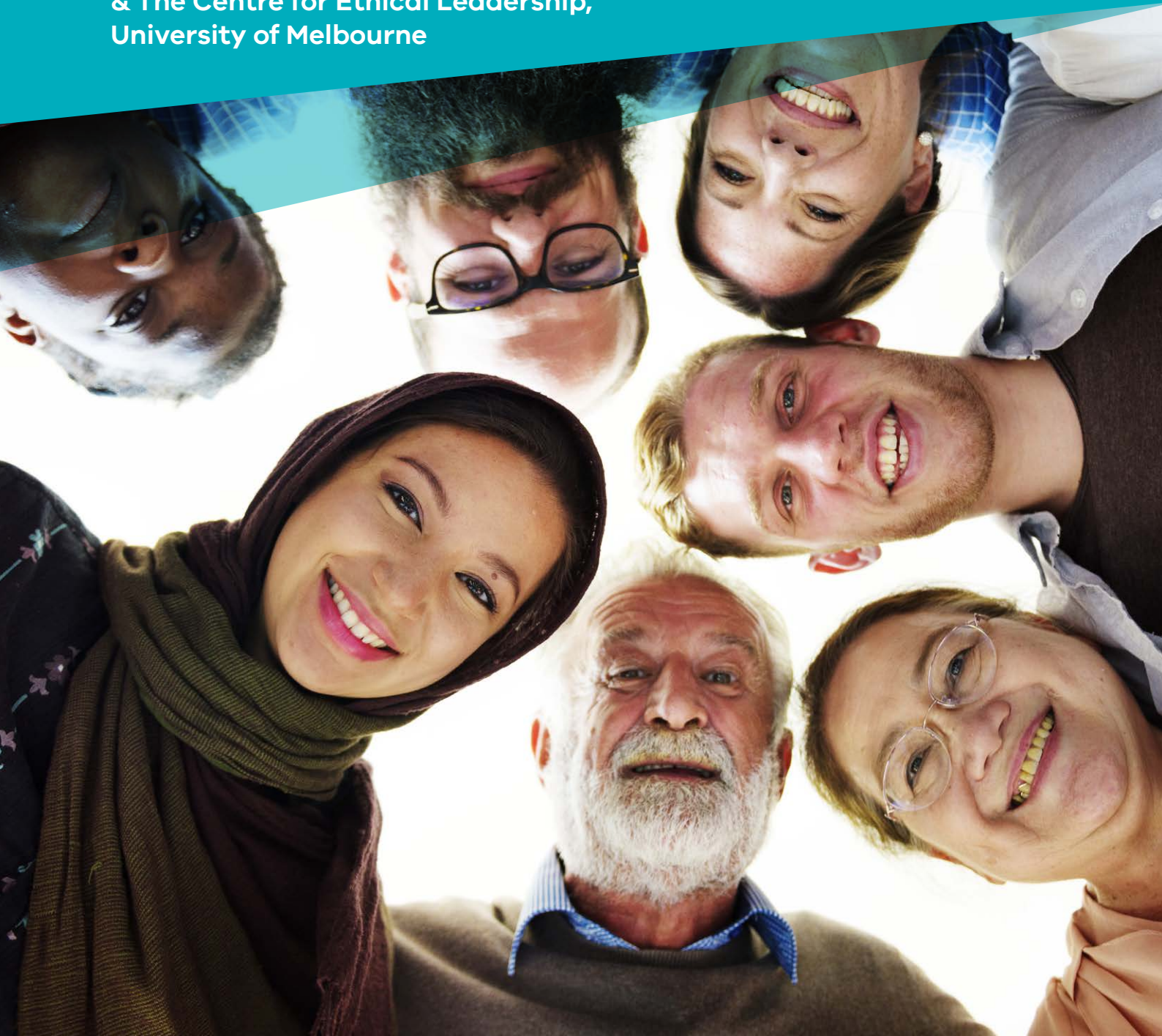RECRUIT SMARTER
VICTORIA

Report of Findings

**Department of Premier and Cabinet Victoria
& The Centre for Ethical Leadership,
University of Melbourne**

Recruit Smarter: Report of Findings
Department of Premier and Cabinet Victoria
The Centre for Ethical Leadership, University of Melbourne

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Brotherhood of St Laurence
Cognicity
Commonwealth Bank of Australia
Community and Public Sector Union
Deloitte
Deloitte Access Economics
Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
Department of Justice and Regulation
Department of Premier and Cabinet
Department of Treasury and Finance
DOW Chemical Company
Emergency Management Victoria
Environment Protection Authority
Ernst & Young
Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria
FlexCareers
Hall & Wilcox LLC
Hays Specialist Recruitment
Hoban Recruitment
JobGetter
K&L Gates LLC
Law Institute of Victoria
Multicultural Youth Network
Municipal Association of Victoria
PwC
Recruitment & Consulting Services Association of Australia & New Zealand
SEEK
The Shannon Company
Transurban
Transport Accident Commission
United Energy & Multinet Gas
Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission
VicHealth Leading Thinkers Initiative
Victorian Multicultural Commission
Victorian Public Sector Commission
Victoria Police
VicRoads
Victorian Trades Hall Council
Westjustice
Westpac
WorkSafe

Foreword

Victoria's multicultural diversity is a proud hallmark of our state.

Our diversity brings with it hope, opportunity, ambition, creativity, innovation, and a unique story. We carry these traits and aspirations with our diversity and our story into our working lives, our workplaces, and our economy.

Our diversity helps us to prosper and grow, and contributes to building the kind of state and community that we want to live in.

We have a responsibility to future generations of Victorians to create a workforce that supports and values diversity and inclusion.

Recruit Smarter is a building block for that community, and for the workplace, workforce and economy in which we want to live and work as a diverse and inclusive State.

Robin Scott MP
Minister for Multicultural Affairs

Contents

What's the issue?

Victoria is growing and becoming more diverse.

It is important for this diversity to be reflected in our workforce.

Victoria has the fastest population growth of all states in Australia.[1]

There will be
10.1 million
people in Victoria by 2051
(8 million in Greater Melbourne; 2.1 million in regional Victoria)[2]

28.4%
were born overseas in over 200 countries
(up from 26.2% in 2011 and 23.8 % in 2006)[3a]
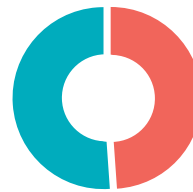
49.1%
were either born overseas or born in Australia with at least one parent born overseas
(up from 46.6% in 2011 and 43.6% in 2006)[3b]

26%
spoke one or more of over 260 languages other than English at home
(up from 23.1% in 2011 and 20.4% in 2006)[3c]

1: ABS 2017 - http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mf/3101.0
2: *Victoria in Future 2016: Population and Household Projections to 2051*, Department of Environment, Land Water and Planning, Victorian Government.
3: All figures drawn from Australian Bureau of Statistics Census Data 2006, 2011, 2016.

Jobseekers from diverse backgrounds face barriers in finding work.

This leads to underemployment and unemployment which makes our economy less productive and affects community wellbeing.

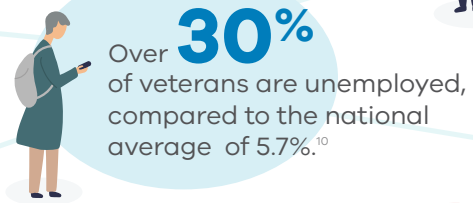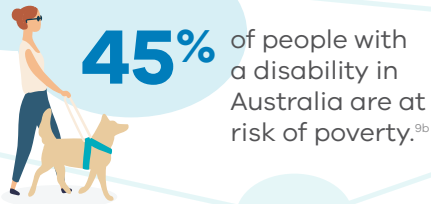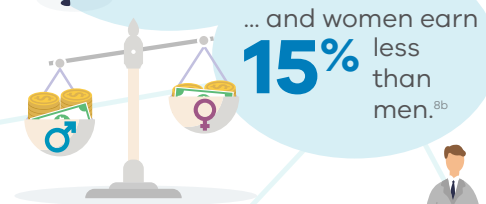The Australian Muslim population experiences almost **2x** the average national unemployment rate, despite equivalent or higher education and qualifications.[7]

The unemployment rate for Australians with a disability is **31%** higher than for the average population.[9a]

45% of people with a disability in Australia are at risk of poverty.[9b]

The workforce participation rate for women in Australia is **10%** lower than men...[8a]

... and women earn **15%** less than men.[8b]

Over **30%** of veterans are unemployed, compared to the national average of 5.7%.[10]

A key barrier is unconscious bias.

Applicants from diverse backgrounds must submit significantly more applications to attain an interview:[11]

Anglo-Saxon people:

Indigenous people: **35%** more

Middle Eastern people: **64%** more

Chinese people: **68%** more

What is unconscious bias?

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.

4: Shore et al. 2011; Roberson 2006.
5: Janssens and Zanoni 2008; Nishii 2013.
6: Harrison, Price and Bell 1998.
7: Pinkerton, T, 2013, 'Recruitment Discrimination against Middle Eastern People in Western Australia', Edith Cowan University. Cook, B, 2006, Labour Force Outcomes for Australian Muslims, University of Newcastle.University of South Australia, 2015, Australian Muslims: A demographic, social and economic profile of Muslims in Australia, International Centre for Muslim and Non-Muslim Understanding.
8: Workplace Gender Equity Agency, 2018, Gender workplace statistics at a glance, February, Australian Government.
9: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2017, Disability in Australia: changes over time in inclusion and participation in employment, Cat. no. DIS 68, Canberra: AIHW.
10: WithYouWithMe, 2017, Veteran Employment Report, Mentorconnect.
11: Booth, Leigh and Varganova 2010; Milkman, Rinne and Zimmerman 2012; Edin and Lagerström 2006.

