



# Inclusion: The Deciding Factor

How inclusion and diversity will shape business success in 2030

# A spotlight on inclusion

In 2020 there is a spotlight on diversity and inclusion in the workplace as never before. The **Black Lives Matter** movement has underlined the extent of racism and racial inequality that exists in all areas of society, including at work. **#MeToo** has demonstrated the workplace sexism and barriers to career progression that many women still face. Almost a fifth of LGBT employees in the UK have been the target of negative comments or behaviour from their co-workers.<sup>1</sup>

Employers increasingly recognise that being diverse and inclusive requires a comprehensive approach across all aspects of a business:



**from creating an inclusive workforce** that allows every individual to bring their whole self to work



**to proactively hiring** women and under represented minorities



providing full transparency over **pay equality**



consciously working with **diverse suppliers**



and **taking a leadership role** within your industry

Diversity and inclusion must be **an authentic, business-wide mindset and priority**: because it is the right thing to do, and because it is instrumental in driving innovation and stronger business growth.

The emphasis on diversity and inclusion is also being driven by **the arrival of Gen Z**, those born since 1995, into the workforce. Every new generation represents a change in business practices, attitudes and expectations. For Gen Z, the priority is not just a stable and rewarding career, but the opportunity to effect change on the most pressing issues of our time: **from combating inequality to tackling the climate crisis**.

Gen Z is highly educated, digitally native and change minded. It is a cohort whose needs and motivations today's leaders need to understand, especially when it comes to the question of diversity and inclusion. For Gen Z, these are issues that **will determine career choices and brand preferences**. Young people expect workplaces to be inclusive and will judge potential employers and job opportunities on this basis.

This is a generation for whom a lack of diversity and inclusion will increasingly be a deal breaker. **Employers need to act accordingly**, responding to the emerging workforce's perspective, concerns and expectations. For businesses to attract and retain this future workforce, action must be taken today.

**Based on a survey of 2,000 UK adults**, this report looks at how employees of different ages think about diversity and inclusion, experiences of bias in the workplace, and how these issues are set to define career choices as Gen Z enters and shapes the workforce in the years ahead.

<sup>1</sup> [www.stonewall.org.uk/lgbt-britain-work-report](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/lgbt-britain-work-report)

# A spotlight on inclusion

## Intel's Commitment

Inclusion is fundamental to Intel's 2030 corporate responsibility strategy and goals, part of the RISE (Responsible, Inclusive, Sustainable, Enabling) framework. That means advancing diversity and inclusion across our global workforce and industry, but also looking beyond our own walls: working with stakeholders to make technology fully inclusive and expand digital readiness worldwide.

As part of this, Intel will also work with other companies to accelerate adoption of inclusive business practices across industries by creating and implementing a Global Inclusion Index open standard. Using common metrics, it will allow the industry to track progress in area such as achieving greater levels of women and minorities in senior and technical positions, accessible technology and equal pay.

### In the next decade, we commit to:



**Doubling the number of women and under represented minorities in senior leadership roles at Intel**



**Increasing the number of women in technical roles at Intel to 40%**



**Advance accessibility and increase the percentage of employees who self-identify as having a disability to 10% of our workforce**



**Increasing global annual spending with diverse suppliers by 100%**



**Empowering more than 30 million people worldwide with AI skills training, by partnering with governments in 30 countries and 30,000 institutions**

These goals seek to build on the progress we have made towards inclusion in the last decade. We have achieved previous goals including full representation in our U.S. workforce for women and underrepresented minorities, gender pay equity across our global workforce, and an annual spend of \$1bn with diverse suppliers. We are proud of this progress, but not satisfied. There is much further to go and more to do. The 2030 goals are designed to accelerate progress on our inclusion objectives.

