



INCLUSION
DIVERSITY
EQUITY
ACCESS

**District of Squamish Inclusion Strategy
IDEAs in Action**

September 2022

BUILDING A CULTURE OF INCLUSION

The District of Squamish is committed to building an inclusive community in which all Squamish citizens feel valued, seen and heard, and accessibility considerations are at the forefront of all District policies, practices, and projects

We know that commitment begins internally, with how we create a culture of inclusion for our staff.





Note from the Chief Administrative Officer

The District of Squamish is committed to building an inclusive community in which all Squamish citizens feel valued, seen and heard, and accessibility considerations are at the forefront of all District policies, practices, and projects. We know that commitment begins internally, with how we create a culture of inclusion for our staff.

Every person who interacts with the District of Squamish is impacted by the organization's diversity, inclusion, and equity efforts. This includes Council, all District of Squamish employees, every member of the public who lives and works in Squamish and those who are here as visitors, students, and guests.

Building a culture of inclusion begins with us. As an organization, we must ask ourselves, *Do we feel respected, valued, and safe? And do we make others around us feel the same?*

Working on inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility can be challenging, emotional, and often uncomfortable. This work invites us to take a closer look at who we are as people, and what power and position we hold in society, and challenges us to imagine how the experiences of others may be different from our own. This work is also highly relational. We need to support one another through this collective process, and be open to listening, learning and asking tough questions of ourselves and one another.

We know that this is long-term work that is not linear, and I am thrilled that the District is taking this important step. This Strategy is intended to facilitate a culture in which all District of Squamish employees are included and empowered to act with courage, kindness, and respect. I encourage all of you to join me in approaching this work with humility, openness, and inquiry.


Linda Glenday

INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW



The workplace is a space that is always in flux: there are emerging management strategies; innovative technologies; new people; and evolving business culture. And while traditionally, organizations may have been primarily preoccupied by productivity and output, there is an increasing push for organizations to turn their focus towards diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts. Prioritizing DEI initiatives challenges organizations to turn inward, and examine their own internal practices, policies, and processes to evaluate how the organization contributes to the ongoing problems of systemic oppression among their staff and within the communities they serve.

In the wake of social justice movements like UNDRIP, #MeToo, and Black Lives Matter, and global traumas like the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a greater emphasis on creating work environments that support and protect the interests and needs of employees. In today's work environment, flexible work arrangements and structures are being adopted; the true value of working within diverse teams is being recognized over tokenizing affirmative action programs; and leaders are increasingly using an equity-based lens in decision-

making. There is increasing evidence that investing in DEI efforts leads to a more productive, satisfied, and creative workforce. Ensuring that employees feel a sense of belonging, safety, and value is critical to an organization's success.

To make meaningful changes in the area of diversity, equity, and inclusion, organizations must clearly evaluate the diversity that currently exists in their staff complement and assess the level of understanding that the organization has—among both leadership and employees—of how structural barriers and forms of oppression systematically exclude or deny opportunities to people based on their own personal identity metrics like race, gender, age, sexual orientation, ability, and so on. Organizations must take a slow, humble, and inquisitive approach, recognizing that this work is often emotional, uncomfortable, and challenging. When embarking on this work, organizations must clearly acknowledge the impact of colonization and other forms of systematic oppression on our society, and how that plays out in the workplace today. Starting from a place of inquiry and a commitment to develop a greater understanding of these impacts is a necessary first step.

