INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

ISO
30415

First edition
2021-05

Human resource management — Diversity and inclusion

Management des ressources humaines — Diversité et inclusion

iTeh STANDARD PREVIEW
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ISO 30415:2021
https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/99958164-329e-4f2c-8f74-
94532f883160/iso-30415-2021

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 260, *Human resource management*.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

Introduction

Developing an inclusive workplace requires an ongoing commitment to diversity and inclusion (D&I) to address inequalities in organizational systems, policies, processes and practices, as well as people's conscious and unconscious biases and behaviours.

In today's increasingly interconnected world, recognizing and leveraging D&I can be critical for organizations seeking to increase innovation, and enhance their resilience, sustainability and reputation. Each organization is different and decision makers need to determine the most appropriate approach for integrating D&I into their strategy and business processes, based on their organizational context. To achieve D&I objectives, organizations need to be brave and committed to actively tackling sensitive issues and addressing non-inclusive behaviours and cultural norms, and unfair and discriminatory organizational practices, whether these are developed by people or associated with technologies.

Fostering a diverse and inclusive organizational culture can enable individuals and teams to thrive and do their best in conditions that enable effective collaboration and participation. Building fairer, more inclusive, socially responsible organizations can help people, regardless of identity, background or circumstance, to access work and develop knowledge, skills and abilities critical to their personal development and well-being.

This document is relevant to the following United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: (5) Gender Equality; (8) Decent Work and Economic Growth; (9) Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure; and (10) Reduced Inequality, and is guided by the principles of human rights at work.[11] Additionally, it is linked to ISO 30408.

This document supports organizations to embed D&I in their workplaces (see Figure 1) by providing guidance and methods on:

a) prerequisites for demonstrating ongoing commitment to D&I;

b) accountabilities and responsibilities for D&I;

c) approaches to valuing diversity and fostering development of an inclusive workplace; and

d) identifying D&I objectives, opportunities and risks, actions, measures, outcomes and impacts.
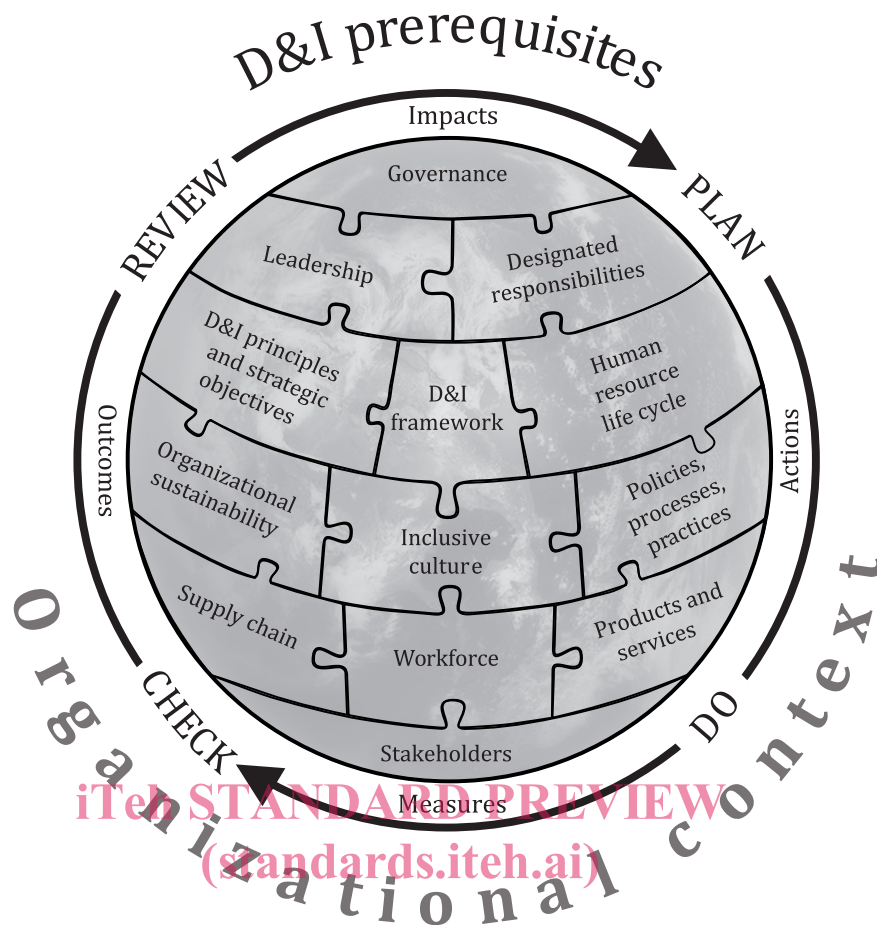
Figure 1 — Organizational diversity and inclusion

