



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

# Defra group: equality, diversity and inclusion strategy 2017 to 2020



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“ Diversity is the mix

Inclusion is about making the mix work

” Quote by:  
Andres Tapia, Korn Ferry Hay

## Equality



Ensuring individuals and groups are treated fairly and equally. This involves taking into account the different experiences and needs of all, particularly in relation to protected characteristics.

## Diversity



The understanding that each individual is different and the recognition that diverse teams, boards and workforces produce better outcomes.

## Inclusion



The action of including or of being included within a group or structure. Promoting an inclusive culture is about recognising the value of diversity and supporting all to realise their full potential.

## A message from Executive Committee members

“As senior leaders within Defra and members of its Executive Committee we want to support the Defra vision of **“Creating a great place for living”** by ensuring Defra continues to be **a great place to work.**”

We are passionate about ensuring that Defra is a **top performing organisation**, with a **diverse range of talent**. This means we are **committed to creating a culture** where everyone can bring their whole self to work and their uniqueness is truly valued.

# Priorities

In February 2016, Defra group's Executive Committee (ExCo) recognised that there was a strong commonality around the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) issues being tackled across the Defra group. As a result, they agreed seven key priorities for 2016/17 in advance of developing a Defra group strategy.

These priorities remain critical to the successful delivery of this strategy and we have added one new priority to strengthen our delivery.

1. Improving declaration/self-disclosure rates and equality, diversity and inclusion data
2. Tackling unconscious bias in people decisions (with a focus on recruitment, progression and performance management)
3. Improving career support for people from under-represented groups
4. Promoting inclusive behaviours by leaders, managers and individuals
5. Tackling discrimination, bullying and harassment
6. Improving the process and delivery of reasonable adjustments
7. Ensuring our policies, projects, programmes and processes show due regard for diversity and inclusion and consider the impact of decisions on under-represented groups
8. Improving the methods, policies and processes supporting recruitment, selection and attraction to ensure they are effective in recruiting a diverse workforce

Our priorities reflect key issues across the Defra group and the ambitions set out in the 'Civil Service Talent Action Plan 2016: Removing the Barriers to Success'. We look forward to aligning with the upcoming Civil Service Inclusion Strategy, expected in spring 2017.

## Four fundamental themes to create an equal, diverse and inclusive place to work

This Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy sets out how we will create an equal, diverse and inclusive place to work (Defra Strategy, Objective 7, point 1).

This strategy is for all Defra group employees, at all levels, wherever they work and whatever they do.

It is focused on four themes: respect, include, support and engage. These themes are common to all our people strategies and EDI aspirations across the Defra group.

They also embrace the priorities described above.

We believe they are the fundamental building blocks for creating an equal, diverse and inclusive workforce.



A workplace based on these four themes will be one where everyone feels genuinely valued and supported at work. In turn, we hope this will lead to greater diversity, more creativity and innovation and higher organisational performance.

## Why do we want this?

There are moral, legal and business reasons for ensuring the Defra group is an equal, diverse and inclusive (EDI) organisation. An equal, diverse and inclusive Defra group is one where: people feel included and supported, innovation and creativity are enabled, organisational performance is high and customer service and organisational reputation are excellent.

<b>People feel:</b>	<b>Innovation and creativity are enabled by:</b>	<b>Individual and organisational performance is high because:</b>	<b>We provide an outstanding service to customers because:</b>	<b>An excellent organisational reputation is developed by:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>valued and included at work for who they are</li> <li>supported by colleagues, line managers and leaders</li> <li>confident that people practices and policies are fair and inclusive</li> <li>respected and safe from prejudice, stereotyping, bullying, harassment, and discrimination</li> <li>reassured that all forms of non-inclusive behaviours counter to Defra group values are challenged</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the celebration of different perspectives, which inform the development of new or enhanced services for Defra group</li> <li>an open culture which supports individuals to take new opportunities and work creatively</li> <li>embracing diverse ways of working e.g. flexible working</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>support is provided for all individuals to realise their full potential</li> <li>there is higher individual wellbeing, engagement and in turn, higher productivity</li> <li>core values and inclusive behaviours are shared</li> <li>the selection and development of people is effective in ensuring individuals with the right skills are in the right role at the right time</li> <li>an open culture enables the organisation to be more agile and respond to change</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>we are representative of the customers we serve</li> <li>we better understand and relate to customer needs</li> <li>we communicate more effectively with customers</li> <li>we are more inclusive to diverse customer perspectives</li> <li>we have an organisational brand customers can align to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrating inclusive practices both internally and externally</li> <li>consistently positive staff feedback</li> <li>working with communities on the basis of mutual respect to achieve outcomes of mutual benefit</li> <li>supporting initiatives which take diverse perspectives into account</li> </ul>
<b>The outcome of which will be:</b>				
<p><b>Increased employee satisfaction and retention because our people feel valued, respected and included.</b></p>	<p><b>A creative, responsive, agile and innovative workforce.</b></p>	<p><b>A high performing organisation delivering an efficient service.</b></p>	<p><b>Customer needs and issues that are understood and engaged with, leading to better results.</b></p>	<p><b>Improved working relationships with customers and stakeholders, and an employer brand that attracts talent and engages our people.</b></p>