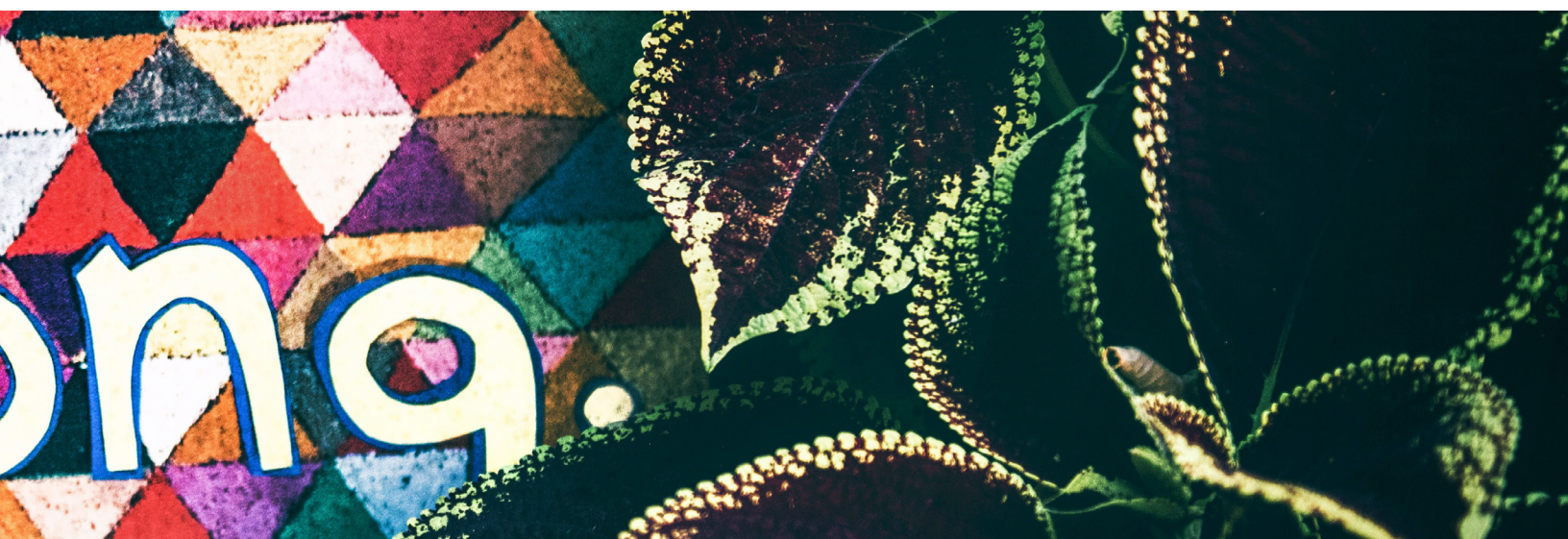




The District of Squamish, as an organization, acknowledges that this process will not be easy, and recognizes that there is a lot to learn. Fortunately, the District has a culture of ongoing learning, and has demonstrated its commitment to furthering our collective understanding of these historical impacts through indigenous cultural and humility training, and the development of the IDEA Committee. This commitment is further demonstrated by the development of an inclusion strategy. Inclusion strategies enable organizations to examine their own internal processes, practices, policies, and programs through a DEI lens, identify shortcomings, and implement opportunities for change. The District began this process in early 2022, and after comprehensive consultation with staff and a review of relevant research and best practices, it has resulted in the development of the **District of Squamish Inclusion Strategy – IDEAs in Action**. This Strategy reflects the current state of inclusion at the District and outlines the first steps that will enable the organization to become a more equitable workplace. The recommended actions are a starting point for the District of Squamish to make meaningful structural changes that will enable a workplace in which everyone will thrive.

To impact change on a structural level, actions must include policy changes, language and terminology updates, and the implementation of new practices and programs. Education and a deeper understanding of the challenges at hand are paramount to the success of these initiatives. Finally, there must be accountability structures in place, particularly at the leadership level, to ensure this work is endorsed and supported. Structural change is slow, incremental, and rarely linear. Advancing inclusion and diversity goals takes time, collective effort, and an openness for continuous learning.

The District of Squamish Inclusion Strategy – IDEAs in Action- will serve as a roadmap for the organization to begin this challenging work of deepening our understanding of systematic exclusion and oppression; understanding our unique social positions and the power dynamics that exist between us; and the actions we can take to create a more inclusive and equitable workplace.



IDEA COMMITTEE



In 2021, the District of Squamish launched the IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access) Committee to tackle inclusion-related efforts internally. The IDEA Committee is a cross-departmental group of staff from all different levels. The Committee works within four domains: research, resources, training, and engagement, and has a broad mandate to:

- ✓ **Cultivate a safe and inclusive workplace culture for everyone;**
- ✓ **Identify opportunities to apply a lens of diversity, inclusion, equity and access across the organization;**
- ✓ **Support a diverse and inclusive workforce that represents all cultures, backgrounds and perspectives;**
- ✓ **Provide consultation, advice, education, and discussion about inclusion, diversity, equity, and access in the workplace; and**
- ✓ **Seek and share resources to identify where we can continually learn and do better.**

As part of their mandate, the IDEA Committee led the development of the Inclusion Strategy, and will continue to oversee its implementation, evaluation, and renewal processes. The IDEA Committee, and the Inclusion Strategy, is focused internally on staff and internal-facing services.



IDEA

COMMITTEE VISION

We are committed to Truth and Reconciliation.

We value diversity, equity, access and inclusion.

We create safe spaces in which all members of our community are valued, seen, and heard.

We celebrate individuality and innovation.

We are humble and unwavering in our approach to continuous learning and acceptance.

DEFINING TERMS

Inclusion

Inclusion is about feeling a sense of belonging at work. It is when an individual feels safe and welcome to be their true, authentic self at work, and feels valued for their unique strengths, contributions, and input. Belonging is personal - the conditions in which people feel a sense of belonging differs from person to person. Conditions that create an environment of belonging and inclusion include psychological safety, acceptance, empathy, connection, and appreciation.

Diversity

Diversity refers to the uniqueness of each person, and any factor that differentiates people from one another. These factors might include gender, race, ethnicity, age, ability, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, education, and lived experience. We can experience a multitude of these identity factors and they can change and evolve over time. These identities and experiences shape our view of the world.

