

Diversity Training Learners' Guide Diversity Inside Out

Prepared by Inova Aspire



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1. Introduction

Dear Participant,

This Learners' Guide will support your participation in the Diversity Inside Out training programme.

Diversity Inside Out – Voices from Inside Organisations is an 18-month project funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Commission and has 2 partners, Inova Aspire, Netherlands and Jafnréttisstofa in Iceland.

The Diversity Inside Out project aims to address labour market needs by narrowing the gap for marginalised individuals and groups who may feel disadvantaged in the workplace due to a range of factors, including age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability, religion, and any other factor that may lead to any kind of discrimination or prejudice. Recognising the value a diverse workforce brings to an organisation, especially post Covid-19, will break down stereotypes and misconceptions through innovative training and new methodologies. This can only be positive in the current economic climate, in ensuring sustainable organisations and sustainable communities as well as increased levels of happiness and general wellbeing. Participants of the training will cover a wide range of topics around the subject of diversity along with exploring the impact of the recent global pandemic. They will explore trends, challenges, opportunities and how to be more resilient to change. In addition, they will have opportunities to network with other managers and to widen their knowledge of diversity issues.

The Diversity Training Programme will support managers and their diverse workforces to work together in harmony by increasing understanding of each employee and their needs – recognising the benefits of a diverse workforce and promoting positive wellbeing.

The training programme includes four modules:

- **Module 1:** Benefits of a diverse workforce for organisations and individuals
- **Module 2:** The Psychology of Othering
- **Module 3:** Positive psychology interventions to promote wellbeing in a diverse workforce
- **Module 4:** Post-Covid changes and challenges for a diverse workplace

A range of activities will be organised during the sessions for maximum benefit to you. Your own experiences are an important aspect of the training, so please be open minded and engage in activities and discussions as much as possible. You will learn about current trends, challenges, and opportunities related to diversity in the workplace. Exploring some quite new concepts, for example, the psychology of “othering”. As a manager you will value the importance of having a healthy team of employees and explore positive psychology interventions. You will explore challenges that still exist, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, especially in a diverse workforce and including hybrid working. Your own contribution will be anonymously included in reporting and may directly and indirectly lead to policy change and support more inclusive and diverse working environments.

During the modules you will explore the many benefits of having a diverse workforce and the benefits for you as an individual working in a diverse workforce whether as a manager or employee. You will participate in a range of activities, some individually and some will be in a group setting. Your facilitator will guide and support you throughout the training. The training, will be delivered as 4 separate 2.5-3 hour sessions, either in person or online. If online, the training will be “live” and this allows for you to engage in activities and discussions.

The facilitator will ask you to introduce yourself and to give a brief background of where you currently work. If online it is advisable to keep your camera on as this gives additional benefit to you for engaging with other participants. You are also encouraged to use the “chat” option

throughout the training as well as verbal interaction during some of the discussions. Your facilitator will give you a brief breakdown of the content for each session. It is important to attend all 4 sessions to get maximum benefit from the training programme. During the training you will also use the newly created resources of Diversity Cards, developed especially for this project and you will be invited to attend Diversity Conversation Clubs, post training. It is anticipated that the training will take place as 4 separate sessions, either online or in person and you will receive the details from your host training organisation. It is important that you share your email address or telephone number or both so that you can be kept updated regarding the training and the schedule.

If the session is online, please notify the training team as soon as possible if you have any technical issues and they will help to resolve them for you. If you lose connection during the training, please access again via the original link (unless notified differently from the training team). Each training session will have a short comfort break allocated, and your facilitator will advise you of this. It is suggested to switch your camera and microphone off during the break.

During some activities you may be required to have your mobile phone or another browser tab available, for example if you use Mentimeter. Your facilitator will advise you of this and support you with it.

At the end of each session, your facilitator will share a link to a session evaluation. If online, the link will be shared in chat. It is very important that these are completed to support ongoing development of the training materials and content. This can be completed electronically prior to the end of each session.

We hope you enjoy the training and that you feel confident to cascade this learning to your organisation and teams!

Best wishes from the Diversity Inside Out training team.

2. Modules

2.1. Module 1: Benefits of a diverse workforce- for organisations and individuals

The facilitator(s) will introduce themselves, the project and their organisation and then ask all participants to engage in introductions prior to commencing with the session. You can share your name and current job role in chat and then your facilitator will lead on an icebreaker. These are just fun activities to help participants to relax and to get to know each other.

Learning Content for session 1

- Benefits of gender equality - Gender and Intersectionality post-Covid
- Inclusion and diversity mindsets- what do we need to pay attention to in organisations e.g., language
- Making change happen-cultural leadership
- Discussions of pertinent issues via case studies

You will participate in creating a group agreement which helps build trust within the group. After you have been introduced to the session you may be asked to work in pairs or smaller groups to discuss some questions related to diversity and inclusion

Your facilitator will support you and move through the groups to help before you will all be gathered for group discussion. You may want to explore your own work experiences for this section and consider if the organisation you work for is supporting a diverse workforce. You will be asked to consider “language” in your workplace and whether it is inclusive. Is it inclusive? Is there any gender or cultural bias with the language that is used?

