Advancing Women in the Information and Communications Technology Workplace

A Review of Leading Practices

Partners

The Diversity Institute undertakes research on diversity in the workplace to improve practices in organizations. We work with organizations to develop customized strategies, programming and resources to promote new, interdisciplinary knowledge and practice about diversity with respect to gender, race/ethnicity, Indigenous Peoples, abilities and sexual orientation. Using an ecological model of change, our action-oriented, evidence-based approach drives social innovation across sectors.

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Women in Communications and Technology (WCT) is a National NGO with a 30+ year track record of success in advancing women in digitally driven workplaces. WCT partners with organizations to build more engaged, diverse and resilient workforces by increasing the retention and advancement of women. WCT's approach integrates gender diversity initiatives into the core of the workplace, building strong leadership pipelines to promote more women into leadership roles.

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Executive Summary

Canada is experiencing a rapid digital transformation, and this trend will continue to generate job opportunities for those with digital expertise. An estimated 250,000 digital jobs will require filling, totalling 2.26 million digitally skilled workers by 2025. Information and communications technology (ICT) jobs are often associated with the ICT sector. However, there are now more digital roles outside the sector than within it as all industries accelerate digitization. Further, shifts in technology, the demand for hybrid skill sets to support digital transformation and the use of new low-code and no-code tools are changing the profile of ICT workers.

Despite increased demand and reports of skills shortages, women and other equity-deserving groups remain underrepresented.

Women's representation within the ICT sector has been near 30% for over a decade and representation drops to 21% if we only consider technical roles. Women hold 28% of management positions within the digital economy but only 15% of senior leadership positions.

Women's representation in the ICT sector

Near
30%
for over a decade

21%
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of management positions within the digital economy

15%
of senior leadership positions

Women and other equity-deserving groups represent an important talent pool and evidence shows that **improving representation helps organizations serve more diverse markets, innovate, improve productivity and mitigate legal, financial and reputational risks.**

The underrepresentation of women in ICT is a function of societal, organizational and individual forces. At the societal level, government policies, programs, legislation and media representations can shape stereotypes, values and who has access to ICT roles. Organization-level policies and practices are also prescient. Organizations can create or foreclose on opportunities through, for example, their human resources (HR) practices or labour force development activities. At the individual level, barriers may include attitudes, gender stereotypes and biases, family obligations and others. For example, research has shown that women are more likely than men, at the same level, to have their judgment questioned, their technical competence devalued, be spoken over and labelled "difficult" for displaying the same assertive behaviours encouraged in men. These microaggressions impede women's confidence and career progression, and increase the likelihood that women will leave science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) professions.

This report examines barriers faced by women in the ICT sector and strategies to improve representation, advancement and inclusion. The analysis is based on a review of recent academic literature, Statistics Canada data and industry reports and 20 in-depth interviews exploring equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) practices across diverse ICT firms. It is also based on a desk review of EDI best practices, examining publicly available corporate policies and actions. The analysis focuses on six aspects of organizations based upon the Diversity Institute's Diversity Assessment Tool (DAT), derived from Canadian and international research and standards.

The anonymized interview data and the desk review of EDI best practices revealed similar themes. Our desk review findings across the six DAT categories are as follows:

Governance, leadership and strategy: To advance EDI, best practice organizations are setting the tone from the top. ICT firms such as Bell Canada, Telus, Rogers and CGI are promoting a greater range of perspectives by incorporating EDI considerations within their board policies and selection processes, and by setting representation targets at the board and/or executive team level. Participation in voluntary codes, such as the 50 – 30 Challenge aids this effort through the public attestation and ecosystem support. Leading organizations are embedding EDI within their corporate goals, leadership competencies, performance measurement and compensation systems. For example, IBM's Leadership Behaviours for executives incorporate EDI capabilities and development opportunities. IBM, Microsoft and other organizations link executive compensation to achieving targets and/or improvements in the representation of women and other equity-deserving groups among leadership and across their workforce. Embedding EDI is a critical element of their strategy, business plans, leadership expectations and ongoing communications.

Human resources (HR) practices: Attention to job design, employee recruitment, selection, promotion, retention and attrition are critical to advancing a diverse and engaged workforce and many promising practices exist. Shopify is reconsidering credential requirements, focusing instead on competencies and opening doors for Indigenous workers and others who may have the skill but not the post-secondary education. Wealthsimple and Capgemini have moved to open candidate sourcing, initiating outreach to seek diverse candidates outside of their networks and eliminating their over-reliance on referrals. Others, such as Microsoft have made their interview process more transparent, incorporating skills assessments (e.g., coding tests), that are less prone to bias. Fifty-fifty diverse short lists for open roles (e.g., Rogers) and ensuring women are equitably represented in talent management and high-potential talent lists can place a check on bias. Finally, employee development, mentorship and particularly sponsorship programs were identified as essential to building a stronger pipeline of women in leadership and driving advancement.

Values and culture: A culture of inclusion fosters an environment where employees from diverse and equity-deserving groups feel valued and supported. Most large ICT corporations, including Telus, Bell Canada, Rogers and IBM Canada, have a suite of workplace policies to standardize expectations and provide behavioural guidance to employees. Sustained EDI training on topics such as Allyship was also employed to foreground the experiences of equity-deserving groups and drive individual

level change. Increasingly, companies such as Telus, Shopify, Hypercontext, Wealthsimple and Buffer are providing flexible work options and family-friendly benefits. The focus on mental health was also notable. Organizations (e.g., Bell Canada), are delivering enhanced benefits and training around mental health—reinforcing the organization's commitment to non-discrimination and an inclusive work culture.

Measurement and tracking of EDI:

Metrics are crucial for ensuring that an organization's commitment to diversity translates into concrete action. Tracking workforce representation at each level of the organizational hierarchy is standard practice at large ICT companies (e.g., Microsoft, IBM, Rogers, Telus Bell Canada and Wealthsimple). As with other business metrics, senior leaders at these firms have access to diversity data or dashboards to monitor EDI and representation indicators and inform specific actions. Microsoft takes an employee lifecycle view to EDI and employee engagement, with additional surveys at key milestones such as onboarding, internal mobility and upon exit. Since representation and employee experience data is collected through anonymous surveys, trust is a factor. Investing in communications, emphasizing the business message and the benefit to employees can support this endeavour.

Diversity across the value chain: An

organization's core business processes, including procurement, product design, marketing and customer service should incorporate EDI. Supplier diversity programs have been employed, setting targets for engaging with businesses majority-owned by women, Indigenous Peoples and other equity-deserving groups. IBM maintains one of the top supplier diversity programs in the world. The company spends US$1.5 billion annually with diverse suppliers. In Canada, IBM, Rogers and Telus have partnered with the Canadian Council for Indigenous Business through their Supply Change program. Women Business Enterprises Canada, Canada's 2SLGBTQI+ Chamber of Commerce and the Canadian Aboriginal and Minority Supplier Council are other organizations supporting this practice. Applying a gender and diversity lens to product and service design is important to ensure products and services are accessible and useful for all. Microsoft is advanced in the areas of inclusive design and product accessibility and has extended its focus to inclusive AI.

Outreach and expanding the pool:

Organizations can form partnerships and initiate proactive measures to reach various groups and attract the future labour force. Rogers is a founding partner of the Cybersecurity Catalyst with Toronto Metropolitan University. The program aims to build a diverse and inclusive cybersecurity workforce and 54% of graduates identify as women or another gender. IBM's STEM 4 Girls program creates a connection to STEM through hands-on experience and

real-life applications. Software companies with smaller budgets have benefited from hackathons run exclusively for women. Salesforce, Telus and Rogers all participate in the TRIEC mentoring partnership; their employees mentor newcomer professionals across Canada, building cross-cultural understanding, awareness and support for newcomer talent.

This report outlines a framework for creating a more inclusive and equitable ICT sector. Advancing EDI in the sector is not only a moral imperative but also a business necessity. The persistent underrepresentation of women and other equity-deserving groups requires sustained effort across all ecosystem levels. Organizations must leverage best practices, set clear goals and commit to ongoing evaluation and improvement to create a more inclusive and equitable digital economy. By doing so, they can unlock the full potential of their workforce, drive innovation and achieve long-term success in an increasingly competitive global market.

Introduction

Canada is undergoing a massive digital transformation, driven by consumer demand and the imperative to remain competitive on a global scale. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated this transformation by shifting the delivery of many products and services to the digital world.[1] The digital shift will continue to create job opportunities, which will need to be filled by individuals with digital skills. The Information and Communications Technology Council (ICTC) estimates that over 250,000 digital jobs will need to be filled, totalling 2.26 million digitally skilled workers by 2025.[2] While information and communications technology (ICT) jobs are often associated with hardware, software and service providers, there are now more jobs outside the sector than within it as all sectors embrace digitization. Additionally, shifts in technology, the demand for individuals with hybrid skills to support digital transformation and the use of new low-code and no-code tools are changing the profile of ICT workers.
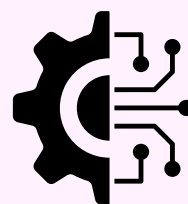
The Information and Communications Technology Council estimates that **over 250,000 digital jobs will need to be filled, totalling 2.26 million digitally skilled workers** by 2025.

Despite the growing demand and industry reports of skills shortages, women and other equity-deserving groups remain underrepresented in the ICT workforce. The percentage of women working in the ICT sector hovers around 30% and has remained relatively unchanged for over a decade.[3] When considering technical roles within the ICT sector, women's representation drops to 21%.[4] Representation is even lower for women at the intersection of other equity-deserving groups, such as newcomers, 2SLGBTQ+ individuals, persons with disabilities and Indigenous Peoples.

Not only do women and other equity-deserving groups represent an important talent pool, but ample evidence shows that improving representation helps organizations serve more diverse markets, drive innovation and improve productivity. Organizations that fail to address equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) often face significant legal, financial and reputational risks.[5, 6]

This report examines the barriers faced by women in the ICT sector and explores strategies to improve their representation, advancement and inclusion in the workplace. This analysis is based on a review of recent academic literature, Statistics Canada data and industry reports elucidating the factors advancing and impeding the participation of women and equity-deserving groups, 20 in-depth interviews exploring the EDI efforts, experiences and results across a diverse cross-section of ICT firms and a desk review of EDI best practices through a web search of publicly available company programs, policies and actions to advance EDI within ICT companies and beyond.
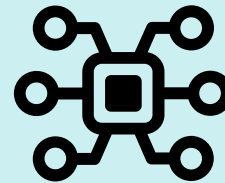
This report examines the barriers faced by women in the ICT sector and explores strategies to improve their representation, advancement and inclusion in the workplace.

Context

This section explores women's representation within the ICT sector in Canada and the factors advancing and impeding the participation of women and equity-deserving groups. A review of recent academic literature, Statistics Canada data and industry reports reveals little has changed. The ICT sector continues to underrepresent women, wage disparities have grown, and recent trends involving the demand for hybrid skills and the transition to low-code and no-code development have yet to have a significant impact on the sector's gender imbalance.

According to ICTC, in 2020, the digital economy in Canada employed 1,935,100 individuals. Among these, 1,553,800 were ICT professionals working in industries across the country, while the rest comprised non-ICT professionals who were employed within the ICT sector. The Information and Communications Technology Council estimates that over 250,000 digital jobs will need to be filled, opening opportunities for 2.26 million digitally skilled workers by 2025.[7] It is also worth highlighting that there are now more ICT jobs outside the sector than within.[8] The employment growth in digital roles throughout all economic sectors has surpassed that within digital industries. In 2020, sectors outside ICT employed 63% of workers in ICT roles. Another trend has been the growing demand for individuals with hybrid skills—those with technical and business skills to help translate and implement technology in organizations.[9] This creates growing opportunities for disciplines beyond science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), which helps foster diversity and innovation while also widening the path into tech for a broader array of candidates.[10]

Women constitute 47% of the overall workforce but represent only 28% of all ICT roles in the Canadian economy. The proportion of women has remained relatively unchanged for over a decade.[11] While the ICTC workforce in Canada has become more diverse, this was largely due to the increased representation of newcomers.[12] Newcomer representation in the ICT workforce increased from 28% in 2010 to 38% in 2020. The growth of women's representation was less pronounced, rising from 24.6% in 2010 to 27.3% in 2020. When looking at the ICT sector, women comprise 31% of the sector's workforce, encompassing technical and non-technical positions and a mere 21% of all technical roles within the ICT sector.[13]

Figure 1 shows how underrepresented women are in ICT across six job categories, and how this underrepresentation has persisted for more than a decade.

FIGURE 1.

