STAFF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION SURVEY GUIDELINES

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This document is intended to serve as a guideline that can be adapted to various organizational contexts. The aim is to outline suggested initial steps, general goals and approaches for identifying and measuring diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging within settlement organization teams. This guideline is meant for organizations to use as a blueprint for preparing to undertake a process within their teams and act as a guide for reflection and adapting what is relevant and appropriate to their local and organizational context.

SURVEY PURPOSE

This survey aims to capture a comprehensive snapshot of an organization's staff composition. Organizations can gain profound insights into their teams' diverse needs and identities by engaging in this self-identification survey. This process will help establish a baseline and thoroughly review policies and procedures.

The survey may highlight demographic areas for future recruitment efforts, targeting underrepresented groups in the staff composition. The organization can strategically focus on fostering inclusivity by identifying gaps and potential barriers.

As an integral aspect of an internal GBA Plus Enhancement Process, this survey aims to offer a snapshot of the current composition and serve as a dynamic tool for tracking and measuring positive changes in diversity and equity within an organization over time.

This approach underscores the sector's commitment to continual improvement and aligns to foster an inclusive and representative workplace environment. Upon collection and analysis of the data, here's how the data can be used:

1 HIRING PRACTICES

If the survey reveals imbalances (e.g., a high number of straight women but low representation of gender-diverse individuals), the organization might review and adjust its recruitment strategies to attract a broader pool of candidates. This could include specific outreach efforts to underrepresented groups, reviewing job descriptions for inclusive language, and training hiring managers on unconscious bias.

2 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Demographic data can also inform targeted professional development opportunities. For instance, if there's a large group of ethnically diverse employees, the organization might develop leadership programs or mentorship opportunities that are culturally responsive or address specific challenges faced by these groups.

3 WORKPLACE CULTURE

Understanding the demographic makeup helps in shaping a workplace culture that respects and celebrates diversity. For example, if there's a lack of gender-diverse employees, the organization might implement or strengthen gender inclusion policies, provide training on gender identity and expression, or create employee resource groups that support underrepresented communities.

4 POLICY ADJUSTMENTS

Policies might be revised to better support diverse needs. For example, if the survey shows a majority group that could overshadow minority experiences, the organization might introduce or revise policies to ensure that everyone's voice is heard and respected, such as more inclusive benefits, flexible working conditions, or anti-discrimination policies.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

CAN THE SURVEY IDENTIFY POWER AND PRIVILEGE DYNAMICS WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION AND CONTRIBUTE TO BALANCING THE PLAYING FIELD?

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS

HOW CAN THE SURVEY PREVENT OVERBURDENING STAFF WITH UNIQUE INTERSECTIONAL IDENTITIES AND AVOID TOKENIZATION?

