

Diversity & Inclusion  
Target Guidance

# Pathways to Developing a D&I Strategy

September 2021

**BORD BIA**  
IRISH FOOD BOARD



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# 1. Introduction

**Diversity simply means difference.** Diversity is about differences, seen and unseen.

**Inclusion is diversity in action.** Inclusion creates an environment where people are valued, feel valued and are able to achieve and contribute to their full potential. An inclusive environment improves interaction with employees, customers and our communities.

“Bring your whole self to work”



## 2. Context

Building a diverse and inclusive company means that firms can draw from across the talent pool, attracting the skilled employees they need, supported by a strong employee brand and recruitment proposition. When a company's talent reflects the customer base it serves, the business is able to better understand its customers needs.

## 2. Context

This Origin Green guidance document was developed by the **Agri-Food Diversity & Inclusion Forum** (AgDiF) a collaborative initiative with industry, led by Bord Bia and Aon, in partnership with the **30% Club**, a global campaign, supported by board chairs and CEOs, committed to achieving better gender balance at leadership level throughout their organisation, for enhanced business outcomes.

AgDiF's vision is that **the Irish food and drink industry is the industry of choice** for the best talent. Their purpose is to advance the D&I agenda within the Irish food and drink industry focusing on gender balance first.

Building a diverse and inclusive company means that firms can draw from across the talent pool, attracting the skilled employees they need, supported by a strong employee brand and recruitment proposition. Employers need to access all talent available and leaders should be able to identify the barriers that inhibit the attraction, development and progression of talent from all backgrounds in order to build a sustainable workforce.

In a **study** conducted by AgDiF in 2020 in the food and drink industry:

- **85% of business leaders believe difficulties in talent acquisition and retention are a risk to their business growth.**
- **Competition from other sectors, within the sector and a lack of suitable applicants drive the talent shortage according to both business leaders and employees.**

When it comes to Diversity & Inclusion, AgDiF note that they see continued discrepancy between the business leaders and employee views. There is a clear mismatch between employer and employee perceptions of the organisation's approach to D&I. The business leaders claim it is a far higher priority than employees believe they are experiencing.

On the other hand, employees are more likely than their business leader counterparts to be of the view that there is a D&I budget, that there is a D&I strategy at all, and that it is reasonably advanced in their organisation.

Although as a strategic approach, employers say they are struggling when it comes to D&I, in terms of practical measures, many already have quite a number of initiatives in place, but the survey results suggest that these are not being promoted effectively, or captured in their Origin Green plans under their social sustainability targets.

**82%**  
*of global HR leaders believe that the 'war for talent' will be a key business issue over the next 10 years.*

**86%**  
*of millennials in Ireland research the culture of an organisation.*

**72%**  
*of women in the workforce say diversity is important when evaluating job offers.*

**11**  
*Female CEOs in the Irish Times Top 1000 companies.*

## 2. Context *continued*

Business leaders are more aware than employees of many of the initiatives and approaches the firm undertakes. Employers think that working from home is more prevalent than employees do, for instance. There is a 20% gap between the employee and employer view on whether progress has been made in attracting, retaining and progressing women to senior management – 86% of business leaders believe this is the case, but only 66% of employees.

Sometimes these differences are a result of perception, demonstrating a business leaders approach that has failed to convey itself to employees. While senior leaders may feel they are tackling an issue, the reality ‘on the ground’ can look very different. In areas where this discrepancy exists, employers need to clearly communicate their D&I strategies to ensure that employees are aware of and value their efforts.

There is a clear call from employees for pragmatic steps to tackle D&I issues. Organisations may be best advised to also look at more modern work practices to ensure they are universally available across role levels and locations. The good news is that this guide aims to point out the steps that employers can take to set targets within their Origin Green plan to rapidly advance their D&I efforts.