Research from all over the world tells us that **diversity is good for the workforce, the economy, and the community.**[12]

Diverse workplaces are...

- more **efficient**
- better at **problem solving**
- more **creative**
- more **resilient** in economic and financial downturns
- **perform better overall**
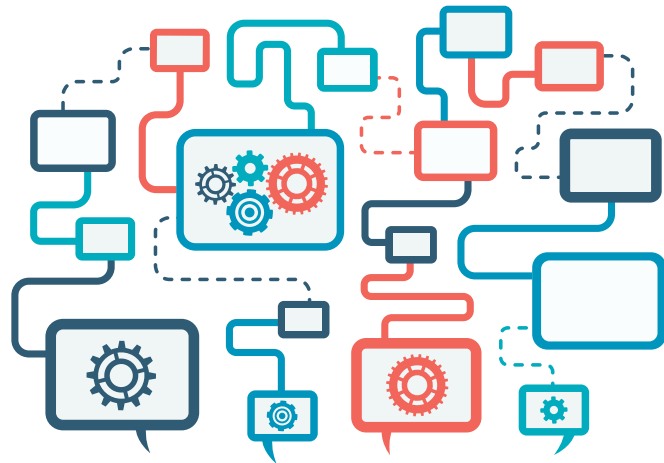
Why is diversity and inclusion important for workplaces?

Companies with **diverse executive ranks and boards** see **53%** higher returns on equity.[13]

Every **1%** rise in gender and ethnic diversity results in a rise in sales revenue of between **3%** and **9%**.[14]

Gender diverse companies are 15% more likely to outperform their less diverse counterparts.[15a]

15%

Ethnically diverse companies are 35% more likely to outperform their less diverse counterparts.[15b]

35%

12: Deloitte & The Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, 2012, Waiter, is that inclusion in my soup? A new recipe to improve business performance, Nov.; Diversity Council Australia, 2013, Capitalising on Culture: A National Survey of Business Leaders.
Grillitsch, M & Tavassoli S, 2018, 'Cultural Diversity and employment growth: Moderating effect of the recent global financial crisis' Australian Journal of Management, Jun.; Jang, S, 2018, 'Cultural Brokerage and Creative Performance in Multicultural Teams' Organization Science, 28(6), pp. 993 — 1009.
Herring, C, 2009, 'Does Diversity Pay? Race, Gender, and the Business Case for Diversity', American Sociological Review, Apr.
13: Hunt, V, Layton, D, & Prince, S, 2015, Diversity Matters, McKinsey & Company, Feb.
14: Herring, C, 2009, 'Does Diversity Pay? Race, Gender, and the Business Case for Diversity', American Sociological Review, Apr.
15: Hunt, V, Layton, D, & Prince, S, 2015, Diversity Matters, McKinsey & Company, Feb.

Culturally diverse teams are more creative and solve complex tasks more efficiently than culturally homogenous teams.[16]

RECRUIT ▽VICTORIA SMARTER

Recruit Smarter is a multi-sector initiative of the Victorian Government to develop inclusive recruitment practices and address unconscious bias in recruitment.

It is the first multi-sector initiative of its kind. 46 partner organisations participated and contributed to the findings.

16: Deloitte & The Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, 2012, *Waiter, is that inclusion in my soup? A new recipe to improve business performance*, Nov. Jang, S, 2018, 'Cultural Brokerage and Creative Performance in Multicultural Teams' *Organization Science*, 28(6), pp. 993—1009.

Recruit Smarter was run over 2 years around 3 priorities:

1

Trialling new approaches

The objective: conduct real-world trials of innovative ways to address unconscious bias in recruitment, including CV de-identification, unconscious bias training, and strategic use of language in job advertising.

Key findings:

CV de-identification

Overseas born job seekers: were 8% more likely to be shortlisted for a job after de-identification.

Women: were 8% more likely to be shortlisted and hired after de-identification.

Applicants from lower socioeconomic suburbs: were 9.4% more likely to progress through the selection process and receive a job offer.

Unconscious bias training...

... improves staff intention and capacity to support diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

Strategic use of language in job advertising...

... increases the number of applicants from priority groups: targeted advertising aimed at applicants with a disability more than doubled the number of applicants willing to indicate their need for reasonable adjustments.

... leads to better employment outcomes for applicants from priority groups: applicants who identified themselves as requiring reasonable adjustments also progressed further through recruitment overall.

2 Designing best practice

The objective: *envision and develop guidelines for inclusive recruitment and workplace practices, drawing on the latest research and on-the-ground sector expertise from participating organisations.*

The outcome:

Collaboratively developed guidelines to support diversity and inclusion in Victorian workplaces.

3 Sharing knowledge

The objective: raise awareness of the importance and value of workforce diversity and inclusion; showcase innovative research and approaches to inclusive recruitment; and highlight key issues and challenges faced by jobseekers.

The outcome:

Over 900 Victorians reached through 13 public, interactive seminars on inclusive recruitment and diversity in the workplace, hosted by leading Australian and international researchers, businesses, and non-government organisations.

What is Recruit Smarter?

Recruit Smarter is a multi-sector strategic initiative of the Victorian Government to develop inclusive recruitment practices and address unconscious bias in recruitment.

Recognising a need for greater collaboration on workplace diversity and inclusion, Recruit Smarter was developed and delivered in partnership with 46 organisations across the public, private, community, non-government, and research sectors.

Internationally, Recruit Smarter is the first initiative of its kind, contributing to a growing body of research demonstrating that diverse and inclusive workplaces perform better, are more innovative, and deliver better results across the board.

The objective of Recruit Smarter was to collaboratively develop and trial innovative approaches to inclusive recruitment.

At the heart of Recruit Smarter's approach was a commitment to meaningful multi-sector collaboration and sharing of expertise for the benefit of Victorian jobseekers. The success of this approach reflects widespread recognition of the value that a diverse and inclusive workforce brings to the economy, and the positive effects that strong labour force participation has on community growth and wellbeing.

Recruit Smarter was officially launched by the Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Robin Scott MP, on 20 May 2016 and submitted its findings to the Victorian Government in September 2018.

Recruit Smarter researchers and partners designed a program of work centred on three strategic priorities:

1 **Pilot interventions**
– real-world trials of innovative approaches to addressing unconscious bias

2 **Development of best practice**
– envisioning and developing best practice for equitable and inclusive recruitment

3 **Knowledge Sharing Seminars**
– sharing knowledge and lessons learned and raising awareness of the importance and value of workforce diversity and inclusion

Australian Human Rights Commission, *Leading for Change: A blueprint for cultural diversity and inclusive leadership revisited*, April 2018.
Australian Human Rights Commission, *Face the Facts.*
WithYouWithMe, 2017, Veteran Employment Report, Mentorconnect Pty Ltd.
Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2017, *Disability in Australia: changes over time in inclusion and participation in employment*, Cat. no. DIS 68, Canberra: AIHW.
Workplace Gender Equity Agency, 2018, *Gender workplace statistics at a glance*, February, Australian Government.

Outcomes and Findings

① Pilot interventions

Recruit Smarter researchers worked with participating employers to trial curriculum vitae (CV) de-identification; targeted advertising; unconscious bias training; and de-biasing language in job advertising.

The research teams and trials were:

Centre for Ethical Leadership, University of Melbourne

• CV de-identification

• Unconscious bias training

• Targeted language in job advertising

The Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth)

• De-biasing language in job advertisements

Noting the complexity involved in the development and delivery of each trial, this report provides an abridged overview of key findings from the pilot interventions. For detailed technical and research information on each intervention, please refer to the **Recruit Smarter Technical Report.**

CV de-identification

• **CV de-identification leads to better outcomes for overseas born job seekers:** The VicRoads trial found that overseas born applicants were 8% more likely to be shortlisted for a job after de-identification.

• **CV de-identification leads to better outcomes for women:** The Department of Treasury and Finance trial found that women were 8% more likely to be shortlisted and hired after de-identification.

• **CV de-identification leads to better outcomes for applicants from lower socioeconomic suburbs:** The Department of Premier and Cabinet trial found that applicants from lower ranked socioeconomic suburbs were 9.4% more likely to progress through the selection process and receive a job offer after de-identification.

When **country of birth** was de-identified, applicants born overseas had an **8%** higher chance of being shortlisted compared to Australian-born applicants.

Before de-identification,

men were **30%** more likely than women to be **shortlisted**

... and **33%** more likely to be **hired**

After de-identification,

men were only **6%** more likely than women to be **shortlisted**

...while **women** were **8%** more likely to be **hired**

Unconscious bias training

- **Unconscious bias training can lead to increases in diversity self-efficacy, intentions and inclusive behaviours**.

The findings from this trial indicated a statistically significant increase in staff-reported positive self-efficacy and intentions regarding diversity and self-reported diversity behaviours in the workplace. Further research is warranted to increase the magnitude of these effects.[1]

Targeted language in job advertising

- **Targeted advertising is an effective way of increasing applicants from priority cohorts:** The Transport Accident Commission (TAC) trial found that targeted advertising aimed at applicants with a disability more than doubled the number of applicants indicating a need for reasonable adjustments.[2] It also decreased the reluctance of applicants to identify as needing reasonable adjustments.[3]

- **Targeted advertising leads to better employment outcomes for applicants from priority cohorts:** The TAC trial also found that Applicants who identified themselves as requiring reasonable adjustments also progressed further through recruitment overall.[4]

De-biasing language in job advertisements

This trial was undertaken as part of VicHealth's Leading Thinkers: Behavioural Insights and Gender Equality initiative and contributed its findings to the Recruit Smarter program of work.

The trial designed to examine unconscious bias in the first stage of recruitment—the job advertisement—and tests the effect of de-biased language on the gender composition of the applicant pool. The trial was an opportunity to investigate the recruitment process as a potential key structural influencer of gender equality practice.

