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# Diversity, equity and inclusion in the technology industry

Becoming an internationally attractive workplace

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# Welcome to a journey towards inclusivity

This guide is targeted to technology companies who are getting started or want to advance their current efforts in relation to diversity, equity and inclusion.

The aim of this guide is to provide organizations with insights on how to leverage existing resources and further develop them in order to attract and retain international talent.

The advice in this booklet will help organizations create inclusive environments that feel safe and respectful for all people regardless of their background.



This booklet is divided into 5 major sections.  
We start with

*01/ Introduction and*

*02/ Self-evaluation tool*

After that, we will introduce you to three key areas to develop DEI in an organization to attract and retain international talent:

*03/ Inclusive leadership*

*04/ Inclusive recruitment*

*05/ Inclusive culture*

For each of the three key areas there are two case examples of technology companies sharing what actions they have taken to develop in these areas.

The maturity level with regards to DEI of these organizations differ from one another but the practices shared by them can serve as inspiration for other organizations looking to advance on their efforts to become more attractive to international talent through inclusion.

<b>01 Introduction</b>	<b>06</b>
Importance of the topic for organizations that strive to be international and key terminology	
<b>02 Sel-evaluation Tool</b>	<b>08</b>
Get an understanding of the current state of diversity, equity and inclusion in your organization.	
<b>03 Inclusive Leadership</b>	<b>14</b>
Introduction the topic	14
Case study: Qvik - Inclusive leaders enable global-minded solutions	16
Case study: Digia - Equipping leaders to advance inclusion	18
<b>04 Inclusive Recruitment</b>	<b>20</b>
Introduction the topic	20
Case study: Wärtsilä - Inclusive recruitment processes as a way to diversity	22
Case study: Metallityö Vainio - Inclusive practices as a way to attract talent	24
<b>05 Inclusive Culture</b>	<b>26</b>
Introduction the topic	26
Case study: Outokummun Metalli - Finding specialists beyond the borders	28
Case study: KONE - Embedding inclusion into organizational strategy and culture	30



**DEI is key for organizations striving to be internationally attractive**

**Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI)** are central to advancing employee wellbeing and business success.

**Diversity** refers to the differences between individuals who work in an organization. **Equity** refers to giving everyone access to equal opportunity by providing the tools they need to succeed, and **inclusion** means creating an environment in which all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully.

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### **The benefits of diversity and inclusion are significant:**

Having an inclusive environment in the organization benefits both, individuals and organizations themselves by:

- Decreasing risks in product development and increasing innovation
- Better decision making and faster problem solving
- Improved organizational reputation
- Organizational growth through international reach
- Attracting and retaining the best possible talent

Inclusion requires active efforts from organizations and their team members. This means that the change has to be both structural (e.g. driven by the organization itself through recruitment practices, strategy, code of conduct, etc.) and behavioural (e.g. the actions adopted by individuals on a personal level such as increasing their knowledge around DEI, how to intervene in inappropriate behaviour situations, using inclusive language, etc.).





02 SELF-EVALUATION TOOL

**Understand your  
organization's  
current state of DEI**



This self-evaluation guide will help you to understand your organization's current state of diversity, equity and inclusion and to prioritise actions. The self-evaluation tool is designed to support technology industry organizations in attracting, hiring and retaining international talent

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**T**he self-evaluation is categorized under three themes: **Leadership, Recruitment** and **Culture & Practices**. These will allow you to reflect on your current state and plan what actions to take next.

Take a look at the tables in the next pages. Mark the option that best describes your organization - either by hand on into the interactive document.