Women in the Information and communications technology (ICT) sector and in ICT roles (2012 to 2021)
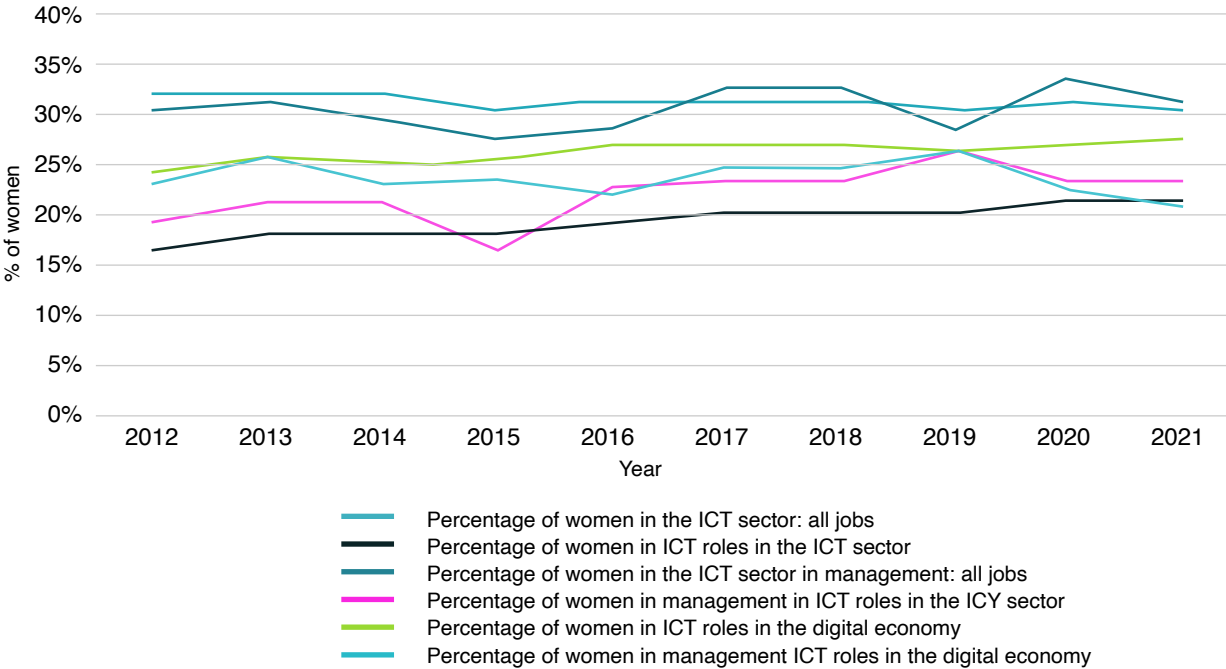
Source: Cukier et al. (2023). Digital skills and the skills gap.

Representation is even lower for women at the intersection of other equity-deserving groups, such as newcomers, 2SLGBTQ+ individuals, persons with disabilities and Indigenous Peoples. For instance, racialized women are even more underrepresented in ICT than both white and racialized men.[14] A lack of disaggregated data prevents the examination of other intersectional identities.

Still, as only 2.2% of tech workers are Indigenous despite making up 5% of the population, this number is likely far lower for Indigenous women in tech.[15]

While women hold nearly 28% of management positions across the digital economy, they account for only 15% of senior management roles and 4% of CEO

jobs.[16] As Figure 1 shows, while there has been an increase of four percentage points in the representation of women in ICT management roles within the ICT sector, there has been a decline in women's representation among ICT managers in the digital economy.[17] According to the 2021 Census, men employed in Canada's ICT sector earned, on average, $20,000 more per annum than women—almost three times the gender pay gap reported five years prior.[18]

There are no simple solutions to complex problems—the underrepresentation of women in ICT is a function of societal, organizational and individual forces. As these factors can interact to create opportunities or barriers, progress necessitates interventions across the ecosystem. At the societal level, government policies, programs, legislation and media representations can shape stereotypes, values and who has access to ICT roles. The public provision of affordable childcare and investments in targeted education and training programs, for example, can improve women's access to the sector. Legislation such as the Employment Equity Act, covering federally regulated businesses such as those in the telecommunications sector, and Bill C-25, which covers federally-regulated distributing companies, or securities legislation requiring that public companies disclose the diversity of their board of directors and senior management team, have a direct impact on outcomes by focusing public attention and scrutiny on the issue.[19] Voluntary codes such as the 30% Club also appear to help advance corporate commitments to improving women's representation and investors'

growing attention on economic, societal and governance (ESG) issues is also driving progress.

Organizational-level policies, processes and practices profoundly impact equity, diversity and inclusion. Organizations demarcate labour market insiders from outsiders through their leadership, governance and strategy, human resources practices, values and culture, measurement systems, value chain and outreach, and labour force development activities. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are significant, employing 88% of Canada's private sector workforce.[20] However, these businesses face challenges in fostering inclusion. Limited resources and a lack of human resources (HR) expertise hinder their ability to attract and retain diverse talent. Informal recruitment practices often result in less diverse workforces and SMEs often prioritize other needs over EDI efforts when resources are constrained.[21, 22, 23]

At the individual level, barriers may include individual attitudes, motivations, constraints, internalized gender stereotypes and biases, personal family obligations and others. For example, research has shown that women experience higher rates of microaggressions in the workplace compared with men at the same level, including having their judgment questioned and technical competence devalued, being spoken over, interrupted, and labelled "difficult" or "aggressive" for displaying the same assertive behaviour encouraged in men.[24, 25] These microaggressions accumulate, impeding women's confidence, career progression

and affecting women leaders' identities and well-being.[26] Women also face higher rates of discrimination and sexual harassment within the ICT sector compared to men; this "chilly climate" in ICT deters women from progressing and pushes them out. Women in STEM are almost twice as likely to say they are considering leaving their workforce compared to women in other industries (22% vs. 12%).[27]

The impact of gender stereotypes starts at a young age and girls are often discouraged from pursuing careers in STEM and ICT early in elementary and secondary school. Cultural norms, a lack of role models and mentors and media stereotypes contribute to girls and women believing they do not belong in ICT.[28] While the benefits of women in tech have been made clear for decades, the proportion of women in engineering and computer science has changed little in the last 10 to 15 years.[29] The phenomenon of girls and women exiting STEM and ICT fields throughout the career pipeline, from early school years to employment, has been called the "leaky pipeline."[30] For example, women's representation among math and computer science post-secondary enrolments has increased only three percentage points, with women representing 25% of 2010 to 2011 enrolments and 28% of 2021 to 2022 enrolments.[31] Women's representation in math and computer science across industries has been unchanged in the workforce, with representation at 25% in 2006, 24% in 2011 and 25% in 2021.[32] Technology tends to be highly gendered, and girls often make occupational decisions tied to their identity at an early age. There is a need to focus on education for women and gatekeepers.

Despite the evidence that improving representation, equity and inclusion is tied to business success, underrepresentation remains. This report advances solutions that can be applied at the organizational level to shift this trajectory and drive results.

Research Design
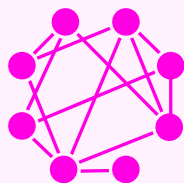
This exploratory study provides an update on women in ICT, focusing on the status, practices and gaps. It asks the following questions:

> What is the state of women's representation in ICT in Canada and what are the factors advancing and impeding the participation of women and equity-deserving groups?

> What specific strategies are organizations are using to improve representation in terms of gender and diversity on their leadership teams and across all levels of their organizations?

> What evidence is there of the impact of these practices?

> What additional research is needed?

The study uses mixed methods, drawing upon:

> a review of promising corporate practices based on recent research and the Diversity Institute's best practices database

> semi-structured, anonymous, in-depth interviews with representatives from 20 ICT companies.

The desk review involved a web search of companies operating in Canada's ICT sector and other markets. Publicly available documents were leveraged, allowing us to explore organizations to identify the processes, policies and actions used to advance EDI within the ICT sector and beyond.

The questionnaire for the interviews is in Appendix A. The interviews were administered by WCT and explored the EDI efforts, experiences and results across a diverse cross-section of 20 ICT firms. One hour of semi-structured interviews were conducted between September 2022 and March 2023. Most respondents, but not all, were HR professionals. Nine interviewees held titles designating responsibility for EDI. Table 1 outlines the interview sample.

TABLE 1.

In-depth interview sample

Women-led companies	4
Large companies	13
Medium-sized companies	3
Small companies	4
Canadian companies	14
Global companies	6
Interviewees with diversity, equity and inclusion titles	9
Interviewees with human resources titles	11

The analysis focuses on six aspects of organizations based on the Diversity Assessment Tool (DAT), a comprehensive framework derived from international research and standards, including recently developed Canadian guidelines: [33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38]

1. Governance, leadership and strategy: Includes measures to set targets and improve the representation of equity-deserving groups in leadership and governance. It also involves applying an EDI lens to the processes of leadership, strategy development and setting the "tone at the top."

2. Human resources: Actions at every step of the HR process, including job design, recruitment, selection, training and development, management and employee engagement.

3. Values and culture: The phrase "culture eats strategy" underscores the idea that an organization's culture is often the most important and challenging aspect of change. It is crucial to implement initiatives that ensure policies and procedures reflect and reinforce EDI and embed them into the organization's core values and work environment.

4. Measurement and tracking of EDI: "What gets measured gets done." This includes a series of benchmarks mapped to each dimension of the corporation's EDI strategy to set targets, track progress and promote transparency and accountability.

5. Diversity across the value chain: Evaluates whether the organization has embedded EDI across its core systems. Whether a bank, a hospital or a small and medium-sized enterprise (SME), an organization needs to apply an EDI lens to its end-to-end processes, including procurement, research and development, product and service design, marketing and sales and service.

6. Outreach and expanding the pool: Refers to how an organization engages and shapes its ecosystem through government relations, philanthropic and community partnerships and helps use its influence to advance EDI more broadly.

Findings

This section includes the findings from a desk review of promising corporate practices across the sector, supplemented with in-depth interviews with 20 ICT companies and a review of practices in more than 300 organizations.

The analysis is organized around the six dimensions of the DAT:

1. Leadership, governance and strategy: Representation and tone from the top

2. HR practices: Incorporation of EDI considerations

3. Values and culture: Policies and corporate values that create an inclusive organizational culture

4. Measurement and tracking EDI: Evaluation of organizational efforts to advance inclusion

5. Gender equity and diversity across the value chain: Procurement, product design, communications and customer service

6. Outreach and expanding the pool: Creating new opportunities for equity-deserving groups within the sector

Promising corporate practices

1. Leadership, governance and strategy

Diverse representation on boards and/or senior management teams fosters a wider range of perspectives throughout the organization. Evidence suggests that legislation, regulation and norm-setting are moving the dial. Setting diversity targets for leadership positions, including on boards and executive teams, is an effective strategy for achieving better representation. Bell Canada, Telus, Rogers and CGI are examples of organizations that have publicly disclosed representation targets for their board and/or executive teams.[39, 40, 41, 42] Opentext has committed to reaching a majority ethnically diverse workforce, gender parity among key roles and to 40% representation of women across all leadership positions, all by 2030.[43] Dell has committed to women representing 50% of its global workforce and 40% of its global people leaders by 2030.[44]

Some organizations, including those federally-regulated or large suppliers to the government, must disclose their representation figures under Employment Equity legislation. Others are required by securities regulations or Bill C-25. Additionally, many organizations have signed voluntary codes such as the 50 – 30 Challenge, 30%+ Club and BlackNorth Initiative (BNI) to signal their commitments.[45]

Several interview respondents said they were taking part in the 50 – 30 Challenge, a voluntary code pledging to advance gender parity (50%) and increased representation of other equity-deserving groups (30%) on boards and/or in senior leadership roles.[46] One signatory to the 50 – 30 Challenge indicated that they had already achieved gender parity. Another interviewee reported similar success with the Catalyst Accord:[47]

> *"We committed to achieving 30% of women executives and 30% of women board directors by 2022. I'm pleased to say we have achieved that and have an average of 30% women executives and 40% women board of directors."*
>
> *Interview Participant*

Participation in voluntary codes can galvanize action due to public attestation and the ecosystem support these programs provide. For example, the 50 – 30 Challenge supports participant organizations through research, resources, self-assessments, toolkits and access to ecosystem partners.[48] This helps firms deploy their resources effectively and efficiently, particularly smaller firms lacking HR departments and EDI expertise.

Our desk review identified Telus, Cisco Canada, Google Canada, Rogers, Wealthsimple and HP Inc. as signatories to the BlackNorth CEO Pledge with their commitment to eliminate anti-Black systemic racism by creating opportunities for members of the Black community.[49]

Becoming a signatory means agreeing to seven goals, including commitments to increase the representation of Black employees and leaders and committing to having a minimum of 3.5% of their Canadian executive and board positions held by Black leaders by 2025.[50] Rogers is also a signatory to the 50 – 30 Challenge.[51]

Leading organizations typically develop strategies to identify, recruit and nominate individuals from equity-deserving groups to the board and senior management team. This strategy can include intentional outreach efforts, using channels that reach equity-deserving groups, setting targets, inclusive selection processes and robust onboarding processes. Rogers, for example, maintains and leverages a skills matrix and core competencies to identify and recruit a diverse board and senior management team.[52] Organizations can also target specific groups, requiring a proportion of shortlisted candidates to be from designated groups. This approach has been adopted at Rogers; the company requires 50/50 diverse candidate shortlists for all open roles.[53] On a similar note, one interview participant stated:

"Over the last 18 months, when we look externally to fill VP roles we hold our third-party search firms accountable to bring us a diverse slate of candidates. I have really seen a shift in that conversation in the last 18 months."