Due to insufficient data collected in this trial, no conclusions could be made about the effect that modified job advertisement wording could have on the gender representation of the applicant pool.

2 Developing best practice

A key advantage of Recruit Smarter was access to a wealth of corporate knowledge and experience in recruitment through the initiative's 46 partner organisations.

Recruit Smarter harnessed these resources to collaboratively envision and develop a set of aspirational and forward-looking guidelines on best practice for inclusive recruitment.

Owing to their collaboratively designed nature, the guidelines are not intended to represent the views or voice of any one sector, organisation, or their representatives.

Instead, they are the product of a collective voice across participating organisations and sectors highlighting the importance and benefits of a diverse and inclusive workforce.

These guidelines can be found in Section 2.

1: The group who had undertaken training had a mean reported efficacy-intention score of 4.66 compared to the control group mean score of 4.52. This represents a 3% increase in efficacy-intentions from training.
2: The modified advertisement led to a 1.6% change in the number of applicants indicating a need for reasonable adjustments (2.6%), compared with baseline (1%).
3: The modified advertisement decreased the percentage of applicants who did not respond to the question about reasonable adjustment by 6% (from 23.9% at baseline, to 18% after introduction of the modified advertisement).
4: Applicants who required reasonable adjustments also progressed further through recruitment overall after the introduction of the modified advertisement (1.17 at baseline compared to 1.62 out of a possible progress score of 7, following the introduction of the modified advertisement).

3 Knowledge Sharing Seminars

The Recruit Smarter seminars showcased innovative research and approaches to inclusive recruitment taking place in Victoria and around Australia, as well as highlighting key issues and challenges facing jobseekers.

Between February 2017 and March 2018, 13 interactive Knowledge Sharing Seminars were hosted and presented by Recruit Smarter partner organisations.

All seminars were free and open to the public, and reached over 900 Victorians.

More information, including a summary of each seminar, can be found in Section 3.

Partner organisation	Seminar topic
The Shannon Company	'Behavioural change principles: potential application within Recruit Smarter'
Behavioural Economics Team of the Australian Government (BETA), Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet	'Going blind to see more clearly: the effect of de-identification in short-listing practices in the Australian Public Service'
Emergency Management Victoria	'Respect and Inclusion for All: Emergency Management Diversity and Inclusion Framework'
Ernst & Young	'Targeted recruitment for people with disabilities'
Deloitte	'Gamification in recruitment practices'
SEEK	'Real people, real connection: utilising candidate insights to attract a diverse workforce'
Australia Post	'Targeted recruitment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons'
Brotherhood of St Laurence	'Onboarding and induction for inclusive employment'
PwC	'All Roles Flex: implementing and embedding'
AMES Australia & Deloitte Access Economics	'Recruiting a diverse workforce in regional Victoria: economic growth and social inclusion'
Westjustice & K&L gates LLC	'Recent trends in employment discrimination law'
HAYS Specialist Recruitment	'The art and science of successful recruitment in 2018 and beyond'
Commonwealth Bank of Australia	'Reflecting our Communities'

Lessons learned from Recruit Smarter

Recruit Smarter navigated a range of opportunities and challenges, providing valuable insights on how to successfully drive effective multi-sector and multi-partner collaboration.

These insights can be found in Section 4.

The case for
Recruit Smarter

Strategic context

Recruit Smarter arose as an opportunity for greater multi-sector collaboration on workplace diversity and inclusion strategies in Victoria.

With the Victorian population projected to double in the next 30 years,[1] the Victorian Government has an important role to play in developing and driving inclusive and equitable recruitment practices to better support Victorian businesses, jobseekers and communities, now and into the future. Moreover, as Victoria's largest employer, it is vital for the Victorian Public Service to reflect the growing diversity of the community in its own workforce.

Across sectors, this vision is also shared by Victorian workplaces—a fact evidenced by the breadth of Recruit Smarter's partner organisations.

There is growing awareness of the importance of diversity and inclusion in the workplace, and the benefits they bring to the workforce, the economy and the community. This is backed by research from Australia and around the world which tells us that diverse and inclusive workplaces are more productive and efficient, better at problem solving, more creative, and more resilient in the face of economic downturns.[2]

In short, diverse and inclusive workplaces perform better overall compared to their less diverse counterparts. These benefits also have important flow-on effects for the community, contributing to greater social cohesion, community wellbeing, and overall prosperity.

What is diversity and inclusion?

The notions of workplace diversity and inclusion are founded on the principle that everyone has a right to participate in the workforce, regardless of who they are, where they come from, or how they identify.

Inclusion

refers to the collective differences among group members, either at surface level, such as age, gender, ethnicity, disability and other observable personal factors, or at a deeper, less immediately observable level, such as cognitive abilities, personality, knowledge and experience, and attitudes.[3]

This definition recognises that people are complex, and can identify with these factors in any combination of ways that are unique to their circumstances and lived experience.

Diversity

refers to worker participation, empowerment, and the degree to which employees feel they are valued, connected with, and utilised in the workplace.[4]

A culture of inclusion is one in which individuals feel that they belong, are respected for their uniqueness, and are psychologically safe. Inclusive workplace cultures are supported by policies, procedures, and actions that are consistent with fair treatment across all social groups.[5]

1: *Victoria in Future 2016: Population and Household Projections to 2051*, Department of Environment, Land Water and Planning, Victorian Government.
2: Tavassoli et al.
3: Harrison, Price and Bell . 1998.
4: Shore et al. 2011; Roberson 2003.
5: Janssens & Zanoni 2008; Nishii 2013.

Why is diversity and inclusion in the workplace important?

There is compelling evidence that diversity and inclusion are important for both social and economic outcomes.

Research by the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission and Deloitte[1] has demonstrated that cultivating workplace diversity and inclusion can improve business performance. A study of 506 companies in the United States found that greater gender and ethnic diversity in the workplace was linked with increased sales revenues, volume of customers, market share, and profits.[2]
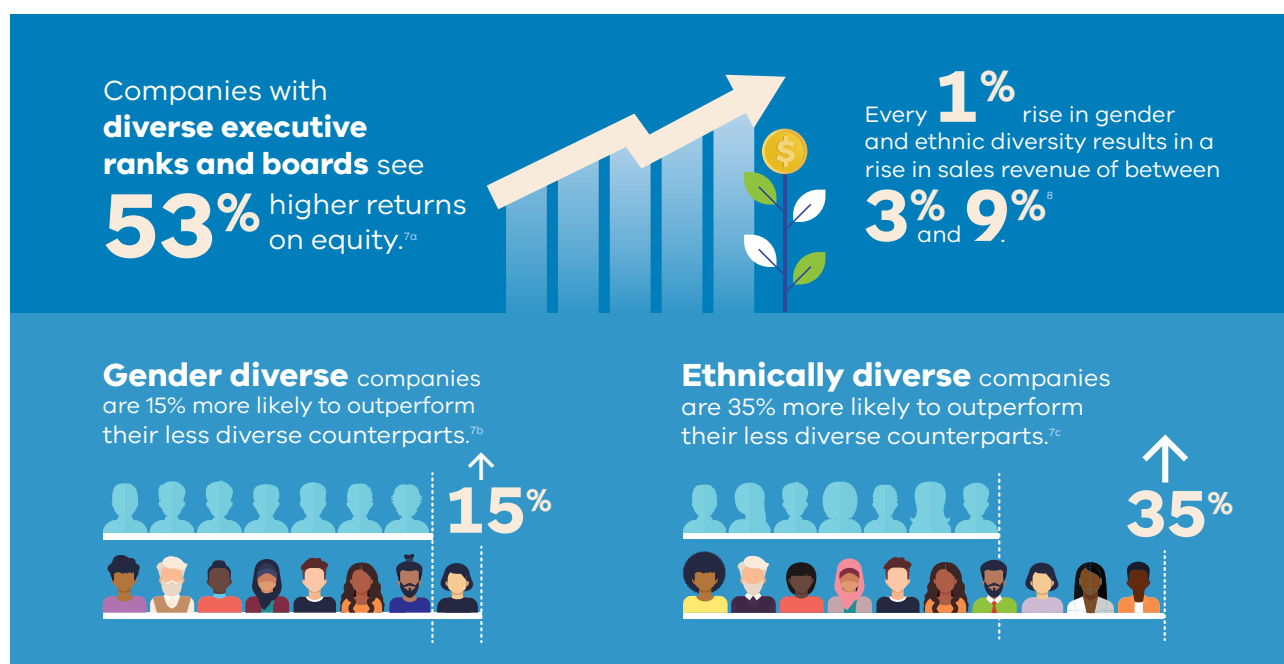
Other large-scale research in Australia and abroad reveals that greater gender and ethnic diversity in executive teams (including greater female representation on boards) is associated with increased profitability and consistent outperformance of both the wider market and other companies with less diversity.[3]

Analyses of ASX500 companies found that those with female representation on their boards had an 8.7% higher return on equity (ROE) over five years compared to the wider market and companies with no women on their board.

