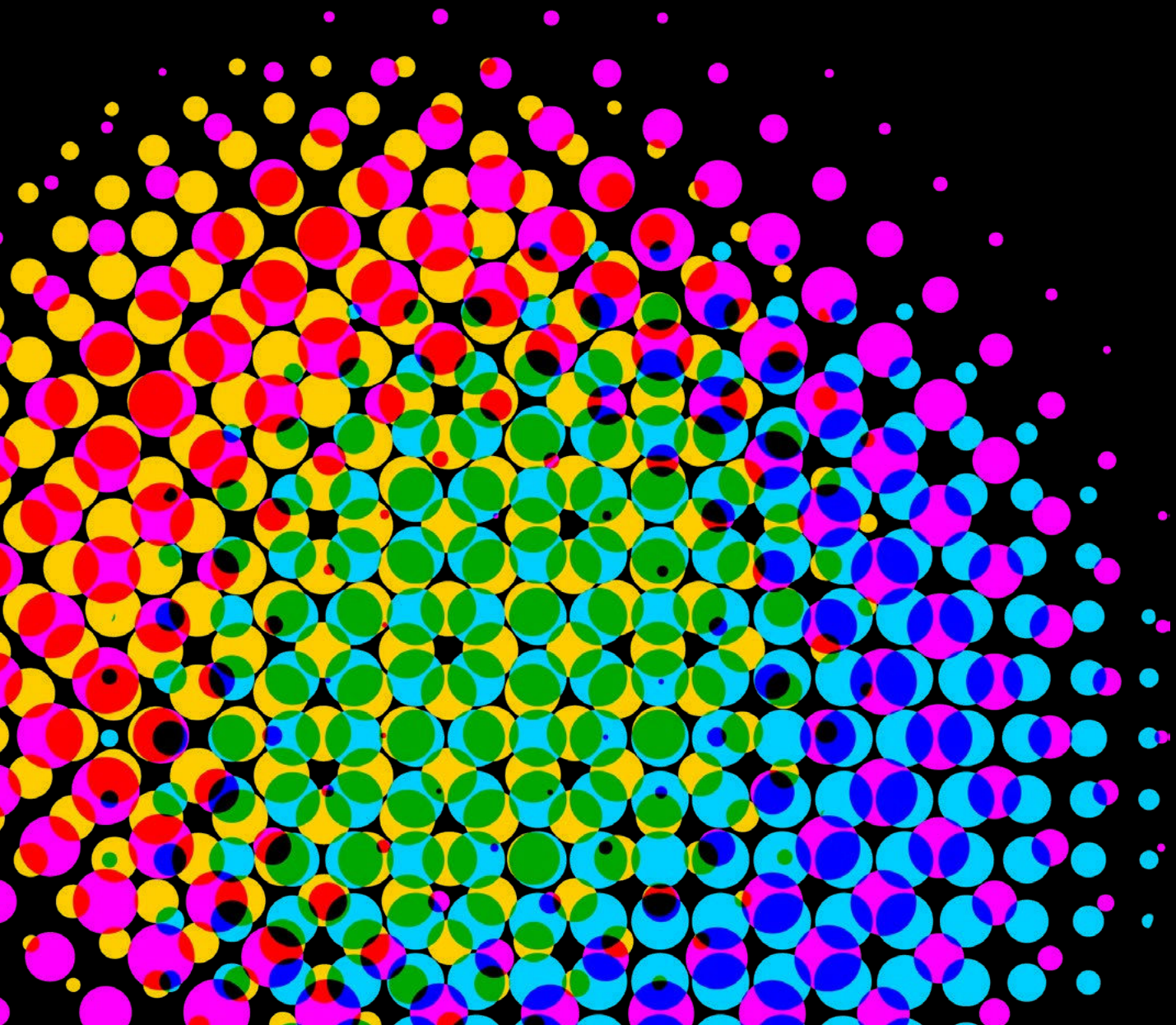


# DEI Futures Paper

## SUMMARY



This document aims to provide a summary of the AHRI Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Futures Paper. The paper was first published in October 2023 with the stated purpose of supporting AHRI members, DEI specialists and HR professionals to effectively navigate Australia's organisational climate from a DEI perspective.

