

# SUPPORTING DIVERSE WORKFORCES






QCOSS acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the original inhabitants of Australia. I would like to acknowledge the Jagera and Turrbal peoples as traditional custodians of the land we are gathered upon. I pay respect to the Elders of this land; past and present.



# SESSION OUTLINE

- Human Resources (HR) in the community services sector
  - Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Strategy
  - Writing a job ad
  - Finding candidates
  - Practical resources
- 

# HR IN THE COMMUNITY SECTOR

Human Resources (HR) and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) issues in the sector:

- Inadequate funding/funding uncertainty contribute to job insecurity and limited career pathways
- Decision makers don't reflect the broader workforce, and don't reflect the diversity seen in the client base
- Difficulty recruiting and retaining staff
- Low pay rates and high part-time and casual employment terms.

# DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND BELONGING

## WHY DOES DEIB MATTER?

- A single incident of micro-exclusion can lead to an immediate 25% decline in an individual's performance on a team project
- Diverse teams = better social intelligence. 40% of team performance is due to its social intelligence
- Diverse teams = better client outcomes
- Workplaces that encourage employees to voice their opinions and be involved in decision making have 33% lower employee turnover

# 1

## DEIB Strategy

# STEPS TO DEVELOPING A DEIB STRATEGY

1. Gain leadership commitment.
2. Conduct a DEIB audit.
3. Review your organisation's policies and practices.
4. Identify areas for strengthening and determine reasonable Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
5. Develop a process for regularly reviewing the strategy and keeping leadership accountable to the agreed KPIs.



# DEIB AUDIT

- Staff
- Stakeholders
- Employment policies and practices
- Recruitment
- Remuneration and reward
- Inclusion
- Learning and development





