

TOOLKIT **D&I**



.....

All the tips you need to use

Diversity and Inclusion

as a tool to promote
innovations and increase
the success of
your company.

.....

"More innovation,
more profitability,
more market share,
more tapped
markets.
All through
promoting
diversity
and inclusion."

(Harvard 2019, McKinsey 2020)

Dear reader,

Let's say you have two teams: one with people who look a lot alike, and one with people from all kinds of backgrounds, beliefs, colors and visions. Who would you want in your product innovations department?

You have founded your own company, or you are the entrepreneurial driving force of an organization. Whatever your role is, it gives you the opportunity to make an impact. Impact as a leader and impact through your business model. You don't make an impact by yourself. Together with your team, you pursue goals, of which the most important one is: unparalleled success. Right?

By now we don't need to tell you anymore that an inclusive and diverse work environment helps bring us closer to this unparalleled success much faster. The creativity within your organization skyrockets, resulting in an innovative and successful business.

We are not the only ones who say that. Numerous studies have shown this. Harvard has demonstrated that more diversity and more inclusion in teams leads to more innovation and more profitability. McKinsey showed the same in a 2020 study. The difference amounts to double-digit percentages. Market shares are rising and - this is where the power of diversity reveals itself even more - new markets are being entered more frequently.

Stop Talking Start Doing

Of course, we still need to talk about diversity and inclusion. Even if it feels like a hype. We absolutely need D&I to be able to cope with the challenges we will all be facing. More diversity and inclusion is not a goal. It is a tool on the road to success, on the road to greater creativity, on the road to solving problems and strengthening your entrepreneurship.

This toolkit contains **tools & tips** that you can use tomorrow to promote D&I within your organisation. We are not a big fan of using too many tools, it distracts from the business. So in this toolkit, we will be sharing the tools that really add value. There's no point in thinking too hard about it. It's mainly a matter of doing it. Start small, end big.

Kind regards,

Team NOM

Table of Contents

Start Strengthening Your Organization Today

The Context: How do you regulate more diversity and inclusion? 6

All tips for entrepreneurs 7

All tips for investors 13

All tips for ecosystem developers 18

All tips for knowledge institutions and government 21

The context

MINDSET

It's easy to come to a unanimous agreement about the power of D&I. It's easy to get a thumbs up to the question of whether organizations should therefore do something about it. That's great, but it's nothing more than an easy start. **The question of how is actually where the problems begin. The biggest challenge: making D&I an integral part of the organization, of the culture and of all its processes and systems.** And that goes beyond just appointing a committee or a manager.

We initiated conversations about the question of how, with inspiring players in the northern ecosystem. In various sessions and personal interviews, NOM spoke with entrepreneurs, investment managers, ecosystem developers, educational institutions and policy makers. **This resulted in concrete tools and tips on how D&I can be embedded in organizations for the benefit of the creativity and success of the company.** The common thread: every employee should feel "I contribute something when I'm here. I contribute to the success of this company." A key condition to successfully implementing D&I in the organization is creating an environment where everyone feels safe and can contribute something to the success of the company.

This requires a change in mindset. To have the courage to come out of your narrow little box. We have been so rigid for too long, so framed. It's really strange actually, because everything that has to do with coloring outside the lines, limitless thinking, is inherent in entrepreneurship. Have we become cumbersome, framed institutions? Surely not?

Entrepreneurs

Top 5 tools and tips you can start using tomorrow

Mirror, take it seriously and measure

.....

Of course, it's hard enough these days to get enough people. Let alone innovative and creative thinkers which - let's be honest - play an important role in the survival of your company. Still, it's worth putting extra energy into the composition of your teams. But how?

TIP 1 Do it yourself

.....

A director who says he insists on diversity but fills his own MT with people who look pretty much alike, accomplishes nothing. For leadership roles within your company, look at other people, people who do not look like you, people who are not an obvious choice. To a more diverse group of people. That sends a powerful signal. Appointing a committee or appointing a D and I manager is a nice first step, provided that you are willing to adopt the vision, recommendations and and advice and implement them at every level so that this way of thinking becomes habitual. Don't be too shy to ask for help so that you can continue to develop in it.

Entrepreneurs

TIP 2 Help new employees with an onboarding program

The first day of work is difficult for many. For those people who think differently in an organization (the diversity has to start somewhere), it's really difficult. Prevent them from becoming a struggling pioneer by offering a standard welcome or onboarding program. An onboarding program will provide guidance for at least 1 month. Schedule introductory meetings for the new employee, include him or her in relevant meetings, come up with a research question or a plan of action that needs to be completed, and also value "just do nothing" moments. Provide structure and support. By doing that, you can make sure someone lands safely in the organization. Did you know that for the first 100 days a new employee still looks at your company with an open mind and very quickly sees where the areas for improvement and success are? This is what you want to know, right? Ask him or her to write this down for you.

