Voluntary Candidate Diversity Dimensions Questionnaire Document

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Our commitment to IDEA

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) is a key priority of Co-operators group of companies ("Co-operators") to fulfill our purpose of supporting financial security for Canadians and our communities, and our vision to be a catalyst for a resilient and sustainable society. Inclusion is one of our core values, and the refreshed IDEA Strategy 2024-2026 describes how we will move forward to proactively embed IDEA into everything we do.

As a Canadian company, we understand that our communities are diverse, and we believe that having employees who reflect the diversity of our communities makes us stronger.

IDEA strategy outline: Talent Aquisition

IDEA goals and actions for Talent Acquisition are embedded within our IDEA strategy. Specifically, the strategic goal for our employees is to **increase representation of under-represented groups** and create equitable, accessible, and inclusive practices and experiences for employees.

Candidates are being asked to voluntarily identify some of their diversity dimensions including disability, gender, preferred language, indigenous identity, caregiver status, race/ethnicity and LGBTQ2S+ identity. The data collected is benchmarked with Statistics Canada, and based on the results, **we make focused efforts to attract candidates in under-represented diversity groups.**

Talent Acquisition action plan

To achieve our strategic goal of **increasing representation of under-represented groups**, Talent Acquisition will partner with the IDEA & Wellbeing team to enhance inclusivity and equitable hiring practices. Table 1 below includes specific actions Talent Acquisition and the IDEA & Wellbeing team aim to implement.

Table 1: Proposed actions to enhance inclusive and equitable hiring practices

Our actions	Completion Timeline	Global Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Benchmarks (GDEIB)	Measures of progress	Impact
Review and enhance recruitment and selection processes to minimize the impact of bias and assess candidates based on skills and qualifications. Establish additional bias checks in the recruitment process.	Year 1	4.8, 4.9	Voluntary candidate diversity dimension data, Employee Engagement pulse data	Improved access to and hiring of diverse talent pools
Add a mandatory behavioural question to standard interview guide related to IDEA, such as "How have you contributed to inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility in your previous workplaces?"	Year 1	4.4, 4.6	100% of interviews have an IDEA-related question	Improve focus on hiring in accordance with Co-operators values
Add to Talent Acquisition intake and onboarding a question about how candidate heard of Co-operators and add IDEA and community partnerships as optional answers	Year 1 to 2	4.2, 11.2	Number of candidates who heard about the position through community partnerships	Ability to connect IDEA partnerships to increased candidate attraction
Establish representation goals for leadership	Year 2 to 3	1.6, 3.3, 5.2	Year 1: Baseline defined Year 2: Representation goal established	Identification of gaps, and improved representation in leadership positions

Our actions	Completion Timeline	Global Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Benchmarks (GDEIB)	Measures of progress	Impact
Talent Acquisition will aim to assemble a diverse slate of candidates for all open positions	Year 1	4.12	Mandatory at all levels of positions - internal and external Measurable with voluntary candidate diversity dimension data	More diverse pool of candidates 50% of candidates from equity-deserving groups
Hold recruitment agencies accountable to provide a diverse slate of candidates for all positions	Year 1	4.12	Mandatory at all levels of positions - internal and external Measurable with voluntary candidate diversity dimension data	More diverse pool of candidates 50% of candidates from equity-deserving groups

Talent Acquisition benchmarks

We use the [Global Diversity Equity and Inclusion Benchmarks (GDEIB)](#) to measure the efficacy of our IDEA strategy. One of the main categories in the GDEIB that applies to Talent Aquisition is recruitment, **ensuring that attraction, sourcing, and recruitment is done through the lens of DEI** (diversity, equity, and inclusion).

Without volunteer candidate diversity dimension data, it's not possible to achieve the GDEIB benchmarks listed in table 2.

Table 2: Specific GDEIB benchmarks volunteer candidate diversity dimension data will help us achieve

GDEIB Category	Benchmark
Vision, Strategy and Business Impact	• 1.6 The organization's strategy includes numerical goals resulting in equitable representation of under-represented groups across functions and levels.
Recruitment	• 4.1 The organization's attraction and hiring processes result in measurable, transparent, and equitable recruitment. • 4.2 The organization's reputation for quality DEI efforts enhances its ability to attract diverse and under-represented employees. • 4.3 When technological solutions are used for recruitment, the organization implements practices to minimize or remove algorithmic bias. • 4.4 The organization conducts regular evaluations of recruiting practices to ensure that candidates from different groups and identities are given equitable opportunities. • 4.5 There are clear measures of success throughout the recruitment process, such as the percentage of diverse and under-represented applicants at each stage. • 4.6 The organization effectively recruits from representative labour markets. • 4.11 The organization's advertisements and/or diversity networks reach broad pools of diverse talent.
Assessment, Measurement and Research	• 8.2 The organization regularly reports and reviews progress against benchmarks and has consistently demonstrated significant improvements in meeting DEI goals over several years. • 8.6 Integrated, multiple approaches to monitoring and evaluating DEI goals are implemented to track their impact, outcomes, and effectiveness.