Research by McKinsey & Company has also demonstrated a link between diversity on company boards (defined by the number of women and foreign nationals) and financial performance. In a large multi-country study, companies ranking in the top quartile for executive-board diversity reported, on average, 53% higher ROEs and 14% higher revenue, compared to companies in the bottom quartile.[4]

These positive business outcomes are potentially the result of more diverse skills sets and increased innovation resulting from improved decision-making processes.[5]

Furthermore, the variety of information, expertise, and cognitive styles inherent in increased workplace diversity is particularly beneficial in an expanding global economy where organisations are serving increasingly diverse customer bases.[6]

Companies with **diverse executive ranks and boards** see **53%** higher returns on equity.[7a]

Every **1%** rise in gender and ethnic diversity results in a rise in sales revenue of between **3%** and **9%**.[8]

Gender diverse companies are 15% more likely to outperform their less diverse counterparts.[7b]

15%

Ethnically diverse companies are 35% more likely to outperform their less diverse counterparts.[7c]

35%

1: Deloitte & The Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, 2012, *Waiter, is that inclusion in my soup? A new recipe to improve business performance*, Nov.
2: Herring, 2009.
3: Hunt, Dixon-Fyle and Yee. 2018.
4: Barta, Kleiner and Neumann, 2012.
5: Roberge & van Dick 2010.
6: Konrad 2003.
7: Hunt, V, Layton, D, & Prince, S, 2015, *Diversity Matters*, McKinsey & Company, Feb.
8: Herring, C, 2009, '*Does Diversity Pay? Race, Gender, and the Business Case for Diversity*', American Sociological Review, Apr.

What evidence is there that diversity and inclusion are still issues in the workplace?

The composition of the Australian population is changing and becoming more diverse. This diversity is not being fully or even adequately represented in Australian workplaces, particularly in professional and leadership roles.[1]

As a result, significant portions of Australia's potential workforce capability are not being utilised.

Evidence suggests that individual members of groups historically excluded from employment and career progression, including women, ethnic minorities, veterans, people with disabilities and members of the LGBTI communities, still experience exclusion from and in workplaces today.[2]

1: Australian Human Rights Commission; O'Leary, Groutsis, and D'Almada-Remedios.
2: For example, Australian Human Rights Commission 2016; Ho and Alcorso, 2004.

Unconscious bias is a key reason why workplaces may lack diversity.

Unconscious bias refers to attitudes and beliefs that can impact our behaviour towards others without us being aware of it.[1]

In work settings, this may mean that we make assumptions about another person's skills or abilities, or their suitability for a job, based on unrelated cues such as their gender or ethnicity.

Both individual and systemic changes must be made to reduce the impact of unconscious bias on decision-making.

1: Kalev, Dobbins, and Kelly 2006;
   Forscher, Mitamura, Dix, Cox and Devine 2017.

Culturally and linguistically diverse jobseekers

Studies on attitudes towards diversity in Australia suggest considerable support for diversity both in Victoria and nationally.

The inaugural Scanlon Foundation and Monash University *Mapping Social Cohesion* survey found that 90% of respondents believe a diverse society is beneficial and 69% of respondents agreed that accepting immigrants from many different countries makes Australia stronger.

However, a third of respondents agreed that that 'Australia is weakened by people of different ethnic origins sticking to their old ways', and that some groups that do not fit into Australian society.

The most common groups mentioned were Muslim, Middle Eastern, and Asian minorities.

Respondents born in non-English speaking countries were substantially more likely than those born in New Zealand, the United Kingdom or Australia to report experiencing race-based discrimination, especially in the workplace, at large public events, in restaurants and shops, and in educational settings.[1]

Minorities are also more likely to experience unemployment, or have less privileged jobs with lower pay and more unfavourable working conditions.[2]

This is a persistent issue. In the first two years of migration, 47% of highly qualified migrants in Australia are underemployed, compared with 23% of similarly qualified workers born in Australia. After five years, 40% of qualified migrants are still working in lower skilled jobs.[3]

Given the significance of these issues in contributing to cycles of disadvantage and reduced social cohesion, it is important for organisations to address these barriers.

Applicants with perceived 'foreign' names and education are disadvantaged in the application process.
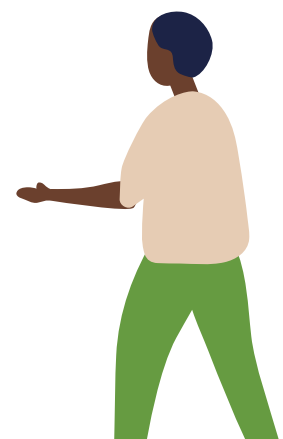
A number of research studies have used matched pairs of CVs to show that applicants with non-Western names are less likely to be offered interviews and jobs.

For example, a recent Canadian trial constructed CVs to represent migrants from China, India, Pakistan, and Britain, as well as non-immigrants with both ethnic and non-ethnic sounding names. They found that applicants with ethnic names and international education were three times less likely to receive interviews.[4]

Employers showed a clear preference for local experience. Even applicants with international experience who reported local qualifications and between four and six years of local experience were less valued than local employees with equivalent or less local experience.

Similar studies have been conducted in different countries. In the United States, African-American applicants are less likely to be offered interviews compared to Caucasian applicants.[5]

In another study, Black and Latino applicants had call-back rates equivalent to those of Caucasian applicants with a criminal record.[6]

In Sweden, Middle Eastern applicants were less likely than native Swedes to be interviewed—irrespective of whether the Middle Eastern applicant was a first or second generation migrant.[7]

Finally, an Australian study found evidence of bias against ethnic minority groups including Indigenous Australian, Italian, Chinese, and Middle Eastern applicants compared to Anglo applicants, with call-back differences varying systematically between ethnic groups.[8]

These studies demonstrate that racial bias against ethnic minorities occurs cross-culturally and consistently.

Women

There is a growing body of evidence demonstrating the benefits that women bring to the workplace.

For example, leadership styles typically ascribed to women have been found to positively influence working environments. A meta-analysis by Eagly, Johannsen-Schmidt and Engen[9] found that compared to men, women were more likely to deliver appropriate feedback and reward behaviours—characteristics that are predictive of effective performance.[10]

More broadly, women were found to have more transactional and transformational leadership styles that positively relate to overall workplace effectiveness.

However, while women have been shown to have many positive impacts in the workplace, a large body of evidence shows that they are systematically disadvantaged and discriminated against in recruitment processes. A meta-analysis of over 100 studies on gender bias in recruitment found that men were preferred for male-dominated roles, but that there was no gender bias for applicants for female-dominated roles.[11]

To the contrary, a related study from potential job applicants in a Swedish public employment database found that female candidates had a 15% lower chance of being contacted by potential employers compared to male candidates.[12] These results suggest that women may be unfairly disadvantaged in the job market.

1: Markus and Dharmalingam 2007.
2: Colic-Peisker and Tilbury 2006.
3: Liebig 2007.
4: Oreopoulos 2009.
5: Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004.
6: Pager, Bonikowski, & Western, 2009.
7: Carlsson, 2010.
8: Booth, Leigh, & Varganova, 2012.
9: Eagly, A., Johannsen-Schmidt, M., & van Engen, M. (2003), *Transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles: A meta-analysis comparing women and men*. Psychological Bulletin, 129 (4), 569-591.
10 Lowe, Kroeck, & Sivasubramanium, 1996.
11: Koch, D'Mello, & Sackett, 2015.
13: Edin & Lagerström, 2006

Disability

Australia is ranked amongst the lowest out of the developed nations in terms of people with disabilities engaged in paid employment.

Consequently, PwC's *Disability Expectations: Investing in a better life*, *a stronger Australia* report revealed that more than 45% of people with a disability in Australia live in or near poverty, in comparison to the 22% average globally.

A 2016 review by the Australian Human Rights Commission of complaints brought under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth) found that disability was the most common category of discrimination, comprising 37% of complaint cases.[1]

Of that figure, a third were cases specific to employment. Many of these cases were also related to discriminatory selection processes for new employees, most of whom were told they weren't being hired because of their disability.

Other research indicates that organisations are reluctant to hire, or even interview those with disabilities because of concerns stemming from common stereotypes such as unreliability, unpredictability, disruptiveness and perceived dangerous behaviours.[2]

To address these issues, it is therefore critical to have committed leadership influence; credible and reliable information on disability and employment; and an appropriate network for linking with and recruiting people with disability.[3]

Given that discrimination is not tolerated in Australia, it is important to ask why it still exists in the workplace. One study examined all Australian cases involving labour market discrimination since 1975. It found that 90% of complaints were settled out of court and there was limited public recognition of systematic discrimination in employment.[4]

The fact that people living with a disability who are appropriately qualified are still marginalised in the recruitment process suggests that it is necessary to increase attention on the steps organisations can take to ensure they are prepared for a diverse workforce.[5]

Moreover, indirect discrimination is not overly visible. Unless it is met with public scrutiny it will continue to persist, unless adequate recruitment policies and interventions are put in place to further reduce incidences of unfair treatment in the workplace.

1: Australian Human Rights Commission. (2016). *Willing to work: National inquiry into employment discrimination against older Australians and Australians with disability*. Sydney, Australia: Australian Human Rights Commission.
2: DEEWR 2008; Ameri, Schur, Adya, Bentley, McKay, & Kruse, 2018; Baert, De Visschere, Schoors, Vandenberghe, & Omey, 2016.
3: Darcy et al. 2016.
4: De Plevitz, 2000.
5: Araten-Bergman 2016.

Pilot
Interventions

Pilot Intervention 1

CV de-identification

Background to the intervention

The objective of this trial was to evaluate the effectiveness of CV and job application de-identification in addressing unconscious bias.

Unconscious stereotypes relating to personal characteristics, such as gender, age and ethnicity have been shown to be triggered by data on applicants' CVs, and can lead to biased recruitment decisions. One approach to reducing this potential bias is to remove personal information that is unrelated to an applicant's capacity to fulfil the role.

Although there are risks and barriers to implementing a CV de-identification strategy, an analysis of the effects of CV de-identification outcomes can provide useful insights into unconscious bias in recruitment decisions and may inform other strategies for improving merit-based recruitment and selection processes.

Intervention summary

Five organisations participated in this intervention, contributing a total sample of 3341 applicants.

Each trial was developed to fit the profile and needs of individual organisations. The demographic characteristics de-identified across different organisations are listed in table below.

The overall pattern of results across the five studies provided solid evidence of greater outcomes for underrepresented groups when personal factors were de-identified.