This document applies to the human resource management life cycle, delivery of products and services, supply chain relationships, and relationships with external stakeholders to ensure equity, fairness and equality. It encourages organizations to use a continual improvement plan, do, check and review approach. It is intended to help organizations achieve D&I objectives, evaluate the impact on people, communities and society, and meet sustainable development goals. It can also support independent and external validation of organizational approaches to embedding D&I in the workplace. To facilitate the use of this document by organizations, a checklist of the document's D&I actions is included in Annex A.

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Human resource management — Diversity and inclusion

1 Scope

This document provides guidance on D&I for organizations, including their governance body, leaders, workforce and recognized representatives, and other stakeholders. It is intended to be scalable to the needs of all types of organizations in different sectors, whether in public, private, government or non-governmental organizations (NGO), regardless of size, type, activity, industry or sector, growth phase, external influences and country-specific requirements.

This document presents fundamental prerequisites for D&I, associated accountabilities and responsibilities, recommended actions, suggested measures and potential outcomes. It recognizes that each organization is different and that decision makers need to determine the most appropriate approach to embedding D&I in their organization, based on the organization's context and any disruptive challenges that emerge.

This document does not address the specific aspects of relations with labour unions or work councils, or country-specific compliance, legal requirements or litigation.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 30400, *Human resource management — Vocabulary*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 30400 and the following apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

— IEC Electropedia: available at http://www.electropedia.org/

3.1
accessibility
extent to which workplace environments, systems, and organizational products and services are accessible and can be used by the broadest range of people

3.2
accommodate
adapt to or adjust to

Note 1 to entry: The aim of accommodating specific needs is to enable people with differing abilities to gain access to work and contribute to the organization.

Note 2 to entry: Adjustments can vary according to differing abilities, specific individual needs and circumstances. For example, having organizational policies that cover making adjustments to premises, working hours, job responsibilities and equipment, and providing accessible information and assistive technologies, as well as time for treatment and rehabilitation, when applicable.

3.3
accountability
obligation of a person or organization to account for their activities or accept responsibility for those activities

Note 1 to entry: The activities can, for example, include the completion of a deliverable or task, and accepting responsibility can involve disclosing the results of the activities in a transparent manner.

[SOURCE: ISO/TS 21089:2018, 3.3.1, modified — Variable characteristics of the concept moved to Note 1 to entry.]

3.4
adverse impact
outcome that is disadvantageous and potentially discriminatory for individuals and groups of people

3.5
bias
tendency, inclination or opinion that is preconceived or unreasoned that hinders impartial judgement

Note 1 to entry: Bias can be unconscious, conscious or systematic.

[SOURCE: ISO 30400:2016, 9.2, modified]

3.6
decent work
work performed in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity

[SOURCE: ISO 26000:2010, 6.4.1.1, Box 8, modified]

3.7
diversity
characteristics of differences and similarities between people

Note 1 to entry: Diversity includes factors that influence the identities and perspectives that people bring when interacting at work.

Note 2 to entry: Diversity can support the development of workplace environments and practices that foster learning from others to gain diverse perspectives on *inclusiveness* (3.12).