Equity

Equity is about creating equal possible outcomes for everyone (regardless of identity or experience) because, despite effort and merit, people can experience substantial barriers in the workplace. Equity focuses on 'leveling the playing field' for everyone. An Equity approach differs from an equality approach. An "Equality" approach means that every individual is given the same opportunities or resources regardless of social location, whereas an "Equity" approach acknowledges that everyone is coming from a different background, with a different set of advantages and disadvantages, and attempts to allocate resources and opportunities to ensure that each person can achieve an equal outcome.

Accessibility

Accessibility is making sure everyone—regardless of ability—has easy access around the workplace including physical environments, and virtual environments. It refers to the design of spaces, products, services, and programs for people with all abilities.

For a comprehensive list of defined terms related to inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility, visit this link: [Glossary - BC's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner \(bchumanrights.ca\)](https://www.bchumanrights.ca/glossary)

WHY INVEST IN THIS WORK

Respecting People's Rights

There are many important reasons why organizations should focus on and invest in inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility initiatives. The most imperative reason, simply put, is because it is the right thing to do. We recognize that certain groups of people have been systemically excluded from the workplace or have faced significant barriers to opportunities based on factors such as race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, and other marginalized identities. This is an injustice that exists in our current society, and one we have a responsibility to actively address. These injustices can be both overt and present in the form of slurs and hate speech, and subtle and present as microaggressions and unconscious bias. In the workplace, these forms of oppression can show up in ways including bias in the hiring process; negative assumptions about one's intelligence, skills, or capacity; or inequitable opportunities for growth and development. It is critical to recognize that these forms of exclusion are not only due to individuals and their actions but are part of a larger system of oppression. It is our responsibility to understand the impacts of those systems on our current and future staff, while implementing ways to challenge it.

Renewing Our Core Values And Organizational Culture

The District of Squamish is currently undergoing a process to refresh its core values and clearly articulate our organizational culture. While the current values of "working together; doing better every day; acting with courage and enthusiasm; doing the right thing; and thinking beyond today" still resonate, it is an opportune time to reflect on which values represent the organizational culture we want to reinforce and where the District is striving to be in the future. Organizations are more commonly integrating values around inclusion, belonging, equity, and diversity into their organizational culture. Having clear and concise values around inclusion signal their importance to all employees at every level of the organization. It sets an expectation for respectful behaviour, fosters mutual respect, and ensures that decisions are made with an equity and inclusion lens.

Committed to Truth and Reconciliation

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada released a report outlining 94 calls to action to advance reconciliation efforts across Canada and redress the lasting legacies of colonialism and residential schools. Call to action #57 specifically calls on governments to act:

“We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal–Crown relations. This will require skills based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.”

This is a responsibility that the District of Squamish takes very seriously. Truth and Reconciliation efforts are a critical part of the District’s organizations culture, and key actions are embedded into the Strategic Plan, the Official Community Plan, and other key internal strategies. Staff are committed to learning, recognizing, and honouring Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw, and their territory that we work upon.



Squamish Nation Canoe Awakening Ceremony 2019

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access is a Business Strategy

Diversity and inclusion are now core components of business strategy. There is significant research demonstrating positive links between investments in DEI, and improved outputs, such as profitability and productivity. There is strong evidence that organizations that focus on diversity (multivariate diversity - including gender, racial, and ethnic diversity) tend to outperform in profitability metrics compared to their less diverse counterparts. As outlined by a comprehensive study by McKinsey and Company in 2020, companies that were in the top quarter for gender diversity on executive teams were 25 percent more likely to have above-average profitability compared to companies that fell within the bottom quarter for gender diversity. Similarly, companies that fell within the top quarter for racial/ethnic diversity, outperformed those in the bottom quarter by 36 percent in profitability.¹ McKinsey's research also demonstrates that diversity supports workplace innovation, bold problem solving and new ways of thinking.² While local governments are not preoccupied with profitability, careful spending of public funds and affordability are always top of mind.