A summary of key findings from the trials can be found below. For detailed technical and research information on this intervention, please refer to the **Recruit Smarter Technical Report.**

De-identified personal characteristics

Organisation	Participants	Gender	Home address	Higher education	Ethnicity
VicRoads	311	✓			✓
Hall & Wilcox	1993	✓			✓
Department of Premier and Cabinet	724	✓	✓	✓	✓
Department of Treasury and Finance	162	✓		✓	
Department of Justice and Regulation	151	✓	✓	✓	

Findings

The result of the five pilot studies provide strong support for and useful insights into the broader implementation and further evaluation of CV de-identification in public and private organizations in Victoria.

However, CV de-identification is not appropriate in all circumstances, such as when under-represented groups make up a small proportion of applicants. In these circumstances, CV de-identification should be implemented along with other interventions, such as targeted recruitment strategies.

VicRoads

- De-identification led to a significant change in likelihood of shortlisting for diverse applicants. When country of birth was identified, Australian-born applicants were 13% more likely to be shortlisted compared to applicants born overseas. However, when country of birth was de-identified, applicants born overseas had an 8% higher chance of being shortlisted compared to Australian-born applicants.

- Applicant gender had no significant effect on progress through selection processes. De-identification did not change this finding.

Hall & Wilcox

- Applicants with names of Western and Northern European origin had significantly better recruitment outcomes than applicants with names perceived as originating from non-Western countries. Differences between applicants from varied cultural backgrounds ranged from 3-7%. These differences were small albeit consistent. De-identification did not significantly alter the discrepancy.

- Applicant gender had no significant effect on progress through selection processes. De-identification did not change this finding.

### Department of Premier and Cabinet

- Applicants from suburbs with a higher socioeconomic ranking were more likely to progress through the selection process. The average socioeconomic status of successful applicants' suburbs was 8.96 (out of 10), compared to the average socioeconomic status of unsuccessful applicants' suburbs of 7.92 (out of 10). This represents a difference of 10.4%. Following de-identification this gap was closed, with the average socioeconomic status of successful applicants reducing to 8.4, compared to 8.3 for unsuccessful applicants. This represents a 9.4% change in favour of candidates from lower socioeconomic suburbs following de-identification.

- Applicants from more prestigious universities were more likely to progress further through the selection process. De-identification did not change this finding.

- Applicant gender had no significant effect on progress through selection processes. De-identification did not change this finding.

Department of Treasury and Finance

- Significant differences between men and women were noted. Before de-identification, men were 30% more likely than women to be shortlisted and 33% more likely to be hired. After de-identification, men were only 6% more likely to be shortlisted compared to women, while women were 8% more likely to be hired than men.

- University attended by applicants was significantly related to recruitment outcomes. Individuals who did not attend a Group of Eight (Go8) university were 22% more likely to be shortlisted than those who attended Go8, and 32% more likely to be hired. Following de-identification, this effect was reversed, with Go8 graduates 22% more likely to be shortlisted compared to non-Go8 candidates, and 8% more likely to be hired.
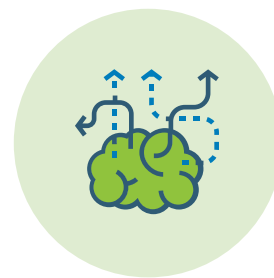
Department of Justice and Regulation

- No significant relationships between demographic variables and hiring outcomes were evident. This may be partly due to the substantially smaller sample size present in this trial.
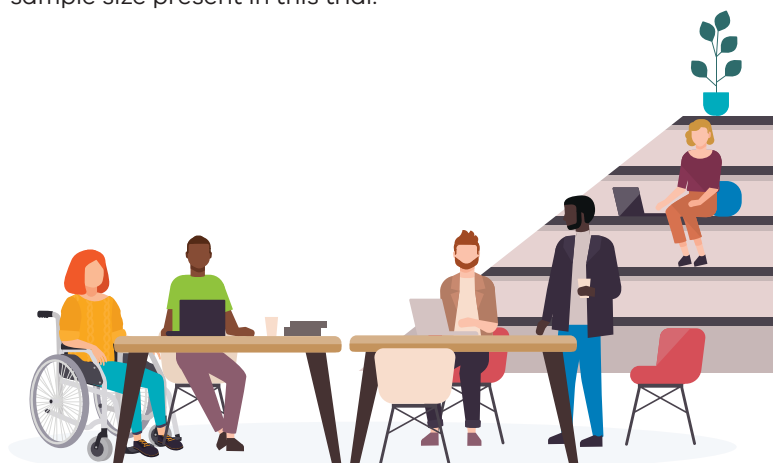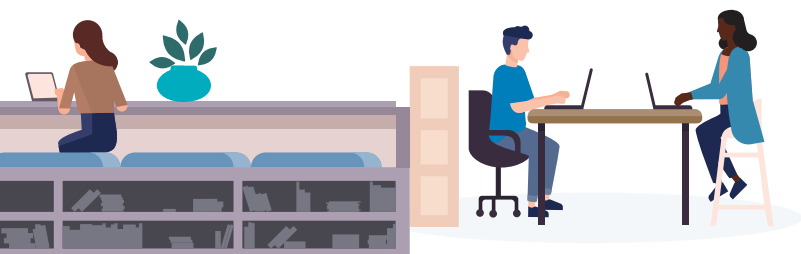
Unconscious bias training

Background to the intervention

Unconscious bias training provides an approach to addressing the negative impact that demographic and social differences between people can have on workplace decision-making. This training helps participants to better identify situations in which their decision making may be influenced by unconscious bias, and to apply learned strategies for responding proactively.

Intervention summary

221 persons from seven Victorian public service entities participated in this intervention:

- Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC)
- Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF)
- Emergency Management Victoria (EMV)
- VicRoads
- Ambulance Victoria
- Transport Accident Commission (TAC)
- Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC)

Participants were predominantly (but not exclusively) drawn from areas associated with human resources and recruitment. The total sample size was 221 participants, with 87 participants in the intervention condition and 134 in the control condition.

The trial compared the responses of participants who had or had not completed unconscious bias training. All participants filled in a baseline survey before undertaking any training (Time 1). A second set of responses to the same questions were collected after the intervention group, but not the control group, had undertaken training (Time 2). Analyses focused on any differences at Time 2 between the two groups of participants, with the assumption that changes were the result of undertaking unconscious bias training.

The key variables compared between Time 1 and Time 2 were: attitudes towards diversity; psychological safety; organisational fairness; efficacy-intentions; and self-reported behaviours.

Findings

The findings indicated a significant increase in staff reported self-efficacy and intentions regarding diversity between the intervention and control groups at Time 2.

The group who had undertaken training had a mean reported efficacy-intention score of 4.66 compared to the control group mean score of 4.52. This represents a 3% increase in efficacy-intentions from training.

An analysis of the relationship between unconscious bias training and diversity-supportive behaviours found a significant indirect effect. Training led to increases in self-efficacy and intentions for diversity. Self-efficacy and intentions then led to diversity-supportive behaviours. This indirect pathway from training to behaviours via efficacy-intentions was significant.

Unconscious bias training provides a potentially powerful means of improving diversity and inclusion supporting behaviours of staff in Victorian workplaces. These results could be further enhanced through training embedded in a formal diversity strategy and the effects studied over a longer period.

For detailed technical and research information on this intervention, please refer to the **Recruit Smarter Technical Report.**

De-biasing language in job advertisements

Background to the intervention

Research shows that the language used in job advertisements can influence whether the role will appeal to men or women, affecting the gender split of applicants. In particular, there is evidence to demonstrate that the use of certain language in advertisements can deter women from applying for certain roles by inferring that the job is male-dominated, and vice-versa.[1]

This intervention therefore aimed to determine whether changing the wording of a job advertisement affected the gender representation of the applicant pool, namely by attracting more female applicants.

Intervention summary

This trial was undertaken as part of VicHealth's Leading Thinkers: Behavioural Insights and Gender Equality initiative[1] and contributed its findings to the Recruit Smarter program of work.

The trial was designed to examine unconscious bias in the first stage of recruitment—the job advertisement—and tests the effect of de-biased language on the gender composition of the applicant pool. It was an opportunity to investigate the recruitment process as a potential key structural influencer of gender equality practice.

Findings

Due to insufficient data collected in this trial, no conclusions could be made about the effect that modified job advertisement wording could have on the gender representation of the applicant pool.

For detailed technical and research information on this intervention, please refer to the **Recruit Smarter Technical Report.**

1: Bem, S. L. (1974) *The measurement of psychological androgyny. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 42,* 155-162.
Colley, A., G. Mulhern, J. Maltby, A.M. Wood. (2009). The short form BSRI: Instrumentality, expressiveness and gender associations among a United Kingdom sample. *Personality and Individual Differences, 46,* 384-387.
Gaucher, D., Friesen, J., & Kay, A. (2011) Evidence That Gendered Wording in Job Advertisements Exists and Sustains Gender Inequality, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* Vol. 101, No. 1, pp. 109–128.

2: Report available at: https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/media-and-resources/publications/gender-equality-health-and-wellbeing

Pilot Intervention 4
Targeted advertising

Background to the intervention

Targeted recruitment refers to a set of strategies adopted in order to increase applicants and new hires from specific groups—typically those under-represented in an organisation. Strategies generally involve a focus on targeted communication, such as engaging with advocacy groups and advertising in community media. In particular, altering job advertisement language is considered to be a particularly effective strategy for targeted recruitment.

Intervention summary

This targeted advertising intervention was implemented at the Transport Accident Commission (TAC). This involved forming a new job advertisement that encouraged people with disabilities to apply. Two outcomes were assessed: the number of applicants indicating a need for reasonable adjustment (an indicator of disability) prior to and following the introduction of the modified advertisement, and how far these applicants progressed through the hiring process.

