Diversity & Inclusion @ IBM: Doing it Differently
“To be essential we need unique thinking and bold ideas that stem from diversity of thought. Recognising this, diversity and inclusion have been the cornerstone of IBM’s business strategy for more than a century.

“With operations in 170 countries, our greatest strength is having a diverse workforce that unites through a shared set of core values; dedication, innovation, and trust and responsibility. Difference is expected, respected and encouraged, so that every IBMer has the opportunity to reach their potential and make a difference.”

At IBM®, we understand that in order for us to help make the world a smarter place, we need a constant flow of new and diverse ideas. We also realise that these diverse ideas must come from a diverse workforce.

We have relied on this diversity of thought for a long time, and it’s helped us change industries, revolutionise business and even land on the moon. Now we are striving to develop smarter systems to tackle the world’s big problems, and diversity is more important than ever.

It’s an integral part of our make-up, and from the very top down, considered essential to our future success. It’s the way we’ve always done business, and it’s the way we intend to do business in the future.

**Our commitment**

The employees of IBM represent a talented and diverse workforce. Achieving the full potential of this diversity is a business priority that is fundamental to our competitive success. A key element in our workforce diversity programs is IBM’s long-standing commitment to equal opportunity.

Business activities such as hiring, promotion and compensation of employees are conducted without regard to gender, race, religion, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, genetics, disability, or age. Respecting and valuing the diversity amongst our employees, and all those with whom we do business, managers are expected to ensure a working environment that is free of all forms of harassment.

While our differences shape who we are as individuals, they are also instrumental in contributing to our business success. IBMers around the world work in an environment where diversity—including diversity of thought—is the norm and innovation can flourish.

A member of Australia’s leading Diversity organisations
Our focus areas

Advancement of women

Diversity means supporting women’s career aspirations without requiring them to sacrifice their other priorities or compromise their natural working style.

We have a strong focus on making our workplace more inclusive for women and to have greater representation of women in technical, leadership and professional roles and in all areas of our business. We have professional development programs, leadership conferences and mentoring programs to advance our female talent into senior positions.

In addition, our flexible work options help all employees, including women, to balance their professional and personal goals.

Women in Technology Business Group

This internal networking group has been established for a number of years and is focused on building a strong community of talented women across Australia and New Zealand. The Group holds regular networking events and sponsors workshops which support the career development of women.

Mentoring and professional development

IBM has a strong culture of mentoring and supporting our senior women. We have targeted career development programs for women at every career level and our succession planning benches have a minimum of one woman identified for each Executive role.

EXITE (Exploring Interests in Technology & Engineering)

EXITE (Exploring Interests in Technology & Engineering) Camps for girls

EXITE (Exploring Interests in Technology & Engineering) Camps are an IBM initiative to help inspire girls to take science and math classes throughout high school and to help them understand how rewarding technology, science and engineering careers can be and how they offer opportunities to be creative, to become a leader and to give back to the community. IBM Australia began holding EXITE Camps in 2001 and the target audience is high school girls aged 13 to 16. The Camps are held annually in collaboration with State-based Departments of Education.

“Networking has been a key factor for my career development. I have formal and informal mentors who have helped me through various challenges in my career. I would be lost without them.”

Ingrid van Uden

Client Executive, IBM Sales & Distribution
Diversity @IBM: Doing it Differently

Cultural Diversity
IBM operates across nine time zones in 170 countries and our employees speak more than 70 languages. This diversity is one of our greatest strengths, enabling us to bring the best talent and ideas together to solve our clients’ problems. With teams and clients spanning the globe, many employees have the chance to experience working with people from different countries and cultures. To make sure they are sensitive to the cultural differences in global working practices, we provide them with learning programs, workshops and tools to help them to work with different cultures.

Floating cultural holiday
You can ‘trade’ official public holidays for days of cultural significance to you. For example, you may wish to ‘trade’ a gazetted public holiday, such as the Queen’s Birthday, for a cultural day of particular significance, such as Yom Kippur.

Learning programs
Interactive learning programs like Shades of Blue not only raise awareness but provide employees with specific skills for analysing and interpreting cultural differences as well as identifying and closing critical gaps.
People with Disability
As a business, we recognise the need to capitalise on the skills and talents of all segments of our diverse community. With four million Australians identifying as having a disability – a figure that will increase as our population ages – we are committed to building the representation of People with Disability (PwD) into our workforce.

Already, our proactive approach to employing PwD means this important group is represented across our business. Where needed, we provide accommodations – a modified workplace, specialist equipment or tools – to ensure our PwD employees are able to realise their potential.

Building accessibility
We are continually improving our premises to ensure all IBM offices are accessible to employees, clients and the general public.

Technology
IBM provides modified workstations and specialist IT equipment for employees with disabilities. We are committed to developing and using technology to improve access in the workplace. IBM has several Accessibility Centres around the world dedicated to assistive technology in the workplace.