**Competition from other sectors**  
*is the biggest challenge when recruiting.*

**81%** of Irish food and drink companies surveyed said recruitment of staff was a risk to growth and development in their business.\*

Just **35%** claim that **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion** is a major priority within their business.\*

\* Bord Bia Readiness Radar 2021



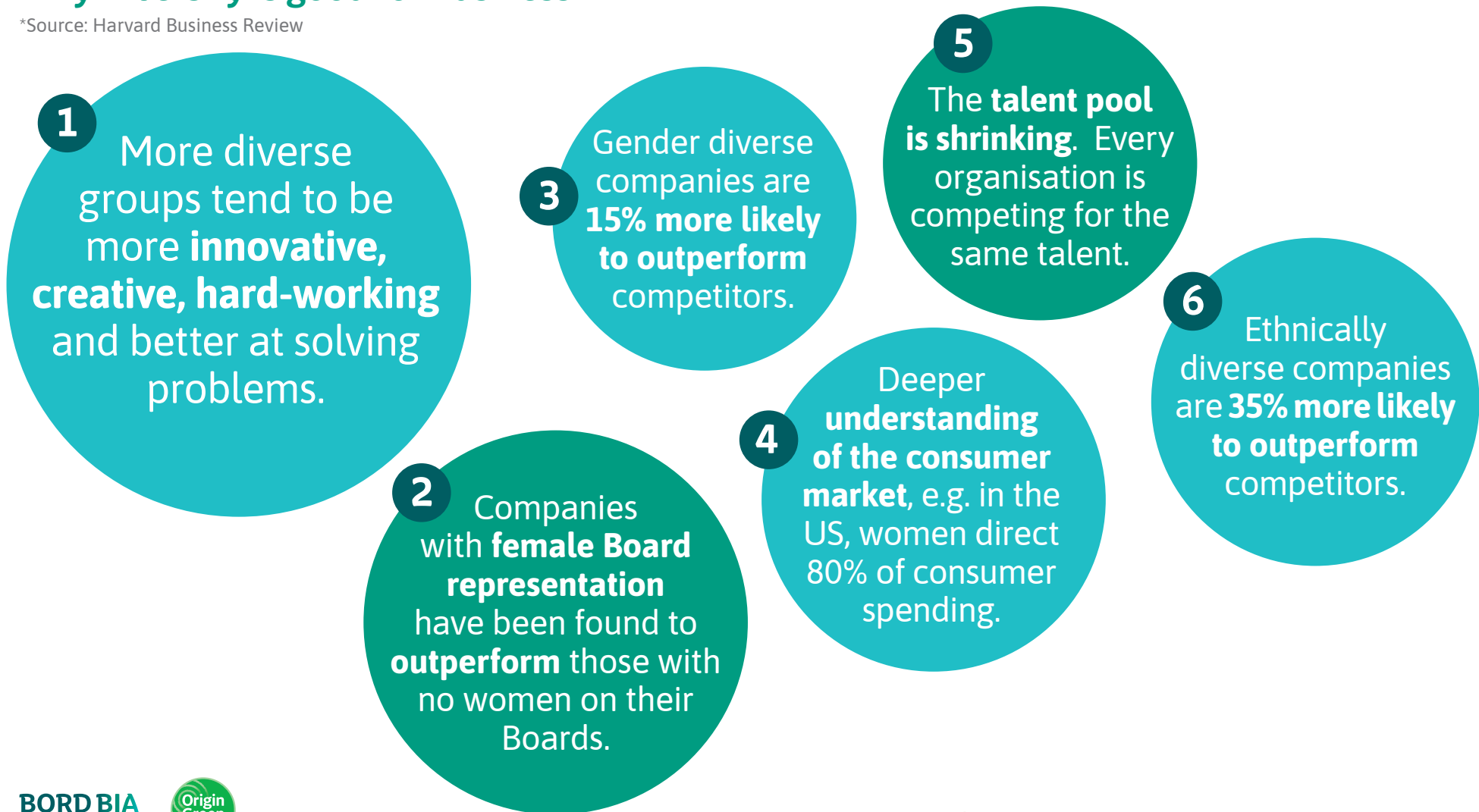
# 3. The Business Case for Diversity & Inclusion

Diversity & Inclusion delivers competitive advantage.