In this intervention, the sample for this dataset comprised 3341 applicants (1834 female, 1331 male, 176 unspecified) who applied for one of 149 roles within the TAC from July to October 2016 (baseline) or July to October 2017 (experimental).

The baseline condition comprised 1744 applicants, with 1597 applicants in the experimental condition. Complete data for the reasonable adjustments question was obtained for n = 2637 participants, with a significant number of applicants abstaining from responding to the question.

Findings

The introduction of a modified advertisement more than doubled the number of applicants indicating a need for reasonable adjustments.

The modified advertisement led to a 1.6% change in the number of applicants indicating a need for reasonable adjustments (2.6%), compared with baseline (1%).

The modified advertisement also decreased the percentage of applicants who did not respond to the question about reasonable adjustment by 6% (from 23.9% at baseline, to 18% after introduction of the modified advertisement).

Applicants who required reasonable adjustments also progressed further through recruitment overall after the introduction of the modified advertisement (1.17 at baseline compared to 1.62 out of a possible progress score of 7, following the introduction of the modified advertisement).

For detailed technical and research information on this intervention, please refer to the **Recruit Smarter Technical Report.**

Modified advertisements led to **2.6 times** the number of applicants indicating their need for reasonable adjustments (2.6%), compared with baseline (1%).
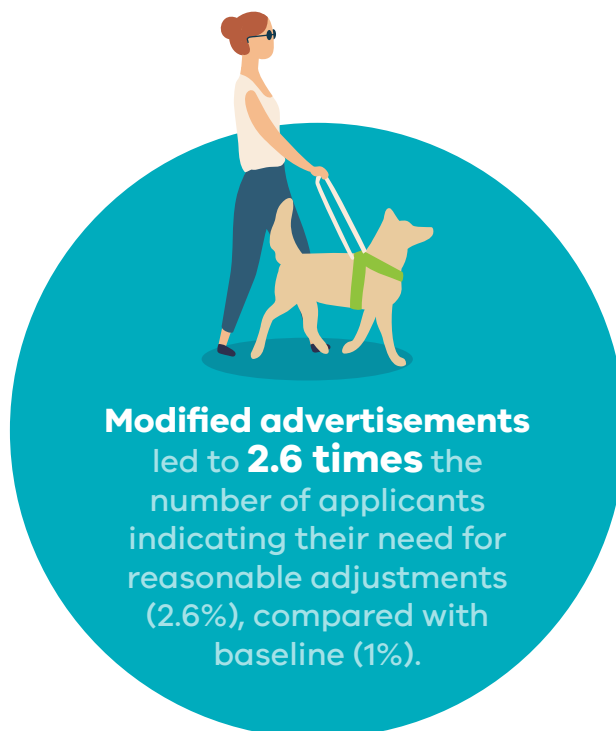
Recruit Smarter
Best Practice
Guidelines
for Inclusive Recruitment

Objectives and strategy

A key advantage of Recruit Smarter was access to a wealth of corporate knowledge and experience in recruitment through the initiative's 46 partner organisations.

Recognising this opportunity, Recruit Smarter harnessed these resources to collaboratively envision and develop a set of aspirational and forward-looking guidelines on best practice for inclusive recruitment.

Implementation

Four multi-sector working groups were assembled, staffed by human resources representatives and professionals from participating organisations, and chaired by a nominated 'champion' organisation. Each working group focused on a different stage of the recruitment life cycle, ranging from advertising; application; selection and interview processes; and onboarding and induction of new staff.

Working group members were provided with the latest research on their group's area of focus by Recruit Smarter researchers. The working groups then met four times each over 12 months to consider the research, and to synthesise it with their own individual, organisational and sector-level expertise and knowledge. The outcomes of this process formed a set of practically-focused guidelines for proposed best practice for inclusive recruitment.

At the conclusion of the working group meetings, the draft guidelines were released for targeted consultation and feedback. Where applicable, the submissions and feedback from this process were reviewed and incorporated into the guidelines. The final guidelines from this component of Recruit Smarter can be found overleaf.

Preface to the guidelines

The Recruit Smarter Best Practice Guidelines for Inclusive Recruitment aim to capture a range of key themes, issues and practical considerations that employers, workplaces and industries can take into consideration to make their recruitment practices and working environments more inclusive and diversity-friendly.

The guidelines are aspirational and forward looking but are not a 'one size fits all' solution to solving workplace diversity and inclusion issues. In many cases the principle behind a guideline may need to be adapted to suit individual working environments, sectors or organisations. In other cases it is acknowledged that the guidelines may not be applicable, but may spark further productive dialogue on the issue of diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

Owing to their collaboratively designed nature, the guidelines are not intended to represent the views or voice of any one sector or organisation. Instead, they are the product of a collective voice across organisations and sectors highlighting the importance and benefits of a diverse and inclusive workforce.

Acknowledgements

DPC and CEL wish to acknowledge the following organisations and their representatives who contributed to the development of the guidelines:

- Australia Post
- Ambulance Victoria
- Deloitte
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
- Department of Justice and Regulation
- Department of Treasury and Finance
- Environment Protection Authority
- Hall and Wilcox LLP
- HAYS Specialist Recruitment
- Hoban Recruitment
- PwC
- Recruitment & Consulting Services Association of Australia & New Zealand
- SEEK
- Transport Accident Commission
- Transurban
- United Energy and Multinet Gas
- Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission
- Victoria Police
- Victorian Public Sector Commission
- VicRoads
- Westpac
- WorkSafe

Special thanks

DPC and CEL wish to thank the following organisations for championing, hosting and facilitating the multi-sector working groups in addition to contributing to the development of the guidelines:

- Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) Leading Thinkers Initiative
- Emergency Management Victoria
- Brotherhood of St Laurence
  - Given the Chance Program
- Department of Premier and Cabinet Victoria
  - People and Culture

Recruit Smarter
Best Practice Guidelines
for Inclusive Recruitment

No.	Guideline	Guideline details	Proposed actions, changes, examples or case studies

1. Strategic Guidelines to Support Workplace Diversity and Inclusion

No.	Guideline	Guideline details	Proposed actions, changes, examples or case studies

1.1	**Start at the top**	• Support for diversity and inclusion must start with the most senior executives in an organisation and be a focus of organisational prioritisation and leadership accountability.
		
		• For governments and political bodies, leadership on and commitment to diversity and inclusion should be recognised as a mutual concern and priority for all political persuasions.
			• Diversity and inclusion should be a standing item of executive leadership meetings. This can provide an opportunity for ongoing reporting and accountability on the status of organisational diversity, and the progress of strategies to support it.
			
			• On commencing leadership duties, a compulsory action could be an audit of organisational diversity and inclusiveness, including human resources systems and processes, to identify areas of merit, concern or improvement.
			
			• Inclusive leadership training could be a condition of commencement for incoming and rising leaders.
			
			• The inclusive leadership training would comprise components that:
			  ✓ provide strategic level understanding of the economic and social benefits of diversity and inclusion at both a macro and microeconomic level; and
			  ✓ the macro and microeconomic costs and broader socioeconomic impact of exclusion.

No.	Guideline	Guideline details	Proposed actions, changes, examples or case studies

1.2	**Embed a commitment to workplace diversity and inclusion in organisational values statements and strategic plans**	• Embed a public-facing commitment to workplace diversity and inclusion in employer, organisational, and sector values statements and strategic plans.
		
		• Embed an employee-level commitment to supporting workplace diversity and inclusion in position descriptions, employment agreements and employee value statements.
			• Executive leadership could champion an annual workforce diversity and inclusion survey. This survey could be used to:
			
			  ✓ evaluate and track workplace awareness and understanding of diversity and inclusion;
			
			  ✓ evaluate how effectively diversity and inclusion messaging and strategies are being embedded; and
			
			  ✓ identify areas of merit, misunderstanding and specific barriers.
			
			• Ideally, workforce diversity and inclusion surveys and assessments should be undertaken annually to measure progress and areas for improvement, and as a matter of entry and handover procedures to new leadership.
			
			• All other factors considered, this commitment could be extended as a preference of procurement and supply chain engagement.

1.3	**Communicate the socioeconomic benefits of workplace diversity and inclusion clearly**	• Use a range of communications tools and channels to provide easily comprehensible evidence on the socioeconomic benefits of diversity and inclusion in the workplace.	• Showcase the evidence demonstrating the tangible positive effects that diversity and inclusion have on workplace innovation and creativity, firm resilience and economic productivity, as well as the positive flow-on effects on individual and workplace wellbeing, and community cohesion and resilience.

No.	Guideline	Guideline details	Proposed actions, changes, examples or case studies
1.4	**Ensure diversity in the workplace is valued, invested in, and has a voice**	• Foster opportunities for self-representation of diversity in the workplace, and in invest in developing diverse talent.	• Embed reasonable workplace flexibility to accommodate diversity and corresponding needs (eg. prayer spaces). • Elevate multilingualism cross-cultural understanding and relevant lived experience as valued business skills and factors of merit. • Work collaboratively with staff to make information available on the communities represented in the workplace, and the area in which the organisation is located or operates. See also **Guideline 1.5**. • Employ a range of communications channels and approaches to give diversity in the workplace a voice without needing to rely on, or single out individuals. • Encourage and support celebration of diverse identity, including cultural, religious or other significant events and practices in the workplace. • Encourage respectful curiosity and dialogue to support mutual understanding of differences. • **Case Study:** Airline crew often have the languages they can communicate in noted on their name tags. Where applicable, similar approaches could be implemented in workplaces to endorse and support linguistic capability and diversity. • **Case Study:** The Victorian Government's *Deadly Questions* campaign gives the community an anonymous and judgement-free virtual platform to ask Aboriginal Victorians questions about their culture, customs and history.

