# HumanBranding | Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Policy | January 2024

HumanBranding is committed to the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion in all aspects of our organization. We believe we are stronger when we not only celebrate our many differences, values, and voices, but include them in practice. This means our organization will actively work to understand and remove barriers to equity and inclusion, be they systematic, physical, or otherwise. In addition, we are committed to ongoing learning and development in the areas of equity, diversity, and inclusion so that we can apply an "equity lens" in all areas of our business. Further, HumanBranding will adhere to the *Ontario Human Rights Code* and the *Accessibility for Ontarians for Disabilities Act* at all times.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the organization's expectations when it comes to equity, diversity and inclusion.

## DEFINITIONS

The following definitions have been sourced directly from the Ontario Human Rights Code:

"Culturally competent organization": an organization that displays cultural competence, in both its systems and individual behaviour.

"Diversity": the presence of a wide range of human qualities and attributes within an individual, group or organization. Diversity includes such factors as age, sex, race, ethnicity, physical and intellectual ability, religion, sexual orientation, educational background and expertise.

"Discrimination": treating someone unfairly by either imposing a burden on them, or denying them a privilege, benefit or opportunity enjoyed by others, because of their race, citizenship, family status, disability, sex or other personal characteristics (note: this is not a legal definition).

"Duty to accommodate": Under the Ontario *Human Rights Code*, people identified by *Code* grounds are entitled to the same opportunities and benefits as everybody else. In some cases, they may need special arrangements or "accommodations" to take part equally in the social areas the *Code* covers, such as employment, housing and education.

"Equal opportunity": aims to ensure that all people have equal access, free of barriers, equal participation and equal benefit from whatever an organization has to offer. Note that equal opportunity extends beyond employment.

"Equity": fairness, impartiality, even-handedness. A distinct process of recognizing differences within groups of individuals, and using this understanding to achieve substantive equality in all aspects of a person's life.

"Inclusion": appreciating and using our unique differences – strengths, talents, weaknesses and frailties – in a way that shows respect for the individual and ultimately creates a dynamic multi-dimensional organization.

**POLICY**

At HumanBranding we strive to ensure all people are treated equally and to be a culturally competent organization. We value diversity will continue to actively work to build a diverse workforce which is inclusive of persons of various groups in terms of age, sex, race, ethnicity, physical and intellectual ability, religion, sexual orientation, educational background and expertise.

We believe in equal treatment and opportunity for employees. We will ensure the right to equal treatment is upheld in the areas of rate of pay, hours of work, holidays, benefits, discipline, performance evaluations, and advancement opportunities. Discrimination will not be tolerated.

Every person who works at HumanBranding has a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect, and make sure all people feel included and have access to the same opportunities. We must actively strive to create an environment where all persons are able to share their ideas, beliefs, and skills.

The organization is responsible for:

- Promoting a culture of respect and inclusion
- Examining its workforce and the various barriers that are in place that work against equity, diversity, and inclusion and implementing strategies to overcome them such as:
  - Revising policies and procedures annually
  - Examining language and available supports
  - Creating diversity committees/groups
  - Asking for employee feedback through various channels
- Training staff members about the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion and our policies
- Providing continuous learning opportunities to managers and employees
- Encouraging applications from persons of various backgrounds
- Providing accommodation, upon request, at all stages of employment

Managers are responsible for:

- Providing an open door so employees can voice any concerns or barriers they may be experiencing and acting on recommendations/concerns
- Providing supports or accommodation to staff members as required
- Creating opportunities to ensure the ideas, talents and opinions of all team members are heard and that proper credit is given for ideas and accomplishments and ensuring staff feel welcomed
- Being flexible on policies as needed such as allowing employees to observe various religious/spiritual practices or days of observance, including altering break time or substituting statutory holidays
- Actively working to find ways to bring people together so they may share ideas

Employees are responsible for:

- Complying with this policy
- Bringing forward any ideas, suggestions, or issues to their manager or supervisor

**Hiring**

We approach recruitment and hiring, with practices that promote equity, diversity and inclusion. Wherever possible we will:

- Openly welcome applications from persons with disabilities or those protected by the human rights code and provide accommodation during all stages of the recruitment and hiring process, upon request.
- Utilize set interview questions based on the job description to help eliminate biases
- Ensure job postings focus on essential requirements of the position

We are committed to hiring applicants on the basis of their individual merits such as their skills and knowledge.

**Employee Supports**

At HumanBranding we have the following:

- Gender neutral washrooms
- Employee Assistance Plan via our group benefits provider