WRITE YOUR THOUGHTS

DEMOGRAPHIC AREAS TO MEASURE

Below are demographic areas for organizations to measure. The list below could be expanded and modified to add or remove categories that better suit the context of the organizations designing a staff survey.
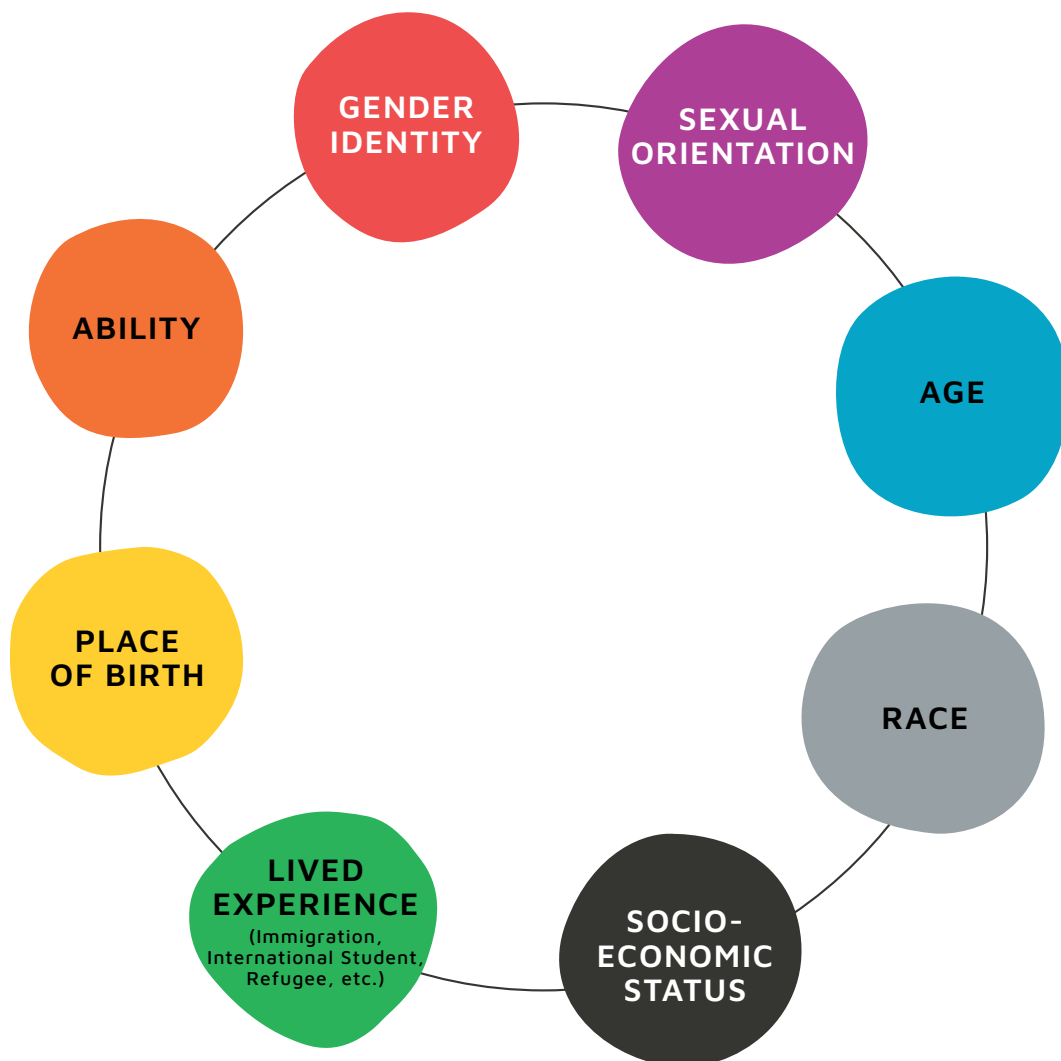
Considering various aspects such as intersectionality, accessibility, communication needs and preferences, neurodiversity, and immigration status, measuring belonging with a nuanced understanding of its diverse implications for individuals is crucial. Recognizing the multifaceted nature of these factors ensures a comprehensive and inclusive approach when assessing the sense of belonging within an organization.

The survey can be an opportunity to review yearly staff needs and inform decision-making processes, including policy reviews and program development. External factors influencing responses, such as seasonal changes and high workload periods, should be considered when looking into the timing and scope of the survey.

It is essential to communicate to staff that if they decide to participate in the survey, they are encouraged to do it during working hours, and the time taken to complete the survey is considered as work time.

This survey guidelines are meant to be used for organizations of every size. It is to be completed on an individual basis and is meant to be confidential.

PRIVACY AND SAFETY

Individual survey responses should be anonymous to respect the privacy and safety of all involved. Carefully consider who has access to this information, how it is stored, and when it is destroyed. (See the **Working with Staff Data** document for more information).

Organizations are encouraged to share summary responses with the staff team. Sharing results with staff fosters transparency and accountability and prevents stereotypes.

The staff team must understand how the collection of internal survey data will be connected to future organizational actions. It is vital to engage with staff and be transparent about who can review the raw data from the survey and what measures will be taken to protect their safety and privacy. While engaging in this process, the organization can identify staff concerns and plan recommendations or suggestions on how to address them.

It is recommended that you add a link to Employee Assistance Programs or free mental health resources in case some of the survey content triggers staff; make sure you offer additional support when and if needed.

To support organizations in starting this process, we have created a **sample survey** that can be adapted as needed, depending on the organization's needs and context. As part of the sample survey document, you will find a glossary of terms; it is encouraged that you have those definitions embedded within the survey. We prefer that you have the definitions pop up as some of the words from the glossary of terms appear in the survey questions. This option is recommended instead of providing a separate link, but if that is not possible. Ensure the link to the glossary of terms is at the beginning of the survey.

Organizations should use **specialized online survey analysis software** (e.g., SurveyMonkey, Microsoft Forms, Qualtrics, etc.). To gain comprehensive insights, it's essential to consider using tools that allow for demographic segmentation and trend analysis. In addition, these tools allow for more privacy and have features to make the surveys anonymous and protect staff confidentiality.

POTENTIAL SURVEY OUTCOMES

Assess organizational knowledge of the intersectional identities of staff and team members to avoid assumptions.