# 3. The Business case for Diversity & Inclusion

## Why Diversity is good for Business\*

\*Source: Harvard Business Review





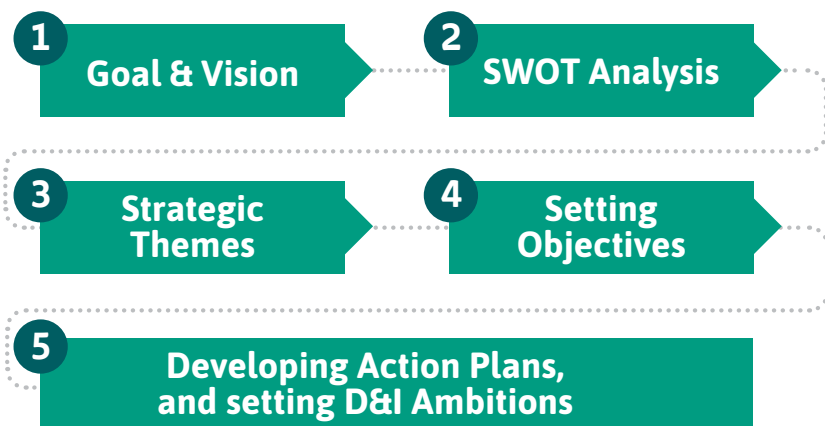
# 4. Developing your Diversity & Inclusion Strategy

Articulate your plan and identify the types of D&I ambitions your company can set.

# 4. Developing your Diversity & Inclusion Strategy

A Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Strategy will help you articulate a plan and identify the types of D&I ambitions your company can set and include in your Origin Green sustainability plan. The purpose of a D&I Strategy document is to explain the rationale or reasons why your company should invest in D&I and to provide more explicit instructions on how you are going to integrate this strategy into your business and how you can monitor your progress through the Origin Green plan.

Like any planning exercise, you should look at where you are now, where you are going and how you will get there. There are many ways to approach building a D&I strategy, and we have focused our guidance on a **5 Step Process**:



## Strategies should meet several criteria. Ideally, they should:

- **Give overall direction:** A strategy, such as developing experiences and skills or increasing resources and opportunities, should identify the overall method without dictating a particular narrow approach. A general D&I strategy will go beyond factors such as gender, race etc. and instead will focus on a broader inclusion approach to benefit all employees.
- **Fit resources and opportunities:** A good strategy takes advantage of current resources and assets, such as people’s willingness to provide support and become involved. It also embraces new opportunities such as an emerging interest in Diversity and Inclusion, employee demands for better resources, the need to attract and retain talent, the need to respond to regulatory (for example [the gender pay gap](#)) or shareholder expectations.
- **Minimise resistance and barriers:** When initiatives set out to accomplish important things, resistance (even opposition) is inevitable. Good strategies attract allies and deter opponents.
- **Reach those affected:** To address the issue or problem, strategies must connect the intervention with those who it should benefit. For example, if the goal is to increase the gender representation of women at senior levels, do the strategies (training, succession planning etc.) reach women in the workforce, and their leaders?
- **Advance the vision:** Taken together, strategies need to make a difference to the required goal. Therefore, it’s important to ensure that the themes and objectives always align back to the goal and vision.

# 5. Steps in Developing your D&I Strategy

Key steps as you embark on your D&I journey

# 5. Steps in Developing your D&I Strategy

## Setting your Goal & Vision Statements

Goal and Vision Statements help you focus on the change you want to create, lets others know what your D&I strategy plan includes and helps bond your employees together in a common purpose.

### VISION STATEMENTS

A Vision outlines the ideal state to which you aspire. Visions are often lofty, describing what is the possible outcome once the plan has been delivered.

They are usually statements that are just out of reach, providing motivation to the stakeholders to think and behave in bold new ways. They are based in the future.

### GOAL STATEMENTS

Your goal statement should clearly communicate what you want to achieve. It should encapsulate the why and how of your strategy. It should also be concise, clear, and useful. Goal statements are written in the present tense.