# Leadership

	BEGINNER	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
<b>Confirming organizational commitment</b>	Discussions about diversity, equity and inclusion and their importance are only just starting in the organization.	Some people have identified the need for discussing and advancing diversity, equity and inclusion, but discussions are limited to certain people or certain teams, eg. the HR, legal or recruitment team.	There is leadership team buy-in for advancing the diversity and inclusion agenda, and the importance of it is regularly communicated to employees. There is documentation in place to demonstrate the commitment.
<b>Diversifying leadership team &amp; board</b>	The importance of having diversity in the leadership team and board has been recognised, but concrete actions have not yet been taken to improve diversity.	Some actions have been taken to increase diversity in leadership, but these are limited to a certain type of diversity category (eg. gender).	Wider diversity and inclusion aspects have been taken into account in the composition of both the leadership team and the board.
<b>Building inclusive leadership skills</b>	Inclusive leadership is still a new topic to leaders and there has been no formal discussions or training on the topic.	Some leaders have taken part in basic introduction to diversity and inclusion -training to build their awareness about the topic on a general level. The senior leadership team has been offered their own training session.	Inclusive leadership practices are integrated into ongoing leadership development and training is offered on a regular basis to both new and existing leaders. All managers have received the support needed to build inclusion and lead diverse teams.

# Recruitment

	BEGINNER	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
<b>Developing inclusive recruitment processes</b>	It has been identified that there may be obstacles in the recruitment process which prevent the organization from hiring diverse teams (eg. unconscious biases or no prior experience hiring international talent), however actions to improve the situation have not been identified.	Some actions have been taken to develop the recruitment process to ensure that e.g. favoritism or unconscious bias don't affect hiring decisions by, for example, ensuring there is a clear job description and recruitment process for every role.	The recruitment process is designed from start to end with the goal of attracting diverse talent and mitigating the effect of known obstacles such as unconscious biases. There are various actions taken to develop the recruitment process (such as having a structured interview process and scorecards). Data is collected to measure candidate diversity and experiences.
<b>Advertising jobs inclusively</b>	It has been identified that there is not enough diversity in the candidate pipeline through inbound applications. It has been recognized that proactive efforts are needed to change this but actions have not been identified yet.	Discussion has started about the language of recruitment posts. Some recruitment posts have been edited to ensure more inclusive language and there are some ideas for how to build a more diverse candidate pipeline.	There are clear processes in place and all recruitment materials are checked for inclusivity on an ongoing basis. Proactive efforts are made to ensure job ads and advertising channels reach new audiences in order to build a diverse candidate pipeline for each role.
<b>Training HR colleagues and recruiters</b>	Some people involved in recruitment processes have either participated in general diversity and inclusion training or are acquainted with the topic.	Most people who are involved in recruitment processes have participated in trainings specifically focused on diversity and inclusion in recruitment.	All people involved in recruitment processes have completed relevant diversity and inclusion trainings. Learning opportunities are offered on a continuous basis.



## Culture & practices

	BEGINNER	INTERMEDIATE	ADVANCED
<b>Improving awareness and internal resources</b>	Some individuals speak about diversity and inclusion but there has not yet been any company-wide sessions or forums for discussion.	Some diversity and inclusion trainings have been offered to all employees, managers and leadership.	There are internal resources available about various diversity and inclusion topics on an ongoing basis. All employees have been trained on topics relevant for their work. Diversity and inclusion are integrated into onboarding processes.
<b>Building inclusion and psychological safety in teams</b>	There is recognition of the different needs people have in the workplace, and it has been identified that inclusion and psychological safety are key topics to develop for successful teams.	There are some actions taken towards inclusion and some time dedicated to discuss these topics in teams. Regular employee surveys gather some feedback on inclusion experiences.	There is effective, open, ongoing dialogue in the workplace about experiences of inclusion, and what could be improved. People feel able to suggest changes and give honest feedback. Everyone plays an active role in advancing inclusion through their own actions.
<b>Ensuring international colleagues thrive</b>	International colleagues or those who don't speak the local language are concentrated in certain areas of the organization. Some initial challenges about multilingual and/or multicultural teams have been identified and the first actions have been taken to improve the situation.	Some guidelines have been put in place to clarify expected behaviour and ways of working in a multicultural/international team. There is an overall culture of respecting others and appreciating diversity. English is one of the organizational languages.	Multiculturalism has become a norm in the workplace. There are clear and common processes and ways of working with international colleagues. In multilingual workplaces, there are clear processes for ensuring inclusion of colleagues speaking different languages. There is a culture where everyone feels respected and safe to be their true-self at work.