# What the future workforce is experiencing

Gen Z takes decisive action. Digitally native and connected, we've seen it rally against climate change and take to the streets to protest inequality. Now it is bringing that sense of activism into the workplace:

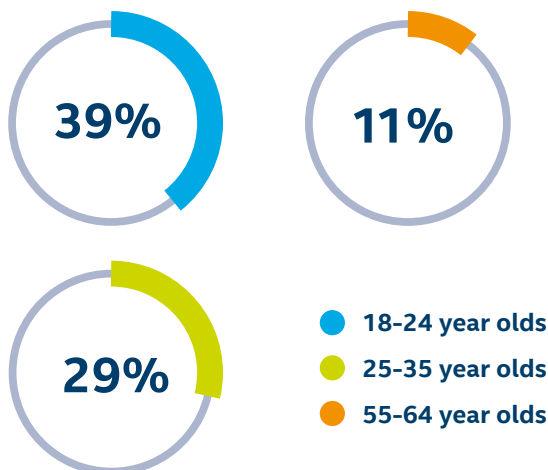
By 2030, over a billion of Gen Z will have joined the global workforce.<sup>2</sup>



This rising generation will look at diversity and inclusion differently, driven in part by personal experience of discrimination. The youngest cohort in our survey was also **the most likely to report having experienced bias as a result of their gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation or disability.**

A significant minority (**39 percent**) of 18-24 year olds said they had encountered **gender bias**, compared to **29 percent** of 25-35 year olds, and just **11 percent** of those aged 55-64. Similarly, **21 percent** of Gen Z has experienced **bias as a result of sexual orientation**, almost double the average across all age groups.

## Gender bias



Additionally, **26 percent** of Gen Z have faced bias because of their **ethnic background**, **19 percent** relating to **religious beliefs** and **31 percent** their **personal appearance**. **Age bias** has also been a problem, experienced by **40 percent** of Gen Z, **more than any other age group except 55-64 (46 percent) and 65+ (53 percent).**



**21%**  
Sexual orientation bias



**26%**  
Ethnic background bias



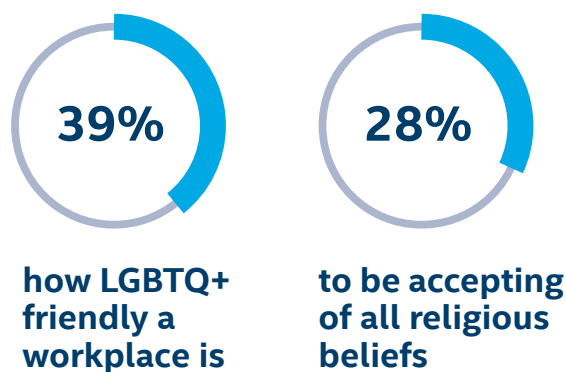
**40%**  
Age bias

These experiences have added to the concerns young people have about finding jobs in the future. **Thirty-four percent** of Gen Z voiced a **worry about 'missing out on opportunities because of bias'**, markedly higher than the average of 25 percent. Even at a formative stage in their careers, **young people's experiences of discrimination are affecting how they think about their professional futures:** both creating concerns and setting expectations.

# Expectations in the future workplace

Those experiences have shaped what Gen Z expect of their employers and the workplace environment they create. Asked what forms of diversity and inclusion are most important at work **39 percent** of Gen Z identified **how LGBTQ+ friendly a workplace is** (average 23 percent), while **28 percent** pointed to **the need for it to be accepting of all religious beliefs** (average 22 percent).

## What forms of diversity and inclusion are most important at work?



Gen Z is not alone in seeing the value of diverse and inclusive workplaces. Across all age groups, **42 percent** said that **diversity and inclusion are important** in an organisation because they allow for a **greater wealth of experience and insights**, and **40 percent** because they mean **people are put first, with nobody left behind**. **Over a third** also highlighted the benefit of an **enriched culture and sense of belonging** (38 percent) and the **reduced scope for bias and discriminatory behaviour** (35 percent).

A smaller, but still notable, proportion pointed to the importance of diversity and inclusion in enabling **higher levels of innovation** (22 percent) and providing **competitive advantage** (18 percent).

## Why are diversity and inclusion important in an organisation?\*



**42%**  
greater wealth of experience and insights



**40%**  
people are put first, with nobody left behind



**38%**  
enriched culture and sense of belonging



**35%**  
reduced scope for bias and discriminatory behaviour



**22%**  
higher levels of innovation



**18%**  
competitive advantage

\*across all ages

# Expectations in the future workplace

Asked to define what being inclusive means in the context of a potential employer, **72 percent** of all age groups cited **'equal opportunities for all'**, **48 percent** **'fair representation of diverse people'** and **42 percent** **'a culture and sense of belonging'** and **'anti-discrimination codes and conducts'**.