TIP 3 Strengthen your selection process

Go back and read those job ads: who are you actually looking for? These will often be typical job profiles, profiles that fit your organization exactly. That's not gonna help. Change your way of hiring, look primarily at someone's personality and mindset and make sure they don't look like yours. Conduct job interviews in different rounds with people from different departments, with different backgrounds. That provides different insights.

Entrepreneurs

TIP4 Set KPIs

.....

What exactly do you want to achieve? Define exactly what your organization means by diversity and attach clear goals to it. How many times a year do you talk about it, how fast should percentages change, what should it achieve? Most importantly, don't forget to celebrate the achievement of these KPIs!

TIP 5 Take a closer look at your products and services

.....

Who do you make your products or services for as an entrepreneur? Let other people than the usual suspects look at your offerings and your marketing strategy! For example, put together a participation team that consists of a mixed group of potential customers and ask this group very specifically about the needs and problems they are experiencing with the current offerings available on the market. What solutions or solution directions do they need? And how can your company respond to this? This way, you can avoid overlooking potential customers or markets. It helps if you already employ those "other people". A more diverse staff provides a more diverse way of looking at product development and successfully entering new markets.

Entrepreneurs

Creating the most diverse teams possible results in an agile business, more revenue and innovation, a work environment where everyone can contribute to better results and therefore a brighter future for your company.

Creating an inclusive work environment is crucial if you want your organization to continue to grow. Because: people from all walks of life who feel comfortable, heard and who can be themselves, produce the best work. And – to throw in a cliché – together they are more than the sum of their parts. They learn from each other, discover new things, dare to lead the way.

We all want that. But how do you manage that? By making the subject important. That's the simplest answer. It takes time, energy and attention. It is a process in which every step is important.

More tips that are worth going through:

- Keep talking about it, especially with people who think that everything is already arranged perfectly.
- Appoint a confidential advisor who is truly independent.
- Share knowledge in the form of best practices.
- Assemble a group of internal and external people who care about the topic and do something with their advice.
- Constantly ask employees and customers about their needs and translate this into an ongoing development of your products and services.

Entrepreneurs

- Give employees more ownership by asking them the question "Dream Big", we have unlimited money and resources at our disposal, where would our company be in 5 years? And "Start Smaller", what actions can you outline for the next 6 months to make this happen? You will be amazed at what great tips your employees have for you. Let yourself be inspired!
- Take a closer look at all your hiring channels; have all of your job ads reviewed by a diverse group.
- Conduct regular anonymous employee and customer satisfaction surveys to identify blind spots.
- Sponsor events that are related to diversity and inclusion.
- Pay extra attention to your hiring policy for interns.
- Ask yourself: what combination of skills do I need, not which combination of people.
- Look at what people can do, not their resume.
- Pay attention to the way you address people, including in meetings. Is everyone equally well represented?
- Be mindful of the (physical) accessibility of your business.
- Limit the term of office of the members of your Supervisory Board and Board of Commissioners, so that this group is also renewed regularly and continues to look at things in an innovative way.
- Choose an investor that suits you.
- Your competitors are not scary, work together with (very) different companies to broaden your perspective and discover new opportunities.
- Take a look at your own (private) network, do you come out of your own bubble sometimes?

Entrepreneurs

- Keep telling people what diversity and inclusion can create.
- Are you starting a new business, a spin-off? That's an opportunity to do things differently and start with a diverse team. The North has plenty of successful examples. Better yet, today's job market demands it of you. The NOM has plenty of successful examples.

Read more:

.....

- Onzichtbare vrouwen [Invisible Women], Caroline Criado Perez | 9789044642711 | Books | bol.com
- Including design update: "Framework: Including Design" (greenberry.nl)
- <https://codedi.nl/artikel-training/handreiking-waarden-voor-een-nieuwe-taal/>

Investors

Top 5 tools and tips you can start using tomorrow

Realize, change and use

Investors and banks have an important role to play in making start-ups and existing businesses more diverse. But they still have quite a few miles to go. But where do you start?

TIP 1 Lower the thresholds

Lower the thresholds for (starting) entrepreneurs. That way, you also reach a target audience that doesn't usually knock on your door. Plenty of people with excellent ideas don't know their way around, or simply don't go places where you as an investor are present. They are often exactly the people who make the startup scene more diverse - and therefore more powerful.

Spotlight projects with diverse teams, actively seek out female interns who want to learn about the VC world (even if they are from the Randstad area), involve experts from diverse backgrounds, and identify fields in which mixed teams and female teams are active. Start acquiring here and proactively solve the innovation gap.