## Reflection questions

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1. Which level do you think best describes your organization's current state of diversity, equity and inclusion: beginner, intermediate or advanced?
2. Which of the three topics (inclusive leadership, inclusive recruitment and inclusive organizational culture) are you currently most advanced in?
3. What do you think should be the next priorities for your organization's DEI work?



A woman's face is shown in a circular frame, held by a hand. The background features a person's profile in a dark, moody setting with warm lighting. The overall aesthetic is professional and focused on human connection.

**03: INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP**

**Leaders are the key  
facilitators of inclusive  
environments**



What leaders say and do has a great impact on the behaviors and attitudes of the team members. Leading in an inclusive way promotes safer workplaces and environments where people can bring up their ideas and concerns.

**I**nclusive leadership is the skill of leading diverse teams in an effective way. Inclusive leaders can manage groups of diverse people in an unbiased and empathetic way, and actively seek out different perspectives and ensure that everyone is treated fairly and respectfully. Inclusive leadership has become and continues to gain importance as a critical way in helping organizations adapt to growing diversity among employees, customers, markets, ideas and talent. According to [HBR \(2020\)](#), "What leaders say and do makes up to a 70% difference as to whether an individual reports feeling included".

There are several things that leaders can do in order to become more inclusive and as such, create environments that are safe for individuals and where their creativity can contribute to their personal and professional growth. This in turn can



What leaders say and do makes up to a 70% difference as to whether an individual reports feeling included (HBR 2020)

translate into many benefits such as better well-being of individuals, better team performance and organizational innovation.

Inclusive leadership is a competence that can be constantly cultivated and developed.

**Leaders that strive to be inclusive can focus on aspects such as:**

- Self-awareness on their own biases, prejudices and privileges.
- The ability to talk and continuously learn about different aspects of DEI and talk about its importance in work life
- Ability to show vulnerability, humility and empathy.
- Understanding how to lead different individuals (with different sets of skills, personality types, cultures, generations, etc.)
- Seeking feedback proactively to understand different perspectives and experiences

On the next pages you will meet two technology companies - QVik and Digia and can learn more about their journey towards a more inclusive leadership.



CASE STUDY: QVIK

**Inclusive leaders  
enable global-  
minded solutions**

The importance of practicing diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) is a core priority at Qvik. It's a way to bring people from different backgrounds working together, improve employee wellbeing and create the best possible tech solutions.

Qvik is a Helsinki and Stockholm-based software company that designs digital solutions and currently employs 120 people. 32% of their staff are women and 18 nationalities are represented throughout the team.

At Qvik, DEI goes well beyond gender equality and representation, topics that have been long recognized in the tech industry. They understand that the products they create have an influence on large audiences and groups of people. The importance of having a diverse team is two fold: it strengthens the team's sense of belonging and it helps Qvik reach their strategic goals in building a global organization.

Inclusive leadership helps Qvik build a thriving workplace and consequently serve diverse ranges of customers, markets and ideas. Qvik's CEO **Lari Tuominen** suggests that leaders especially focus on enabling their team members. Leaders should also receive support in taking an active role in advancing inclusion in a diverse team by for example providing a toolset to employees to show what concrete actions can be done inside the organization.

The journey of having a more strategic and holistic approach around DEI continues at Qvik. Data points such as what kind of organization they are and aspire to be are collected during the process to ensure Qvik is on the right track towards the vision

of building a more inclusive organization.

Ten years ago Qvik changed their organizational language to English which translated into a more international team. Currently, with actions including the creation of a DEI roadmap, reviewing internal practices and policies among others, Qvik aims to be more proactive in growing a more diverse and inclusive team.



Qvik's CEO **Lari Tuominen** suggests that leaders especially focus on enabling their team members.