# 2

## Write a job ad that gets hits

# 5 COMPONENTS OF A JOB AD

Information about  
organisation/team

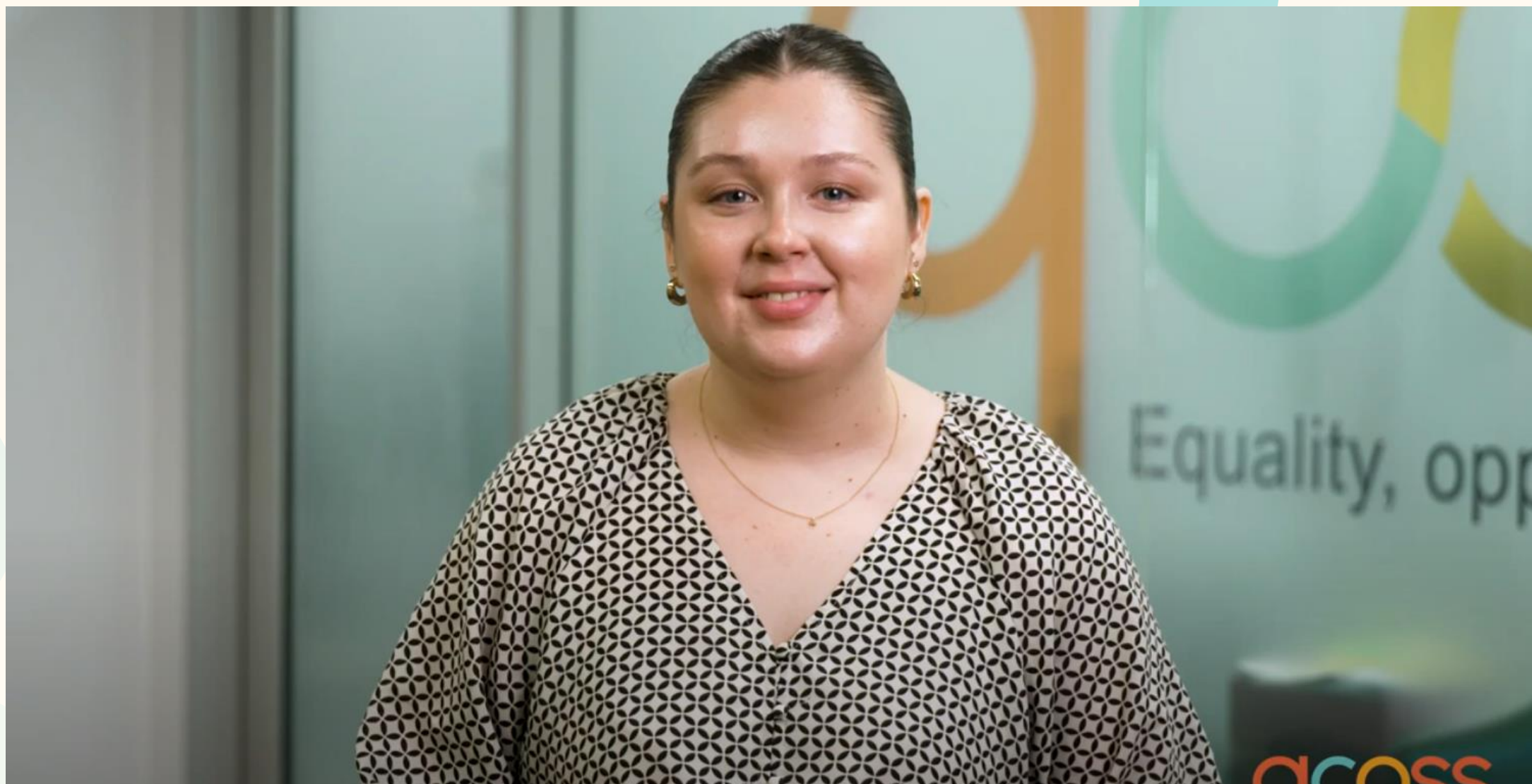
What the role entails



Employee benefits  
e.g. EVP

Skills, experience,  
attributes required

How to apply



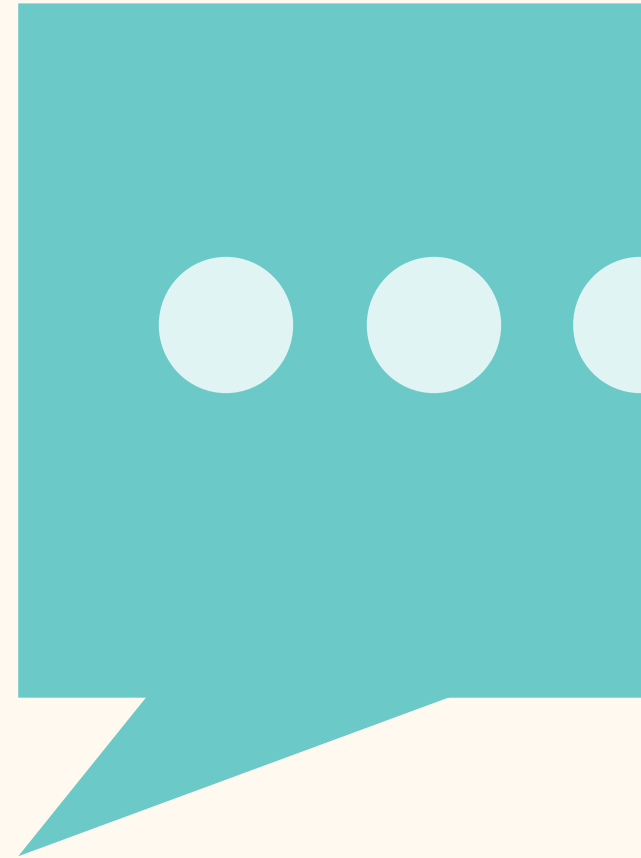
# INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

Different words conjure up different images which can bias who applies

- Competitive, fearless and enforcement (masculine toned)
- Transparent, collaborative and supportive (feminine toned)
- Energetic, ninja, fun-loving (youth toned)
- Responsible, strategic, mentor (elder toned)