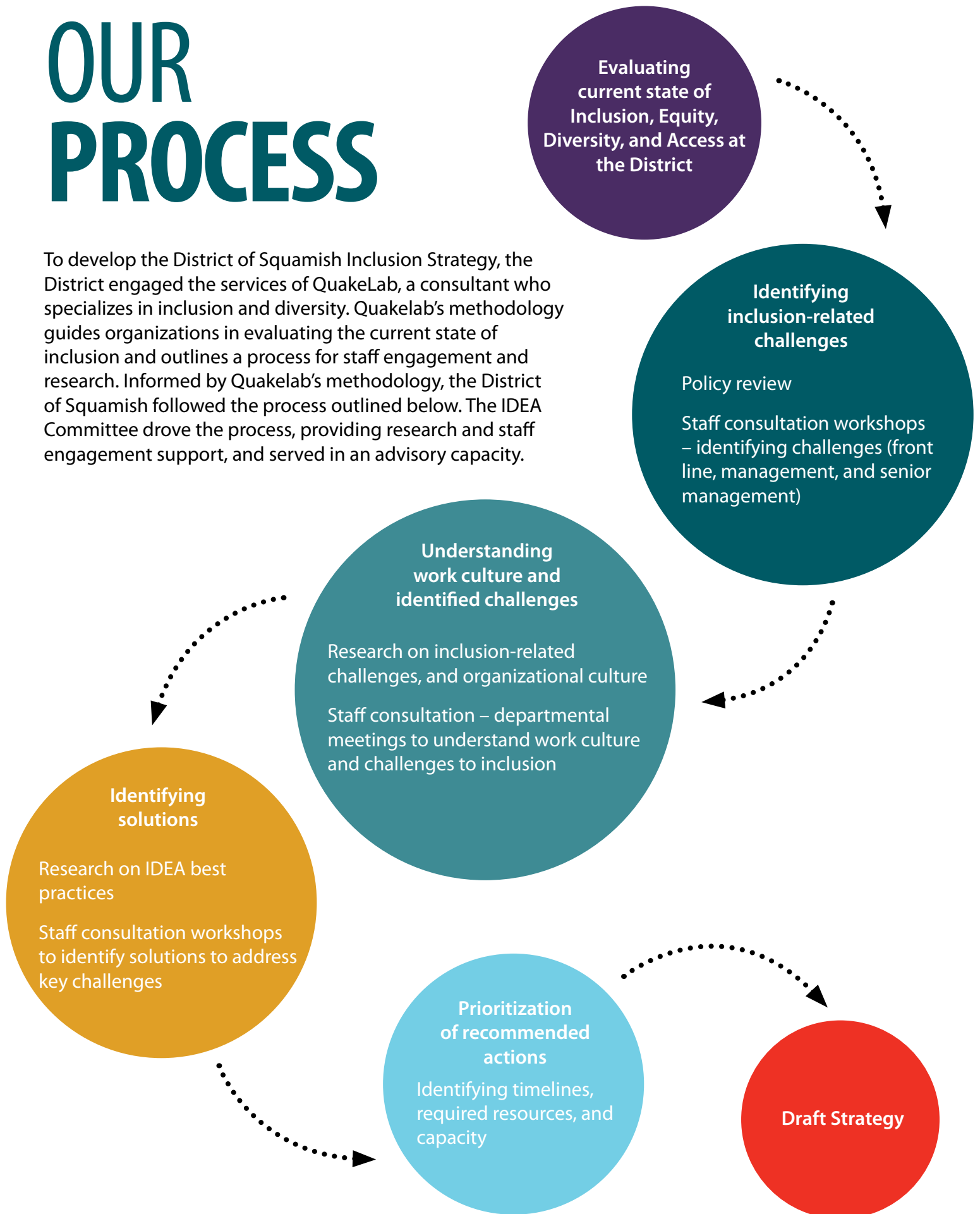
Similar research suggests that focusing on diversity metrics alone is not enough. To recruit and retain talent, research shows that organizations need to invest in and implement inclusion strategies. Even when there are concerted efforts in recruiting for diversity, women and people of colour are less likely to stay at an organization if it is not set up to accommodate how different people experience the workplace.³ Workplaces have historically been established for a homogenous workforce which has created challenges to equity, and inclusivity in the workplace. To better serve a diverse workforce, leaders need to reconsider traditional work arrangements, and focus on flexibility, transparency, engagement, and DEI training.⁴ Many people still report experiencing some form of discrimination or bias at work. Microaggressions, which are subtle interactions of behaviours that intentionally or unintentionally express a prejudiced attitude or bias towards a historically marginalized group (such as a racial minority), are commonly experienced. Although they may seem like innocuous comments to a bystander, microaggressions can severely impact one's mental health and job satisfaction. Employers need to better understand and create more awareness of how microaggressions show up in the workplace and implement appropriate response mechanisms.^{5 6}

Organizations must also focus on creating a sense of belonging and purpose at work to keep employees satisfied. According to the 2022 Deloitte Gen Z and Millennial Survey⁷, younger people are seeking out and staying longer at workplaces that focus on inclusion and align with their values. 23% of all respondents in the survey stated that a positive workplace culture (employees feeling valued, a sense of belonging) was their top reason for choosing to work at an organization. In another study conducted by the Human Rights Campaign Foundation⁸, research shows that 26% of LGBTQ employees stayed in a position because the work environment was inclusive. On the flipside, the researched shows that if a work environment is unwelcoming, employee engagement can suffer up to 30%.



