-free and we are prepared to provide accommodation for people with disabilities.

**Good (accommodations available during interview):** If selected for an interview, please advise our Human Resources team if you require accommodation due to a disability during the interview and assessment process.

**Better (reference to accommodations available throughout the process, i.e. including resume submission):** welcomes and encourages applications from people with disabilities. Accommodations are available on request for candidates taking part in all aspects of the selection process.

**Great (wide range of diversity referenced including men, willingness to find mutually acceptable accommodation throughout the process):** X is committed to providing a fair and equitable work environment and encourages applications from qualified women, men, visible minorities, aboriginal peoples and persons with disabilities. X is also committed to providing accommodations throughout the interview and employment process. If you require an accommodation we will work with you to meet your needs.

## NO

**Passive and vague:** We are an equal opportunity employer.

**Only encourages applications from people with disabilities and limits accommodation to what employer thinks is reasonable:** The studio welcomes and encourages applications from people with disabilities. We are committed to providing reasonable accommodation upon request for candidates taking part in the recruitment process.



YES

NO

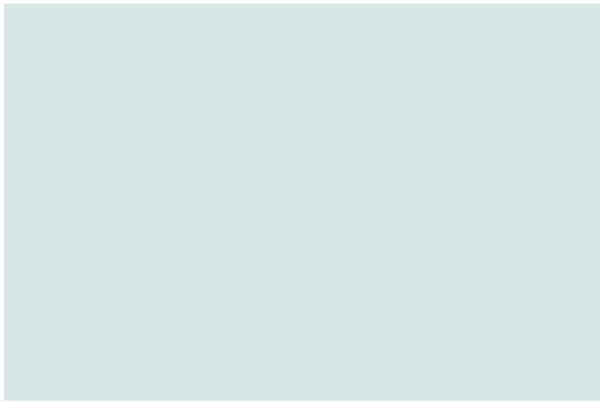
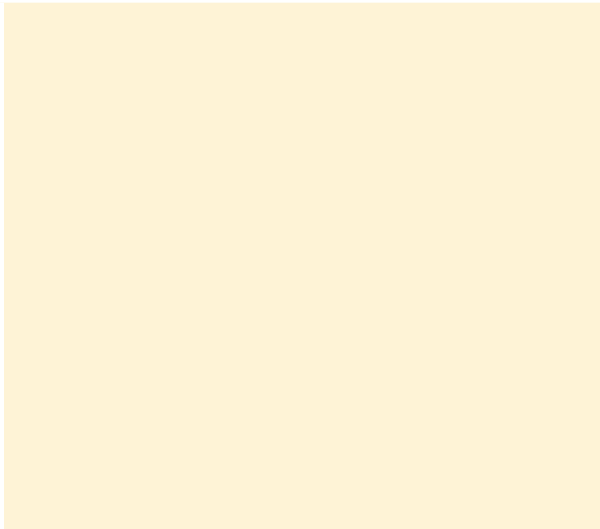
We understand and value diversity in our employees and we are proud to be an Equal Opportunity Employer. We hire the best talent regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, disability, marital status, sex, age, veteran status or sexual orientation. We draw on our diversity and collective genius as we continue to shape a better future for our customers and be the Best Place to Work for our employees- nothing is off the table at X.

X welcomes applications from visible minority group members, women, Aboriginal persons, persons with disabilities, members of sexual minority groups, and others who would contribute to the further diversification of our team.

This is a general description of the Duties, Responsibilities and Qualifications required for this position. Physical, mental, sensory or environmental demands may be referenced in an attempt to communicate the manner in which this position traditionally is performed. Whenever necessary to provide individuals with disabilities an equal employment opportunity, X will consider reasonable accommodations that might involve varying job requirements and/or changing the way this job is performed, provided that such accommodations do not pose an undue hardship.

We are looking to balance our team with both emerging talent and mentors.

**Work/Life balance:**  
Flexible work hours  
Family-friendly  
Offsite work arrangements



Any use of the word hip suggests ageism.

"Superheroes wanted!" or "fast-paced, results driven" both suggest overworked and underpaid.

# APPENDIX “E”

## Values Statements Including Diversity and Inclusion

Note that while few of the value statements use the words diversity or inclusion, they do promote aligned values such as respect, belonging, collaboration etc. The key is to express diversity and inclusion in a way that is consistent with your business and the vision of the owners and staff.

**Build-A-Bear Workshop** (make your own bears): Reach, Learn, Di-bear-sity, Colla-bear-ate, Give, Cele-bear-ate

**Whole Foods** (grocers): With great courage, integrity and love—we embrace our responsibility to co-create a world where each of us, our communities, and our planet can flourish. All the while, celebrating the sheer love and joy of food.

**Starbucks** (coffee)

With our partners, our coffee and our customers at our core, we live these values:

- Creating a culture of warmth and belonging, where everyone is welcome.
- Acting with courage, challenging the status quo and finding new ways to grow our company and each other.
- Being present, connecting with transparency, dignity and respect.
- Delivering our very best in all we do, holding ourselves accountable for results.
- We are performance driven, through the lens of humanity.

**Square Space** (website building and blogging platform):

- Be your own customer
- Empower individuals
- Design is not a luxury
- Good work takes time
- Optimize towards ideals
- Simplify

**Buffer** (social media management):

- Choose positivity
- Default to transparency
- Focus on self-improvement
- Be a no-ego doer
- Listen first, then listen more
- Communicate with clarity
- Make time to reflect
- Live smarter, not harder
- Show gratitude
- Do the right thing



**Netflix** (streaming):

- Judgment
- Communication
- Impact
- Curiosity
- Innovation
- Courage
- Passion
- Honesty
- Selflessness

**Pulse Point** (digital advertising technology):

- Win Together, Lose Together
- Innovative approaches in everything we do
- Delight our customers every day
- Move fast and make shit happen
- Have fun or go home

**Riot Games** (multiplayer game studio):

- Player experience first
- Challenge convention
- Focus on talent and team
- Take play seriously
- Stay hungry, stay humble

**Blizzard Entertainment** (video game studio):

- Gameplay first
- Commit to quality
- Play nice; play fair
- Embrace your inner geek
- Every voice matters
- Think globally
- Lead responsibly
- Learn and grow

# APPENDIX “F”

## Template for Powerpoint Presentation to Staff re-developing a diversity and inclusion strategy

<http://interactiveontario.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Diversity-Inclusion-Presentation.pptx>