No.	Guideline	Guideline details	Proposed actions, changes, examples or case studies
1.5	Foster mutually beneficial engagement with local communities	• Look locally to develop and build talent and leadership pools.	• Maintaining strong engagement between community, peak and representative bodies, and local industries and businesses should continue to be a priority. • For businesses, consider designating development opportunities for local talent. This can help build and develop talent pools that are mutually beneficial for the organisation and the community. • **Case Study:** Brotherhood of St Laurence and Jesuit Social Services have long-standing and highly effective cross-sector collaboration programs that focus on employment for priority cohorts. • **Case Study:** Victorian community health organisation CoHealth offer specially trained bicultural workers who can support and facilitate community and stakeholder engagement.

1.6	Include a diversity awareness component in relevant qualifications and training	• Make diversity awareness, and cognitive bias training mandatory curriculum components for human resources, management and business qualifications. Include these components in continuous learning and development for leaders, management and human resources professionals.	• This training should ideally include components on:
			
			  ✓ heuristics in judgement and decision-making, and other cognitive biases;
			
			  ✓ the socioeconomic costs of exclusion;
			
			  ✓ the financial, economic and social benefits of inclusive recruitment and diversity in the workplace at both a macro and microeconomic level.
			
			• This training could also include case studies of lived experiences by diverse persons, and an experiential component replicating a range of barriers or challenges that diverse persons can face in the workplace, such as unfamiliarity with a culture, or a lack of understanding of other forms of diversity, such as disability status or gender identity.
			
			• For new employees, this training should be a priority. This is noting that finding time to undertake this becomes harder the longer a person is embedded in a role.

No.	Guideline	Guideline details	Proposed actions, changes, examples or case studies

2. Practical Guidelines for Inclusive Recruitment Processes

No.	Guideline	Guideline details	Proposed actions, changes, examples or case studies
2.1	Use evidence-based approaches to ensure bias-free construction of language and imagery in advertising	• A range of training, applications, and systems are available on the market that employers can access to de-bias their advertisements.	• **Example:** SEEK's *Laws of Attraction* suite of research and advertisement construction tools,[1a] and Textio,[2] a writing platform to construct unbiased job advertisements.
2.2	Consider including diversity as a factor of merit for recruitment purposes	• This can help to overcome barriers to entry for under-represented cohorts into employment and positions of leadership.	• Such a consideration should be made with all other relevant factors and points of merit taken into account. • **Case Study:** A strategic priority for the Commonwealth Bank of Australia is employing staff who reflect their diverse consumer base, recognising the importance to the Bank of supporting diversity and inclusion in the workplace. Diverse staff also bring with them valuable cross-cultural and linguistic skills, as well as an understanding of their community's needs as customers of the bank.
2.3	Consider alternative approaches to job applications and assessment for suitability	• Not all roles benefit from a written job application process. • Practical, hands-on approaches that engage the skills and competencies required in the role may widen the pool of talent employers can choose from.	• Approaches include gamification and work simulation-based exercises that are aimed at maximising a fair go for a broad range of cohorts, especially where written application processes are not an ideal approach.[3]

1: SEEK, *Laws of Attraction*, 2017; https://insightsresources.seek.com.au/lawsofattraction.

2: Textio, Inc. 2018 www.textio.com.

3: Deloitte Australia, *Play to Win: How gamification can give companies an edge in innovation and strategy execution,* 2017; http://blog.deloitte.com.au/
play-to-win-how-gamification-can-give-companies-an-edge-in-innovation-and-strategy-execution/.

No.	Guideline	Guideline details	Proposed actions, changes, examples or case studies
2.4	Where a written application is determined as the best approach, ensure the process is efficient, logical, relevant, and short	• Job seekers consistently report that vague selection criteria and a lack of clarity around role responsibilities in position descriptions are a deterrent.[1]	• Employers could consider providing applicants with guidelines and examples of expected response format and content as part of any position description documents. • **Case Study:** Australian research indicates that advertisements with more than five selection criteria deters applicants, particularly females.[2a] • **Case Study:** Young jobseekers report not knowing where to begin to construct an application that effectively sells their skills and potential.[2b]
2.5	Review the need for formal qualifications, and encourage jobseekers to construct their applications from a 'whole of person' perspective[3]	• Employers may benefit from hiring applicants from diverse backgrounds and life experiences who can bring new and innovative ways of thinking to roles and workplaces.	• Not all roles require formal qualifications to be undertaken successfully. Where applicable, review the essentiality of formal qualifications. • Taking a 'whole of person' approach can give jobseekers who are new to the market an opportunity to leverage other skillsets and experiences to get a foot in the door.

2.6	Take steps to minimise bias in the application process	• Remove information from applications that is not relevant to an applicant's competency to undertake the role, such as the applicant's name, age and other personal details.
		• Assemble a balanced interview panel that is reflective of diversity in the community and includes an independent panel member.
		• Ensure recruitment and selection panellists understand how unconscious bias can influence their decision making.
			• A range of commercial providers offer de-biasing systems and capabilities for employers as part of their services, including SEEK[4] and Applied.[5]
			• The level and content of redaction may vary depending on legal and organisational requirements.
			• Provide recruitment panellists with training on unconscious bias, and the benefits of diversity in the workplace.
			• Approaches may include:
			  ✓ formal training on diversity awareness and the impact of bias on decision-making;
			  ✓ information provided to hiring staff as part of any interview 'pack' (where applicable).

1: JobGetter, 2017 Australian Job Seeker Report, 2017, p. 11; https://my.jobgetter.com/job-seeker-survey/.
2: SEEK, *Laws of Attraction*, 2017; https://insightsresources.seek.com.au/lawsofattraction.
3: This guideline needs to be balanced with the likelihood of such an approach opening the application to a range of details that can lead to bias and managed accordingly (See Guideline 2.6).
4: SEEK, Appendix 4E and Statutory Accounts, Report to the Australian Stock Exchange (ASX) under Listing Rule 4.3A, 4.5, p. 13; https://wcsecure.weblink.com.au/pdf/SEK/01884210.pdf.
5: Be Applied Ltd 2018; https://www.beapplied.com/.

No.	Guideline	Guideline details	Proposed actions, changes, examples or case studies
2.7	Give interview candidate the best chance to showcase themselves	• Providing candidates with supporting information to prepare for their interview can reduce nerves, increase confidence and maximise their capacity to sell themselves.	• Consider providing candidates with a copy of the questions prior to the interview to assist them to respond effectively. • Alternatively, interview candidates could be provided with a response matrix at the point of invitation that outlines how they should respond to interview questions, and the circumstances where they will be prompted for more information by the panel. • The response matrix could support applicants to map their skills, capabilities and experience against the selection criteria, responsibilities and behaviours of the role.
2.8	Score candidates independently	• Candidate assessment and scoring should be completed independently by each panel member.	• Discussion about candidates should only occur once all scores have been tallied and submitted to prevent panel members influencing each other's ratings of applicants. • To provide a more balanced picture of suitability, weight should be given to candidate applications as a whole and not just their performance in the interview. This is noting that applicants perform differently in interviews and may be affected by nerves and other factors.
2.9	Provide candidates who are unsuccessful at the interview stage with feedback	• Job seekers consistently report that not receiving any feedback on their application is one of the most frustrating and discouraging aspects of looking for work.[1a] A lack of feedback also deters applicants from re-applying to organisations.[1b]	• Applicants who are interviewed should be given feedback on their application as a compulsory step of the selection process. • Feedback can take the form of brief, standardised points on how the candidate performed, and where they could improve. • Where volume of applications is an issue, unsuccessful applicants could be given a response detailing common reasons for unsuccessful applications that can guide applicants to review their own submission.

1: JobGetter, 2017 Australian Job Seeker Report, 2017, pp. 7-11; https://my.jobgetter.com/job-seeker-survey/.

No.	Guideline	Guideline details	Proposed actions, changes, examples or case studies
2.10	**Showcase and demonstrate a diversity-friendly environment**	• Showcase the organisation's values, codes of behaviour, and commitment to supporting diversity in the workplace to new employees.	• Where appropriate, identify and promote diversity champions who can support new employees from diverse backgrounds. • Support and encourage the development of chartered 'employee resource groups' for diverse employees within workplaces and sectors. • Provide employees with safe, 'judgement free' spaces and opportunities where they can raise questions or concerns frankly, and seek advice and information about issues relating to diversity in the workplace that they are uncertain about. See also **Guideline 1.4.**
2.11	**Make onboarding processes systematic, structured and consistent**	• Develop a clearly structured induction plan and allow sufficient time for it to be completed before the successful candidate's commences substantial duties.	• This can be facilitated by an IT-based system but cannot be replaced by it.[1] • Job seekers report that opportunities for 'meet-and-greets' with new co-workers and having administrative essentials ready at role commencement make a lasting impression on their perception of the organisation, and sense of belonging.
2.12	**Make mentoring and buddying a standard part of staff induction and development**	• Develop internal and external buddying and mentoring arrangements to support placement and transition of staff into the organisation.	• This is particularly critical for new staff from diverse backgrounds who may not be familiar with sector-specific or organisational workplace culture and unwritten rules. • A distinction should be made between the terms 'buddy' and 'mentor', and the different roles they play in supporting staff. • A 'buddy' is an internal colleague who can provide advice and support around workplace practices, procedures, and values, behaviours and culture. • A 'mentor' is separate to a line manager and is defined as an external support provider who can provide advice and guidance around career and personal development goals, industry and the jobs market. • For diverse employees, a mentor may also be someone who is familiar with the challenges and benefits that diversity in the workplace brings, and who can provide advice and guidance on how to navigate them.

1: For example, InductPro; www.inductpro.com.au; or Enboarder; https://enboarder.com.