OUR PROCESS

To develop the District of Squamish Inclusion Strategy, the District engaged the services of QuakeLab, a consultant who specializes in inclusion and diversity. Quakelab's methodology guides organizations in evaluating the current state of inclusion and outlines a process for staff engagement and research. Informed by Quakelab's methodology, the District of Squamish followed the process outlined below. The IDEA Committee drove the process, providing research and staff engagement support, and served in an advisory capacity.



Challenges

Through the staff engagement process, staff were given the opportunity to identify challenges or barriers to inclusion at the District and were also asked how organization culture shaped the experience of inclusion at the workplace. While many staff felt like the District of Squamish was a very welcoming place to work, several challenges surfaced. A primary challenge that staff identified was feeling disconnected from one another after the COVID-19 pandemic. Many staff reported wanting more opportunities to connect with colleagues, especially with those from other departments. Many people started during the pandemic and may have not had as many opportunities to attend social events and participate in cross-departmental work. It was also identified that staff events and programs should be made to be more accessible, and inclusive. Many people challenged Squamish's "hardwired for adventure" brand identity and expressed the need for a more holistic view of the organization itself.

Another challenge that was identified was that some employees feel that there are not clear pathways for growth at the organization. Staff noted the lack of a transparent succession planning process and commented that performance evaluations and the exploration of a new leadership program had been paused due to COVID-19. Staff also identified that capacity was an issue and finding time to learn about IDEA-related concepts was challenging. Finally, many employees felt that our recruitment and hiring practices could be updated to allow for a more inclusive hiring process, and to encourage more diversity in our workforce.

Moving Forward From Challenges To Action

Based on the feedback from staff, the IDEA committee reviewed the challenges that surfaced, and connected these sentiments with larger structural ideas around diversity, equity, and inclusion. In following Quake-lab's methodology, discussions at the IDEA Committee level led to reframing challenges as opportunity questions. Out of the core challenges that were identified, the opportunities that surfaced include:

- *How might we create a culture at the District of Squamish where everyone feels a sense of inclusion and belonging?*
- *How might we establish a deeper understanding of IDEA principles amongst all staff so we are operating from the same framework?*
- *How might we embed IDEA principles in the fabric of the organization (policies, programs, events)?*
- *How can we update our hiring practices to ensure they are more accessible and equitable to everyone?*
- *How can we create equitable access to growth and development opportunities at the District of Squamish?*

These opportunity questions served as a framework for how potential solutions were generated.



ACTION PLAN

To address the challenges that were identified and begin the journey to making the District a more inclusive and diverse workplace, several goals, objectives, and actions were identified. These actions are based on feedback from staff during the employee engagement workshops, and best practices identified from reviewing recent, relevant literature. This is an ambitious plan and will require the support of all staff including senior management. These actions also provide a roadmap for the IDEA Committee and can be used to inform the workplan for the Committee.

GOAL #1 Culture

GOAL #2 Education

GOAL #3 Equity in Professional Development and Leadership

GOAL #4 People

GOAL #5 Environments

GOAL #1

Culture of Inclusion

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access is valued at the District of Squamish and is reflected in the organizational culture

Objective 1: Embed inclusion into organizational structures and processes

Action	Timeline	Responsibility
Develop inclusive language and communication standards including meeting and facilitation guidelines and resources for the use of inclusive processes such as the use of pronouns and Territorial Acknowledgements	Short-term 6 m - 1 year In Progress	Media Relations and Content Specialist Chief Administrative Officer IDEA Committee to inform Core Leadership Team to endorse
Ensure that IDEA principles are reflected in the renewed core values and culture of the organization	Short term 1 year In Progress	Core Leadership Team Culture Working Group and IDEA Committee to support
Research and explore the development of a formal Inclusion Policy outlining the DoS commitments to inclusion	Medium-Term 2-3 years	IDEA Committee Human Resources Department to support

Objective 2: Formalize IDEA work at the District

Action	Timeline	Responsibility
Review IDEA Committee Terms of Reference and Model (including IDEA Champion/Ambassadors)	Short-term 1 year In Progress	IDEA Committee Human Resources Department to support
Ensure that the IDEA Committee has an annual budget for training and professional development, and IDEA is included in the 5-year budget planning process	Short-term 1 year	Chief Administrative Officer Core Leadership Team to support
Include IDEA Updates in the CAO newsletter and at SLT meetings	Short-term 1 year	Chief Administrative Officer IDEA Committee Core Leadership Team to support
Develop a new position to lead and manage IDEA-based projects	Short-term 1 year	Chief Administrative Officer

Objective 3: Ensure employee engagement efforts and initiatives are aligned with IDEA principles