Interview Participant

Once diverse leaders are recruited and selected, EDI should be embedded into the onboarding and ongoing support provided to board members and senior leaders. A combination of strategies is necessary to embed EDI within the board, including revising board policies and guidelines to reflect EDI principles and mandatory training on diversity and inclusion for board members and senior leaders. IBM, for example, introduced the IBM Leadership Behaviours framework to define the characteristics and capabilities required of IBM executives. This framework is used for executive assessment and development and includes expectations around fostering an environment of caring, belonging and inclusivity.[54] IBM's board composition and diversity policy and its board selection process detail the importance of EDI and the requirement for a diversity of backgrounds, including gender, ethnicity, talents and perspectives, for board selection decisions.[55]

Organizations may also establish term and tenure limits for director positions, fostering opportunities for new perspectives. This is now recommended in Bill C-25 and the legislation of some securities commissions. Bell Canada Enterprises has a maximum board tenure limit of 12 years, with annual re-election. In keeping with its board composition and diversity policy, the governance committee ensures that the list of potential board candidates includes gender-diverse candidates, racialized persons, Indigenous Peoples and/or persons with disabilities.[56]

EDI should be embedded within an organization's corporate strategy. Tying EDI to corporate goals and objectives helps mainstream it within organizations. The strategy should include measurable goals and key performance indicators (KPIs) and be reflected in the corporate dashboard or risk register.[i] CGI integrates EDI into its strategic business planning process, to identify specific priorities and actions.[57] It has set goals and KPIs with respect to the representation of women and other equity-deserving groups among its senior leadership and has specific plans to achieve them.[58] This has generated results. In 2023, CGI reported 44% of its strategic business unit presidents were women, an increase from 33% in 2022.[59] IBM's management discussion in its 2023 annual report discloses its performance on executive representation and details how diversity and inclusivity serves as a catalyst for heightened innovation, agility and performance.[60]

Compensation should play a role as well, signalling EDI's priority. For example, Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella publicly tied his bonus compensation to achieving diversity goals.[61] Rogers has operationalized a five-year inclusion and diversity (I&D) plan that includes targets for the representation of each equity-deserving group in aggregate and by line of business. Leaders at the director level and above are evaluated based on their EDI scorecard and KPIs.[62] IBM's diversity-linked executive compensation reinforces its focus on attracting and

retaining diverse talent. It measures the improvement in the executive representation of women and equity-deserving groups and links this to compensation.[63]

> *"Last year our CEO tied a portion of the executive bonus to achieving diversity goals. So they were very inspired to make diversity a priority … it certainly changed the conversation."*
>
> *Interview Participant*

Organizations should also have a clear mission, vision or purpose statement linked to EDI. For example, Corus Entertainment incorporates EDI into its mission and vision statement.[64]

Effective EDI implementation requires leadership commitment to EDI values and ongoing communication of this commitment. Microsoft's executive describes diversity and inclusion as key to its business model. The company communicates the value of EDI and its critical importance to achieving its mission and vision through its annual report, diversity and inclusion report, employee town halls, emails, blogs, website content and other communications.[65, 66] Microsoft details its initiatives to increase representation and strengthen a culture of inclusion, including targets to address racial injustice and improve the representation of women and racialized persons across its workforce. Cogeco communicates the importance of EDI in driving innovation, supporting a collaborative work environment,

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i   Key performance indicators are quantifiable measures used to evaluate the success of an organization or employee in meeting objectives.

supporting communities and customers and realizing improved organizational performance. The company details its commitment to EDI through six levers: listening, sharing, training, taking action, representing, and supporting diversity, and inclusion. Bell Canada, Rogers, Telus, Loopio Inc., Nakisa Inc., AccessNow, CopperLeaf Technologies and Dash Hudson are other ICT organizations emphasizing EDI values in their public communications.

It is important to ensure that EDI initiatives are supported with the appropriate structures, senior leadership and resources. Initiatives should be led by a senior leader or committee with resources and access to executive decision-makers. For example, Rogers has an I&D council that champions I&D strategies and advocates for EDI across the organization.[67] While its initial 2015 I&D strategy was led by HR, in 2020, ownership transitioned to the business, with dedicated HR and I&D council support. This council, chaired by a senior vice-president in the business, helps leaders embed inclusion into their business strategies for greater impact.[68] Rogers also has a Black Leadership Council that ensures issues of anti-Black racism and bias are addressed. They work in partnership with the I&D council. In cases where an executive with direct responsibilities for a line of business or functional area outside of HR is given EDI accountability, it is important that EDI is an integral part of the role and not merely a spare-time project and that the function is supported appropriately. Having a dedicated HR diversity and inclusion leader can support this aim.

2. Human resources practices

HR practices encompass the job design process and employee recruitment, selection, promotion, retention and separation. Inclusive HR practices are critical in advancing a diverse and engaged workforce and building an inclusive organizational culture. This improves employee satisfaction, job retention and commitment.[69]

Job design is critical for embedding EDI within talent strategies. This includes reviewing position requirements and skills (including technical and essential skills), eliminating unnecessary requirements, valuing international credentials and experience and mitigating other barriers and biases within the design process. It is important to critically review the qualifications to ensure they are job requirements. Additionally, there may be opportunities for developmental roles, where people who do not have 100% of the qualifications are provided with coaching and training.

For example, many large companies, including Shopify, are reconsidering credentials required for employment and focusing instead on competencies, opening doors for Indigenous workers and others who may have the skill but not a post-secondary education.

Another participant noted that arbitrarily setting the experience bar can function as a barrier to women because, while a man with four years of experience will look at the 10-year requirement and apply anyway, a woman will just as likely not apply. Similarly, the expectation of a well-written résumé may bias the recruitment process and limit diversity. One interviewee asked:

Job postings with inclusive language help attract a more diverse pool of applicants.[70] Tools such as TextIO can reduce gendered language and ensure job postings resonate with as large an audience as possible. In the education technology sector, Duolingo is one example of a company that has reported improved outcomes after deploying TextIO to ensure their job description and job posting language is inclusive.[71] Shopify Inc., on its job postings, includes a statement encouraging applications from Indigenous Peoples, racialized people, persons with disabilities, people from gender and/ or sexually diverse communities and/or people with intersectional identities.[72] The company's job postings link to their diversity data, EDI resources and information on Shopify's initiatives to mitigate bias in their talent acquisition process.[73] Wealthsimple's "Work with Us" webpage features a "Cultural Manual", stories profiling diverse employees, the work of employee resource groups and other content illustrating the organization's commitment to EDI.[74]

Organizations should use expansive, intentional outreach methods to seek women and equity-deserving groups when recruiting potential candidates proactively. This includes leveraging partner networks, matching platforms, community organizations, specialized search firms and partnering with non-profit and advocacy groups focused on equity-deserving populations.

Many ICT firms engage with partners to support recruitment. This includes organizations focused on advancing the representation of women in technology, Indigenous Peoples, racialized persons, persons with disabilities and immigrants. For example, the Onyx Initiative was founded to close the systemic gap in hiring, retention and promotion of Black college and university students and recent graduates for

roles in corporate Canada. It expands the recruitment pipeline through comprehensive career development resources and creates mutually beneficial corporate, educational and community partnerships.[75] Rogers has partnered with the Onyx Initiative and other organizations such as ACCES Employment, Ontario Disability Employment Network, Community Living, Lime Connect, Pride at Work, The 519, Indigenous Link and QueerTech.[76] In Canada, Rogers changed their recruitment processes, requiring job postings to be shared on diverse job boards.

CGI Canada has also worked to extend their recruitment pipeline, partnering with organizations such as the Women in Leadership Foundation, Indigenous Links Canada, Equitek, Talent Beyond Boundaries and Pride at Work to promote their key roles.[77] Bell has developed partnerships to expand its sources for attracting diverse talent, such as Indigenous Careers, Indigenous Link and Indigenous Works. The company also worked with BIPOC TV & FILM on HireBIPOC, to increase the hiring of individuals who identify as Black, Indigenous and racialized persons.[78] Outside the ICT sector, CIBC has advanced a similar approach. In addition to its relationship with Onyx, CIBC has created an inclusive talent pipeline using partnerships and/or scholarships with organizations such as the Black Professionals in Tech Network, Catalyst, Indspire, AccessNow, Magnusmode, Specialisterne, Tent, 30%+ Club, Toronto Immigrant Employment Council and Lime Connect.[79]

Selection processes should be formally reviewed to ensure they are bias-free.

This includes ensuring that the selection committee is diverse and that alternative candidate evaluation tools (interviews, written assessments and others) are used depending on the skills required for the position. In 2020, Wealthsimple outlined new recruitment measures to improve the representation of equity-deserving groups across the organization. The company recognized that an over-reliance on referrals was working against its EDI commitments: "Like a lot of tech companies, we've relied heavily on referrals. This will change. Instead, we will spend the time and resources to seek diverse candidates outside of our networks."[80] The French IT consulting company, Capgemini, is another example of an organization that has moved to open candidate sourcing to mitigate the bias inherent in referrals.[81] Loopio is focused on building diverse talent pipelines for open roles, including the use of structured interviews to support equitable hiring decisions, leveraging community partnerships and building a more diverse management team. This has led to an increase in racialized employees and women in management.[82]

Other organizations have worked to increase the transparency of their process. Microsoft, for example, uses an entirely virtual interview process and their website provides interview tips and guidance to help candidates prepare for their interviews.[83] This guidance includes information on the six core competencies they will cover during the interview (e.g., collaboration, growth mindset, etc.). Microsoft's website text and video content details how candidates can

request accommodations. Job specific technical tests and case study work assignments can be less prone to bias.[84] For engineering and technology roles, Microsoft supplements the interview process with a coding test leveraging a third-party platform; candidates may also use the programming language of their choice.[85]

Equity, diversity and inclusion-focused recruitment programs have also been developed within the sector. US-based technology company Intel created the "Rotation Engineers Program" (REP) to address industry-specific barriers in STEM recruitment. The program hires diverse recent engineering graduates while developing and fostering growth through three six-month-long employment rotations, allowing participants to gain deep technical knowledge from multiple areas while being paid.[86]

Rogers has implemented several initiatives to broaden the talent pipeline and increase leadership diversity. The company requires a 50/50 diverse shortlist for all open roles and requires all hiring managers and recruiters to complete "Inclusive Recruitment" training.[87] CBC has committed that one-half of the new hires for senior leadership and executive positions would come from three targeted groups: Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities and racialized persons, and that it would double the retention and promotion rates for these groups. As of 2021, it had achieved 43.8% of new hires from these groups (double its previous track record) and a 31.5% promotion rate (versus 21.5% before making this commitment).[88] To support its efforts, CBC has implemented a recruitment policy that requires diverse selection committees and candidate shortlists, with 50% of candidates from the three targeted groups.[89]

"What we try to do is make sure we have diverse interviewers–people who have different life backgrounds, come from different parts of the organization, different racial identities. These people assess our candidates based on an objective set of criteria … By bringing in additional, more diverse recruiters, we want to make sure people can see themselves in our organization. By trying to ensure that we have people with different backgrounds or are different in various ways, the process helps us attract the best diverse talent."

Interview Participant

Many organizations implement EDI training for their employees, managers and hiring teams. However, there is mixed evidence on the efficacy of training, including unconscious bias training. The Equality and Human Rights Commission's review of 18 studies on unconscious bias training programs found that while courses effectively raise awareness of bias, there is limited evidence of long-lasting behavioural change.[90] On the other hand, results from a meta-analysis of over 40 years of research on diversity training evaluation indicate that diversity training can have more pronounced effects if it takes longer.[91] As with the interview findings, unconscious bias and other EDI-related training were common among the companies examined in our web search. Respondents stressed the importance of executive championship of the training and that unconscious bias training is not a one-and-done solution but requires frequent iterations.

Transparent and open policies around promotion are critically important, as well as providing pathways to promotion through professional development and clear performance appraisal, rewards systems and performance review processes. Ensuring these processes are fair and equitable is a complex endeavour, as they can be influenced by one's visibility, political acumen, unconscious bias and ingrained stereotypes. For example, men in STEM are more likely than women to engage in and embrace political behaviour in the workplace.[92] Political processes can impact not only promotional outcomes but also who is awarded the high-profile projects and assignments that lead to greater exposure and advancement opportunities. Further, research illustrates how equivalent performance and behaviours in men and women are differentially assessed, with women more likely to have their judgment questioned, accomplishments diminished and labelled "difficult" or "aggressive" for displaying what in men are valued as assertive behaviours.[93, 94] Measurement is important. An example of a practice from outside the ICT sector is at CIBC, which ensures women are equitably represented through regular tracking across its talent management process, including gender-balanced slates and high-potential talent lists.[95]

Considerable research has been conducted regarding the role of coaching, mentoring and sponsorship and their importance in advancing women and other equity-deserving groups. Organizations can also provide professional development and training opportunities for employees, leading to upskilling and improving employee capacity across all levels of the organization. Our web review identified several programs targeting equity-deserving groups. For example, Startech offers a Women in Leadership Initiative, a program focused on empowering women leaders and encouraging greater gender diversity in leadership.[96] The software company SAP launched the Women in Tech team to develop and showcase women leaders within the business. The program includes a speaker series and partnerships with the United Nation's Equals program, Girls and Women Talking Tech.[97]

Bell Canada provides extensive employee learning and development opportunities, including leadership development for high-potential employees. Women represent about 44% of the overall usage of the learning programs, and Bell offers specific programming to prepare women to advance into executive roles (e.g., the Judy Project and the International Women's Forum Fellows Program).[98] Rogers' recruitment procedure strongly emphasizes cultivating its talent pipeline and fostering internal mobility, allowing internationally educated professionals, often racialized, to move from what may initially be survival jobs in call centres or support functions into professional roles more aligned with their qualifications.[99] The organization has operationalized an Accelerated Development Program for women, focusing on building a pipeline of women in senior positions. It is a highly targeted sponsorship program to support women directors with customized development activities. The program helps build a gender-diverse executive pipeline.