Our instant messaging service helps our hearing impaired employees to communicate with their colleagues. We also support video remote interpreting and live remote captioning and encourage hearing colleagues to undertake deafness awareness training.

In 2014, IBM appointed a Global Chief Accessibility Officer to further accessibility standards and develop human-centric technology and industry solutions that support an inclusive workplace environment for all employees.

“There is no differentiation between what I and my colleagues produce or deliver. In most circumstances, I am able to do the same work as others, thanks to the support provided by IBM.”

Todd Wright
Manager in Global Technology Services and hearing impaired IBMer.
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Intersex

Diversity means feeling comfortable, valued and included: making it safe for people to be out at work. We know that all employees, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) employees, will only reach their full potential and make their fullest contribution to our clients’ success if they are comfortable to be who they are.

Our Diversity and Inclusion policies have included references to sexual orientation for over 25 years. IBM was one of the very first companies to do this, and continues to lead the way by creating an atmosphere where LGBTI employees are not just valued, but empowered to think freely and to be themselves.

Pride in Diversity

IBM is a founding member of Pride in Diversity – Australia’s first and only not-for-profit workplace program designed specifically to assist Australian employers with the inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex employees.

In 2011, IBM was named the leading employer for LGBTI employees in the inaugural Pride in Diversity Australian Workplace Equality Index and our employee group, EAGLE, was named the LGBTI Employee Network Group of the Year.

IBM has been a top employer for LGBTI employees in the Pride in Diversity Australian Workplace Equality Index in each successive year.

In the community

IBM has been a major supporter and is the longest standing corporate sponsor of the Midsumma Festival in Melbourne, a major arts and cultural event on the LGBTI calendar.
**Work Life Integration**
In today’s busy world, there’s no longer a typical working day. Family, sport, study, caring responsibilities and health priorities can all encroach on the traditional work life.

That’s why we offer flexible work options which allow employees to make changes to the way they work and better meet their work and personal needs. Our employees are key to our continued business success so we believe in creating a workplace culture in which employees can meet their professional and personal priorities, according to their individual needs and those of the business.

**Flexible work**
We offer a range of flexible working options

- Individualised work schedule to fit the shape of your life
- A compressed or flexible work week
- Part-time work
- Job sharing
- Working from home when the role allows

**Flexible Leave**
Our leave entitlements help our people meet life’s challenges.

- Paid parental leave
- Self funded leave
- Long service leave
- Personal work/life leave
- Study leave
- Leave of absence
- Religious observance
- Floating cultural holiday

“*I am a single parent of two young children. As with any parent, I think the time I spend with them now, while they’re growing up, is the most precious.*

“I am fortunate that my role within IBM allows me to balance my work with my home-life through flexible working hours and a diverse set of communication tools.

“I am able to manage my work schedule to suit my caring commitments and my work colleagues know they can trust me to get the job done!”

Andrew Kumar
from IBM Software Sales, works flexible hours rather than the traditional 9 to 5.
Generational Diversity
Generational Diversity is about looking at the lifecycle of the employee and their needs at the different phases of their career, from recruitment through to retirement. It means valuing the talents and abilities of all generations, from the experience of mature-age workers to the energy of the next generation entering the workforce.

Mature-age workers
We believe employees approaching retirement should be supported in scaling back their hours, shifting to project-based work or taking up mentoring roles, In this way we are able to keep their expertise in our business while enabling them to continue doing challenging, interesting work.

The next generation
It's important to support young employees and help them honour their dreams and ambitions. That means finding them challenging work in global teams and giving them extraordinary opportunities to prove themselves. To help them do so we provide flexible work arrangements that fit the shape of their lives and flexible leave so they can follow their dreams, as well as volunteering opportunities through our Corporate Service Corps.

Did you know
- In 1914, IBM employed its first person with a disability.
- In 1935, IBM employed women in technical roles on the same wages as men.
- In 1943, IBM appointed its first female Vice President.
- In 1953, a decade before the US Civil Rights act, IBM published the company’s first equal opportunity policy letter that stated that IBM will hire people based on their ability, regardless of race, colour or creed.
- In 1964, IBM introduced the first automated Braille printing system
- In 1984, sexual orientation was added to IBM’s non discrimination policy. IBM becomes one of the first major companies to make this change.
- In 1997, IBM established its first Diversity Networking Groups – employee organisations that promote internal networking, career development and community service.
- In 2005, IBM became the first major corporation in the world to establish a genetics privacy policy, prohibiting current or future employees’ genetic information from being used in employment decisions.
- In 2012, IBM appointed its first female Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Board, Ginni Rometty.
- In 2014, IBM appointed its first Global Chief Accessibility Officer.
For more information
visit: ibm.com/employment/au/diversity

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