Throughout the sessions, the facilitator will also be presenting a PowerPoint presentation to support your understanding and to help explain some of the theories, research, and current thinking.

Before the end of the session, your facilitator will share resources for further reading and further exploration of the topics covered and will also share

details of organisations that can be held up as a benchmark for good practice.

After each session, your facilitator will share a link to a session evaluation. It is very important that these are completed to support ongoing development of the training materials and content. This can be completed electronically. You will also be reminded of the date and time of the next training session, and you will have an opportunity to ask any questions that you may have.

Please engage in the discussions as this way you will get the best possible from the training – everyone has different experiences to share.

2.2. Module 2: The Psychology of Othering

This session will explore the theory of psychology of othering. Your facilitator will conduct an icebreaker activity with you and recap the last session to check if any further explanation is needed on any of the topics. The topics have been designed specifically to interlink so this also helps set the scene for each session.

In short, this effect speaks to how we differentially treat those whom we see as "in our group" versus those whom we see as some kind of "other," meaning someone who is defined as in "some group other than my own group." <https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/darwins-subterranean-world/201904/the-psychology-othering>

We often and unknowingly label groups or individuals, and this is something that starts at a very young age and often as part of education in helping to give a point of reference. However, it also leads to every one of us developing stereotypes, whether related to a particular group or culture.

"Unconscious bias is when we make judgments or decisions on the basis of our prior experience, our own personal deep-seated thought patterns, assumptions or interpretations, and we are not aware that we are doing it. The irony is that prejudice and discrimination are inevitable by-products of the efficiency of human cognition". Professor Uta Frith DBE FBA FMedSci FRS

<https://royalsociety.org/-/media/policy/Publications/2015/unconscious-bias-briefing-2015.pdf%20p2>

We automatically categorise and put individuals into groups and subconsciously decide if someone is like us or part of some “other” group. This kind of thinking will be explored in your group discussions and examples shared.

At the end of the session, please complete the online evaluation. The link will be shared by the facilitator and you can complete it electronically. You will be reminded of the date and time of the next session and given the opportunity to ask any questions that you may have.

2.3. Module 3: Positive psychology interventions to promote wellbeing in a diverse workforce

This session will focus on the importance of wellbeing in a diverse workforce and will present positive psychology interventions that can be useful tools to achieve this aim.

Your facilitator will conduct an icebreaker activity with you and recap the last session to check if any further explanation is needed on any of the topics. The topics have been designed specifically to interlink so this helps set the scene for the session.

Amongst others these are the topics that you will explore during the session:

- Positive psychology – key concepts and themes
- Role of a line manager – influence on job satisfaction
- Herzberg’s hygiene factors
- Improving meetings with a positive psychology twist
- Action planning – how to use the diversity cards in a work setting

At the end of the session, you will be asked to complete the online evaluation. The link will be shared by the facilitator and you can complete it electronically. You will be reminded of the date and time of the next session and given the opportunity to ask any questions that you may have.

2.4. Module 4: Post-Covid changes and challenges for a diverse workplace

Your facilitator will conduct an icebreaker activity with you and recap the last session to check if any further explanation is needed on any of the topics. The topics have been designed specifically to interlink so this helps set the scene for the session.

Session 4 topics:

- Being resilient and change focused in the workplace
- Equity issues
- On site and remote working teams
- Training and development
- Recruitment
- Promotion
- Flexibility advantage for employees
- Avoiding fake flex

In the session there will be some group activities and you will also use the Diversity Inside Out Diversity Cards for further exploration of the topics – it is important to respect differing opinions in this section and sometimes you may have to agree to disagree.

You will also explore flexibility, microaggressions, and the psychological harm of discrimination. Most of us have experienced microaggression at some time in our lives where we may have felt excluded due to age, race, gender, class, culture etc.

You will also be introduced to “Fake-flex”, a term coined by Flex Appeal campaigners Anna Whitehouse and Matt Farquharson. The term is used to define home working without proper policies in places that require employees to be constantly online or available for their business.

<https://techmonitor.ai/leadership/workforce/fake-flex-working-homeworking-covid-19>

At the end of the session, please complete the online evaluation. The link will be shared by the facilitator, and you can complete it electronically. As this is the last module you will be advised of other activities that you may be interested in, for example the Diversity Conversation Club.

3. Organisation background and information

Jafnréttisstofa, Iceland

The Directorate of Equality is a governmental institution responsible for monitoring the Gender Equality Act in Iceland. The Directorate provides counselling and education. The Directorate also helps with preparing complaints for the Gender Equality Complaints Committee and advises government authorities, institutions, companies and individuals on gender equality issues.

Website: <https://www.jafnretti.is/>

Inova Aspire, Netherlands

Inova Aspire provides a flexible consultancy service that responds to the needs of organisations and individuals internationally in diversity, equal opportunities, and entrepreneurship. Inova has specialist experience in the development and delivery of coaching and mentoring programmes in the UK and on an international level for women in a range of fields, including entrepreneurship, management, and STEM. Inova Aspire's employees and associates combine experience and qualifications in organisational development, psychology, mentoring and coaching in addition to bringing in best practices from across Europe to assist organisations and individuals in the field of personal and business development.

Website: <https://www.inovaaspire.com/>