Goals, like vision statements, look at the big picture however, they are more concrete, and action orientated.

### EXAMPLES OF GOAL & VISION STATEMENTS:



Diversity and inclusion is an inherent part of our culture and drive Sodexo's growth. With D&I as a competitive advantage Sodexo is an employer and business partner of choice, enriching the quality of daily lives or our employees, customers, clients, communities, and stakeholders globally.



Microsoft's global diversity and inclusion mission is to be the world's #1 provider of innovative technology solutions that help realise the full potential of its diverse customers and partners around the world.



To maximise the global power of diversity and inclusion to drive superior business results and sustainable competitive advantage.



Leaders from Yale SOM are comfortable with difference, believe in the value of diverse perspectives and aspire to lead organizations and communities across boundaries.



# 5. Steps in Developing your D&I Strategy continued

## Conducting a SWOT analysis

You may also want to conduct a SWOT analysis to establish what are your company’s Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats are in the context of addressing progress on D&I.

Questions to Consider	
<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What advantages do we have?</li> <li>What valuable assets and resources do we have?</li> <li>What do colleagues/trainees identify as our strengths?</li> <li>What are our capabilities?</li> <li>What resources, assets, people are in place?</li> </ul>	<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What could we do better?</li> <li>What do we need to improve? Where are we vulnerable?</li> <li>What are the disadvantages? What are gaps in capabilities?</li> <li>What are the timescales, deadlines, and pressures?</li> <li>What institution/logistical barriers are in place?</li> </ul>
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What opportunities do we know about, but have not addressed?</li> <li>Are there emerging trends on which we can capitalise?</li> <li>What resources are available that may be useful?</li> <li>Are there potential partnerships, or agencies that could help?</li> </ul>	<p><b>THREATS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What internal/external roadblocks exist that block our progress?</li> <li>Are economic conditions affecting our ability to accomplish this task?</li> <li>Are there any insurmountable weaknesses?</li> </ul>



# 5. Steps in Developing your D&I Strategy continued

## Conducting a SWOT analysis continued

### Example of a Diversity & Inclusion SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<p><i>Hiring plan attracts a diverse population</i></p> <p><i>Operate in a good catchment area for skills</i></p> <p><i>On a growth trajectory so opportunities for career progression</i></p> <p><i>Have a Board member who is a diversity champion</i></p>	<p><i>Lack of recruitment or promotion of ethnic minorities/women</i></p> <p><i>Retention of women in senior roles</i></p> <p><i>Employee dissatisfaction with current policies, processes, or experiences</i></p> <p><i>No clear policy to communicate</i></p>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<p><i>Create a D&amp;I Board and Policy</i></p> <p><i>D&amp;I Training for Recruiters and Managers</i></p> <p><i>Addressing the diverse needs of customers</i></p> <p><i>Improving engagement scores amongst staff</i></p> <p><i>Enhancing reputation with customers</i></p>	<p><i>Disbelief that there is a need for a more inclusive culture within the organisation</i></p> <p><i>Lack of backing of Diversity Agenda</i></p> <p><i>Lack of budget</i></p> <p><i>Limited Resources to work on D&amp;I</i></p> <p><i>Regulatory sanctions</i></p>

# 5. Steps in Developing your D&I Strategy continued

## Identifying Strategy Themes

### DECIDING STRATEGIC THEMES TO PRIORITISE

Once you have a clear understanding of your Vision and Goal, you have a general outline of your strategic direction – the next step is to decide what themes you would like to focus on.

Ideally you should focus on just 2/3 themes at a time and **select those that you feel will help change the dial relevant to your current circumstances and where you want to be.**

To help you make this decision it would be helpful to: -

- **Develop a baseline of your current numbers and employee demographics – this gives you a starting point but also helps to identify issues**
- **Have some research from respected sources – this gives ideas, current trends, and can also be useful in presenting your business case for resources**
- **Think about how you would integrate the plan into other people initiatives, culture change or values programmes already in place or underway – this helps ground your strategy**

### What are the typical D&I strategic themes

The key areas that organisations dial up/down depending on as is, to be, and aligned to culture.



- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raising Awareness</li> <li>• Unconscious Bias</li> <li>• Talent Pipeline (recruitment, promotion)</li> <li>• Organisation Targets</li> <li>• Engaging Men</li> <li>• Customer Integration</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agile Workplace</li> <li>• Minding the Gap</li> <li>• Network Groups (ERG's)</li> <li>• Leadership Development</li> <li>• Boarding Skills Training</li> <li>• Succession Planning</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

# 5. Steps in Developing your D&I Strategy continued

## Setting Objectives

Objectives refer to specific measurable results for the achievement of your goals and include outcomes and deadlines. Objectives usually link to specific strategic themes and can be directed towards employees and other stakeholders.

**EXAMPLE:** An **employee-related objective** could be to recruit and hire workers from a diverse talent pool; a **customer-related objective** could be to assess your customers' demographic information and train your teams to develop communication skills specific to your customers' needs.

A **community-related objective** could be to contribute volunteer hours and funds to a local non-profit organisation that serves a diverse segment of the population.



## LONG TERM OBJECTIVES

Long term objectives are those that you plan for the future and link directly to the strategic themes you want to focus. The objectives should outline what you plan to achieve rather than how you are going to achieve it.

**EXAMPLE:** If one of your strategic themes is around **Talent Pipeline**, you might have an objective to have 50% female representation at senior levels by 2025.

The objectives must be realistic and achievable if they are to be accepted by everyone.

## SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES

Short term goals are stepping-stones which will help the achievement of the long-term objectives and link to your agreed strategic themes.

They are usually measured in shorter time periods and should be SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time specific.

S M A R T



Step 5

# 5. Steps in Developing your D&I Strategy continued

## Developing Action Plans & Setting D&I Targets for your Origin Green Plan

### ACTION PLANS

Action plans are how you are going to achieve your Short-Term Goals/Targets and they should identify who is going to help achieve them e.g. D&I Board, HR Policy Team, Leadership Team, Supervisors, Hiring Managers, Staff Teams etc.

For example:

<b>Strategic Theme</b>	<i>Develop our Talent Pipeline to achieve better gender representation</i>
<b>Long Term Objective</b>	<i>Achieve 50:50 at senior manager level by 2025</i>
<b>Short Term Objective</b>	<i>Achieve 50:50 in our applicant pool and short list slate by end 2022</i>
<b>Action Plan Item</b>	<i>HR to update existing recruitment policy and process by December</i>

50:50 

Summary

### Execution & Measurement

Finally, every strategic plan should include an outline as to a) how you plan to measure progress and b) the approach you intend to take for implementation.

In the case of Execution, your D&I plan should have a **clear focus on accountability, governance, resources, project management and issue resolution.**

In the case of Measurement consider the key performance indicators (KPI's) that you should track and include these as targets in your Origin Green plan. These can include quantitative e.g. employee numbers, demographics, staff uptake on key initiatives and ultimately can include business performance numbers. Measures can also be qualitative and can include employee engagement survey results, social media ratings and other discussion updates. Please see some more examples below. Both should contribute to ongoing review and change so that you D&I strategy can continue to evolve and deliver value and change.

## 6. Sample Key Performance Indicators

<p><b>Communicating Diversity Imperative:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Company data &amp; metrics</li> <li>• M:F on Board, Mgmt Team, Senior Mgmt, by Business Area, by Function</li> <li>• Continuous communication via internal channels and on company website</li> </ul>	<p><b>Hiring Practices:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M:F make-up of candidate short-lists</li> <li>• Hiring targets specific to certain role types</li> <li>• % of hiring managers trained e.g. 'Licence to Hire'</li> <li>• % of Interview panels with M:F balance</li> </ul>	<p><b>Talent Development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of mentors assigned to mentees</li> <li>• Number of coaching relationships</li> <li>• Talent &amp; succession metrics</li> <li>• Development Programmes M:F ratios</li> <li>• Number of leaders attending relevant training</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pay Equality:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pay Practices e.g. M:F pay parity difference by level/by role type</li> </ul>	<p><b>Raising Awareness &amp; Understanding:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of company offices/ locations getting involved in global events such as International Women's Day</li> <li>• Number of employees attending training events such as unconscious bias training</li> </ul>	<p><b>Flexible Work Practices:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of employees returning from maternity leave/career break/carers leave &amp; support provided</li> <li>• % of employees using Parental Leave, Part-time hours</li> <li>• % of employees working remotely</li> </ul>

