

# Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2021–2024



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The new Forestry Commission Diversity and Inclusion Strategy is focused on **five memorable actions**:



**Develop...**  
a more inclusive culture



**Grow...**  
a more representative workforce



**Listen...**  
using diverse insights to avoid group think



**Learn...**  
growing in capability and confidence



**Share...**  
our experiences and learning

It also builds on the Civil Service Strategy, focusing on a **Civil Service for Everyone**.

An approach that takes a **broad view of diversity**, focused not just on the characteristics protected under law but equally committed to greater socioeconomic diversity, greater regional diversity and to building teams where effectively harnessing cognitive diversity is the way decisions are made. This has a **zero tolerance for discrimination**, with teams and leaders equipped to confidently and swiftly tackle inappropriate behaviours and the impact of inequalities. Alongside a **focus on action** rather than rhetoric with an agile and effective response to the irritants and barriers that persist – applying core leadership skills to issues of exclusion.

This strategy builds on focus group work, ideas and feedback submitted from staff through 2019, 2020 and early 2021.



# **We will develop** a more inclusive culture

## → Goal

To create working environments and recreational spaces where people are valued and respected for being themselves.

## → Focus

Whole organisation ownership of the benefits of diversity and a commitment to inclusion through the Professional Manager Programme and supporting senior leaders to become 'Inclusion Confident' through training, mentoring and support within wider Civil Service programmes.

Creating the right environment and providing support to allow our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion networks to grow, flourish and self-sustain.

Reduction in bullying, harassment and discrimination (BHD) and negative micro behaviours, raising awareness and changing team cultures through embedding the Inclusion Ambassador programme and Forest Research Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination (BHD) Ambassador programme.

Upskilling staff and managers in what 'inclusion in practice' looks like through expanding the Inclusion Ambassador programme, Conversation Starter programme and rolling out Equally Yours.

Drawing on best practice in inclusion through our accessibility work in inclusive design, events accessibility and ensuring Equality Impact Assessments are embedded within new programme and policy design.

# **We will grow** a more representative workforce across the Forestry Commission

## → Goal

To have a workforce that better represents all the communities of the UK.



## → Focus

To accurately collect and understand our workforce demographics, those currently applying for our jobs and the demographics of pipelines we use or support, through data collected by CONFOR, universities and apprenticeship partners.

To implement an FC People Strategy which considers positive action, sponsorship, secondments and mentoring to enable our staff to grow and develop within the organisation and sector.

To identify and eliminate any barriers or discrimination enabling us to grow the diversity of our workforce across all pay bands and job roles.

To create a Forestry Commission Early Careers working group creating strategic opportunities for volunteering, placements, apprenticeships, and partnerships to diversify our incoming talent pool.





## **We will listen** – using insights from our diverse stakeholders, customers, volunteers and employees to inform development of external policies, services and programmes

### → Goal

For all programmes, policies and services to be inclusive to all.

### → Focus

To employ a range of diverse voices in our decision making, using our Equality Diversity Inclusion networks and diverse partnerships, to ensure our services, programmes and policies are inclusive to all.

To be an organisation which seeks to continually improve its understanding of diversity and inclusion, in the ambition to be an outstanding organisation for those who work here and those we interact with.





# **We will learn,** improving our equality, diversity and inclusion capability and confidence

## → Goal

To be an organisation where equality, diversity and inclusion is everyone's responsibility.

## → Focus

To be an organisation where everyone is committed to improving their diversity, inclusion and equality knowledge and know how to apply that knowledge in their working environment and relationships.

To be an organisation that uses data and clear metrics to diagnose problems, evaluate interventions, monitor progress and make improvements.

To be an organisation where senior leaders are Diversity and Inclusion confident and champion equality, diversity and inclusion daily in their working relationships.



# **We will share** our experiences and learning, raising awareness, reporting progress and celebrating success

## → Goal

Raise awareness, share best practice and celebrate success.

## → Focus

To be an organisation that is confident in talking about equality, diversity and inclusion, increasing workforce understanding, respect and creating an opportunity for dialogue and engagement.