Action	Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure employee engagement survey has IDEA components	Short-term 6 months In Progress	Director of Human Resources IDEA Committee to advise
Launch an employee “anniversary” interview process that takes aligns with the employee recognition program milestones (5, 10 years, etc) and ensure IDEA Committee can be a stakeholder in its development	Medium-term 2-3 years	Director of Human Resources IDEA Committee to advise Core Leadership Team to support
IDEA Committee to advise social committee on accessibility and inclusivity of social events	Ongoing	IDEA Committee Social Committee
Research feasibility of District ambassador program, encouraging and allowing staff to volunteer time with community organizations that are aligned with IDEA principles	Short term 1-2 years	Chief Administrative Officer

Objective 4: Recognize and honour our commitment to Truth and Reconciliation

Action	Timeline	Responsibility
Host or share specific ways to celebrate and honour National Indigenous People’s Day and National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (e.g cultural learning opportunities, community events, webinars, staff podcast, etc.)	Short-term 1-2 years Ongoing	Chief Administrative Officer IDEA Committee
IDEA Committee to offer learning opportunities specific to Squamish Nation history and how staff can support reconciliation efforts locally	Short-term 1-2 years Ongoing	Chief Administrative Officer IDEA Committee
IDEA Committee to share ongoing resources, training opportunities, and community and regional events related to Truth and Reconciliation and Cultural knowledge	Short-term 1-2 years Ongoing	Chief Administrative Officer IDEA Committee

Objective 5: Celebrate diversity amongst Staff

Action	Timeline	Responsibility
Honour and recognize major cultural events and days of importance	Short-term 1-2 years Ongoing	IDEA Committee Core Leadership Team to support Communication Department to support
IDEA Committee to support social committee to host more opportunities for meaningful connection, intercultural events, and learning opportunities	Short-term 1-2 years Ongoing	Social Committee IDEA Committee

GOAL #2

Education

All staff have a robust understanding of IDEA

Objective 1: Establish an IDEA training program for all staff to ensure all District of Squamish staff have a foundational understanding of inclusion-related concepts

Action	Timeline	Responsibility
Create and implement a full-day education experience on DoS Values including IDEA concepts for all staff	Medium-Term 2-3 years	Chief Administrative Officer Director of Human Resources IDEA Committee Core Leadership Team to support
Create an IDEA orientation session for new employees as part of onboarding process, and include specific training on Truth and Reconciliation	Short-Term 1-2 years	Chief Administrative Officer Director of Human Resources IDEA Committee
Create a schedule of regularly offered education opportunities that are immersive, accessible, and appropriate	Short-Term Ongoing	Chief Administrative Officer Director of Human Resources IDEA Committee
Offer specific training for supervisors and managers to ensure staff are supported in the workplace such as: psychological safety, cross cultural communication, power dynamics, managing diverse teams, etc.	Short-term Ongoing	Chief Administrative Officer Director of Human Resources Core Leadership Team IDEA Committee
Ensure organization-wide leadership development program has IDEA foundations	Medium-term 2-3 years In Progress	Director of Human Resources IDEA Committee to advise
Develop accountability framework for training (e.g. staff are required to take at least two IDEA trainings per year)	Short-term 1-2 years	Chief Administrative Officer Senior Leadership Team to support Human Resources Department to support
Regularly review and update IDEA resources and training to ensure materials are relevant, appropriate, and aligned with best practices	Short-term Ongoing Annually	IDEA Committee

Objective 2: Research and share resources with staff

Action	Timeline	Responsibility
Identify further areas of research for IDEA Committee such as racial justice and inclusivity; gender diversity; and workplace decolonization.	Ongoing	IDEA Committee
Increase awareness of IDEA Resources through SharePoint, Library, and community events/programs	Short-Term Ongoing	IDEA Committee

GOAL #3

Equity in Professional Development and Leadership - Pathways for growth and leadership are transparent and equitable

Objective 1: Develop a transparent and equitable succession planning program

Action	Timeline	Responsibility
Create an organization-wide leadership continuum program	Medium-term 2-3 years	Director of Human Resources Core Leadership Team to support
Create a transparent process for succession planning, a roadmap for leadership, growth, and development at the District	Medium-term 2-3 years	Director of Human Resources Core Leadership Team to support
Build a transparent competency framework for all roles outlining key behaviours, and support development of those competencies	Short-term 1-2 years In Progress	Director of Human Resources Core Leadership Team to support Senior Leadership Team to support
IDEA Committee to provide input into the development of key behaviours related to the diversity, and inclusion competencies in the competency framework	Short-term 1-2 years In Progress	IDEA Committee

Objective 2: Ensure that all permanent staff have formal and informal professional development opportunities

Action	Timeline	Responsibility
Introduce departmental presentations to SLT meetings	Short-Term 1-2 years	Chief Administrative Officer Core Leadership Team to support
Re-introduce formal employee evaluation/check in process where staff can identify their professional development goals, and learning needs	Short-Term 1-2 years	Director of Human Resources Core Leadership Team to support Senior Leadership Team to support
Develop and implement a professional development and training policy to ensure equitable access to learning and development opportunities	Medium-Term 2-3 years	Director of Human Resources