Investors

TIP 2 Don't get stuck

How is your investment club doing? Does it represent different ages, backgrounds, genders, religions, orientations and other differences? There is a good chance that the answer is: not enough. It is therefore only logical that the investment money would go to a not very diverse group. In fact, an annoying human trait is that we mostly trust people who look like us. Measure the rejection rate of men versus women, old versus young, and so on. And learn from it. It might be a good idea to set a term for investment committees. That's how you get through biases and looks.

TIP 3 F*ck the resume

It might be easier for a serial entrepreneur to get investment money than for an unknown startup. That has everything to do with investors' assumptions. F*ck the resume! Take a serious look at people who are different, give them a chance. Even that deviant personality, who already failed in a previous life, deserves another opportunity. As an investment organization, set goals for yourself. What percentage of the shares does a diverse team have?

Investors

TIP 4 Listen

.....

Now that we know that none of us can get past our own biases, the next step is to have someone else take a look at it. And I mean really someone else. Gather a group of internal and external people who are involved in inclusion and diversity and let them advise you. An open door: the more diverse the group, the better the advice. A fresh perspective on an investment application can bring exceptional results. For example, you can actively involve a female entrepreneur in the investment policy and approach. Or more actively seek connections with startup communities and facilitators to hear the needs of the market and respond to them. What do entrepreneurs need? What are their needs when it comes to raising capital?

TIP 5 Measuring is knowing

.....

By making things objective, you can see what's going on and what you can do about it. Who evaluated which teams, what about the percentage of rejections by gender/background/religious preference or whatever, is there a difference in the amount of investments that were pledged? Good finger exercise: make applications anonymous and see if the results are the same.

Investors

Several studies show that diverse teams perform better (even though women in particular are still raising much less investment money). The question is: How do we achieve this result? And then the cat is out of the bag, because that's when our prejudices come into play. And they can't just be turned off. A good start is to realize that we simply have prejudices. Don't think, "I'm not like that, for me diversity and inclusion is something completely natural and I can really look at things objectively," because that's just not true.

The only way to really make strides is to constantly be aware of your own images and expectations of different people. Give someone who doesn't fit your mold, but that does have the perfect profile for your challenge, a chance too and then see what great things can come of it!

And take it even a little further. Use your position to convince the entrepreneurs you talk to of the power of diversity. Because once again: it produces better results.

Investors

More tips that are worth going through:

- Encourage start-ups to set up advisory boards. That way they can still involve people from other backgrounds in their company.
- Look at your own team of investors: more diversity leads to a more diverse portfolio
 - And don't be afraid to seek your own advice about improving diversity in participation
- Think about the question: which types together form the most creative team?
- Put the spotlight on diverse start-ups as an example.
- Take a look at new networks.
- Involve minorities from the entrepreneurial world in the investment policy
- Commit to investing a higher percentage in other sectors than you are used to.
- Look beyond the background and the business plan; present a candidate with a serious case.
- Create a KPI on making your portfolio more diverse.
- Towards participations and applicants, keep hammering on the economic benefits of diversity and inclusion.

Ecosystem developers

Top 5 tools and tips you can start using tomorrow

Look, measure and determine

For organisations and institutions that support entrepreneurs, diversity and inclusion has to be high on the list. Not because of ethics, but because striving to have the most diverse company possible is good for those entrepreneurs, and therefore for the entire ecosystem. But how do you get there?

TIP 1 Lead the way

Entrepreneurs are certainly willing to accept all kinds of things, but advice on diversity from an organization that is not diverse itself, nobody is going to buy that. So it's time to take a good look at your own organization. Is your own company in order? You already know what diversity does for a company. What would you advise your own organization? Follow your own advice for a change.

TIP 2 Turn things around

In continuation of point 1, it is a good idea to look very carefully at the composition of your committees that deal with grants and scholarships. The more distinction there is between the different members, the more likely it is that the entrepreneurs who successfully apply will also form a diverse group.

Ecosystem developers

TIP 3 Make it measurable

Objectivity does not exist, striving towards it does. Examine which applications were rejected, which support was given to whom and by whom. This allows you to objectify what processes are prevalent within your organization and to conclude whether that benefits the diversity of applicant entrepreneurs. If not, it's time to take a critical look at it.

TIP 4 Demand

Don't want to work on diversity? No subsidy. That's how hard you could make it for entrepreneurs who are looking for support in the form of money, advice or whatever. It's okay to put conditions on that. Include in a contract that support will only be given if it is certain that the applicant will work to promote diversity within their organization.

TIP 5 Check your communication

How do you ensure that entrepreneurs know about your offer? I'm sure someone devised a really great text for that, but does it appeal to your broadest target audience? To reach enterprising minds that are different, it might be necessary to make a video, or write all the texts in English. That is an easy way to appeal to other groups. Just think of all those foreign talents that you don't reach in Dutch.