Q1

## CASE STUDY: DIGIA

Q3

Q4

Redesign

Jira  
premi

Rights  
management

Improve  
CSV upload

Map Tre  
due da

Improve  
Trello  
integration

Add  
views

Mobile  
App

Build  
NPS  
survey

Launch  
new  
website

Zendesk  
integration

Azure  
integration

In-app  
notifications

Airtable  
integration

Restructure  
onboarding  
flow

Trello  
integration

Chrome  
integration

SSO/  
SAML

MS Teams  
integration

Project  
tracker

Checklist

Allow  
dependencies

GitHub  
integration

# Equipping leaders to advance inclusion

Digia is a software and service company that helps its customers renew themselves in the networked world. Their offering covers all layers of digitalization: digital services, business systems, integration and API solutions as well as solutions for data management and analytics. Digia's has over 1300 employees representing 14 different nationalities, among whom 30% are women and the team's age ranges between 21-68.

**A**t Digia, leaders have a vital role in advancing inclusion among teams. They are responsible for setting goals and giving feedback to help support every employee's wellbeing and self-development. It is important for leaders to be mindful of the messages they send to the team through daily communication and by leading by example. Leaders can also encourage sustainable change by acknowledging that they are on a journey of continuous development.

Leaders at Digia receiving training and coaching on inclusive leadership is one of the concrete actions that the organization has taken in order to advance diversity, equity and inclusion. Awareness has been raised through open conversations among employees at all levels across the organization. For example, there is an equity team in Digia, where company equity plan targets and actions are discussed regularly, and a diversity group which shares knowledge, provides peer discussion and learning opportunities around DEI topics.

Furthermore, to support leaders and managers to lead diverse teams, Digia has adopted actions such as providing language and culture training. Additionally, Digia has created instructions for leaders on how to intervene and react if inappropriate behavior occurs as one important element to advance inclusive leadership.

To measure the efforts on Digia's journey to

diversity, equity and inclusion, employee equity surveys are conducted to gather employees' feedback and to get a sense on how people actually experience the various initiatives that promote inclusion.

Other metrics such as the number of upward career moves for female employees and the hiring rate of underrepresented groups are recorded in order to keep their progress visible. In addition, Digia tracks the number of blog posts on certain diversity, equity and inclusion topics every year. According to **Liisa Onninen**, HR Business Partner at Digia, these actions are a way to keep momentum in their DEI journey but they constantly reflect on ways to continue moving forward.



Metrics such as the number of upward career moves for female employees and the hiring rate of underrepresented groups are recorded in order to keep their progress visible.





04: INCLUSIVE RECRUITMENT

**An inclusive recruitment process is a core tool to build diverse teams**

Recruiters have the possibility of contributing to building more diverse teams and creating inclusive experiences for candidates throughout the process. Inclusive recruitment processes are a tool to attract the best possible talent.

**A**n inclusive recruitment strategy is one of the most impactful ways of creating a sustainable change in your organization's diversity.

Inclusive recruitment refers to a set of processes, practices and behaviors that ensures that the most suitable professionals can be hired for organizations. Recruiters face many obstacles to make right hiring decisions such as unconscious and conscious biases, stereotypes, favoritism and group thinking, which can affect the way of interacting with others and ultimately, who gets hired for a role.

It requires proactive efforts from both organizations and individuals to ensure inclusive recruitment. Building an inclusive recruitment




Recruiters face many obstacles to make right hiring decisions such as unconscious and conscious biases, stereotypes, favoritism and group thinking

process happens through structural inclusion (transforming the systems and processes to become fair and equitable) and behavioral inclusion (the personal transformation and conscious effort by recruiters, interviewers and decision makers to develop their own actions e.g. by learning about their unconscious biases).

**Inclusive recruitment practices can consist of elements such as:**

- Ensuring clear job requirements and using predetermined screening and evaluation criteria during interviews
- Training people involved in recruitment about the effect of unconscious biases
- Standardized interview questions for every candidate applying for same role
- Using inclusive language in job ads to appeal to wide audiences
- Using anonymous recruitment as part of the recruitment process, e.g. in CV/ application screening where some candidate demographics are hidden such as name and gender





CASE STUDY: WÄRTSILÄ

# Inclusive recruitment processes as a way to diversity

Wärtsilä is an innovative technology company known for being a forerunner in the Marine and Energy markets. Every day, Wärtsilians put their hearts and minds into turning Wärtsilä's purpose of enabling sustainable societies with smart technology into a reality.