Objective 3: Ensure leadership fosters a safe environment for growth and development

Action	Timeline	Responsibility
Ensure there are behaviours in competency framework for leadership positions around "DEI" and psychological safety	Short-term 1-2 years In Progress	Director of Human Resources IDEA Committee to advise
Ensure Core and Senior leadership teams take Psychological Health and Safety Manager training	Medium-term 2-3 years	Director of Human Resources Core Leadership Team to support Senior Leadership Team to support

GOAL #4

People

Our internal policies, programs, and practices reflect IDEA principles

Objective 1: Review and update benefits and compensation offerings with an equity and inclusion lens

Action	Timeline	Responsibility
Review "family" in entitlement provisions	Short-term 1-2 years	Director of Human Resources
Review inclusive leave models (e.g cultural holidays)	Short-term 1-2 years	Director of Human Resources IDEA Committee to support
Include equity as an aspect in review of compensation	Short-term 1-2 years	Director of Human Resources
Review Employee Family Assistance Program (EFAP) models to identify which model suits the District of Squamish best	Short-term 1-2 years In Progress	Director of Human Resources

Objective 2: Implement recruitment and hiring practices that are inclusive

Action	Timeline	Responsibility
Implement Squamish Nation Recruitment Work Experience Pilot Program	Short-term 1-2 years In Progress	Director of Human Resources General Manager of Community Services IDEA Committee
HR to provide education and support to hiring managers on inclusive hiring practices (e.g understanding bias; Interviewing coaching)	Medium-term 2-3 years	Director of Human Resources IDEA Committee to support

Objective 3: Review policies with an inclusion lens

Action	Timeline	Responsibility
Develop schedule for the IDEA Committee to review policies for DEI gaps and inclusive language	Short- term 1-2 years In Progress	HR IDEA Committee
Update specific policies such as: conflict resolution processes, and dress code policy.	Medium-term 2-3 years	Director of Human Resources IDEA Committee to support

GOAL #5

Environments

Our physical and virtual work environments are accessible and inclusive

Objective 1: Improve our facilities to make them more accessible, inclusive, and safe

Action	Timeline	Responsibility
Establish an Accessibility committee and develop an Accessibility plan for the District as per the Accessible British Columbia Act (2021)	Short-term 1-2 years	Chief Administrative Officer
Include accessibility overview into orientation process (including allergies, phobias, accessibility needs, etc.)	Short-term 1-2 years	Director of Human Resources IDEA Committee to support
Increase awareness of individual supports (ergonomic assessments, tools for accessibility, etc.)	Short-term 1-2 years Ongoing	Director of Human Resources IDEA Committee to support
Update signage to include more inclusive wording and images (e.g. gender neutral wording; universal accessibility, etc.)	Short-term 1-2 years	Director of Communications General Manager of Community Services
Implement gender neutral washroom and changeroom facilities in municipal buildings	Ongoing In Progress as facilities are updated	Director of Facilities Planning & Construction

Objective 2: Ensure our virtual environments are accessible and inclusive

Action	Timeline	Responsibility
Increase awareness of electronic accessibility tools and resources	Short-term 1-2 years	Director of Human Resources Director of Information Technology
Increase diversity in electronic forms, webpages, and online training programs (e.g. allow characters beyond English alphabet; multiple options for gender identify)	Short-term 1-2 years	Director of Communications Director of Human Resources Director of Information Technology

NEXT STEPS

Accountability

To ensure this plan is implemented and actions are pursued, a lead department or position has been identified for each action. Where necessary, other departments have been identified to support. The status of the action plan, including updates on each objective will be reported annually. The CAO's Office will bring annual updates for Council's consideration as part of the regular annual reporting schedule. The IDEA Committee will review the status of the Strategy actions regularly, and a complete review and update of the Strategy will be completed biannually, in consultation with staff from across the organization.

Evaluation

Evaluating the impact of an inclusion strategy can be challenging as it requires a largely qualitative approach. To measure the impact of these actions over time, several questions in the staff engagement survey will be centred around belonging and inclusion. The first iteration of the staff engagement survey will be conducted in parallel to the initiation of this strategy. The results of the survey, specifically the questions related to belonging and inclusion will serve as a baseline measurement. Staff will continue to measure sentiments in this area year over year and continue to identify additional metrics for evaluation over time. Additionally, actions that are project based, such as the development of an education program, will have a unique evaluation process.

Measuring Diversity

Many organizations track personal identity metrics like age, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, ability, and education status for a multitude of reasons – one being to evaluate diversity. While this can be a worthwhile practice for some – the District of Squamish does not closely track or report on identity metrics at this time. Our goal with this Strategy is to enhance inclusion at the District of Squamish first; expand diversity in our workforce; and ensure that it is a safe, welcoming, inclusive space for people from all different backgrounds and experiences in which to thrive. In future, once gathering that information can be perceived as safe for individuals, we may track additional identity metrics, if it will support decision making efforts around inclusion and diversity.