Note 3 to entry: Diversity dimensions include the demographic and other personal characteristics of the workforce, for example age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, as well as characteristics related to socio-economic context. These are often identified and agreed upon dimensions, which can be associated with legal requirements in different jurisdictions.

[SOURCE: ISO 30400:2016, 9.1, modified —Note 2 to entry modified and Note 3 to entry added.]

3.8
employee resource group
ERG
people with shared demographic and other *diversity* (3.7) dimensions, and their allies

Note 1 to entry: An ERG generally consists of people who join together in a network to share experiences and beliefs, and to promote diversity and *inclusion* (3.12) in the workplace.

Note 2 to entry: ERGs can contribute to an organization's approach to D&I, and promote, lead and provide support for D&I objectives.

Note 3 to entry: Organizations can support the role and contribution of an ERG by allocating a budget and identifying a leadership team sponsor.

3.9
equality
state of being equal, especially in status, rights, opportunities or outcomes

3.10
equity
principle that policies, processes and practices should be fairly applied and individual needs recognized

3.11
fairness
principle that everyone should be subject to procedures that are equitable and, as far as possible, free from systematic *bias* (3.5)

3.12
inclusion
inclusiveness
practice of including all stakeholders in organizational contexts

Note 1 to entry: Inclusion can involve stakeholders from different groups being accepted, welcomed, and enabled to have a *voice* (3.19) and develop a sense of belonging.

Note 2 to entry: Inclusion can also involve offering opportunities to people on the basis of their knowledge, skills and abilities, as well as providing access to resources that enable their participation.

[SOURCE: ISO 30400:2016, 9.5, modified —Note 1 to entry revised and Note 2 to entry added.]

3.13
inclusive culture
values, beliefs and practices that influence the conduct and behaviour of people and organizations by including and valuing the perspectives and contributions of the broadest range of stakeholders

3.14
inclusive behaviour
conduct that promotes *inclusion* (3.12)

Note 1 to entry: Organizations can enable conditions that encourage inclusive behaviour.

Note 2 to entry: Individuals within an organization demonstrate inclusive behaviour when they enable everyone to have a *voice* (3.19) and accept and value the perspectives and contributions of every stakeholder.

3.15
intersectionality
combination of one or more *diversity* (3.7) dimensions and other personal characteristics that are part of a person's identity

Note 1 to entry: These diversity dimensions and personal characteristics intersect, such that each is linked to the other, and influence a person's life and work experiences.

3.16
onboarding
process of welcoming people into the organization, its culture, expectations, policies, people and their roles

Note 1 to entry: The approach to onboarding can depend on the type and size of the organization, complexity of the job, and the knowledge, skills and abilities of the person.

Note 2 to entry: Onboarding can help people adjust or acclimatize to a new work environment, role and responsibility, and also help the workforce and the organization to adjust to its new members.

3.17
organizational governance
system by which an organization makes and implements decisions in pursuit of its objectives

[SOURCE: ISO 26000:2010, 2.13]

3.18
outreach
activities undertaken by an organization to engage with a broader group of stakeholders

3.19
voice
way people communicate their views and influence matters that affect them

Note 1 to entry: Voice can include workforce views on employment and organizational issues, which can enable participation and involvement of people in influencing organizational decision-making.

Note 2 to entry: Voice can be evident through formal and informal mechanisms, including engagement surveys, *employee resource groups* (3.8), and consultations and negotiations that involve workforce representatives, labour unions or work councils where they exist.

Note 3 to entry: Voice can include communications from customers, people in the supply chain and other external stakeholders, expressing expectations and concerns.

4   Fundamental D&I prerequisites

Collectively, the following prerequisites are fundamental to implementing the guidance in this document, demonstrating commitment to D&I and developing an inclusive organization:

— **Recognizing diversity**: valuing all people intrinsically, individually and as groups, appreciating how different diversity dimensions intersect, and acknowledging that demographic and other personal characteristics can possibly be protected by law and regulation.