Rationale

Historically, under-represented groups in Canada have faced hardship, economic disadvantage, and/or discrimination achieving equal employment opportunities.

Table 3: Evidence of challenges experienced by under-represented groups in Canada

Diversity Dimension	Evidence
Indigenous person	• Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report – Government of Canada, 2022-09-29 • 8 key issues for Indigenous peoples in Canada – Indigenous Corporate Training inc., 2022-12-05 • Socio-economic Gaps on First Nations Reserves - Indigenous Services Canada – Office of the Auditor General of Canada, 2018-04-11
Neurodiverse and person with disabilities	• What is the pay gap between persons with and without disabilities – Statistics Canada, 2023-06-27 • Accessibility findings from the Canadian survey on disability, 2017 – Statistics Canada, 2021-10-27 • Disability Employment Awareness Month: An Under-Utilized Labour Market - Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, 2022-10
Visible minority	• Canada's Anti-Racism Strategy – Government of Canada • Poverty persists among some racialized Canadians from the first generation to the third generation or more – Statistics Canada, 2023-08-23 • Sustaining the Black Lives Matter movement in the workplace – Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, 2021-05
Caregivers	• Differences in the characteristics of caregivers and caregiving arrangements of Canadians, 2018 – Statistics Canada, 2022-01-14
Preferred language	• While English and French are still the main languages spoken in Canada, the country's linguistic diversity continues to grow – Statistics Canada, 2022-08-17 • Multilingualism of Canadian households – Statistics Canada, 2023-06-21
Gender	• Gender Results Framework – Government of Canada • Intersectional Gender Wage Gap in Canada, 2007 to 2022 – Statistics Canada, 2023-09-21 • Representation of women on boards of directors and in officer positions, 2020 – Statistics Canada, 2023-05-29
LGBTQ2S+	• Improving data on 2SLGBTQ+ populations – Statistics Canada, 2023-08-16 • Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan 2022 – Government of Canada • Labour and economic characteristics of lesbian, gay and bisexual people in Canada – Statistics Canada, 2022-10-04 • Diverging perspectives on LGBT Inclusion in the Workplace – Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion, 2015-05-28

Employment equity encourages the establishment of working conditions that are free from barriers, seeks to correct conditions of disadvantage in employment, and promotes the principle that it requires

special measures to accommodate differences for four designated groups in Canada: Indigenous people, people with disabilities, visible minorities, and women.

The Talent Acquisition goal and action plan defined in the IDEA strategy are designed to increase representation of under-represented groups, remove barriers and focus efforts to attract candidates in diversity groups with representation gaps.

- The IDEA strategy for Talent Acquisition applies to under-represented groups, including the diversity dimensions listed in table 3 (reference the *Voluntary Candidate Diversity Dimensions Definitions* for more information).
- The GDEIB benchmarks in the IDEA strategy is designed to achieve and demonstrate current global best practices, beyond what is required or expected.

Data collection

The data collected in *Voluntary Candidate Diversity Dimensions Questionnaire* (the "Questionnaire") is voluntary and anonymous, used solely for the purposes of identifying opportunities in attracting talent that better represents the diversity within Canada. **Voluntary candidate diversity dimension data is not used to influence hiring decisions and is not linked to the candidate at any time within the recruitment process, hiring process, or anytime thereafter.**

The data collected through the Questionnaire is limited to the diversity dimensions listed in table 3 and is benchmarked with Statistics Canada, **enabling us to conduct regular evaluations of recruiting practices aimed towards ensuring that candidates from different groups and identities are given equitable opportunities, and that we are actively identifying and mitigating any biases evident in the recruitment processes.**

- The data submitted within the Questionnaire will not be used in individual candidate hiring decisions nor for any other purpose not articulated herein.
- Candidates provide consent prior to submitting the Questionnaire. A consent statement is presented to candidates in the MS Form prior to entering voluntary candidate diversity dimension data. Should candidates elect to exit the Questionnaire prior to clicking submit, their answers will not be collected.
- Participation in the Questionnaire is completely voluntary. Should candidates elect to participate, they may choose not to respond to any of the questions.
- If candidates have any questions about how their diversity dimension data is used, or what decisions are made from the data, they can contact the IDEA team at idea@cooperators.ca

Restricted Access
- None of the data provided in the Questionnaire will be disclosed or accessible to hiring managers and/or other decision-makers involved in the individual hiring process.
- Access to the data is highly restricted to specific permission groups within HR Operations.