Among our interview respondents, mentorship was frequently mentioned as a means of creating stronger connections with women employees. Employers in this sample are developing mentorship programs in various forms, including peer-to-peer, mentorship circles and speed mentoring, for employees generally and for women and others from underrepresented groups. Smaller organizations that do not have the internal resources or critical mass to custom-create a mentorship program have sought membership in organizations that provide this support and highlighted it as a benefit to employees; WCT, for example, has operated a national mentorship program for many years. Sponsorship programs were also mentioned as serving a different

purpose. While a mentor is someone who has knowledge and will share it with you, a sponsor is a person who has power and will use it for you.[100]

> "We have formal mentorship programs, but I find that the most powerful influencer that we've seen for women is sponsorship programs. I'm sponsoring a couple of women in the company, and I talk to their bosses about what their opportunities are … moving barriers and helping that (advancement) happen."
>
> *Interview Participant*

Another employer provides each woman who advances to VP with an executive coach. An interviewee explained their company's approach.

> "Our program was first created to help us build a stronger pipeline of women in leadership, to drive advancement and help expand their roles. The intent of the program is to help these women build greater self-awareness, identify their authentic leadership style, engage in some meaningful networking and build exposure to senior leaders, as well as to opportunities in the organization."
>
> *Interview Participant*

Finally, termination and separation processes need to incorporate an EDI lens. Along with tracking diversity data, interviews with departing employees can offer valuable insights into these processes.[101] Exit interviews are widely used among interview respondents, helping their employers understand why individuals leave the organization and providing an opportunity to review gender-based differences in experiences. "Stay interviews" were another frequently mentioned practice. There is also a growing awareness that sometimes, women who leave the tech industry may not have left for good. Academic and third-sector organizations have developed programs to provide updated skills and the confidence boost required to encourage re-entry.[102] And, with the rapid pace of change in the technology industry, IT professionals will inevitably find that their skills need refreshing. At least one respondent organization operates a return-to-work program.

> *"It's specifically for women who have been out of the workforce, have a technology background and are trying to reintegrate themselves back into the workforce. The intention is to help them reintegrate, giving them training, just trying to help them balance as they shift back into the workforce."*
>
> *Interview Participant*

3. Values and culture

A culture of inclusion fosters an environment where employees from diverse and equity-deserving groups feel valued and supported.[103] Organizational culture is shaped and reflected by its policies. Many organizations have a code of conduct and policies on workplace harassment, safety and accessibility. These and other EDI-related policies standardize expectations and provide valuable behavioural guidance to workers. Most large ICT corporations in Canada have a suite of workplace policies, including Telus, Bell Canada, Rogers Communications and IBM Canada. For example, Cogeco has a comprehensive Code of Ethics that builds on the organization's core principles in great detail, leaving little room for ambiguity for issues such as harassment, intimidation and discrimination.[104]

Organizations can foster a supportive, positive and inclusive culture by helping employees manage a healthy work-life balance through family-friendly benefits that are inclusive for working and 2SLGBTQI+ parents, strong parental leave policies and supports flexible working arrangements.[105] For example, Telus, Shopify, Hypercontext, Wealthsimple and Buffer all provide flexible work options. At Telus, Work Styles is a flexible work program that enables team members to work when and where they will be most effective. Hypercontext offers remote work and apart from team and company meetings, employees can schedule their workday at their discretion. In addition to statutory maternity leave benefits, Deutsche Telekom provides new parents

the option to work remotely or switch to part-time positions with the guarantee that they can return to their full-time positions. The company also runs the Stay in ContacT network, which provides company activity updates to employees on parental leave so they can continue their career trajectories and ensure that women on maternity leave, in particular, can apply for leadership positions in the future. Canadian software company Benevity offers 17 weeks of parental leave; for the non-delivery parent, they offer a two-week bonding break and a one-month salary bonus if the employee takes two or more months leave.[106]

Senior leaders can normalize family-friendly policies by setting an example. For instance, former Twitter CEO Parag Agrawal took paternity leave from his company to demonstrate the company's commitment and encourage other fathers to do the same.[107]

Mental health support and benefits reinforce the organization's commitment to inclusion, non-discrimination and a healthy work culture. Organizations can support employees through wellness efforts and efforts to support employee capacity. Bell, for example, offers a leading mental health package, including benefits that cover up to $3,000 per year for psychological care and mental health training, team member training and leadership training around mental health.

Outside the ICT industry, Purolator stood out in our web search as an organization with extensive programming in this area. The company's health and wellness strategy includes programs to support employees'

and their families' physical, mental and social health. In addition to comprehensive health benefits and an employee and family assistance program, the company has a chief medical director and wellness programming and training.[108] This includes mandatory mental health e-learning modules for all employees—designed to increase awareness around mental health topics and reduce stigma and barriers in the workplace. The Working Mind Manager training was completed by all people managers, allowing them to gain the knowledge and skills they need to support their employees. The Workplace Mental Health Leadership certificate, a new initiative for Purolator managers, takes this learning further. Developed by the Faculty of Health Sciences at Queen's University and TELUS Health, the program provides practical solutions to create a psychologically safe work environment.[109]

Innovations in benefits programs can signal a deep commitment to EDI principles. One notable example was Google's response to the U.S. Supreme Court decision to overturn Roe v. Wade. Google already had an established work relocation program and decided to modify and deploy it to support its employees by offering relocation assistance to those seeking to leave jurisdictions under abortion bans. This was a powerful statement underscoring Google's cultural value of fairness and equity to all employees.[110] One of our interview respondents, a mid-sized global company, also expressed its commitment to EDI through its benefits package. The company operates globally and has employees in a location where 2SLGBTQ+ partner coverage

is not normative. The interview participant stated:

> *"We made that change. We contacted our broker. We had them really advocate with our benefits provider. And we were able to add that coverage to our plans."*
>
> *Interview Participant*

Accessibility is a critical aspect of building an inclusive workplace and organizational culture. For AccessNow, creating a world that is accessible to all is core to their mission. AccessNow partners with eSSENTIAL Accessibility (eA), a leading digital Accessibility-as-a-Service platform, to ensure they meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, Level AA at a minimum.[111] BenchSci's accessibility policy provides a commitment to accessibility, legal obligations and standards, and it provides persons with disabilities with individual accommodation plans during their employment.[112] The organization provides employees with disabilities with individualized emergency response information, follows WCAG 2.0, Level A and complies with accessibility standards. It also provides flexible working options.

Building a robust EDI culture must be a project that is fully inclusive of all. The engagement of white, able, cisgender men is critically important.[113] Many of the organizations interviewed recognized this and have made allyship a key element of their EDI strategies.[114] Allyship can

be reactive or proactive. Allyship is reactive where a colleague intervenes and counteracts an interaction or bias that has occurred. The act of allyship can reaffirm the equity-deserving employee's contribution while making evident what constitutes unacceptable behaviour to drive behaviour change and a more inclusive culture. Allyship can also be proactive, for example by consistently ensuring the ideas of women or other equity-deserving groups are heard during meetings. Among respondents, building allyship often involved training for leaders or employees. One organization partnered with Catalyst's MARC (Men Advocating Real Change) program, an initiative to inspire and equip men to leverage their unique opportunity and responsibility to be advocates for equity.[115]

> *"That was a fantastic program. We took about 30 of our senior leaders through. The conversations were really around gender equity. It was all about men recognizing some of the advantages they might have and giving them perspective on women's lived experience. And we all left the session with actions they were going to take to improve representation."*
>
> *Interview Participant*

Other interviewed organizations had developed bespoke allyship initiatives.

An organization that consistently stresses the inclusion of diverse points of view, respect for all and the elimination of bias will encounter organizations in the marketplace that don't share this perspective. One mark of an organization's maturity in an EDI culture is the decisions it makes in the marketplace when it does.

"We are committed to not support clients that are outwardly discriminatory or are making decisions that drive systemic discrimination. When we're screening for credit, we also do an ethics check."

Interview Participant

A large part of this approach is empowering employees to decline problematic clients. One interviewee reported:

"We've turned down some clients because even in the initial discussions I felt like it wasn't an appropriate place for women and diverse team members."

Interview Participant

Employee resource groups (ERGs) offer a valuable platform for employees from diverse and intersectional backgrounds to connect voluntarily. These groups provide a space to discuss social and professional goals, fostering a more inclusive organizational culture.[116] However, their impact varies depending on resources, access to decision-makers and their ability to change organizational policies and processes. They must be integrated into a larger strategy.[117, 118, 119] Our web search revealed that many large ICT companies, including IBM, Microsoft, Apple, Telus, Bell, Rogers and others, have supported and resourced employee resource groups as an important aspect of continuous learning and building an inclusive organizational culture. Respondents frequently cited these groups as having been implemented by their organizations. Interviewees stressed the need for executive support of ERGs and ensuring ERG resourcing is not uncompensated "volunteer" work but is recognized in official performance objectives and bonus assessments.

Organizations should also consider diverse needs when planning social events and celebrations to foster inclusion and engagement. One example is ensuring halal food options for those with dietary restrictions. Other ways to communicate and share values include acknowledging diverse religious observances and celebrating heritage months.

Culture is a mainstream business priority, as central to success as are innovation, delivering customer value and controlling costs. The best time to begin building culture is from the beginning. Unfortunately, established organizations do not have this luxury and must approach EDI as two simultaneous tasks—deconstructing the

legacy barriers created by an outdated culture while implementing new ones. Industry-leading firms are demonstrating this can be done. They can bring deep business insight and resources to bear upon cultural transformation and demonstrate that this, combined with committed strategic intent, can produce results and compensate for lost time.

4. Measurement and tracking equity, diversity and inclusion

Metrics and benchmarking are crucial for ensuring that an organization's commitment to diversity translates into concrete action. Employers cannot critically assess their diversity and inclusion objectives without robust measures to track implementation of EDI initiatives. Setting targets and measuring outcomes can advance EDI practices in the workplace.[120] Tracking diversity through anonymous surveys and interviews and publishing their results reinforces the organization's commitment to diversity and informs employers about the effectiveness of their interventions. These results can also be used as a benchmark against which an organization can measure its progress year-over-year or in relation to other firms in its sector or industry.[121]

All interview respondents, irrespective of their company size, stated they had explicit diversity targets in place, and the interviews validated that setting targets is essential to create change.

"To the marketplace we have said we are aiming to have 40% women at AVP level, 35% VP and up. I wanted to be very clear that I did not want this to become an exercise in going out and hiring our way to 35%. Rather, have we done the work? Are we building succession planning into our processes? Who's in our pipeline as director and AVP who we're growing and investing in? I wanted to make sure we are building talent within and not just a quick fix to go out and hire to hit some number."

Interview Participant

This highlights the planning and organizational change required to meet the targets each year and sustain the results and momentum in the long term. Further, when it comes to targets and measurement, the organization must share back with the employee population what it is learning, the actions it is taking and communicate the results of those actions. This is vital to building the trust necessary to give employees the confidence to disclose their experiences and self-identification information safely.

From our web review, tracking workforce representation at each level of the organizational hierarchy is standard practice at large ICT companies. Microsoft tracks and publicly reports the representation of women, Indigenous Peoples and

racialized persons within technical and non-technical roles and across all levels of the organization.[122] In its Global Diversity & Inclusion Report 2023, the company reported its annual representation data versus the past five years performance, including among new hires and exits.[123] Microsoft takes an employee lifecycle view to EDI and employee engagement, with additional surveys at key career milestones such as onboarding, internal mobility and exit surveys.[124] Wealthsimple conducts quarterly surveys to measure the representation of equity-deserving groups on each team and at the leadership level; they conduct twice-annual diversity, inclusion and belonging surveys, and publicly share the results of these surveys to track progress and hold themselves accountable.[125] Bell Canada reports its annual progress on corporate responsibility initiatives, including EDI initiatives and metrics. Its annual performance versus its targets for gender representation among board directors and executives, Indigenous Peoples and racialized persons' representation among senior managers, graduate and intern hires, and its annual employee engagement survey scores are validated by an external auditor and linked to corporate compensation and executive pay.[126] Rogers uses diversity dashboards to provide a monthly view of team diversity data to help inform the specific actions needed to meet Rogers' representation goals. Rogers also measures progress against representation goals in annual CEO-driven talent reviews.[127]

Outside of the ICT industry, Stantec Inc. has an interesting approach. It tracks progress using third-party systems such as the Bloomberg Gender-Equality Index and the Globe and Mail Women Lead Here survey.[128]

Self-identification data is required to be collected to track representation. Self-identification rates are themselves an indication of trust and inclusion in organizations, as low response rates are often an indication of fear and distrust. Self-identification questionnaires (SIQs) are carefully designed to sensitively probe more deeply into aspects of identity that were previously shielded out of respect for employee privacy—such as religion, 2SLGBTQ+ identity, childcare status and health status, including mental health. Completing the questionnaire is voluntary, and the anonymity of respondents must be protected. Getting a response rate large enough to support reliable analysis can be challenging, even under these circumstances.

Companies that report the highest levels of success (75% to 85% response rate) invest significant energy in internal communications. This communication stresses the value of completion, such as how a deeper understanding of the employee community will allow the employer to improve existing programs (e.g., benefits packages), create new programs specifically for self-identified groups and address systemic barriers to advancement. Attention to data protection, storage and use are also essential. One interview respondent enlisted senior business executives from the operational areas of the company to communicate directly with teams to stress the importance of the SIQ to the company:

Employee engagement surveys, which include EDI data, enable employers to understand employees' experiences better, particularly regarding inclusion, to identify experiences across groups and to collect recommendations for change.[129, 130] Our web review suggests these surveys are standard among large employers in the sector.