— **Governing effectively**: exemplifying and promoting leadership commitment to D&I through the use of inclusive organizational governance systems, policies, processes, practices and operations.

— **Acting accountably**: acting in an ethical and socially responsible manner, promoting productive employment and decent work for all.

— **Working inclusively**: enabling and developing an accessible and respectful workplace environment that fosters inclusion and a sense of belonging.

— **Communicating inclusively**: recognizing and responding to the needs of people who access, understand and relate to communications in different ways.

— **Advocating and championing D&I**: actively influencing and promoting inclusive organizational practices and stakeholder relationships.

5   Accountabilities and responsibilities

5.1   General

The organization's governing body and senior leadership are accountable for developing D&I principles and objectives, which should be delivered through a D&I framework. The principles and objectives should be aligned with Clause 4 prerequisites, and integrated into the organization's policies, processes and practices, for human resource management, products and services, and supply chain and external stakeholder relationships. They are also accountable for ensuring that resources, time, support and adequate funding is available for D&I initiatives and activities.

D&I responsibility should be delegated to people with expertise and understanding of D&I. People who have delegated responsibilities for D&I, people management and stakeholder relationships are accountable for planning, implementing and monitoring policies, processes and practices, and reviewing their effectiveness in achieving D&I objectives.

Everyone in the organization has a role and responsibility in the realization of D&I principles, and in establishing and maintaining an inclusive culture at work. When people work inclusively, ideas and contributions of all stakeholders are welcomed and respected, which can result in a competitive advantage for the organization.

5.2   Organizational governance

To ensure that the organization's D&I principles and objectives are aligned with its vision, mission, values and strategy, its governing body should have accountability for:

— directing senior leaders to establish D&I principles and objectives, and allocation of resources to achieve them;

— demonstrating commitment to D&I and role modelling behaviours that are consistent with D&I principles, shared values and beliefs;

— challenging and addressing behaviour that is inconsistent with D&I principles and ensuring that people who challenge inappropriate behaviour, and those who are affected by it, are protected and supported; and

— holding senior leaders to account when evaluating the organization's D&I opportunities and risks, and reviewing performance and progress in achieving D&I objectives and the impact of their outcomes.

5.3   Organizational leadership

The organization's leaders should be active advocates and champions of D&I and have accountability and responsibility for:

— establishing D&I principles and objectives and a supporting framework to realize these;

— facilitating an inclusive organizational culture by establishing D&I expectations and accountabilities, communicating these to all stakeholders, and fostering inclusive relationships and shared values with them;

— demonstrating their commitment by role modelling inclusive behaviour, setting behavioural expectations for the workforce, challenging and addressing inappropriate behaviour, and recognizing and rewarding D&I inclusive practices and behaviours;

— designating responsibility for achieving D&I objectives to those who lead functional areas in the organization;

— ensuring that the organization's systems, policies, processes and practices across all functional areas align with its D&I principles and objectives;

— allocating resources to achieve D&I objectives, for example sponsoring initiatives, ERGs and steering committees, including allocation of time and support for participating and contributing to the achievement of D&I objectives;

— reviewing the outcome and impact of their products and services on market segments and the broadest range of stakeholders; and

— ensuring that the organization's annual report includes a clear narrative description of its D&I opportunities and risks, and progress on achieving D&I objectives, supported by robust evidence and demographic data of its workforce (see ISO 30414 for guidance on human capital reporting).