## Objectives of the Futures Paper

**Define** the role of DEI in the current context, including emerging needs

**Identify** critical elements that drive DEI impact, including the AHRI D&I Maturity Model

**Explore** systemic enablers in building DEI skills and inclusive workplaces

## Key Topics

### 1 DEI, Identity and Belonging

- **Identity in Australia:** Recognises the diverse and complex identities within Australia, emphasising the importance of understanding and acknowledging these identities to foster a foundation for DEI practices.
- **Complexity of Identity:** Highlights the plurality of complex identities and the need for HR professionals to consider intersectionality, perceptions, and experiences to inform ethical and legal DEI practices.
- **Identity and Belonging:** Discusses the impact of inclusion on the sense of belonging in workplace cultures, and the role of HR in balancing inclusion and unity while recognising unique employee contributions.

## 2 The Role of DEI in the Current Context

- **Social Movements and Collective Actions:** Recognises the influence of global and local movements on DEI practices in Australian workplaces. Highlights the need for HR professionals to be knowledgeable about these movements to provide strategic advice and support to their organisations.
- **DEI Awareness, Literacy and Capability:** Emphasises DEI as a core capability for HR professionals. It discusses the evolving nature of DEI practice and the importance of foundational knowledge and ongoing upskilling in areas such as cultural and psychological safety, data literacy, and intersectionality.
- **Emerging Needs of Organisations:** Addresses the increased expectations from various stakeholders for organisations to demonstrate leadership and accountability in DEI practice. It underscores the role of HR in driving and sustaining successful business outcomes through effective DEI programs and initiatives.

## 3 Critical Elements that Drive Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Impact

- **AHRI D&I Maturity Model:** The model is designed to support HR professionals in engaging leadership for DEI support and provides a reference for enhancing diversity management. It outlines three levels of DEI maturity: compliance, changing mindsets and behaviours, and DEI ingrained in business culture.
- **Sustainable DEI Approach:** Sustainable DEI impact requires a data-informed, future-focused approach. AHRI recommends a process involving defining, diagnosing, designing, implementing, and evaluating DEI strategies to develop or assess current approaches.
- **Measuring DEI Impact:** It's crucial to measure DEI's support for business strategy and key people metrics. This includes establishing baselines, considering stakeholder metrics, and creating a robust governance model for regular reporting and accountability.

## 4 Systemic Enablers to Build Diverse, Equitable and Inclusive Workplaces

- **Inclusive Design:** Emphasises the importance of inclusive design in HR systems, processes, policies, and practices to achieve better DEI outcomes. It involves considering the diverse needs and capabilities of individuals at the start of the design process.
- **Stakeholder Responsibilities:** Outlines the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders, including senior leaders, people leaders, HR and DEI professionals, and external stakeholders, in driving DEI.
- **Navigating Polarisation:** Discusses the challenges of managing diverse perspectives and polarisation in the workplace. It highlights the need for creating cultures where respectful curiosity and healthy disagreement are facilitated.
- **Facilitating Conversations:** Provides guidance on enabling respectful and healthy conversations in the workplace. It suggests actions for organisations to create inclusive, respectful, and safe environments that encourage sharing and listening.

# Reflection Questions

Reflecting on the DEI landscape in Australia, DEI and HR practitioners could consider the following questions:

## IDENTITY AND BELONGING

- *How well do we balance inclusion and unity, while acknowledging distinctness and the unique contributions of all your employees?*
- *How well do we measure belonging and what is the impact on employee experience and performance?*

## AWARENESS, INTENT AND CAPABILITY

- *How would we assess our organisation's DEI awareness, engagement, capability and accountability?*
- *How would we assess our leaders' intent, strategic commitment, demonstrated capability and accountability?*

## AHRI D&I MATURITY MODEL

- *How well have we defined, diagnosed, designed, implemented and evaluated our current approach to DEI?*

## RESPONDING TO SOCIETAL ISSUES

- *How well are we responding to current DEI related situations?*
- *How well are we meeting the DEI expectations of our employees, investors, customers/clients and the communities we operate in?*

## MEASURING IMPACT

- *How comprehensive, systemic and data informed is our current DEI approach and are we measuring impact?*
- *How well does our organisation demonstrate comprehensive and regular reporting and transparent accountability?*

We encourage you to read the AHRI Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Futures Paper in full to explore these topics in their original form. The Futures Paper includes definitions and references linked to the above content.