Equal pay auditing assessments and gender wage reporting are promising practices for metrics and benchmarking. These practices promote pay transparency, identify where gender wage gaps are most prevalent and guide pay equity action plans. Bell Canada reports on its pay equity audits and year-over-year job-level progress, and segregates its results by gender, racialization and Indigenous Peoples representation.[131]

Outside of the ICT sector, Jazz Air Canada Express is an example of an organization that has also committed to understanding and addressing pay gaps within their organization. In its public Employment Equity Pay Transparency Report, the organization explains the causes of pay gaps and actionable steps to rectify them. This analysis also points to how representation gaps lead to overall

disparities in remuneration. For instance, women are underrepresented among highly paid positions such as pilots, maintenance engineers and senior management at 7%, 6% and 26.7%, respectively, yet women represent 80% of flight attendants and 64% of administrative positions. In response, Jazz has set targets, timelines and plans to increase diverse representation among the highest-paying roles and within the pipeline needed to get there. In some cases, such as efforts to increase women's representation among maintenance engineers and pilots, it will be necessary to engage in outreach efforts with educational institutions and civil society organizations to expand the pool of qualified candidates.

Information and communications technology organizations should also raise the question of whether job categories dominated by women are fairly remunerated, given the tendency within STEM fields to evaluate expertise in a way that privileges the builders of technology. Manulife Financial Corporation leverages additional categories in its comparative pay analysis, examining job grades, geographies, performance levels and experiences.

These examples from other sectors illustrate how incorporating granular, transparent compensation analysis into the process can help pinpoint the issues and potential solutions, and could be used in the ICT sector as well.

Among our interview respondents, one company shared an innovative framework for pay transparency.

"Everyone that is at a certain cohort level gets paid the same amount of money. And those salaries are published for every person, including our CEO, on an internal website. It's transparent for everyone, so a new college hire can go on day one and say, 'salary table' and see the salaries for every single level in the company. Employees each receive a semi-annual review. These reviews are written as letters against the expectation framework. The letter goes through a quality assurance committee made up of diverse people. That is where the decision is made if someone is promoted or not."

Interview Participant

The interviewee stated that promoted employees receive the salary documented on the website. Pay points are one mechanism to support fairness and equity.

5. Gender equity and diversity across the value chain

Diversity across the value chain refers to an organization's core business processes, including procurement, research and development, product design, marketing and communications, and customer service.[132] Applying a gender and diversity lens throughout the entire value chain produces measurable benefits, particularly in serving more diverse markets and customers, and ensures that EDI is embedded into the organization's processes rather than being viewed as an add-on. Applying an EDI lens

to each step of an organization's processes can uncover new opportunities and reduce risks.[133]

Supplier diversity programs set targets with dedicated budgets for engaging with businesses majority-owned by women, Indigenous Peoples and other equity-deserving groups. These programs demonstrate an organization's commitment to EDI and deliver business benefits. The Conference Board of Canada identified how such programs better represent a corporation's diverse customer base, increasing customer satisfaction and revenues; better reflect the diverse background of employees, increasing their job satisfaction and retention; and strengthen supply chains by identifying a wide range of qualified suppliers and reducing the risk associated with streamlined supply chains and open new markets.[134]

IBM maintains one of the top supplier diversity programs in the world. The company spends USD 1.5 billion annually with diverse suppliers, including women, 2SLGBTQ+ persons, veterans, persons living with disabilities, and individuals who identify as Black, Hispanic, Asian-American or Indigenous Peoples.[135, 136] IBM created its supplier diversity program in 1968, before the existence of the U.S. Department of Commerce's Minority Business Development Agency. In 2003, IBM expanded the program beyond the U.S. to promote relationships with diverse suppliers in every country where they operate.[137] IBM has established a program manager in each geographic region, and each has established locally relevant criteria for diverse suppliers.

Cogeco, Bell, Rogers, Telus, CGI and others have also introduced supplier diversity programs. To support these initiatives, the procurement departments at IBM, Rogers and Telus have partnered with the Canadian Council for Indigenous Business through its supply change program and Rogers, Telus, Cogeco, Bell and IBM have partnered with Women Business Enterprises Canada.[138] Canada's 2SLGBTQI+ Chamber of Commerce and the Canadian Aboriginal and Minority Supplier Council are other examples of organizations supporting this practice.[139]

Among our interview respondents, only a few had implemented supplier diversity programs. Diverse suppliers could help address the needs of a diversifying workforce. For example, engineers receive training in the communications technology sector to safely climb communications towers. One small company interviewed is committed to hiring more women engineers but recently encountered a serious supply chain problem with its training supplier and their safety equipment provider. A woman engineer reported for climbing training. She was a petite woman, and the training provider was caught flat-footed.

"You have to put a harness on, and they didn't have a woman's harness, let alone a harness that would fit a physically smaller woman. Her sense was the trainer had never seen a woman climber, never mind a short woman."

Interview Participant

Woman-led safety training equipment companies exist and would have addressed this problem.

Increasingly, evidence suggests that research and development undertaken without an EDI lens leads to products that do not work for everyone or can even pose physical dangers. Applying a gender and diversity lens to product and service design is important for creating products and services that are accessible, usable and useful for all.

Microsoft, for example, is committed to inclusive design and accessible products and content. They are constantly working to offer more to boost every user's productivity. They have accessibility resources for Word, PowerPoint and Excel, and tools to make their content accessible to everyone, including people with disabilities.[140] Microsoft also created a responsible AI standard to ensure AI products are developed in an equitable, empowering and inclusive manner. Their partnership with Stimson Centre engages academics, civil society and public sector organizations across the globe to consider the regional perspectives, social and cultural contexts, and gender impacts that are requisite for the development of inclusive AI.[141] Telus ensures its products and services are accessible. It offers many free or low-cost products and services to increase tech and health access for persons with disabilities, in-need families, low-income seniors or youth aging out of care. Examples include its Internet for Good, Mobility for Good, Tech for Good and Health for Good products and services.[142]

Our desk research outside the ICT industry found that BMO has established programming specific to diverse client needs, including the Indigenous Banking Unit created in 1992, the Indigenous Personal Banking and On-Reserve Home Loan programs. Through its BMO for Women initiative, the bank aims to support gender parity among its clients, increasing its investment in women entrepreneurs to double the number of women-owned businesses that BMO supports.[143] CBC's update on its key gender parity measurements for the 2019 to 2020 broadcast year included an analysis of the number of productions with 50% or more women in key TV production roles (i.e., producer, director, writer and showrunner).[144] This important initiative highlights how representation, or a lack thereof, can shape Canadian news and popular culture-dictating whose stories are told and how diverse individuals are represented.

Customer service also needs to have a diversity and inclusion lens. Customer service should respond to diverse needs and encourage positive customer experiences. Customer service representatives should be trained on diversity issues with mandatory training. Organizations must recognize customers' preferences and requirements when accessing support and service. Telus is an example of an organization that trains its staff to engage with individuals of all abilities effectively.[145]

Diversity and inclusion in marketing, sales and communications are key to engaging wider audiences. Marketing should authentically represent diverse people and dispel negative stereotypes and biases.[146] Rogers, for example, is incorporating the principles of EDI in its marketing and media program, utilizing its media assets to promote inclusion and inspire change. Rogers has committed $10 million over the next five years in pro-bono advertising and creative services to charities and small businesses supporting equity-seeking communities.[147] Its ALL-IN initiative details its pledge to embed EDI across its sports and media business and programming. Other examples from outside the ICT industry are also illustrative. Canadian Tire Corporation has publicly communicated its efforts to reflect EDI within its marketing programs. Canadian Tire Corporation engages their ERGs and community consultants to ensure campaigns are executed authentically (e.g., Canadian Tire's 100th Anniversary campaign). The organization audited all stock photos, existing advertising and web content to ensure the content reflects the corporation's EDI values and diversity.[148] Laurentian Bank developed a responsible marketing policy, which requires that its marketing materials depict human diversity and reflect the reality of its customers—this involves being sensitive to cultural, social, ethnic and religious groups in its advertising and marketing.[149]

Initiatives targeting EDI across the value chain have been slower to take shape. Most of our interview respondents had yet to adopt such programs. A shortage of financial or human resources and internal resistance to change may explain this lag.[150] Another obstacle may be organizational, EDI strategies generally reside within the purview of human resources, whereas

procurement and marketing do not. Human resources departments initiating EDI plans may reasonably prioritize goals and programs within their direct span of control. As organizations transition EDI from being an HR initiative to a more integrated business imperative, support for EDI across the value chain should rise.

6. Outreach and expanding the pool

Outreach and expanding the pool refers to the organization's efforts to develop its resources, including proactive initiatives to reach out to various groups and form partnerships to attract participants in the labour force.[151] Organizations can significantly influence the ecosystem through outreach, partnerships and supplier relations. By collaborating with other organizations, they can implement transformative external programs that improve outcomes for equity-deserving groups. For example, in 2020, Bell launched the $5-million Bell Let's Talk Diversity Fund, which focused on supporting initiatives that increase access to culturally informed mental health services for Black, Indigenous and racialized Canadians. Through the fund, they partnered with several organizations, including the Black Youth Helpline, a volunteer-driven initiative that supports Black youth and their families across Canada, focusing on education, health and community development. In another example, Cogeco partners with several organizations to provide initiatives, such as their partnership with Computers for Excellence Canada to provide computers to young Canadians.[152]

Employers can also extend their impact and supplement internal diversity processes by leveraging their outreach through partnerships and harnessing supplier relations to promote EDI externally.[153] As noted, to increase the diversity of the supplier pool, organizations can engage with diverse supplier councils.

Employers can leverage their partnerships to access diverse communities and create programs to build talent pipelines. Organizations often invest upstream in cooperative programs and work-integrated learning to ensure that members of equity-deserving groups have access to these opportunities, which is critical for their inclusion and advancement. Rogers, for example, is a founding partner of the Cybersecurity Catalyst with Toronto Metropolitan University. The program aims to build a diverse and inclusive cybersecurity workforce. About 54% of graduates identify as women or another gender, and 85% of 2022 admissions identified as members of a racialized group.[154]

AT&T has tried to improve the high school completion rate throughout the U.S. by initiating a program called Aspire. The Aspire initiative takes a multi-faceted approach to giving students the support and tools they need to stay in school.[155] IBM offers the STEM 4 Girls program in nine major cities across Canada. The program is available to girls in grades 6, 7 and 8. It helps create awareness and a connection to STEM through hands-on experience and real-life applications such as circuits and robotics, coding, tower building and design.[156, 157]

Salesforce, Telus and Rogers all participate in the TRIEC mentoring partnership, wherein their employees mentor newcomer professionals across Canada.[158] This program develops leadership and cross-cultural understanding among employees, increasing their awareness and support for newcomer talent. The program aids newcomers in their search for commensurate employment by expanding their networks and understanding of Canadian workplaces and industries.

One interview participant, representing a medium-sized company, outlined employees' role in getting the word out.

"It's like our people to be very involved in the community. This organization invests its time in many women-in-tech initiatives, showing up at events, mentoring and so on. We often host universities, and there's relationships we have with different schools. And we often host students in our space for tours or specific talks introducing them to some of the opportunities in a company like ours."

Interview Participant

Another interviewee shared what they do.

"A lot of the recruiting that we do happens in thought leadership events, speaking engagements, trade missions, and the people we meet and how we are present in the community. We talk a lot externally in the community about what it's like to be a woman-led and Indigenous-owned business … and about the importance of diversity in the sectors we're changing and the very male-dominated and clean tech sectors. But we also talk about the impact of diversity on our results."

Interview Participant

Among the larger companies interviewed, there were many examples of relationships across the education system to encourage women to study STEM disciplines and build STEM careers. As one participant noted, these programs were getting results.

"We've seen an increase in women applying to and joining core programs pertaining to STEM-related fields through this partnership, so we're very excited about that."