5.4   Organizational delegated responsibilities for D&I

People who are accountable for managing functional areas of the organization should have delegated responsibility for:

— ensuring that D&I principles are embedded in functional systems, policies, processes and practices;

— sharing D&I knowledge, skills and expertise, and providing advocacy and guidance on policies, processes and practices that promote a diverse and inclusive organizational culture;

— demonstrating and role modelling inclusive behaviours;

— deploying resources to respond to opportunities, risks, constraints and challenges in order to achieve D&I objectives;

— fostering an inclusive and diverse workplace by enabling access and adjustments to increase participation of demographically under-represented groups;

— ensuring policies, processes, practices and decisions about people, as they move into, through and out of the organization, are evidence-based and supported by checks and balances to mitigate the effects of bias, including any in existing and emerging technologies;

— promoting the organization's D&I principles and objectives through all stages of the human resource management life cycle;

— facilitating open channels of communication so that diverse perspectives are received with respect and without prejudice;

— enabling a safe environment for D&I issues, concerns and complaints to be raised, and ensuring policies, processes and practices are fairly applied for all stakeholders, including whistle-blowers;

— ensuring that stakeholder feedback is considered when monitoring the implementation of policies, processes and practices to identify D&I impacts, outcomes, challenges, constraints and trends;

— promoting the organization's D&I principles and objectives through contracting arrangements with the supply chain, relationships with customers and communities, and other external stakeholders;

— identifying and analysing diversity data to measure impacts;

— identifying the criteria and associated measures for D&I that are material to the organization;

— evaluating the impact of policies, processes and practices on the development of an inclusive workplace, including the movement of people into, through and out of the organization, and other stakeholders; and

— reviewing and reporting the status and progress against identified D&I objectives, including the assessment of risk and opportunities, and any recommendations for change and inclusion in the organization's annual report.

5.5   Individual responsibilities

Everyone has responsibility for:

— treating colleagues, customers, suppliers and other stakeholders with respect and fairness;

— meeting expectations of the organization's D&I principles and objectives;

— behaving inclusively, actively fostering inclusion, trust and a sense of belonging; and

— voicing concerns and challenging inappropriate behaviour.

6 D&I framework

6.1 General

A D&I framework is a supporting structure of interrelated components, which organizations can employ to contextualize, manage and promote inclusion strategically and cross-functionally. An illustration of organizational D&I (Figure 1), which is used to structure this document, presents a D&I framework as a central component, emphasizing its coordinating function in the context of a plan, do, check, review approach. The D&I prerequisites in Clause 4 are fundamental to the development of an organization's D&I framework, which recognizes its organizational context and the need for alignment with its vision, mission, values, objectives and systems.

An organization's D&I framework can incorporate and articulate:

— D&I principles and objectives;

— accountabilities and responsibilities;

— D&I actions related to, for example, its HR management life cycle, supply chain, products and services, and relationships with external stakeholders;

— valid and reliable quantitative and qualitative measures;

— D&I opportunities and risks, including those related to the use of technologies and automated systems; and

— potential D&I outcomes and impacts on different stakeholders.

Using a framework structure can be an effective way to leverage D&I benefits and demonstrate organizational social responsibility. Designating a leader with accountability for ensuring the maintenance, continual improvement and relevance of the D&I framework is essential to promoting an inclusive organizational culture. For guidance on sustainable employability, see ISO/TR 30406.

6.2 Actions

To achieve D&I objectives pertaining to the D&I framework, organizations should:

— designate responsibility for ensuring that the framework is relevant, developed and maintained;

— establish the rationale for D&I;

— ensure organizational leaders articulate their commitment to sponsoring, developing and sustaining an inclusive organization;

— integrate D&I principles and objectives into organizational policies, processes and practices;

— identify D&I measures which are material to the organization and utilize aggregated and segmented workforce and other stakeholder data to assess progress;

— inform members of the workforce about the D&I objectives and opportunities to contribute to them;

— align departmental, group, team and individual objectives to D&I objectives;

— identify, monitor and address D&I risks, challenges and constraints, and optimize D&I opportunities;

— review plans, systems, technologies, policies, processes and practices to ensure that they are fair, equitable and do not adversely impact people, including those related to the use of technologies and automated systems;

— collect data on workforce and other stakeholder perceptions about the organization's commitment to D&I, such as from focus groups, surveys, interviews and external reviews;