There was also consensus across age groups around the barriers to achieving diverse and inclusive workplaces. **Forty-one percent** cited the challenge of **'respecting and accepting the differences of others'**, while **38 percent** pointed to **'understanding ethnic and cultural differences'** and **32 percent** **'accommodating physical and mental disabilities'**.

## What does being inclusive mean in the context of an employer?

### 72%

across all ages cited **equal opportunities for all**



### 48%

across all ages cited **fair representation of diverse people**



### 42%

across all ages cited **a culture, sense of belonging and anti-discrimination codes and conducts**



## What are the barriers to achieving diverse and inclusive workplaces?

### 41%

across all ages cited the challenge of **respecting and accepting the differences of others**



### 38%

across all ages cited the challenge of **understanding ethnic and cultural differences**



### 32%

across all ages cited the challenge of **accommodating physical and mental disabilities**



# D&I will define career decisions

Diversity and inclusivity are not just something that employees, especially from Gen Z, have come to expect in the workplace. They are also increasingly a **defining factor when making decisions** about **what career choices to make** and **job opportunities to pursue**.

Asked what worries them most about finding a job in the future, a **third of 18-24 year olds** pointed to **'finding a job that aligns with my ethics and sense of purpose'**, close to the **36 percent** who highlighted **financial security** and the **41 percent** concerned with **career enjoyment and fulfilment**. By contrast, the **impact of a global economic downturn** was most worrying for older workers, cited as a cause for concern by **44 percent of 55-64 year olds** and **41 percent of 45-54 year olds**, compared to **22 percent of Gen Z respondents**.

## What worries you most about finding a job in the future?

**33%** ethics and purpose alignment

**36%** financial security

**41%** career enjoyment and fulfilment

**22%** the impact of a global economic downturn

Gen Z is also set to use evidence of diversity and inclusion to choose between potential employers in the future. Presented with job offers from two otherwise similar organisations, **34 percent** said their decision would be influenced by which was **more diverse and inclusive**, compared to an average of 24 percent across all ages. That makes these factors almost as important as **remuneration** for Gen Z, **36 percent** of whom said **'whichever pays more'** would be a defining factor.

## When choosing between potential employers...



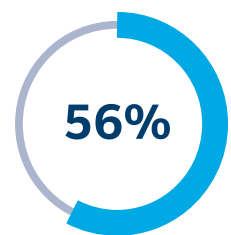
**34%**  
more diverse and inclusive



**36%**  
whichever pays more

Gen Z is also ready to rule out potential employers who cannot show an effective track record on promoting diversity and inclusion.

A majority (56 percent) agreed that they would be hesitant to take a job in an organisation that says it is diverse if it does not have any unrepresented minorities in senior leadership roles

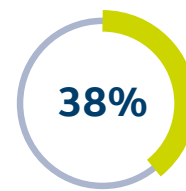


18-24 years

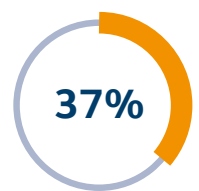
An **equal proportion of younger Millennials** (25-35s) said the same, compared to **38 percent** of those aged **45-54** and **37 percent** in the **55-64** age group.



25-35 years



45-54 years



55-64 years

# Conclusion

This research underlines the growing demand among employees of all ages for UK companies to make diversity and inclusion a priority. Many agreed that **more inclusive organisations** have a **better base of experiences, a stronger sense of belonging, and a greater competitive advantage**. It is increasingly important for people to work somewhere that welcomes people of different backgrounds, provides equal opportunities for underrepresented minorities and people with disabilities, and which is LGBTQ+ friendly.

These are not isolated sentiments, but **key factors driving the career decisions of UK employees, especially among younger age groups**. Diversity and inclusion are a tie-breaker for a third of Gen Z job-seekers, and they want to see the evidence. Talking a good game is not good enough, when a majority of under-35s want to see that organisations promoting diversity are backing that up with leadership teams that include under-represented minorities.

As diversity and inclusion rise up the business agenda, **employees are expecting more**, and less willing to forgive companies that fail to achieve tangible progress. Gen Z will make a generational difference in how the UK workforce thinks and acts around diversity and inclusion.



## Methodology

A survey of **2,000 UK adults** was conducted by **Sapio Research in June 2020**. Of all those surveyed, 59 percent were full-time employed, 21 percent part-time employed, 8 percent self-employed or freelance, 8 percent unemployed but looking for work, and 4 percent in education or training.