Interview Participant

Software companies with smaller budgets have also benefited from hackathons (events where many people meet to engage in collaborative computer programming) exclusively for women. These events help sharpen coding skills, provide excellent networking opportunities, and introduce employers to potential employees. Hackathons for women are a popular approach to help develop their coding skills and expand their networks. SheHacks+, Hackergal and ElleHacks are just a few women and non-binary hackathons offered annually in Canada.[159, 160, 161]

Additionally, employers can offer opportunities earlier in the pipeline by establishing internship and scholarship programs directed at equity-deserving groups. Google, for example, has supported more than 3,000 students enrolling in university programs in computer science through scholarships such as the Google Lime scholarship, supporting students living with disabilities and the Generation Google Scholarship, supporting individuals who identify as women, Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latinx or Indigenous Peoples.[162]
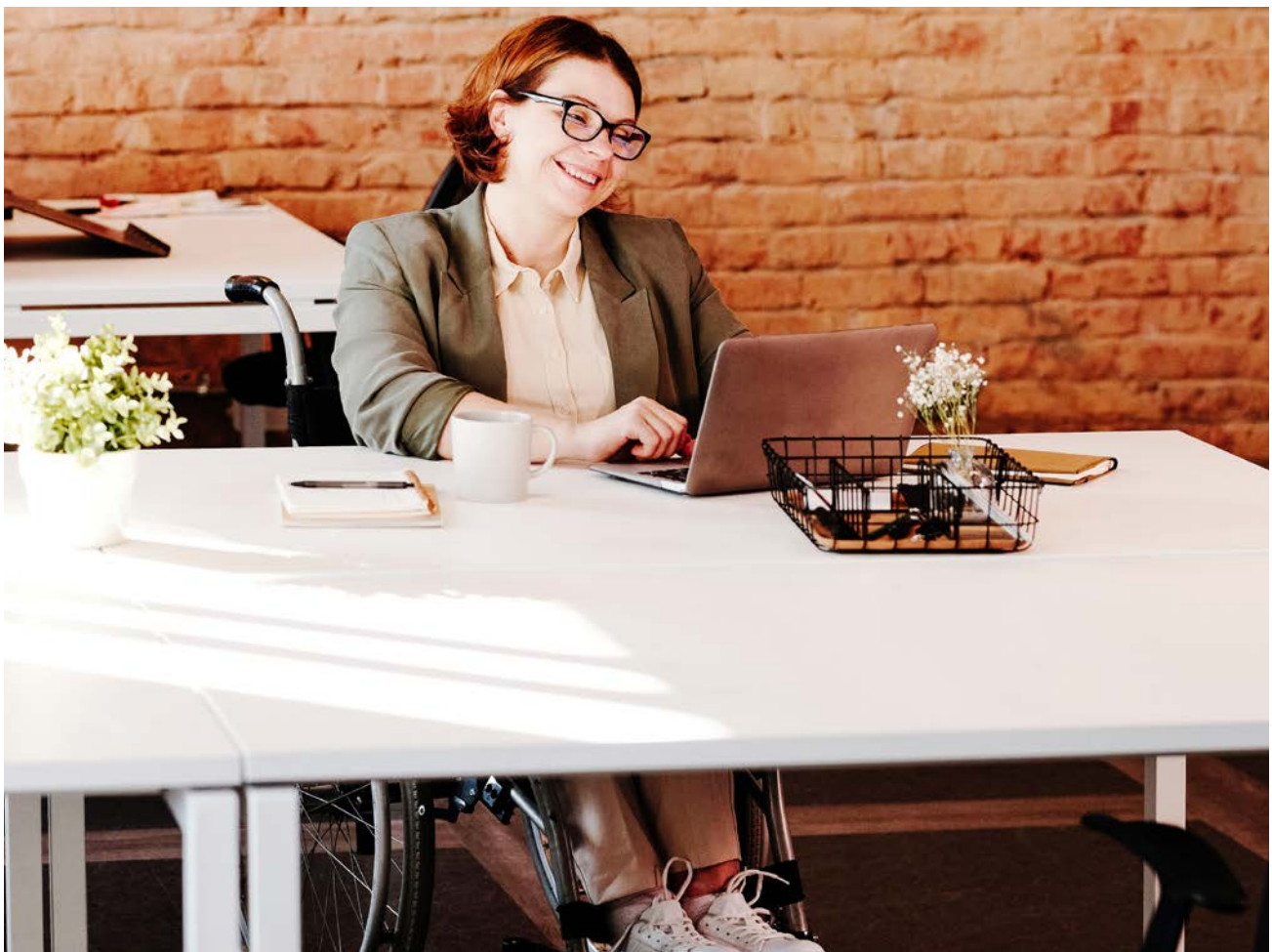
Conclusions and Recommendations

The digital transformation underway in Canada has brought about significant changes in the job market, creating a high demand for digitally skilled workers. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated this shift, highlighting the need for a workforce adept in digital skills across all sectors of the economy. Despite this growing demand, women and other equity-deserving groups remain underrepresented in the ICT sector. This underrepresentation poses a significant challenge, not only in terms of filling the required positions but also in leveraging the diverse perspectives that can drive innovation and productivity.

The findings of this report underscore the persistent gender imbalance in the ICT sector and highlight the systemic barriers women face at societal, organizational and individual levels. While women are nearly one-half of the workforce, their representation in ICT roles is markedly lower, particularly in technical and senior management roles. The intersectionality of gender with other identities, such as race, disability and sexual orientation, further exacerbates these disparities, with women from these groups facing even greater challenges.

The report outlines a comprehensive framework to address these issues, based on the DAT, which includes governance, human resources practices, organizational values and culture, measurement and tracking of EDI initiatives, diversity across the value chain and outreach efforts. This multi-faceted approach is essential for creating a more inclusive and equitable ICT sector.

Leadership and governance are crucial in setting the tone for organizational diversity and inclusion. The report highlights the importance of diverse representation on boards and senior management teams and the effectiveness of setting diversity targets. Organizations such as Rogers and Bell Canada have demonstrated success through voluntary commitments, such as Rogers' participation in the 50 – 30 Challenge, which promotes gender parity and increased representation of equity-deserving groups.

Human resources practices are pivotal in advancing EDI. Inclusive job design, recruitment, selection, promotion, retention and separation processes are critical for building a diverse workforce. The report emphasizes the need for organizations to reassess job requirements, use inclusive

language in job postings and engage in proactive outreach to attract diverse candidates. Partnerships with organizations that advance underrepresented groups can help bridge the gap and create more inclusive recruitment pipelines.

Organizational culture is also important. Policies and codes of conduct that address workplace harassment, safety and accessibility set the foundation for a supportive environment. Family-friendly benefits, flexible work arrangements and robust mental health support reinforce an inclusive culture. The engagement of all employees, including white, able, cisgender men, in allyship initiatives is critical. Similarly, ERGs offer a platform for employees from diverse and intersectional backgrounds to connect and promote a more inclusive corporate culture.

Measurement and tracking of EDI initiatives are essential for ensuring accountability and transparency. Setting explicit diversity targets, conducting regular audits and publishing results help organizations assess their progress and identify areas for improvement. Self-identification and employee engagement surveys provide valuable insights into the experiences of employees and the effectiveness of EDI initiatives.

Diversity across the value chain involves integrating an EDI lens into all core business processes, including procurement, research and development, product design, marketing and customer service. Supplier diversity programs and inclusive product design practices ensure organizations effectively serve diverse markets and customers. Examples from IBM, Bell Canada and Telus demonstrate the benefits of these practices in driving innovation and customer satisfaction.

Outreach and expanding the talent pool require organizations to engage with the broader ecosystem. Partnerships with educational institutions, non-profit organizations and diverse supplier councils help create a talent pipeline and support the inclusion of underrepresented groups. Programs such as hackathons, internships and scholarships directed at equity-deserving groups can inspire and prepare the next generation of ICT professionals.

Advancing EDI in the ICT sector is not only a moral imperative—it is a business necessity. The persistent underrepresentation of women and other equity-deserving groups requires comprehensive and sustained efforts across all ecosystem levels. Organizations must leverage best practices, set clear goals, and commit to ongoing evaluation and improvement to create a more inclusive and equitable digital economy. By doing so, they can unlock the full potential of their workforce, drive innovation and achieve long-term success in an increasingly competitive global market.

Appendix A: The Interview Guide

GOVERNANCE, LEADERSHIP AND STRATEGY

1. Are gender and diversity reflected in your mission and organizational goals? Do you have a specific equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policy statement? Please explain/provide details.

2. What is the representation of women on your board and your leadership team? Does your organization set targets (e.g. part of the 30% club, 50 – 30 Challenge, etc.)?

3. In addition to considering gender, does your organization address other dimensions of diversity in leadership? Please explain.

4. How does recruitment to the board and leadership team typically happen? Is there a skills matrix? Is EDI considered? What specific measures does your organization take in order to address representation in terms of gender and diversity? Please describe your process for recruiting and onboarding board and leadership team members.

5. Does your organization have specific strategies to improve representation in terms of gender and diversity in your leadership team? What are the processes in place to recruit and develop women and diverse leaders in your organization?

6. Is there an EDI council or senior person responsible for the EDI portfolio? If so, what is their mandate? Where do they report? How is gender equity considered?

7. PROBE: budget for EDI, number of dedicated EDI employees (relative to the employee base).

8. Are the benefits of EDI communicated by the organization's leaders within the organization and without? Please provide examples.

9. Are there any other policies or practices related to your organization's board or leadership that support gender equity that you would like to share?

RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, RETENTION AND PROMOTION OF WOMEN IN TECH:

10. Does your organization have a strategy to recruit, develop and retain women and diverse people? Please provide us with an overview of the elements of the strategy.

11. Is there outreach to under-represented communities outside of the organization?

12. How do you measure success of the strategy?

13. Does your organization review job postings to ensure the qualifications required fit the demands of the job without creating barriers to women and nonbinary people? Racialized or Indigenous communities? Persons with disabilities? Please explain.

14. Please describe the ways in which your organization provides inclusive selection processes. Who does the hiring? How are the processes managed? Are targets set for representation in short listed candidates? Do selection committees receive training in EDI?

15. Are job vacancies and promotional opportunities and processes communicated openly and clearly to employees throughout the organization?

16. What strategies does your organization have to help women and non-binary persons advance to leadership positions? How well are these strategies working?

17. Does your company have a consistent definition of high performance and promotable talent (e.g., critical competencies assessed with a standardized approach)? Does your company measure the number of women (compared to men) deemed as high potential?

18. What strategies are in place with respect to retaining women and diverse employees? Are exit interviews conducted?

19. Is there anything else about selection, retention, training and promotion you would like to share?

VALUES AND CULTURE

20. Does the organization have explicit and documented policies that support a diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace for women, non-binary and gender diverse people, including racialized persons and Indigenous communities and persons with disabilities? Does this include an employee protection policy (e.g., whistle-blowing, anti-retaliation policy)? Please explain.

21. Do managers and employees receive specialized training on equity, diversity and inclusion? If so, what has been the impact of this training?

22. What kind of organizational support programs are available that support women, nonbinary persons in your organization? Please explain any policies that exist.

23. What kind of flexible work arrangements are available?

24. Is there anything else about your organization's values and culture and how they support women that you would like to share?

MEASUREMENT AND TRACKING EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

25. Are there metrics on the number of employees from underrepresented groups at each management level? Are there explicit diversity targets? How do you use these data? How are the data collected?

26. Does your organization ensure that there is equal pay for women? If so, how? If not, why not?

27. Is accountability of diversity and inclusion built into the organization's performance management system? How does your organization stay accountable to its diversity, equity and inclusion goals?

28. Are there regular employee engagement surveys with self-reported demographic data? How are the data used? Please provide examples.

29. Are gender and diversity tracked among the people served (customers, clients, communities)? Please explain.

30. Are there any other practices related to measurement, tracking and accountability and how they support women that you would like to share?

DIVERSITY ACROSS THE VALUE CHAIN

31. Are gender and diversity considered or tracked in your organization's procurement processes? Please explain.

32. Are gender and diversity considered in research and development? Please explain.

33. Are gender and diversity considered in product and services development? Please explain.

34. Are gender and diversity considered in your organization's marketing practices or communications both internally and externally? Please explain.

35. Is there anything else related to embedding equity, diversity and inclusion in the value chain that you would like to add?

OUTREACH AND EXPANDING THE POOL

36. How does the organization engage with the external community to build the pathways for women and non-binary persons? Are you participating in sector or industry wide approaches? (e.g., What are the activities upstream? How does the organization interact with primary schools, high schools and post-secondary institutions?)

37. When deciding on philanthropic and corporate social responsibility initiatives, are gender and diversity considered? Please provide details/examples.

38. When considering government relations strategies, does your company advocate for policies to advance gender and diversity? Please provide examples.

FINAL THOUGHTS

39. What equity, diversity and inclusion policies are you most proud of as an organization? What is your biggest frustration?

40. What are some new equity, diversity and inclusion initiatives your organization is considering? What has worked/not worked?

41. The COVID-19 pandemic affected the course of recruitment and retention of women and non-binary employees in all sectors. How have these factors impacted recruitment and retention of women in your company, if at all?

42. Additional events–such as the murder of George Floyd, discovery of unmarked graves at residential schools to name only a few–have had an immense impact on EDI as well. Have these events impacted recruitment and retention in your company?