To be an organisation that shares best practice and reports on progress and success while also being open and transparent around areas that need to change.

To be an organisation that uses data and clear metrics to diagnose problems, evaluate interventions, monitor progress and make improvements.



# Action plan



## Key actions

**We will develop** a more inclusive culture

<b>Ongoing</b>	Work with Workforce Policy Lead to ensure all new and revised workforce policies are fully inclusive.
<b>Ongoing</b>	Work with our employee Equality Diversity & Inclusion networks, currently Women in Forestry, LGBTQ+ Supporters and the Ethnic Minority group, statutory appointed groups, e.g. the Forest and Woodland Advisory Committees (FWAC) and external stakeholder groups, on programmes of work that ensure a more inclusive culture. Additionally, learning from the finest across business in this area.
<b>2021–2024</b>	Roll out new diversity and inclusion training through the Professional Managers Programme, Equally Yours and Inclusion Ambassador programme (in FR Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Ambassadors) to increase understanding of diversity, inclusion and respect at work and how to implement that in their work with volunteers, customers and stakeholders.
<b>2021–2024</b>	Run annual Equality Impact Assessment training to ensure staff know when and how to do an Equality Impact Assessment.
<b>2021+</b>	Support Senior Leadership in becoming diversity and inclusion confident offering training / reverse mentoring, utilising wider Civil Service opportunities. Monitor for success and offer support where it is needed.

**We will grow** a more representative workforce across the Forestry Commission

<b>June 2021</b> Then ongoing 3-monthly dashboard	Encourage all our workforce to declare their diversity data and continue to monitor and report data and insights, to support evidence-based action and to track our progress. Role model through stories that this is a positive declaration.
<b>Scoped 2021</b> Implemented from 2022	Early careers programme of work: Looking at the needs of a future workforce; work with schools, colleges, universities, and the wider industry, targeting underrepresented communities to improve the knowledge, perceptions and status of careers in Forestry.
<b>2022–2024</b> To follow the early careers work and People Plan	Take action to increase diverse representation at all levels, encouraging diverse thought and experiences across the FC. For example, short term secondments, shadowing roles, Civil Service positive action training or mentoring programmes.



## Key actions

**We will listen** – using insights from our diverse stakeholders, customers, volunteers and employees to inform development of external policies, services and programmes

<b>Ongoing</b>	Consult with Equality Diversity and Inclusion networks across the FC, using their skills and experience to ensure development of programmes and policies are culturally appropriate and sensitive to staff and customers.
<b>From 2022</b>	Proactively engage with diverse customers/users/volunteers and actively seek to include a stakeholder group and/or shadow boards, with diversity requirements, to ensure development of activities, programmes, services and external policies meet the needs of all UK citizens.

**We will learn**, improving our equality, diversity and inclusion capability and confidence

<b>In progress</b>	Develop a new grievance to resolution policy with associated training and culture change to improve understanding of what is likely to amount to Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination and what is not and how to de-escalate a situation.
<b>Ongoing</b>	Develop the capability and capacity of workforce Equality Diversity and Inclusion networks and champions to contribute to progress, share good practice and collaborate.
<b>Ongoing</b>	Regularly evaluate and report on progress to the Executive Board, offering advice on improvements.

**We will share** our experiences and learning, raising awareness, reporting progress and celebrating success

<b>2021</b>	Consult, develop, communicate and share our 2021-2024 Diversity and Inclusion strategy to highlight the benefits of a diverse and inclusive workforce and galvanise action across our organisation.
<b>Ongoing</b>	Sharing and communicating data and insights on the progress and experiences of diverse employees (for example our Staff Engagement Survey data) to benchmark progress and evaluate activity.
<b>Ongoing</b>	Create a shared comms plan and use national dates as a springboard for sharing equality, diversity and inclusion messages, progress and good practice.
<b>Ongoing</b>	Empower employee equality, diversity and inclusion networks and champions to share their stories.



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For all Diversity and Inclusion enquiries, including alternative formats, please contact:

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