**I**n Finland, Wärtsilä employs around 3 700 unique experts, among which they have 60 different nationalities. In 2021, Wärtsilä reached fully equal (100%) average annual salaries between genders.

As a global organization, Wärtsilä's core revolves around DEI and the belief that diverse thought drives best business outcomes. Thus, they are intentional about creating a culture that promotes and appreciates different views. With this in mind, recruitment processes are thought through an inclusive lens from identification, engagement, assessment and onboarding.

According to **Elin Eklöf**, Global Head of Talent Acquisition, to ensure creating a diverse workplace, they must ensure that the talent pipeline, recruitment process and assessment methodologies reflect these same beliefs. The process starts with candidate attraction and ensuring that job ads are inclusive and bias-free. Job ads are in constant iteration and Wärtsilä actively benchmarks bias-free practices. The aim is for job ads to attract potential candidates from a wide range of backgrounds. Other tools such as LinkedIn anonymous functionality, where a recruiter is able to present candidates to a hiring manager without showing their name and picture are in active use. Recruiters at Wärtsilä receive unconscious bias training to identify better ways

of working, and guides on how to advise hiring managers to do the same. Finally, they methodically review interview panels to ensure that they also represent diverse backgrounds.

When asked about the important actions to attract international talent Elin responds: "it is important to create an organizational culture where everyone demonstrates DEI values not just in words, but also action. Typically a clear ambition needs to be stated, and then leaders need to be coached on the matter so they can lead by example". At Wärtsilä it's a priority to celebrate diversity and actively listen to employees to identify development ideas. Elin believes in the importance of also sharing this inclusive culture through everyday behavior.



Tools such as LinkedIn anonymous functionality, where a recruiter is able to present candidates to a hiring manager without showing their name and picture are in active use.





CASE STUDY: METALLITYÖ VAINIO

# Inclusive practices as a way to attract talent

As a growing company  
Metallityö Vainio  
understands the  
importance and need  
to hire international  
talent and even more  
so, to adopt inclusive  
practices to remain an  
attractive employer in  
a time when workers can  
choose where they want  
to work.

**M**etallityö Vainio corporation provides a wide range of high quality services in the field of metalworking. The company is located in the heart of Finland and their services include machine-and-equipment manufacturing industry, building-and-construction industry and processing industry, from individual components operations to complex system and project deliveries.

Throughout the years Metallityö Vainio has established relationships with temporary work agencies that understand their needs and requirements. They help them meet their talent needs and take care of everything from recruitment, work permit documentation and accommodation. Employees come mainly from countries in the European Union which eases the formalities because of the free movement of labor. If these temporary workers perform well, they are hired as full-timers. Another stream to attract international talent, although significantly smaller, is collaboration with educational institutions for apprenticeships.

Even though Finnish is the official organizational language Metallityö Vainio uses five languages (Finnish, English, Polish, Estonian and Russian) in the documentation of the major processes and practices. Moreover, the onboarding process is always done in the person's mother tongue either

by someone in the team or through interpreters. This ensures the onboarding process is inclusive.

According to **Tommi Lähteinen**, Managing Director at Metallityö Vainio the general atmosphere of the management and team is very welcoming towards international talent and they appreciate people's skills and attitude. So far there have not been any significant misunderstandings. They overcome language barriers by communicating in English or Finnish with the aid of a team member who can help interpret important messages.



The onboarding process is always done in the person's mother tongue either by someone in the team or through interpreters.





05: INCLUSIVE CULTURE

**Inclusive culture is a way  
to make your team thrive**

Attracting a diverse team is only the first step. Creating environments where everyone is cherished and can thrive is the way in which individuals and organizations can grow.

**I**nclusive culture refers to a working environment where everyone feels valued, respected and supported. It refers to a culture that ensures that differences are appreciated and that individuals can feel a sense of belonging to their team and organization as a whole.

According to a [study by Nathan and Lee \(2013\)](#) published in Economic Geography, increased cultural diversity is an economic asset, a social benefit and a boost for innovation. Also, according to the article from [Harvard Business Review \(2019\)](#), when people feel like they belong at work, they are more productive, motivated, engaged and 3.5 times more likely to contribute to their fullest potential.




