



Here for young people
Here for communities
Here for you

15 key actions to help boost EDI in your organisation

Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are important aspects of any organisation or community and are fundamental to creating a good YMCA. What follows is fifteen key actions that every YMCA should be undertaking to help them become more equal, diverse and inclusive as an employer and recruiter/manager of volunteers¹.

¹ In this document, we sometimes use the word 'employer' brevity, but when we do so it should be taken to include YMCA's status as an organisation which recruits and manages a range of people including employees, contracted workers, casual workers and volunteers (such as, but not limited to, trustees). Similarly, where we use the phrase word 'employee' this should be taken to include anyone who is engaged to act on behalf of the association including contracted workers and casual workers who are not employees, and volunteers (including, but not limited to, trustees)

01 | Establish your baseline position

- ▶ Start by asking the difficult questions – How are we perceived from the outside? How does our existing organisational culture assist or impede EDI objectives? Which areas seem to present challenges to us in terms of EDI?
 - ▶ Get baseline data to establish the current composition of your staff and volunteers.
 - ▶ Ask staff and external agencies how they perceive you. Allow them to respond anonymously and don't be disheartened or defensive about what they tell you.
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02 | Develop an EDI strategy

- ▶ Make sure there is a clear rationale for the strategy – What is it that you want to achieve? How are you going to achieve it and by when?
 - ▶ Make sure to include measurable targets of success.
 - ▶ Incorporate communications on your expectations of partners and stakeholders as part of the strategy.
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03 | Develop a clear EDI policy

- ▶ Ensure the EDI policy covers all nine of the protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010 as a minimum.
 - ▶ Link the EDI Policy to other relevant policies e.g. Safeguarding and Whistleblowing for example.
 - ▶ Review the policy annually and refresh as required.
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04 | Diversify organisational governance

- ▶ Look beyond traditional/existing recruitment networks to identify new trustees.
 - ▶ Engage with initiatives like Boardroom Apprentice to bring in fresh talent and new perspectives.
 - ▶ Appoint a board EDI champion and look to adopt – and implement – the YMCA EDI Charter.
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05 | Define the organisational vision and values

- ▶ Communicate a compelling vision of the future and the path towards it.
 - ▶ Include staff, management, Board, and volunteers in defining the organisational values.
 - ▶ On an annual basis check that you are living the values — organisationally through a survey with key stakeholders, and individually through supervision or appraisal.
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06 | Set leadership and management behaviours and hold people to account

- ▶ Align leadership and management behaviours to the organisational values.
 - ▶ Use the leadership and management behaviours for recruitment and selection, development, and performance management purposes.
 - ▶ Conduct surveys to establish that leaders and managers are role modelling and embedding the values.
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07 | Plan for succession — preparing your workforce for the opportunities that arise

- ▶ Look to the future and consider how best to develop existing talent.
 - ▶ Make sure that opportunities for training and development are offered to all groups.
 - ▶ Encourage those from underrepresented groups to take up professional development opportunities and ensure that barriers to access are tackled.
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08 | Provide EDI training – use the lived experience of staff

- ▶ As a minimum ensure everyone gets training on the Equality Act, EDI policy and other related policies.
 - ▶ Consider peoples' different learning styles and potential barriers to training.
 - ▶ Give a voice to those from underrepresented groups – learning from the lived experience of others can provide powerful insights.
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09 | Ensure accessibility to premises, services, and information

- ▶ Always think about what reasonable adjustments could be made to make the workplace and/or a particular role more accessible for someone with a protected characteristic.
 - ▶ Seek the views of clients and customers around accessibility of services.
 - ▶ Adapt a flexible approach to assist staff to come to work and do their best.
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10 | Encourage employee feedback on policies and practice

- ▶ Input to policy formation increases ownership of the output.
 - ▶ Sense check the final draft with key stakeholders.
 - ▶ Review key policies regularly and refresh as necessary.
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11 | Celebrate diversity

- ▶ Examine ways to celebrate the different cultures of staff, service users and groups within the wider community.
 - ▶ Produce an annual diversity calendar to highlight key events in the year.
 - ▶ Promote your celebrations on social media.
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12 | Partner with community organisations for mutual benefit

- ▶ Consider partnering with organisations who work with groups which are underrepresented on your Board and in staff teams.
 - ▶ Try to find projects that will benefit your YMCA, the partner organisation – and your service users.
 - ▶ Consider how you can learn from partner organisations and how they can learn from you.
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13 | Diversify your approach to recruitment and selection

- ▶ Train all those involved in the recruitment and selection process in how to minimise bias.
 - ▶ Remove barriers for potential applicants such as unnecessary qualification requirements.
 - ▶ Consider which channels might help to yield the best pool of applicants.
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14 | Think about what and how you communicate with the wider customers/ clients/ residents/tenants

- ▶ Consider how best to use social media to communicate with others.
 - ▶ Think about the imagery and graphics on your website — what does it say about you as an organisation.
 - ▶ Use Apps and technology to help you communicate with others in their first language.
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15 | Focus on continuous incremental improvement

- ▶ Use standards not as an accreditation framework but as a tool to drive continuous improvement.
 - ▶ Listen to staff and service users.
 - ▶ Use local and national comparators to benchmark practice.
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