# Our strategy – four themes to create an equal, diverse and inclusive place to work

## Respect: We respect others

### We will have succeeded when

- All employees treat each other with respect
- Employees do not experience discrimination, bullying or harassment because of their individual differences
- We recognise and value everyone's individual contribution
- Employees feel confident challenging disrespectful behaviours

### We will do this by

- Setting clear standards of behaviour
- Raising awareness of discrimination, bullying and harassment and its impacts
- Enhancing management confidence and capability in dealing with discrimination, bullying and harassment
- Promoting inclusive behavior by leaders, managers and individuals
- Celebrating diversity by supporting and empowering our networks and creating opportunities for people to share experience

### How we will measure

- Regular review of quantitative data from staff surveys, casework statistics and HR people data
- Analysis of qualitative indicators such as feedback from employees, diversity networks and champions and take-up of support services
- Evaluation of HR policies and their impact on under-represented groups

## Include: We promote inclusive behaviours and use our data to drive workplace improvements

### We will have succeeded when

- Everyone in the Defra group demonstrates clearly defined behaviours promoting inclusion
- Everyone in the Defra group feels included and able to bring their whole self to work
- The Defra group is recognised internally and externally as a great place to work
- We meet the Civil Service targets or reflect the UK's economically active population i.e. Female: 50%: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual: 6%: Disabled: 11%: Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic: 14%

### We will do this by

- Raising awareness of inclusive behaviours and promoting inclusive leadership
- Identifying and removing barriers to creating an inclusive workplace
- Enabling employees to confidently and securely share their diversity data
- Using our diversity data to inform organisational and team workforce plans
- Regularly monitoring our diversity data and using this to inform HR policies and people decisions
- Creating a fully accessible workplace by ensuring workplace adjustments are in place quickly and effectively
- Delivering the upcoming 2017 Civil Service Inclusion Strategy

### How we will measure

- Regular review of quantitative data from staff surveys, HR people data and declaration rates
- Analysis of qualitative indicators such as feedback from employees, diversity networks and champions and efficiency of implementing workplace adjustments
- Evaluation of inclusion campaigns, HR policies and workforce plans

## Support: We ensure everyone is supported in the workplace to achieve their full potential

### We will have succeeded when

- Our boards, executives, senior leaders and employees are diverse and representative of the communities we serve
- Our employment and development opportunities are accessible to everyone
- Our employees feel supported in their career development
- All people practices show due regard for EDI and risks of unconscious bias or barriers are mitigated

### We will do this by

- Adopting a fair, transparent selection process that brings out the best in people and attracts new talent
- Exploring the use of apprenticeships to attract and support talented people and provide opportunities for our existing employees to develop
- Recognising and developing the potential of all and providing career support for under-represented groups
- Ensuring all employees participating in selection phases of recruitment and in managing performance complete unconscious bias training
- Supporting the mutual mentoring programme to provide opportunities for leaders and managers to learn from and develop our employees

### How we will measure

- Regular review of quantitative data from staff surveys, recruitment data, and uptake of learning and development opportunities
- Analysis of qualitative indicators such as feedback from employees, diversity networks and champions and take-up and feedback of career support (e.g. EDI talent programmes and mutual mentoring programme)
- Evaluation of HR policies and impact on under-represented groups

## Engage: We engage with others

### We will have succeeded when

- Our workforce understands and embraces the EDI strategy, consistently applying the four themes in all that they do
- Our employees see our senior leaders actively championing and demonstrating key EDI messages
- Our customers feel that their individual needs are valued
- Our organisational brand is positively recognised by under-represented groups
- We attract and retain people from the widest range of under-represented groups

### We will do this by

- Using all available forms of media, including social media (e.g. Twitter, Linked In) to communicate to the widest audience
- Building relationships with and working within under-represented communities
- Encouraging our employees to use their volunteering / outcome days to build stronger links with the communities we serve
- Holding open and constructive conversations with our employee networks and EDI Champions
- Connecting with external institutions such as educational facilities to attract high potential people from different backgrounds
- Enabling accessible, open channels of communication with customers
- Increasing the numbers of internships and work experience placements from under-represented groups year on year

### How we will measure

- Regular review of quantitative data from staff surveys and communications data (e.g. online activity)
- Qualitative indicators such as feedback from employees and customers , analysis of engagement with campaigns and feedback from diversity networks
- Evaluation of HR policies and analysis of any impact on under-represented groups