Assess if organizational policies align with the diversity of employees and gauge perceptions of inclusion and belonging.

Evaluate if the organization's staff and leadership reflect the communities served and explore workplace culture and climate.

NEXT STEPS

HOW TO LAUNCH THE SURVEY IN 4 WEEKS?

This next section contains suggested steps your organization may want to consider before distributing the survey to the whole staff team.

- Four weeks before launching the survey, make sure you announce it to the whole staff, addressing its goals, purpose, how it can improve the organization and the workplace environment, and the planned steps to ensure staff confidentiality.

- 2-3 weeks before launch, make sure there is a conversation within small staff groups, either departments or teams that usually work together. This is to discuss the goals and purpose of the survey, gather some general feedback on the process, and answer questions from staff. Be explicit in explaining how the data collected will be handled and used.

- 1-2 weeks before launching the survey, connect with supervisors, including checking in with individual staff members regarding additional questions or concerns related to the survey purpose and launch.

- One week before the survey, send an all-staff communication reiterating the purpose and how the data will be handled and clarifying that this is a voluntary activity.

PROCESSING STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

When receiving the staff survey results, it is important to consider the following:

After reviewing the survey results, explore the following question: How can these results be used to improve internal processes and procedures?

Prepare a plan to report back on the results to the staff team and use the opportunity to use this as an accountability mechanism.

Be intentional in creating the space for this conversation, meeting staff where they are, and building a plan.

Please review the following **Working with Staff Data** document to strengthen your plan for processing the results. Additionally, the GBA Plus Policy Assessment Tool should be considered as a complementary tool to support internal policy change.

— GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ABLEISM

Ableism refers to prejudiced thoughts and discriminatory actions based on differences in physical, mental, and/or emotional ability; usually that of able bodied/minded persons against people with illness, disabilities, or less developed skills[1].

ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility is the combination of aspects that influence a person's ability to function within an environment and to access it with ease[2].

AGEISM

Ageism refers to the stereotypes (how we think), prejudice (how we feel), and discrimination (how we act) towards others or oneself based on age[3].

AROMANTIC

A person who experiences little or no romantic attraction to others and/or has a lack of interest in romantic relationships/behavior[4].

ASEXUAL

A person who does not experience sexual attraction to people of any gender.

BISEXUAL

A person who is attracted to people of more than one gender.

CISGENDER

A person is cisgender when their gender identity aligns with their sex assigned at birth.

DISABILITY	Any impairment, including a physical, mental, intellectual, cognitive, learning, communication or sensory impairment - or a functional limitation - whether permanent, temporary or episodic in nature, or evident or not, that, in interaction with a barrier, hinders a person's full and equal participation in society.
DISCRIMINATION	Discrimination is an action or a decision that mistreats a person or a group for reasons such as race, age, disability, gender etc[5].
EQUITY	Equity is fairness and justice achieved through systematically assessing disparities in opportunities, outcomes, and representation and redressing [those] disparities through targeted actions.
FLUID	A person who does not identify with the gender binary and move within genders and gender stereotypes.
GAY	A person who is attracted to people of the same gender. It can also refer generally to people who are not cisgender or straight[6].
GENDER	Socially constructed roles, behaviors, expressions, and identities of girls, women, boys, men, and gender-diverse people. It influences how people perceive themselves and each other, how they act and interact, the distribution of power and resources in society, and people's social, health and economic outcomes.

GENDER EQUALITY

Gender equality refers to equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities for women, men and non-binary people. Equality refers to the state of being equal while equity refers to the state of being just, impartial or fair. However, equality of opportunity by itself does not guarantee equal outcomes for women, men and non-binary people.

GENDER EQUITY

Gender equity refers to fairness, impartiality and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between women, men and non-binary people. Unlike gender equality, which simply provides for equality of opportunity, gender equity explicitly recognizes and actively promotes measures to address historical and social disadvantages. By 'levelling the playing field,' gender equity creates circumstances through which gender equality can be achieved. Gender equity means providing all social actors with the means to take advantage of equality of opportunity.

GENDER EXPRESSION

Gender expression refers to the various ways in which people choose to express their gender identity. For example: clothes, voice, hair, make-up, etc. A person's gender expression may not align with societal expectations of gender. It is therefore not a reliable indication of a person's gender identity.