TIP: You can use a free gender decoder to analyse your ad  
<https://gender-decoder.katmatfield.com/>



# TARGETING DIFFERENT PEOPLE

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## Feminine

provision  
communication  
collaboration  
flexible

## Masculine

independent self-  
starter  
challenging  
highly unionised  
confident  
decisive  
high performer  
leader

## Young

creative  
fast-paced  
digital-first  
fresh ideas  
'out-of-the-box'  
exciting opportunity

## Mature

responsible  
strategic  
mentor  
experienced

# INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

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## Prioritise

Prioritise inclusivity and emphasise accessibility

## Eliminate

Eliminate industry jargon and gender coded words

## Craft

Craft a strong diversity statement & encourage diverse applications

## Update

Regularly update your ads to reflect best practice

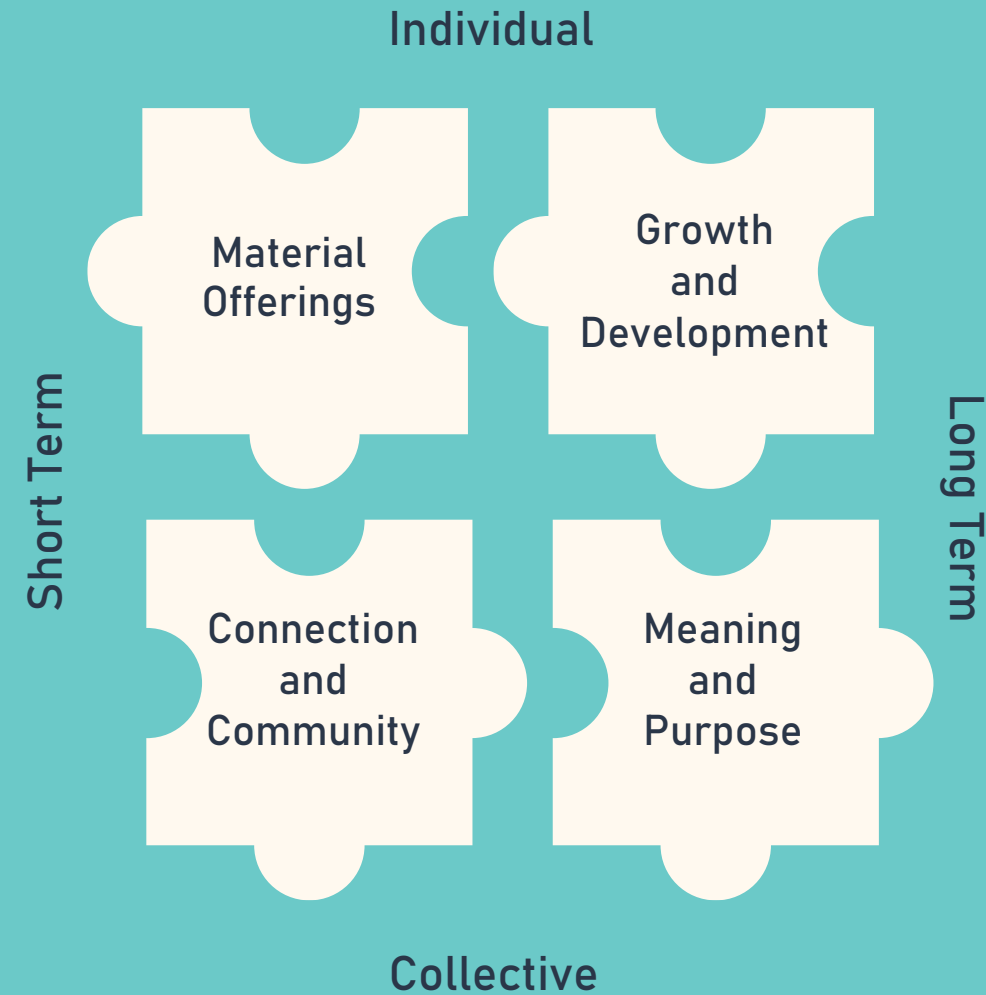
## Lead

Lead by example by showcasing your DEIB initiatives

# EMPLOYEE VALUE PROPOSITION

Different employees value different things, so consider having multiple EVPs including:

- Financial benefits
- Leave provisions and flexible work arrangements
- Learning and career development, mentoring opportunities
- How employees get to work, e.g. do they have autonomy, collaboration opportunities, flexibility
- Employee Resource Groups



# IS YOUR APPLICATION PROCESS ACCESSIBLE?

- Allow people to apply from their phone rather than a computer
- Match the level of the role
- Allow for a spellcheck function to be used on their application
- Allow people to navigate the application form just by using their keyboard
- Allow people to use a screen reader or other assistive technology



# APPLICATION PROCESS ACCOMMODATIONS

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- Simplify the process
- Highlight accommodations available
- Accessible formats for applications
- Contact for queries
- Inclusive timing
- Feedback mechanism
- Continuous improvement



**Find the candidates you're looking for**

# RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

Effective recruitment and selection...

- Attracts a diverse range of talent reflective of the community and able to meet the community's needs
- Helps mitigate against skills shortages
- Reduces turnover and associated costs
- Increases service quality
- Helps foster an inclusive and positive workplace culture

# WHERE TO LOOK FOR CANDIDATES...

What you write in your ad is just as important as where your ad is seen. Relying on employee referrals for your new hires means new employees will look the same as your existing ones.



# WHERE TO LOOK FOR CANDIDATES...

- Job boards, e.g. Seek, SmartJobs, Indeed, LinkedIn
- Employee referrals
- Recruiters
- SeekOut Recruit
- Grassroots organisations
- Specialist media
- Partner with support agencies and NFP organisations
- Offer student placements/entry-level roles/apprenticeships
- Referees



# THE MYTH OF MERIT

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- Criteria definition: If criteria are based on qualities or experiences that are more accessible to certain groups due to socioeconomic or cultural factors
- Assessment methods: Can be influenced by the assessors' biases, consciously or unconsciously
- Opportunity access: Access to opportunities that enhance a candidate's merit, such as education, internships, and professional development, is not equally available to all
- Cultural fit: Prioritises candidates who align with the existing organisational culture, typically shaped by dominant groups
- Networks and referrals: Recruitment processes that rely heavily on networks and referrals perpetuate homogeneity

# 'MERIT'

## WHO GETS OVERLOOKED?

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- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples – lack of recognition of unique cultural competencies or alternative career pathways
- Women – gender biases, particularly in male dominated industries/roles or leadership roles
- Older workers – ageist stereotypes
- Candidates with disabilities – assumptions about productivity, job requirements or requiring significant job accommodations





# **‘MERIT’ WHO GETS OVERLOOKED?**

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- Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) candidates – biases around name, accent, cultural practices or residency status
- LGBTQIA+ individuals – personal prejudices and stereotypes
- Candidates with nontraditional career paths – career breaks, industry changes, volunteer work



# SELECTION TECHNIQUE

## CV SCREENING

- Use your selection criteria to assess CVs, rather than a 'general feel'
- Use a marking guide to identify each criteria identified in the CV
- De-identify CVs if possible

# DIVERSIFYING YOUR INTERVIEW PANEL

- Leverage community networks and partnerships
- Volunteer panel members
- Staff rotation and training
- Internships and mentoring programs
- Community advisory boards
- Redefine expertise
- Simplify panel requirements
- Utilise digital platforms and social media
- Get feedback!



# SELECTION BIASES

Confirmation  
bias

Affinity bias

Conformity bias

Gender bias

Ageism

Overqualification  
bias

Halo effect

Horns effect

Cultural bias

Name bias

Beauty bias

# A KEY BARRIER IS UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

Unconscious biases are judgements and assessments formed outside our conscious awareness, based on our beliefs and past experiences, and those of the community or culture in which we live.