Knowledge Sharing Seminars

About the Seminars

The purpose of the Knowledge Sharing Seminars was to showcase innovative approaches to inclusive recruitment practices and raise awareness about key issues, changes, and trends in recruitment across sectors.

The seminars also played an important role in raising public and cross-sector awareness about the Recruit Smarter initiative and its program of work.

Between February 2017 and March 2018, thirteen interactive Seminars were hosted and presented by Recruit Smarter partner organisations. All seminars were free and open to the public, with more than 900 people attending from a diverse range of sectors and backgrounds.

Seminar audiences were privy to exclusive research and insights on diversity in the workplace and inclusive recruitment from leading researchers and some of Australia's most prominent firms and non-government organisations.

The thirteen seminars covered a broad range of topics and issues, from effective approaches to regional settlement through to the growing use of big data and machine learning in recruitment and selection.

The Shannon Company

'Behavioural change principles and their application within Recruit Smarter'

The Shannon Company presented on behavioural change principles and their potential application within the Recruit Smarter initiative.

The Shannon Company believes that behaviour change is the heart of sustainable businesses and is critical to improving job performance, workplace culture, and organisational practices.

Behavioural Economics Team of the Australian Government (BETA)

'Going blind to see more clearly: the effect of de-identification in short-listing practices in the Australian Public Service'

The Behavioural Economics Team of the Australian Government (BETA) removed gender and ethnicity characteristics from job applications to see if this would change the selection outcomes at senior levels of the Australian Public Service (APS). The team presented details of the trial including how and why it was designed, and a summary of the key results. A copy of the published report and a short animation outlining the trial are available online.[1]

1: https://pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/publications/BETA-report-going-blind-to-see-more%20clearly.pdf. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k6QAiog1gnw.

EMV

'Respect and Inclusion for All: Emergency Management Diversity and Inclusion Framework'

Emergency Management Victoria presented on a diversity and inclusion framework the organisation launched in 2016, focusing on two main areas: creating a diverse and inclusive emergency management sector, and improving connections with diverse communities.

Key issues discussed included attracting diverse talent to the organisation, overcoming strong community views about the emergency sector, combating affinity bias, and building a welcoming and inclusive environment where people feel valued and respected, regardless of their background and experience.

Ernst & Young

'Targeted recruitment for people with disability'

Ernst and Young (EY) provided an insight into the approach they had taken as part of their Diversity and Inclusiveness strategy.

The audience learnt about EY's Disability Confidence Workplace Maturity Assessment tool, which assesses the preparedness of a client to recruit and maintain employment for people with disability, and further identifies areas for improvement. The tool comprises two components—a staff survey, and a qualitative component of staff interviews and documentation review. Organisations are then reviewed across seven maturity criteria deemed integral for businesses seeking to build a disability confident workplace, including strategy, leadership, infrastructure, and recruitment and branding.

Deloitte

'Gamification in recruitment practices'

Deloitte hosted an interactive knowledge sharing session focusing on how organisations can reduce unconscious bias and increase diversity in their recruitment process through the use of gamification, principles of gaming and digitisation.

The session showcased a number of best practice examples, both global and local, from the private and public sector on how organisations have gamified their attraction and selection process to reduce bias and attract more diverse applicants. Deloitte deep-dived into their own experience gamifying their selection processes, sharing their learnings on designing and implementing a gamified selection activity and the impact it is having on the diversity of the workforce. The session was highly immersive and interactive with attendees freely roaming through five stations, each showcasing a different case study.

SEEK

Real People, Real Connection:
Utilising candidate insights to attract a diverse workforce

SEEK hosted an interactive presentation and panel discussion focusing on emerging themes around artificial intelligence, diversity and jobseeker behaviour, and advances in recruitment strategies.

Drawing on their own research, SEEK gave the audience an insight into differences in jobseeker behaviour between men and women, and how this can affect recruitment.

Australia Post

'Towards parity: Indigenous talent and the workforce'

Australia Post showcased its proud history of partnership with Indigenous Australian communities and presented on a range of initiatives around diversity and inclusion it has underway under its Reconciliation Action Plan, launched in 2014.

The seminar explored different ways Australia Post is engaging with Indigenous Australian jobseekers and employees under the Action Plan to deliver sustainable employment opportunities, services to the community, and recognition as First Australians.

Brotherhood of St Laurence

'Onboarding and induction for inclusive employment'

Brotherhood of St Laurence drew on their highly successful Given the Chance workplace employment program to present on onboarding and induction processes for diverse new employees.

The presentation took audiences through the importance of an effective onboarding and induction process, highlighting the crucial steps needed to help diverse employees transition smoothly into a new organisation and workplace environment. Representatives from Given the Chance partner ANZ Bank spoke about their experiences as diverse candidates and how the program assisted them to transition comfortably into their roles with the Bank.

PwC

'All Roles Flex: Implementing and embedding'

PwC gave an overview of the firm's experience implementing and embedding its 'All Roles Flex' flexible work practices pilot.

PwC reflected on the context and catalysts driving the growth and acceptance of flexible work practices, emphasising the need to focus on productivity and output rather than hours spent in the workplace.

The audience was given a glimpse into PwC's experience implementing the pilot, focusing on workplace culture, productivity, and employee satisfaction and engagement.

AMES & Deloitte Access Economics

'Recruiting a diverse workforce in regional Victoria: economic growth and social inclusion'

AMES and Deloitte Access Economics showcased the highly successful resettlement of Karen refugees in the regional Victorian town of Nhill.

Audiences were given an insight into the economic and social revitalisation that the resettlement has brought to the town and the region, and the substantial boost in productivity provided by a diverse and inclusive workforce.

WEstjustice & K&L Gates LLP

'Recent trends in employment discrimination law'

WEstjustice and K&L Gates LLP presented their insights into current issues in workplace discrimination law.

Focusing on a range of recent cases, the audience learnt about some of the key issues in workplace discrimination that have led to litigation in Australia.

Presenters looked at all stages of the recruitment cycle and drew on the case examples to provide insight into the experience of persons who have suffered workplace discrimination.

HAYS Recruitment

'Recruitment remodelled: the art and science of recruitment in 2018 and beyond'

HAYS Recruitment focused on the future of recruiting, walking the audience through a range of developments in technology and data science that are likely to change the way recruitment takes place in the future.

The audience learnt about the emergence and growth of 'find and engage' approaches to talent attraction. Enabled by developments in data science, HAYS Recruitment explored a future where machine learning and sophisticated data analysis can help employers to proactively match roles with candidates while reducing the impact that issues such as unconscious bias can have on the assessment and engagement process.

Commonwealth Bank of Australia & Cultural Diversity Week 2018

'Reflecting our communities'

In partnership with Cultural Diversity Week 2018, Commonwealth Bank presented on its strategy to reflect the diversity of the Australian population in its workforce by 2020.

Echoing the Cultural Diversity Week theme of 'Proud to Belong', the audience heard about the Bank's efforts to implement strategies to support workplace diversity and create an inclusive workplace. Commonwealth Bank highlighted the importance of developing a workforce that reflects the communities the Bank serves and who understand those communities' needs. Current and former interns from the Bank's African Internship program spoke about their experiences working with Commonwealth Bank and the unique skills, lived experience and insights they bring to their roles.

Lessons Learned from Recruit Smarter

Recruit Smarter navigated both opportunities and challenges in its development, implementation and delivery.

Concurrently, the initiative produced many valuable insights on how to foster and drive multi-sector and multi-partner collaboration to produce the best possible project outcomes.

These are presented below as a suggested checklist and guide for other projects.

☑ Develop clear Terms of Reference

Develop a comprehensive and detailed terms of reference to act as a project 'Constitution' and foundation for project planning.

Regularly review the terms of reference to ensure they remain a relevant and meaningful foundation for the project, in light of any changes or developments.

☑ Don't overcomplicate project governance

Keep project governance as simple as possible to maintain project agility around authorisation, implementation and reporting.

Recruit Smarter utilised an executive level steering committee who endorsed a clear strategic program of work. Implementation of this program was then coordinated across partner organisations and researchers by a project secretariat within the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

This model provided substantial agility, without significant governance-related delays.

☑ Understand the partner organisations

When exploring engagements, work with organisations to understand their current and forecasted strengths and limitations. This will provide all parties with an indication of how the organisation might contribute to a program of work in an effective and mutually beneficial way.

Discuss the organisation's priorities and strategic goals for engagement, and any potential risks to the organisation or the project in their participation.

☑ Engage senior leadership

Senior organisation leaders have the influence to prioritise and drive engagement, foster organisational buy-in, and allocate resources to ensure commitments can be delivered at the operational level.

☑ Account for programs and strategies already underway

Existing work underway within organisations can cause duplication or have an unforeseen influence on the direction and outcomes of engagement.

Maintain regular intra-project communication

Ensure communication across stakeholders is consistent and easily accessible, and provide regular updates on project progress.

Recognise performance and delivery of outcomes, and highlight any challenges encountered to ensure they can be taken into consideration and mitigated by all stakeholders.

Foster intra-project networks

Create opportunities for stakeholders to network and work together. This provides the project with internal drive and momentum and facilitates collaboration, innovative thinking and shared ownership of outputs and outcomes.

Present a united voice

Develop key messaging, project narratives, and agreed terminology, and review and update regularly.

Ensure external facing communication is consistent by establishing agreed strategic communications protocols with partner organisations.

Sound project management is critical

A dynamic and changing cast of individuals will participate across the life of a multi-sector project. Sound project management, record keeping, and administrative processes are critical to ensure effective tracking of responsibilities and commitments, implementation progress, and overall engagement across partner organisations.

Plan for organisational change

Staff movement and organisation change are normal workplace occurrences and need to be factored in, especially for long projects.

To ensure project continuity, develop handover and succession plans and ensure they are regularly updated.

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