Strict reporting thresholds
- All requests to use and disclose anonymized candidate diversity dimension data for reporting and analysis purposes will be reviewed and approved through a data governance practice.

- Restrict the reporting of any candidate diversity dimensions that would identify an individual by a single attribute or a combination of attributes (including job title, application date, diversity dimension).
- Data will only be presented at an aggregate level when the threshold of eight or more is met in a specific diversity dimension.

Technical solution

- Upon completion of the job application, Human Resources Information System (HRIS) automatically sends an email thanking candidates for applying and asks if they wish to voluntarily complete the Questionnaire via MS Forms.
- A link to this document and the *Voluntary Candidate Diversity Dimensions Definitions* is provided in the automatic email for candidates to reference and make an informed decision on their participation.
- Internal candidates are redirected to complete their employee voluntary self-identification in the HRIS system.
- The Questionnaire inputs are captured anonymously. It is not possible to tie the candidate's voluntary diversity dimension data to the job application and/or the candidate.
- All responses are stored in an MS Form. All data collected through the Questionnaire will be retained and destroyed in conjunction with Co-operators' record retention schedules.

Eligibility requirements

The IDEA strategy is designed for everyone, including those who are not members of an under-represented group.

Collecting voluntary candidate diversity dimension data is an important contribution to employment equity. We're encouraging participation because diversity data helps foster and encourage programs and policies that promote greater equity and inclusion for all diverse groups in Canada.

Information about the IDEA strategy is published on the external website and in the Integrated Annual Report.

Evaluating the program

Measures of progress are embedded within the IDEA strategy.

Voluntary candidate diversity dimension data is one of the inputs needed to achieve our GDEIB benchmarks, IDEA strategic goals and ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the strategy. We're conducting the Questionnaire to see if candidates reflect the communities we serve. We perform regular evaluations of recruiting practices leveraging candidate diversity data to ensure that candidates from different groups and identities are given equitable opportunities.

We have established regular IDEA strategy progress reporting, which includes, but is not limited to, quarterly executive and board reports, semi-annual benchmarking, and the integrated annual report.

Planning and consultation

Our IDEA strategy is governed with representation across the business at the steering, project, and employee levels. The following groups were consulted, and their views have been included in the design of the IDEA strategy:

- Co-operators management Group (CMG)
- Executive IDEA Council
- Strategy development working group (including key members from Talent Acquisition and Human Resources)
- VP Advisory Group
- Leader Advisory Committee
- Employee Resource Group (ERG) members
- IDEA Influencers
- HR Partners (including labor relations/union)
- HR Management and Leadership Teams
- Employees (via an IDEA strategy feedback survey)
- External GDEIB consultant

Actions and implementation tactics are defined within the IDEA strategy, including the IDEA Learning Pathway.

- The IDEA Learning Pathway is designed to educate all to achieve the level of competence needed to create a diverse, equitable and inclusive organization.
- The learning objectives for each level of the IDEA Learning Pathway address specific GDEIB benchmarks, moving us towards our goal of becoming a best practice organization.

An integrated (internal and external) change and communications plan is developed, monitored, and adjusted to support the implementation of the IDEA strategy and address concerns. The plan is designed to achieve GDEIB benchmarks for DEI Communications best practice, which includes:

- 9.1 The organization is known for its high-quality DEI initiatives that are regularly communicated internally and externally enhancing the organization's reputation.
- 9.2 DEI content is easily and quickly located on the organization's websites. Information is thorough, regularly updated, and fully accessible.

Specific to the *Voluntary Candidate Diversity Dimensions Questionnaire*, public resources/web content is available articulating the following:

- Purpose of the Questionnaire, how the data is used, how privacy is protected, action taken to support equitable recruiting practices and transparent demographic reporting (when it becomes available).

References

1. Co-operators purpose, vision, values
2. IDEA Strategy 2024-2026
3. Global Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Benchmarks

4. Statistics Canada
5. Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion
6. Employment Equity Act
7. Voluntary Candidate Diversity Dimensions Definitions
8. Integrated Annual Report