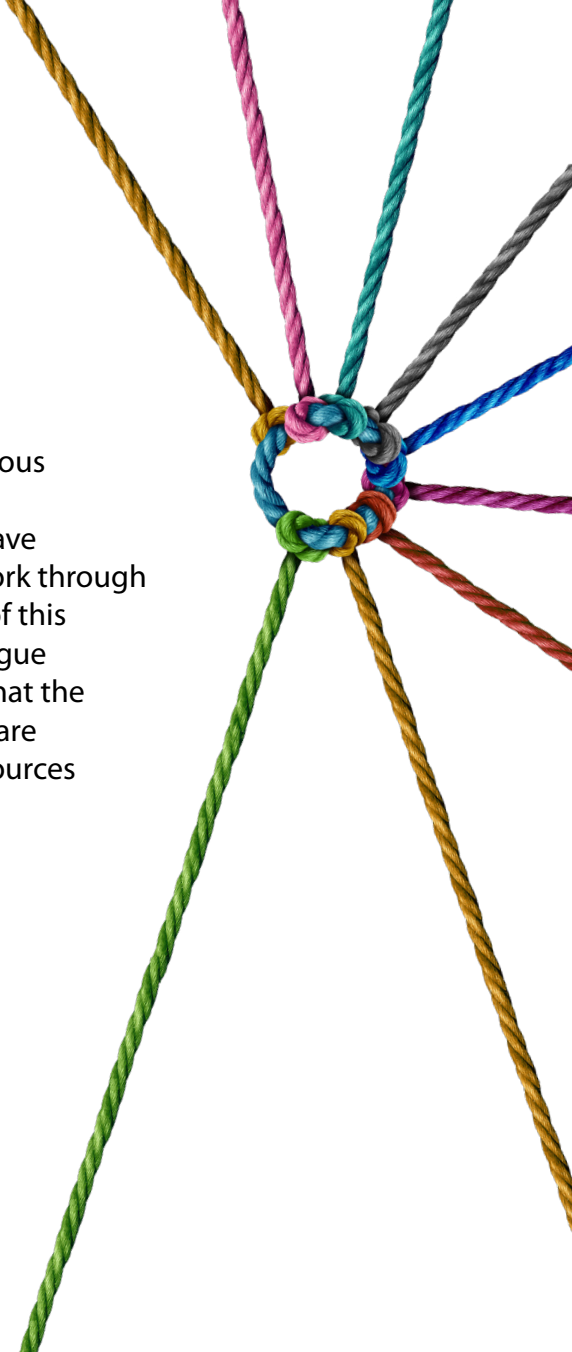


Together, We Create

CONCLUSION

The District of Squamish Inclusion Strategy – IDEAs in Action is an ambitious and vital step in an ongoing journey towards making the District a more diverse, inclusive, equitable, and accessible place to work. District staff have already demonstrated their interest, passion, and commitment to this work through the overwhelming feedback and ideas that went into the development of this Strategy. Staff from across the organization engaged in thoughtful dialogue about this Strategy with a sense of openness and curiosity. It is evident that the District of Squamish employees are eager to learn, gain knowledge, and are willing to make changes, if provided with the necessary support and resources to enable meaningful actions to strengthen and uphold inclusion in our workplace. It is with this approach that the District will be successful in making meaningful, structural changes that will support the IDEA goals.

This Strategy will continue to grow and change over time as the District's understanding of inclusion deepens, and the organization evolves. Staff will continue to build strong relationships between one another based in respect, kindness, and empathy.



End notes...

- 1 McKinsey (2020). [How diversity, equity, and inclusion \(DE&I\) matter | McKinsey](#)
- 2 McKinsey (2015). [Why diversity matters | McKinsey](#)
- 3 Harvard Business Review (2018). [To Retain Employees, Focus on Inclusion — Not Just Diversity \(hbr.org\)](#)
- 4 Future Forum (2021). [Building a connected organization - Future Forum](#)
- 5 Harvard Business Review (2022). <https://hbr.org/2022/05/recognizing-and-responding-to-microaggressions-at-work>
- 6 NPR -National Public Radio (2020). <https://www.npr.org/2020/06/08/872371063/microaggressions-are-a-big-deal-how-to-talk-them-out-and-when-to-walk-away>
- 7 Deloitte (2022). <https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/global/Documents/deloitte-2022-genz-millennial-survey.pdf>
- 8 Human Rights Campaign Foundation (2014). [Cost of the Closet May2014.pdf \(hrc.org\)](#)





SQUAMISH

HARDWIRED *for* ADVENTURE

District of Squamish

37955 Second Avenue | Squamish, BC
squamish.ca