Inclusive culture is not a state of mind, it requires actions throughout the organization

Inclusive culture is not a state of mind, it requires actions throughout the organization, including managers and employees to drive the behaviors and practices that build an inclusive environment.

**Inclusive culture can be developed through practices such as:**

- Providing training for leaders and managers on how to lead diverse teams
- Taking actions to appreciate and celebrate differences
- Evaluating existing processes and practices to ensure equity and that everyone has the grounds to succeed
- Ensuring organizational values are linked to promoting diversity, equity and inclusion
- Prioritizing safe environments where people can raise their concerns and these are addressed
- Having a constructive feedback culture





CASE STUDY: OUTOKUMMUN METALLI

# Finding specialists beyond the borders

Outokummun Metalli Oy is a family-owned company whose values include customer orientation, reliability and reinvention. Their organizational cornerstones have been long-term customer relationships, high quality and efficient operations. In order to live by their values and cornerstones, having the right talent is crucial, as it is for any organization.

**B**ut what happens when the talent is not available in Finland? Although hiring international talent can be a solution, especially for small or middle sized companies, there might be hesitations related to the possible barriers such as the language.

According to **Jarmo Paakkunainen**, Managing Director at Outokummun Metalli, being open to international workforce is a matter of thinking sustainably. Having specialists not found in Finland, such as welders, is a priority and they are ready to look beyond the borders. Their way of doing it is through agencies that outsource specialists coming mainly from Eastern Europe. These agencies take care of all the practicalities related to bringing the workers to Finland. Outokummun Metalli then focuses on providing them with the right working conditions and all the needed information to perform their work. In some cases, these initially temporary workers become a permanent part of the team.

Having non-native Finnish speakers requires adaptations such as translating all the working instructions into English. Although some cultural differences might exist, these haven't been an issue so far. Outokummun Metalli sees these adaptations to the day to day work as minor compared with the advantage of having people with the right skills and high motivation. As an organization that found a solution to the workforce shortage, they

encourage other companies to be open to the idea of international talent. In the future, they hope to continue to be an organization that is open to people from different nationalities across various functions.



Having specialists not found in Finland, such as welders, is a priority and Outokummun metalli is ready to look beyond the borders.



CASE STUDY: KONE

# Embedding inclusion into organizational strategy and culture

KONE is a global leader in the elevator and escalator industry. While their headquarters are in Finland, they have over 60,000 employees operating in more than 60 countries, serving 550,000 customers. The company's mission is to improve the flow of urban life, which requires having a deep understanding of mega trends and working together with customers and partners.

“KONE’s culture is about working together as one KONE team. To really bring that to life, diversity, equity and inclusion are embedded in our culture and values.” says **Minna Ääri**, Global Talent Manager at KONE. Values are at the heart of KONE’s culture; they guide decision-making, behavior and mindset. At the same time, KONE’s culture is based on the belief that when people are valued as their authentic selves, innovation can flourish and work communities can thrive.

An inclusive working culture creates a safe environment for employees from different backgrounds to express their perspectives and ideas. These various viewpoints in turn help KONE better understand their customers and identify products and services that fit their needs. Their inclusive culture also helps attract and retrain people from various backgrounds, which contributes to KONE’s continuous innovation.

There are several practices in place to ensure e KONE continues to achieve their Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) ambitions. These involve for example building awareness through systematic communication and training, and getting everyone involved in developing our ways of thinking and working together. It is also important to integrate DEI into the people processes to ensure fair talent practices.

To bring a clear direction to their journey, KONE has a global DEI strategy where six focus areas are identified. This is shared globally, taking into account different maturity levels and local needs. Because of this, each country is asked to create their own roadmap using the global strategy as a compass.

Getting started does not require complex strategies. Starting with small actions can have a big impact on how team members feel. The most important thing is to have the courage to take those first steps and to continuously work towards a more inclusive culture.



Starting with small actions can have a big impact on how team members feel.





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