

# Achieving high governance performance through diversity

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21 March 2018

# Diversity

- What does diversity mean for you?

# Diversity

**Principle 6:** The board's approach to diversity supports its effectiveness, leadership and decision making.

**Key outcomes:**

The board is more effective if it includes a variety of perspectives, experiences and skills.

The board ensures that the charity follows principles of equality and diversity

Diversity is an integral part of board reviews

**Plans** are in place to monitor/achieve diversity

**Small charities:** publish a description of steps taken

**Larger charities:** an annual description explaining performance against objectives.

# Recommended practices

- Consider skills (regular skills audit)
- Attract diverse pool of candidates
- Periodic training/reflection on diversity
- Remove/reduce/present obstacles to trusteeship
- Feedback to the chair on accessibility/equality

# Inclusion

- What does being inclusive mean to you?
- Does the board have open and honest conversations about diversity and inclusion?
- Is there a culture that encourages and nurtures diverse expression?
- Are you comfortable voicing your ideas and opinions?
- How comfortable are you discussing issues of diversity?

# Needed Action

- We need to invest in communication strategies to raise awareness levels and build the political will to address inequalities
- Initiatives need to explicitly focus on developing the knowledge base to reduce and eliminate the 'empathy gap'

# Recruiting diverse trustees

1. Take a positive effort to remove, reduce or prevent obstacles to people being trustees
2. Allocate budgets to achieve diversity within the charity's available resources
3. Pay reasonable expenses
4. Consider where and how trustee vacancies are publicised the the trustee recruitment process

# Consider...

- Consider the time, location and frequency of meetings
- Consider how papers and information are presented to the board (eg using digital technology)
- Offer communication in formats such as audio and braille.



# Retention and succession

- Are there the same opportunities for leadership positions?
- Recognise positive influences
- Recognise negative influences

# Action needed

- We need to identify how to tell the story of challenges of the disadvantaged in ways that resonates with the public.

Source: R.Dore et al, Br J Dev Psych, 2014

# Creating the Conditions for Change

The empathy gap?

There have been few other cases in the history of civilised peoples where human suffering has been viewed with peculiar indifference

W.E.B. Du Bois (1899 [1967]p 163

- No racial bias at age 5
- At age 10 children rate pain of black child less than white one (strong reliable racial bias)
- Unrelated to social preference (ie would like to be friends with)
- We need to start empathy training very young.

# Determinants of Long-term Success

- Leadership matters: institutional priority, rhetoric
- Align diversity at all organisational levels (eg training to increase knowledge and sensitivity)
- Identify and nurture multi-sectoral core of champions
- Explicit communication strategies: maintain a steady drumbeat of information for policy-makers and engaged public (framing, build empathy)
- Synergy that supports recruitment and retention
- Financial support for diversity initiatives
- Highlight interventions that are working

# Compassion..

- True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar; it understands that an ediface which produces beggars needs restructuring.

# Get practical...

1. Implement policies and procedures that address diversity, inclusion and engagement.
2. Have a process to identify and address non-inclusive behaviours.
3. Commit: assign roles and resources, assess culture, gather and share data
4. Make diversity a top objective for the organisation
5. Encourage diversity initiatives
6. Shape the cultural competency and approach to diversity

# Organisation

- How effective are your diversity and inclusion strategies?
- How do you create an environment where it is safe to talk about issues of diversity, culture and inclusiveness?
- Seek input from stakeholders
- Develop a case for change – make it compelling
- Communicate regularly with all involved.



# Governance Committee

1. Create a pipeline: cultivate prospects
2. Encourage on going awareness raising and teambuilding. Foster inclusiveness
3. Offer coaching and mentoring
4. Monitor retention rates
5. Conduct exit interviews. Assess progress related to inclusiveness
6. Administer board self-assessments that include questions related to diversity strategies and goals

# Board

1. Assess board and organisational culture
2. Determine whether there are barriers to serving on the board.
3. Make visible commitments to diversity, inclusion and engagement (eg the mission statement, organisation communications materials, the website, social media etc)
4. Create shared experiences – informal social time together
5. Host training on diversity, inclusiveness and engagement
6. Monitor progress toward meeting action items – monitor intention and impact

# A call to action

- Each time a man stands up for an ideal or acts to improve the lots of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.
- **Robert F. Kennedy.**  
**helping you to help others**

# Develop a comprehensive action plan

1. Monitor activities and results
2. Schedule progress reports on diversity metrics
3. Continue critical discussions about diversity inclusion, engagement and change.
4. Continually explore the right answer for you.
5. Create and deliver value.

# Resources

- Vital Voices (BoardSource)
- Charity Governance Code
- Taken on trust (The awareness and effectiveness of charity trustees in England and Wales)