**“AN IMPORTANT RULE OF BIAS  
MITIGATION IS TO ALWAYS  
ASSUME AND ACCEPT THAT WE’RE  
BIASED AND HOLD OURSELVES  
ACCOUNTABLE.”**

Arthur Chan

# DEFINING THE 'SEEDS' MODEL OF BIAS

- Similarity: “People like me are better than others”
- Expedience: “If it feels right, it must be true”
- Experience: “My perceptions are accurate”
- Distance: “Closer is better than distant”
- Safety: “Bad is stronger than good”



## HOW TO MITIGATE USING 'SEEDS'

- Similarity: create a list of commonalities you have with each potential candidate
- Expedience: interviewers write down their scoring and decisions before sharing with each other
- Experience: use a diverse interview panel so different perspectives are used; complete inclusive recruitment training
- Distance: one interview on video, all on video
- Safety: approach decisions like you are an advisor to the group



# REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Offer 'reasonable accommodations' as part of your standard recruitment practices.

- Flexible interview scheduling, e.g. bookings, Calendly
- Provide clear instructions on the process, location, interviewers etc.
- Accessible website, job ad and online processes
- Use accessible venues for face-to-face interviews



# REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

- Provide interview questions in advance
- Untimed assessments
- Offer a range of ways to apply
- Adjustment of assessment methods
- Communication support (e.g. arrange for an interpreter if required)



# TARGETED RECRUITMENT

## ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE

Targeted recruitment strategies may include:

- Reserving certain positions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants
- Guaranteed interview schemes
- Work placements, traineeships or mentoring programs
- Engaging an Indigenous Recruitment Service to hire trainees, graduates and fill other roles

*‘Targeted recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people guideline’*



# TARGETED RECRUITMENT

## ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE

- **Special Measure:** an action taken to address disadvantage experienced by a particular racial group.
  - Example: an action taken to support groups of people who face, or have faced, entrenched discrimination, so they can have similar access to opportunities as others.
- **Genuine Occupational Requirement:** refers to situations where being of a particular race is a genuine occupational qualification or requirement for a particular job.
  - Example: roles that involve developing or implementing policies, programs, or services targeting Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities.



# **SUPPORTING DIVERSE WORKFORCES**



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## **RESOURCES**

# DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING GUIDE

- DEIB in the community services sector
- Understanding diversity and inclusion
- Creating an inclusive organisational culture
- Unconscious bias and stereotypes



## DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING GUIDE

Developing inclusive and equitable workplaces  
in Queensland's community services sector

The Supporting Diverse Workforces project is proudly funded by the  
Queensland Government through its Growing Workforce Participation Fund.

# CREATING AN INCLUSIVE ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN TOP TALENT

- Organisations that prioritise inclusivity are more likely to attract a diverse pool of talented individuals.
- When employees see that their organisation values diversity and inclusion, they are more likely to stay and contribute long-term.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Guide

# STRATEGIES FOR CREATING AN INCLUSIVE CULTURE

1. Establish leadership commitment
2. Develop inclusive policies and practices
3. Promote Inclusive policies and practices
4. Provide Diversity and Inclusion Training
5. Encourage Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)
6. Foster inclusive communication
7. Regularly assess and adjust inclusion efforts





# SUPPORTING DIVERSE WORKFORCES

## RESOURCES

- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) Guide
- HR Lifecycle – DEIB Checklist
- Position Description and Job Ad Template
- Diversifying Recruitment Channels Tipsheet
- Reasonable Accommodations Tipsheet
- Bystander to Upstander Guide

[www.qcoss.org.au/project/supporting-diverse-workforces](http://www.qcoss.org.au/project/supporting-diverse-workforces)

# THANK YOU

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