GENDER IDENTITY

Gender is how people perceive themselves with respect to their gender. Gender identity is not confined to a binary (girl/woman, boy/man) nor is static; it exists along a continuum and can change over time. There is considerable diversity in how individuals and groups understand, experience and express gender through the roles they take on, the expectations placed on them, relations with others and the complex ways that gender is institutionalized in society.

GENDER NON-CONFORMING

Someone whose gender identity and/or gender expression expands beyond, actively resists, and/or does not conform to the current cultural or social expectations of gender, particularly in relation to male or female[7].

HOMOPHOBIA	Feelings of hatred, fear, and/or disdain for people that are not heterosexual[8].
INTERSECTIONALITY (WAGE DEFINITION)	A theoretical approach that acknowledges that our lives are shaped by multiple, overlapping or intersecting identity factors (e.g., race, class, gender), which results in unique, and complex lived experiences that impact how we experience federal policy, programs, and legislation. Compounding discrimination based on identity factors can create barriers for some or opportunities for others.
INTERSECTIONALITY	Intersectionality is a metaphor for understanding the ways that multiple forms of inequality or disadvantage sometimes compound themselves and create obstacles that often are not understood among conventional ways of thinking.
LESBIAN	A woman who is attracted to a woman.
LIVED EXPERIENCE[9]	Someone whose gender identity and/or gender expression expands beyond, actively resists, and/or does not conform to the current cultural or social expectations of gender, particularly in relation to male or female.
NON-BINARY	A person whose gender identity does not fall within the binary genders of man or woman.
OPPRESSION	The unjust use of power to disempower, marginalize, silence or otherwise subordinate specific groups or categories, often in order to further empower and/or privilege the oppressors.

ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Organizational culture is the collection of shared values, beliefs, attitudes, and practices that shape how people behave and interact within an organization. It's the "personality" of a company, encompassing everything from the way employees communicate to the unwritten rules about how work gets done. This culture influences how decisions are made, how employees are treated, and how the organization presents itself to the outside world.

PANSEXUAL

A person who experiences sexual, romantic, physical, and/or spiritual attraction for members of all gender identities/expressions.

QUEER

Historically a slur, reclaimed by some people that do not identify as cisgender and/or straight.

QUESTIONING OR UNSURE

An individual who is unsure of and/or exploring their gender identity and/or sexual orientation.

RACISM

Is an ideology and system of beliefs wherein distinctive attributes are evaluated relating to ideas of inherent superiority and inferiority. It is the act whereby one group of individuals exercises power over another group based on skin colour based on a set of actions, erroneous assumptions and implicit or explicit beliefs. Racism manifests within organizational and institutional structures, programs, and individual attitudes, thoughts, or behaviour patterns.

SAME-GENDER-LOVING

A term some prefer to use instead of lesbian, gay or bisexual to express attraction to and love of people of the same gender[10].

SEX

Refers to a set of biological attributes. It is primarily associated with physical and physiological features, including chromosomes, gene expression, hormone levels and function, and reproductive/sexual anatomy. Sex is usually categorized as female or male, but there is variation in the biological attributes that comprise sex and how those attributes are expressed.

SEXISM	Discrimination and prejudice against someone of a certain sex.
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	A term used to describe a person's emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction.
STRAIGHT (HETEROSEXUAL)	A person who experiences sexual, romantic, or emotional attraction with a member of the opposite sex or gender.
TRANSPHOBIA	Feeling hatred, fear, or [11]disdain for transgender people.
TRANSGENDER	A person whose gender identity and/or biological characteristics differs from the sex they were assigned at birth.
TWO-SPIRIT	A culturally-specific gender identity. 2S people serve an integral role in Indigenous communities. We place 2S at the beginning of initialism to recognize Indigenous people as the first to build gender-diverse communities in Canada.

[1]Source: Guide on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Terminology; *Glossary of Terms: Race, Equity and Social Justice | icma.org1).

[2]https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/documents/asa_glossary_terms_accessibility_systemic-ableism-en.pdf

[3]World Health Organization: https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/ageing-ageism

[4]https://www.vanderbilt.edu/lgbtqi/resources/definitions

[5]https://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/en/about-human-rights/what-discrimination

[6]2SLGBTQIA+ Terminology Guide and Media Reference Tool

[7]https://itgetsbetter.org/glossary/gender-nonconforming/

[8]2SLGBTQIA+ Terminology Guide and Media Reference Tool

[9]OCASI, Anti-Racism and Anti-Oppression Framework Glossary

[10]https://www.hrc.org/resources/glossary-of-terms

[11]2SLGBTQIA+ Terminology Guide and Media Reference Tool

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