43. Are there any questions you think I should've asked or final thoughts that you would like to share?

Appendix B: ICT Sector Desk Review of Promising Corporate Practices

Topic	Company	Initiatives or Activities	Link
Governance, leadership and strategy			
Voluntary codes	Rogers	Rogers Communications has signaled its commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) by registering for the Government of Canada's 50 – 30 Challenge. By becoming a signatory to the 50 – 30 Challenge, Rogers has publicly committed to achieving 50% gender diversity and 30% representation of other equity-deserving groups on its board and/or executive management team.	https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/ised/en/50-30-challenge-your-diversity-advantage
Voluntary codes	Telus, Cisco Canada, Google Canada, Rogers, Wealthsimple, HP Inc.	Telus, Cisco Canada, Google Canada, Rogers, Wealthsimple and HP Inc are signatories to the BlackNorth CEO pledge with their commitment to eliminate anti-Black systemic racism by creating opportunities for members of the Black community. Becoming a signatory means committing to its seven goals, including commitments to increase the representation of Black employees and leaders within their organizations and committing to having a minimum of 3.5% of their Canadian executive and board positions held by Black leaders by 2025.	https://blacknorth.ca/pledge/ https://blacknorth.ca/signatories/

Topic	Company	Initiatives or Activities	Link
Governance, leadership and strategy			
Board skills matrix	Rogers	Rogers maintains a skills matrix based on the industry and functional experience required across the board. Within its board policy, Rogers details the need for its board nominating committee to incorporate gender diversity as an important consideration.	https://investors.rogers.com/corporate-governance/governance-materials/
Board tenure limits and diversity policy	Bell Canada	Bell Media has a maximum board tenure limit of 12 years, and in keeping with its board composition and diversity policy requires that the list of potential board candidates maintained by the Governance Committee include gender diverse candidates, racialized persons, Indigenous peoples and/or persons with disabilities within the pool of candidates considered.	https://www.bce.ca/investors/AGM-2022/2022-bce-corporate-governance-practices.pdf
Board policy and leadership development	IBM	IBM introduced the IBM Leadership Behaviours framework to define the characteristics and capabilities required of IBM executives. This framework is used for executive assessment and development and includes expectations around fostering an environment of caring, belonging and inclusivity. IBM's board composition and diversity policy and board selection process detail the importance of EDI and the requirement for a diversity of backgrounds, including gender, ethnicity, talents and perspectives, for board selection decisions.	https://www.ibm.com/downloads/cas/QVXD7VDO

Topic	Company	Initiatives or Activities	Link
Governance, leadership and strategy			
Communicating the value of EDI	Microsoft	Microsoft's executive communicates the value of EDI and its critical importance to achieving the company's mission and vision through emails, blogs, website content and other communications. It has detailed its initiatives with respect to increasing representation and strengthening a culture of inclusion, including initiatives and targets to address racial injustice, the representation of women and racialized persons and its progress on its EDI results.	https://blogs.microsoft.com/blog/2023/11/01/microsofts-2023-diversity-and-inclusion-report-a-decade-of-transparency-commitment-and-progress/ https://blogs.microsoft.com/blog/2020/06/05/change-in-ourselves-helps-drive-change-in-the-world/
Communicating the value of EDI	Cogeco Inc.	Cogeco communicates the importance of EDI to the company's ability to: drive innovation; support a collaborative and engaging work environment; support its communities and its customers; and realize improved organizational performance. The company details the six levers of its commitment to diversity and inclusion, including how it will: listen, share, train, take action, represent, and support diversity and inclusion.	https://corpo.cogeco.com/cgo/en/company-overview/diversity-and-inclusion/
Communicating the value of EDI	Copperleaf Technologies	Copperleaf's DE&I committee focuses on initiatives and programs that encourage psychological safety and DE&I in the workplace.	https://go.copperleaf.com/rs/727-PJA-841/images/Copperleaf_Report_ESG_2022.pdf?_gl=1*vco6d5*_ga*MjcyMTE1MjcxLjE2ODk4NjQ2MTg.*_ga_8BD8CHDV96*MTY4OTg2NDYxNy4xLjEuMTY4OTg2NDc3MC40OC4wLjA.#page=21

Topic	Company	Initiatives or Activities	Link
Governance, leadership and strategy			
Diversity and inclusion resourcing	Rogers	Rogers has an I&D council who champions the inclusion and diversity strategies and advocates for inclusion and diversity across the organization. They also have a Black Leadership council who ensures issues of anti-Black racism and bias are addressed. They work in partnership with the I&D council.	https://crtc.gc.ca/eng/BCASTING/ann_rep/Rogers_2021_CD_Report.pdf
Strategies to improve leadership representation	Rogers	Rogers has operationalized a five-year Inclusion & Diversity (I&D) plan that includes targets in aggregate and by line of business for the representation of each equity-deserving group. Leaders at the director level and above are graded on their EDI scorecard and KPIs.	https://investors.rogers.com/corporate-governance/governance-materials/
Strategies to improve leadership representation	OpenText	OpenText has committed to reaching a majority ethnically diverse workforce, gender parity among key roles and to 40% representation of women across all leadership positions, all by 2030.	https://www.opentext.com/about/corporate-citizenship
Strategies to improve leadership representation	Dell	Dell has committed to women representing 50% of its global workforce and 40% of its global people leaders by 2030.	https://jobs.dell.com/en/diversity-and-inclusion
Strategies to improve leadership representation	Rogers	Rogers requires 50/50 diverse candidate shortlists for all open roles.	https://about.rogers.com/wp-content/uploads/2020-Rogers-ID-external-EN-final-A.pdf

Topic	Company	Initiatives or Activities	Link
Governance, leadership and strategy			
EDI and corporate strategy	CGI	CGI integrates EDI into its strategic business planning process, to identify specific priorities and actions. It has set goals and KPIs with respect to the representation of women and other equity-deserving groups among its senior leadership and has specific plans to achieve them. This approach has generated results.	https://www.cgi.com/sites/default/files/2024-05/cgi-2023-esg-report-en.pdf
EDI and corporate strategy	IBM	IBM's management discussion in its 2023 annual report discloses its performance on executive representation and details how diversity and inclusivity serve as a catalyst for heightened innovation, agility and performance.	https://www.ibm.com/annualreport/assets/downloads/IBM_Annual_Report_2023.pdf
EDI and executive compensation	Microsoft	Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella publicly tied his bonus compensation to achieving diversity goals.	https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/14/business/economy/corporate-diversity-pay-compensation.html
EDI and executive compensation	IBM	IBM's diversity-linked executive compensation reinforces its focus on attracting and retaining diverse talent. It measures the improvement in the executive representation of women and equity-deserving groups and links this to compensation.	https://www.ibm.com/downloads/cas/QVXD7VDO

Topic	Company	Initiatives or Activities	Link
Human resources practices			
Inclusive recruitment	Shopify	Shopify is reconsidering credentials required for employment and focusing instead on competencies, opening doors for Indigenous workers and others who may have the skill but not a post-secondary education. On its job postings, the company includes a statement encouraging applications from Indigenous Peoples, racialized people, persons with disabilities, people from gender and/or sexually diverse communities and/or people with intersectional identities. The company's job postings link to their diversity data, EDI resources and information on Shopify's initiatives to mitigate bias in their recruitment process.	https://ictc-ctic.ca/sites/default files/ictc-admin/resources/admin ict001genderreportdesignfnl-2.pdf
Inclusive recruitment	Wealthsimple	Wealthsimple's "Work with Us" webpage features a "Cultural Manual," stories profiling diverse employees, the work of employee resource groups and other content illustrating the organization's commitment to EDI.	https://www.wealthsimple.com/en-ca/careers
Inclusive recruitment	Duolingo	Duolingo has reported improved outcomes after deploying TextIO to ensure their job description and job posting language is inclusive.	https://explore.textio.com/case-study-duolingo
Inclusive recruitment	Bell Canada	Bell Canada launched an inclusive leadership development program for executives and unconscious bias training for all leaders. The training raises awareness and equips leaders with the tools to disrupt unconscious bias and create an inclusive and accessible workplace.	https://bce.ca/responsibility/key-documents/2021-supporting-diversity-in-our-communities.pdf#page=12

Topic	Company	Initiatives or Activities	Link
Human resources practices			
Inclusive recruitment	Rogers	Rogers has implemented several initiatives to broaden the talent pipeline and increase leadership diversity. The company requires a 50/50 diverse short list for all open roles, the mandatory posting of roles on diverse job boards and it requires all hiring managers and recruiters to complete "Inclusive Recruitment" training.	https://about.rogers.com/wp-content/uploads/2022-Rogers-ID-external-EN-final-A.pdf
Inclusive recruitment	Loopio	Loopio is focused on building diverse talent pipelines for open roles, including the use of structured interviews to make equitable hiring decisions, leveraging community partnerships and building a more diverse management team. This has led to an increase in racialized employees and women in management.	https://loopio.com/annual-deib-report/
Inclusive recruitment	CGI Canada	CGI Canada worked to extend its recruitment pipeline, partnering with organizations such as the Women in Leadership Foundation, Indigenous Links Canada, Equitek, Talent Beyond Boundaries and Pride at Work to promote their key roles.	https://www.cgi.com/canada/en-ca/diversity-equity-inclusion
Inclusive recruitment	Bell Canada	Bell has developed partnerships to expand its sources for attracting diverse talent—for example, Indigenous Careers, Indigenous Link and Indigenous Works. The company also worked with BIPOC TV & FILM on HireBIPOC, to increase the hiring of individuals who identify as Black, Indigenous and racialized.	https://bce.ca/responsibility/key-documents/2021-supporting-diversity-in-our-communities.pdf#page=12

Topic	Company	Initiatives or Activities	Link
**Human resources practices**

Topic	Company	Initiatives or Activities	Link
Inclusive recruitment	Rogers	Rogers Communication has a partnership with the Onyx Initiative which helps them recruit young Black professionals. The Onyx Initiative was founded to close the systemic gap in hiring, retention and promotion of Black college and university students and recent graduates for roles in corporate Canada. It does this by expanding the recruitment pipeline through comprehensive career development resources and by creating mutually beneficial corporate, educational and community partnerships.	https://onyxinitiative.org/
Inclusive recruitment	Wealthsimple	Wealthsimple outlined new recruitment measures to improve the representation of equity-deserving groups across the organization. The company recognized that an over-reliance on referrals was working against its EDI commitments and changed its process to spend the time and resources to seek diverse candidates outside its employee networks.	https://www.wealthsimple.com/en-ca/magazine/what-we-are-doing
Inclusive recruitment	Capgemini	The French IT consulting company, Capgemini, moved to open candidate sourcing to mitigate the bias inherent in referrals.	https://ictc-ctic.ca/sites/default/files/ictc-admin/resources/admin/ict001genderreportdesignfnl-2.pdf
Inclusive recruitment	Microsoft	Microsoft has made their recruitment process more transparent. The company uses a virtual interview process, and their website provides interview tips and guidance to help candidates prepare for interviews. This includes information on the six core competencies they will cover during the interview (e.g., collaboration, growth mindset, etc.). Microsoft's website content details how candidates can request accommodations. For engineering and technology roles, Microsoft supplements the interview process with a coding test and candidates may use the programming language of their choice.	https://careers.microsoft.com/v2/global/en/hiring-tips/interview-tips.html, https://careers.microsoft.com/v2/global/en/hiring-tips/virtual-interviewing

Topic	Company	Initiatives or Activities	Link
Human resources practices			
Learning and development	Bell Canada	Bell Canada offers extensive employee learning and development opportunities, including leadership development for high-potential employees. Women represent approximately 44% of the overall usage of the learning programs and Bell offers specific programming to prepare women to advance into executive roles (e.g., The Judy Project and the International Women's Forum Fellows Program).	https://bce.ca/responsibility/key-documents/2022-engagement-learning-development.pdf
Learning and development	Intel	To address industry-specific barriers in STEM recruitment, Intel created the "Rotation Engineers Program" (REP). The program was originally founded in 1987 to develop and foster new, diverse talent at the tech giant. In REP, recent college graduates hired as engineers at Intel move through three, six-month-long rotations that allow them to gain deep technical knowledge from multiple areas within the company. This unique experience that REP provides has helped the company's efforts in recruiting top, diverse talent while also strengthening Intel's leadership pipeline. This is a program that builds upon the core of diversity—diverse talent, experiences, connections and training. It is a unique opportunity to attract diverse talent and bring diversity of experience to those that participate and experience the program.	https://images.forbes.com/forbesinsights/StudyPDFs/Innovation_Through_Diversity.pdf

Topic	Company	Initiatives or Activities	Link
Human resources practices			
Learning and development	Rogers	Rogers Communication Inc. has an Accelerated Development Program for women with a focus on building a pipeline of women in senior positions. It is a highly targeted sponsorship program aimed at supporting women Directors with a variety of customized development activities based on assessment and feedback of their individual performance. At the end of the program, participants have stronger strategic leadership skills and are ready to take on expanded roles and assignments. The program also helps to build a gender-diverse executive pipeline.	https://about.rogers. com/wp-content/ uploads/ESG_ Report_2021.pdf
Mentorship and coaching	Startech	StarTech is committed to a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion. The Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (DIB) group at StarTech was created to support an inclusive culture where people feel valued through engagement and participation. They have the Women in Leadership Initiative, a program focused on empowering female leaders and encouraging greater gender diversity in leadership.	https://www.startech. com/en-us/about-us/ our-values/employees
Values and culture			
Workplace policies	Cogeco	Cogeco has a comprehensive Code of Ethics that builds on the organization's core principles in great detail, leaving little room for ambiguity for issues such as harassment, intimidation and discrimination.	https://cdn.corpo. cogeco.com/ cgo/8716/5911/0701/ M800_Code_Ethique_ Cogeco_English_F.pdf

Topic	Company	Initiatives or Activities	Link
Values and culture			
Employee resource groups	Bell Canada	To further EDI in the workplace, Bell supports and empowers Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) including the Black Professionals at Bell, Pride at Bell and Women at Bell network—4,500 members participate in ERGs and the organization builds awareness, spotlights member accomplishments, and provides learning and networking opportunities.	https://bce.ca/ responsibility/key-documents/2021-supporting-diversity-in-our-communities. pdf#page=12
Employee resource groups	Rogers	At Rogers, Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are employee-driven groups who work to build awareness and drive allyship at Rogers through events, resources and community engagement and support. There are many ERGs: Rogers Mosaic, supporting racialized employees; Spectrum, supporting LGBTQ2S+ employees; the Indigenous Peoples Network; Rogers AccessAbility Network (RAAN), Rogers Pan Asian Network, Jewish Community Team, Muslim Community Team and RISE for Women.	https://about.rogers. com/wp-content/ uploads/2022-Annual-Report-on-Cultural-Diversity-Rogers-Media-Inc.-FINAL.pdf
Accessibility	BenchSci	BenchSci's Accessibility Policy provides a commitment to accessibility, and legal obligations and standards and provides persons with disabilities individual accommodation plans needed during their employment. The organization provides employees with disabilities with individualized emergency response information, and it follows WCAG 2.0, Level A in compliance with accessibility standards. The company also provides flexible working options.	https://www.benchsci. com/accessibility/plan https://www.benchsci. com/accessibility/ policy