# 7. Further Support and Information

Resources and guidance to help start your D&I journey

# 7. Further Support and Information

## The 30% Club Diversity & Inclusion Roadmap

As you build out your plan you can start to roadmap where you are at on your journey and where you want to be. If you're focusing on a very ambitious plan or are maturing your existing plan you might want to use the full roadmap. If you're just starting off and want to build gradually, or have a specific need, to address, then you might want to focus on a particular theme, maybe Resourcing or Retention, and the roadmap will give you ideas on where to start

and where to progress. The 30% Club Roadmap can also help you benchmark against other companies on a similar journey.

You might also want to start your plan focusing on a specific diversity aspect - most companies start with a gender lens, particularly for building diversity in their employment pool. Building your plan out as you progress on Inclusion will then help to include other D&I considerations.

	STARTING	FUNDAMENTALS	EMBEDDING	MATURING
<b>Strategy</b>	Build the Business Case Agree the approach	Build an outline D&I plan Start with quick wins	Integrate into Business Strategy and all aspects of People Management	Extend to Customer Strategy & Supply Chain Integration
<b>Attract</b>	Establishing 'as is' - what our process and results look like currently	Recruitment & Selection standards including remuneration	Returns Programme Internal Recruitment & Job Rotation programmes	Executive & Board Resourcing Code Senior Succession Planning
<b>Retain</b>	Establishing 'as is' - what are our current policies and where are the gaps	Building Block policies for Agile Working & Family Leave arrangements	Advanced Family Leave Minority Group supports Wellbeing initiatives	Senior Team Programmes Inclusive Leadership Training
<b>Develop</b>	Establishing 'as is' - describing our current focus on talent development	Mentoring Programmes	Coaching Programmes Building Career Programmes	Sponsorship Programmes Executive Development Board Ready Initiatives
<b>Engage</b>	Get support from the most senior leader Establish plan owners and ambassadors	Internal Diversity Statement Communications programme	Keep-in-Touch programmes Employee Resource Groups Unconscious Bias Training Senior Role Models	External Facing Ambassadors ERG self direction & cross-group collaboration
<b>Measure</b>	Establish a baseline	Build Metrics for analysis Required reporting e.g. gender pay gap reporting	Set internal targets for progress Engagement Surveys	Public Targets & Reporting Balanced Scorecard Accountability



## 7. Further Support and Information

### AgDif

The Agri-Food Diversity & Inclusion Forum (AgDif) is a collaborative initiative with industry, led by Bord Bia and Aon in partnership with The 30% Club. AgDif was established with the clear purpose to advance the diversity & inclusion agenda in the Irish Food and Drink sector, with an initial focus on gender diversity. We want to ensure that Food & Drink is the industry of choice in Ireland for the brightest and best talent. By building a reputation as a progression and inclusion industry it will appeal to as wide a talent pool as possible

To create awareness and provide support to the industry as it advances its D&I agenda AgDif produces a series of webinars, case studies and toolkit to provide inspiration and practical examples and learnings from companies in the food and drink industry.

#### For further information

<https://www.bordbia.ie/about/about-bord-bia/ag-dif/>

#### Contact the AgDif Taskforce:

Mary Morrissey or Michelle Walshe  
[agdif@bordbia.ie](mailto:agdif@bordbia.ie)

<https://www.bordbia.ie/about/about-bord-bia/ag-dif/>

### The 30% Club

#### For Further Information:

<https://30percentclub.org/about/chapters/ireland>

#### Contact the 30% Club:

Gillian Harford, Country Executive:  
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