Topic	Company	Initiatives or Activities	Link
Values and culture			
Accessibility	AccessNow	Creating a world that is accessible to all is core to the AccessNow mission. AccessNow partners with eSSENTIAL Accessibility (eA), a leading digital Accessibility-as-a-Service platform to ensure they meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0, Level AA at a minimum.	https://accessnow.com/Accessibility/
Flexible work arrangements	Telus	Work Styles is Telus' flexible work program that enables team members to work when and where they will be most effective.	https://www.telus.com/en/blog/business/enabling-flexible-work-unified-communications
Flexible work arrangements	Hypercontext	Hypercontext offers remote work, and apart from team and company meetings employees can schedule their work day at their discretion. The company also offers a $100 monthly remote work allowance to support employees in building their remote work setup.	https://hypercontext.com/about/careers
Flexible work arrangements and benefits	Uberflip	Uberflip offers a range of benefits, including mental health resources, and the company allows employees to work abroad for up to three months of the year.	https://www.uberflip.com/careers/
Flexible work arrangements	Shopify	Work Anywhere program from Shopify for Flexible Work.	https://www.shopify.com/ca/careers

Topic	Company	Initiatives or Activities	Link
Values and culture			
Flexible work arrangements	Deutsche Telekom	In addition to the minimum 14 weeks of fully paid maternity leave, mandated by the government, Deutsche Telekom provides new parents with the option to work remotely or to switch to part-time positions with the guarantee that they will be able to return to their full-time positions. The company also runs the Stay in ContacT network that provides company activities' updates to employees on parental leave with the purpose of continuing their career trajectories and ensuring that women on maternity leave in particular can apply for leadership positions in the future.	https://www.telekom.com/resource/blob/1027872/86607c1492e11f2959d7f889b03ec3dc/dl-report-on-equality-and-equal-pay-for-2021-data.pdf
Family-friendly benefits	Benevity	Benevity offers 17 weeks of parental leave; and for the non-delivery parent, they offer a two-week bonding break and a one-month salary bonus if the employee takes two or more months leave.	https://ictc-ctic.ca/sites/default/files/ictc-admin/resources/admin/ict001genderreportdesignfnl-2.pdf
Benefits innovation	Google	Google's response to the U.S. Supreme Court decision to overturn Roe v. Wade was to modify its established work relocation program. It deployed the program to support its employees by offering relocation assistance to those seeking to leave jurisdictions under abortion bans.	https://www.theverge.com/2022/6/24/23182288/google-letter-email-employees-roe-v-wade-decision
Mental health support	Bell	Bell offers a leading mental health package, including health benefits that cover up to $3,000 per year for psychological care and mental health training, team member training and leadership training around mental health.	https://bce.ca/responsibility/key-documents/2020-mental-health-workplace.pdf

Topic	Company	Initiatives or Activities	Link
Measurement and tracking of equity, diversity and inclusion			
EDI, representation and employee engagement tracking	Microsoft	Microsoft tracks and publicly reports the representation of women, Indigenous Peoples and racialized persons within technical and non-technical roles and across all levels of the organization. Microsoft takes an employee lifecycle view to EDI and employee engagement, with additional surveys at key career milestones such as onboarding, internal mobility and exit surveys.	https://query.prod. cms.rt.microsoft.com/ cms/api/am/binary/ RW1e53b
EDI, representation and employee engagement tracking	Wealthsimple	Wealthsimple conducts quarterly surveys to measure the representation of equity-deserving groups on each team and at the leadership level; they conduct twice-annual diversity, inclusion and belonging surveys and they publicly share the results of these surveys to track progress and hold themselves accountable.	https://www. wealthsimple.com/ en-ca/magazine/what-we-are-doing
EDI, representation and employee engagement tracking	Bell Canada	Bell reports its annual progress on corporate responsibility initiatives, including EDI initiatives and metrics. Its annual performance versus its targets for gender representation among board directors and executives, Black, racialized and Indigenous Peoples representation among senior managers and among graduate and intern hires and its annual employee engagement survey scores are validated by an external auditor and linked to corporate compensation and executive pay.	https://www.bce.ca/ responsibility/our-capitals/our-people
Diversity metrics	Rogers	Rogers uses diversity dashboards to provide a view of team diversity data to help inform the specific actions needed to meet Rogers' representation goals. Rogers also measures progress against representation goals in annual CEO-driven talent reviews.	https://about.rogers. com/wp-content/ uploads/2023-SSI-Report.pdf https:// about.rogers.com/wp-content/uploads/2022-Rogers-ID-external-EN-final-A.pdf

Topic	Company	Initiatives or Activities	Link
Pay equity	Bell Canada	Bell Canada reports on its pay equity audits and year over year progress by job level and segregates its results by gender and Black, racialized and Indigenous Peoples representation.	https://www.bce.ca/responsibility/our-capitals/our-people
Diversity across the value chain			
Procurement	Telus	TELUS' supplier diversity program takes proactive steps to provide equal access to a supply base that reflects the diversity of where they live, work and serve. The program encourages economic development and provides more opportunities for ethnic minorities, Indigenous Peoples, 2SLGBTQ+ and/or women-run organizations to bid for the business in competitive processes. Telus suppliers are encouraged to identify, adopt and integrate diverse vendors into their processes so their own supply base reflects the true make-up of society. Telus Supplier Code of Conduct includes engaging diverse suppliers, accessibility and uphold human rights.	https://assets.ctfassets.net/rz9m1rynx8pv/4aZRfDYicDH0o7vpWXV9G9/3d506f912d448825af6ebfc1fd531711/2020_Supplier_Code_of_Conduct.ENG.pdf

Topic	Company	Initiatives or Activities	Link
Diversity across the value chain			
Procurement	IBM	IBM maintains one of the top supplier diversity programs in the world. The company spends US$1.5 billion annually with diverse suppliers, including women2SLGBTQ+ persons, veterans, persons living with disabilities and individuals who identify as Black, Hispanic, Asian-American and/or Indigenous Peoples. IBM created the program in 1968 and in 2003, it expanded the program beyond the U.S. to promote relationships with diverse suppliers in every country where they operate. IBM has established a program manager in each geographic region, and each has established locally relevant criteria for diverse suppliers.	https://www.ibm.com/procurement/supplier-diversity
Procurement	Bell Canada	Bell's Supplier Diversity Program encourages the inclusion of businesses that are 51% owned and managed by Indigenous Peoples, racialized persons, women, 2SLGBTQ+, veterans and persons with disabilities. The Procurement team has corporate memberships with five Canadian supplier diversity certifying organizations (e.g., CCAB, WBE Canada). Bell sponsors and participates in supplier diversity industry networking events annually. It maintains access to a certified diverse supplier database to build awareness with Bell's buyers. It tracks its performance and reports quarterly on the program. In 2023 Bell was awarded the 2SLGBTQ+ Chamber of Commerce's Supplier Diversity Program Ambassador of the Year Award and the WBE Canada's Top Corporation in Supplier Diversity Award.	https://www.bce.ca/suppliers#scrollable-content-2

Topic	Company	Initiatives or Activities	Link
Diversity across the value chain			
Procurement	Cogeco	Cogeco recognizes that diverse and inclusive environments foster collaboration, stimulate innovation, improve business performance and help to better support the communities they serve. The establishment of a formal Supplier Diversity Program was intended to provide a fair opportunity for these suppliers to bid on contracts or enhance their ability to do so.	https://corpo.cogeco.com/cca/en/company-overview/supplier-diversity-program/
Product and service offer	Telus	Telus ensures its products and services are accessible and trains staff to engage with individuals of all abilities. It offers many free or low-cost products and services to increase tech and health access for persons with disabilities, in-need families, low-income seniors and/or youth aging out of care. Examples include its Internet for Good, Mobility for Good, Tech for Good and Health for Good products and services.	https://www.telus.com/en/social-impact/connecting-canada/connecting-for-good-programs#tech-for-good?INTCMP=tcom_about_accessibility-at-telus_tile_to_tech-for-good
Product and service offer	Microsoft	Microsoft is committed to inclusive design and accessible products and content. They are constantly working to offer more to boost every user's productivity. They have accessibility resources for Word, PowerPoint, Excel and tools to make their content accessible for everyone, including people with disabilities.	https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/accessibility-tools-for-microsoft-365-b5087b20-1387-4686-a0a5-8e11c5f46cdf?activetab=pivot_1%3Aprimaryr2

Topic	Company	Initiatives or Activities	Link
Profiling diversity	Bell Canada	Bell's #TeamBell stories feature and celebrate the careers of Bell employees, many of whom are from equity deserving groups. Employee stories have previously been featured as part of the company's celebration of events like International Women's Day and Black History Month. Bell conducts interviews with employees from equity-deserving groups who speak about the importance of fostering EDI in the workplace and how the work environment at Bell makes them feel included and celebrated.	https://jobs.bell.ca/ca/en/blog
Outreach and expanding the pool			
Building the talent pipeline	AT&T	AT&T has made efforts to improve the high school completion rate throughout the United States through initiating a program called Aspire. One of Aspire's success stories is a $375,000 multi-year grant to Louisiana State Youth Opportunities Unlimited (LSYOU), a dropout prevention program that targeted at-risk students. The LSYOU program provided students with long-term strategies that foster academic achievement and workforce readiness. The graduation rate among students who completed the four-year program is 79% compared to 50% of inner-city youth in similar situations. In addition, the Aspire program runs a job shadow initiative in partnership with Junior Achievement, where they provide students with the opportunity to learn more about career options and what it takes to be successful in today's workforce. Part of Aspire's approach is to conduct research on innovative models that yield real results, and then to use AT&T's significant resources to bring them to scale.	https://images.forbes.com/forbesinsights/StudyPDFs/Innovation_Through_Diversity.pdf

Topic	Company	Initiatives or Activities	Link
Outreach and expanding the pool			
Building the talent pipeline	Telus	Telus participates in the TRIEC mentoring partnership wherein their employees mentor newcomer professionals across the country. This program develops leadership and cross-cultural understanding among employees, increasing their awareness and support for newcomer talent. The program aids newcomers in their search for commensurate employment by expanding their networks and understanding of Canadian workplaces and industries.	https://triec.ca/telus-is-changing-newcomer-lives-through-national-mentoring-partnership/
Building the talent pipeline	Rogers	Rogers is a founding partner of the Cybersecurity Catalyst with Toronto Metropolitan University. The program aims to build a diverse and inclusive cybersecurity workforce. 54% of graduates identify as women or another gender and 85% of 2022 admissions identified as members of a racialized group.	https://cybersecurecatalyst.ca/impact/
Building the talent pipeline	IBM	IBM offers the STEM 4 Girls program in nine major cities across Canada. The program is available to girls in grades 6, 7 and 8. It helps create awareness and a connection to STEM through hands-on experience and real-life applications such as circuits and robotics, coding, tower building and design.	https://www.ibm.com/blogs/ibm-canada/2021/12/ibm-stem-for-girls-canada-inspiring-youth-to-envision-a-future-in-stem/
Building the talent pipeline	Google	Google has supported over 3,000 students enrolling in university programs in computer science through scholarships such as the Google Lime scholarship, supporting students living with disabilities and the Generation Google Scholarship, supporting individuals who identify as women, Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latinx or Indigenous Peoples.	https://buildyourfuture.withgoogle.com/scholarships

Topic	Company	Initiatives or Activities	Link
Outreach and expanding the pool			
Improving outcomes for equity-deserving groups	Bell Canada	In 2020, Bell launched the $5 million Bell Let's Talk Diversity Fund focused on supporting initiatives that increase access to culturally informed mental health services for Indigenous Peoples, Black and racialized Canadians. Through the fund, they have now disbursed $2.25 million in donations to organizations from around the country, announcing six new recipients in 2021. Partners include: the Black Youth Helpline, a volunteer-driven initiative that supports Black youth and their families across Canada, with a focus on education, health and community development. Bell Let's Talk has launched funds for Indigenous mental health initiatives in Canada's northern territories and in Manitoba, providing grants to leading organizations such as the Embrace Life Council, the Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre, Ogijiita Pimatiswin Kinamatwin, the Bear Clan Patrol, the Behavioural Health Foundation and the Peguis Foundation.	https://bce.ca/responsibility/key-documents/2021-supporting-diversity-in-our-communities.pdf#page=10
Improving outcomes for equity-deserving groups	Cogeco Inc	Cogeco Inc has developed partnerships to serve local communities. Cogeco has refurbished used desktops and laptops for distribution to young people who need them. Over the past year, they have provided more than 800 of these computers to young Canadians. The Computer for Schools program, launched in partnership with Computers for Excellence Canada, has provided over 800 computers to young Canadians over the past year. Cogeco also participates in the Connecting Families initiative, which offers discounted internet services to eligible low-income families in Cogeco's network footprint.	https://corpo.cogeco.com/cgo/en/sustainability/community-involvement/initiatives-and-partnerships/

Topic	Company	Initiatives or Activities	Link
Improving outcomes for equity-deserving groups	Rogers	Rogers has committed $10 million over the next five years in pro-bono advertising and creative services to charities and small businesses supporting equity-seeking communities. Its ALL-IN initiative details its pledge to embed diversity inclusion across its sports and media business and programming.	https://about.rogers.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/26934_RMS_Cultural_Diversity_Report_Feb19.pdf

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