Ecosystem developers

Grant providers, consulting firms, government agencies and whatnot can play an active role in achieving this goal. That's a really great idea, because we need everything and everyone to strengthen the entrepreneurial (Northern) Netherlands through diversity and inclusion. Room to think, "that's not my role" needs to be curtailed. But how do we do that, promote diversity and inclusion, seemingly from the sidelines? By continuing to hammer on it and incorporating it into any and all advice. And perhaps by increasing the pressure here and there. That's how.

More tips that are worth going through:

- Four successes of varied companies within your ecosystem is great.
- Facilitate uncomfortable conversations, especially when it comes to opinions that you don't like.
- Make connections between very different organizations within the ecosystem possible, so that it creates diverse units. Work together on projects that generate new insights and energy.
- Organise a knowledge base where entrepreneurs and organisations can go to learn more about diversity and inclusion.
- Set up a work group to actually help organisations broaden their horizons.
- Support events that encourage diversity and inclusion.
- Set quotas when forming committees to review grant applications for innovations.
- Give committee members temporary appointments.
- Make diversity a requirement, both internally and for companies seeking support.

Knowledge institutions and governments

Top 5 tools and tips **you can start using tomorrow**

Knowledge institutions and government: **Learn, show and give**

.....

More diversity and inclusion are desperately needed in the workplace, but it already starts at school. That is where ingrained prejudices need to be exposed, that is where people need to be made aware, that is where differences need to be encouraged. The government is no different. After all, they should be leading by example.

What can you do tomorrow (and the next few days)?

TIP 1 Set up a hotline

.....

If you really want to get started on encouraging diversity, you need to take any complaints and comments that are standing in the way of diversity seriously. The threshold for reporting situations should be as low as possible.

Establishing a hotline is just the beginning; widely disseminating information about it is the next step. Acting on these findings is what makes a difference.

Knowledge institutions and governments

TIP 2 Learn it

.....

And not as a separate subject, but incorporated into the entire curriculum. This is not a topic that comes up a few times a week, but rather a starting point that needs to be hammered on continuously. Diversity and inclusion are normal, not something that's unusual.

TIP 3 Open your arms

.....

The educational system and the government have considerable steps to take themselves, some of which are not that difficult. To be open, the curriculum needs to be adjusted so that everyone can participate and feel welcome. Think of digital accessibility, language support and more. Within the government, this is also the most important starting point: make sure that everyone feels useful. This can be done by removing thresholds and facilitating that people of every walk of life can do whatever they are good at.

TIP 4 Address internship discrimination

.....

Students deserve a fair chance in the job market. All students. Educational institutions have a role to play in this. They can improve the start of young people entering the workforce by addressing internship discrimination. Talk to employers about the importance of value-free access to the labor market.

Knowledge institutions and governments

TIP 5 **Lead the charge**

In order to change our society in a positive way, we need young people. But why should they take action when they see that the top of their own educational system has dropped the ball? Ensure the widest possible representation at the highest positions. This is even more important in government. Which would ideally be a true reflection of society. Make it measurable to what extent this is a reality in your organization.

Startups often originate at a knowledge institution. That is why there is a responsibility to train fresh entrepreneurs in diversity and inclusion. Showing that teams perform better when they are diverse is already doing a lot.

The daily education program offers great opportunities to "normalize" diversity and inclusion. Students and schoolchildren who get used to the fact that everyone is allowed to be there and should be given the same opportunities, grow up to be more conscious people, who are capable of making improvements to society.

And improvements in society, that's exactly what the government stands for. The motto "a better world begins with yourself" applies at every level. From imposing quotas to eventually even passing legislation to promote diversity, it's all in the hands of the government. It starts with looking at your own organization, and asking the question: how well are we actually doing ourselves?

Knowledge institutions and governments

More tips that are worth going through:

- Allow groups from different departments to contribute ideas. Young and old, dark and light, man and woman.
- Campaign within your own organization. Hammer on the importance of diversity and inclusion and show time and time again why it is important and useful.
- Start at the bottom and at the top. Create diverse teams, but don't skip the board.
- Put together a brochure to explain what diversity and inclusion means within your organization.
- Help entrepreneurial students to be more active in finding entrepreneurial help.
- Organize a marathon session with different broadly composed teams to come up with a rewards program to promote diversity
- Make room for a specialist who cares about stimulating diversity and inclusion.
- Look for unorthodox ways to make teams more diverse, take a look at sectors where that works well.
- Within teams and during lectures, hammer on the economic benefits of diversity and inclusion.
- Pay attention to the (physical) accessibility.
- Make sure that the information is also available in English.
- Municipalities and provinces: you have an exemplary role. Hold yourself "accountable" for what is being achieved.
- In many areas, the cultural sector is already further along than the business world. Use people's experiences in that sector.

Good. So now what?

Now it's your turn. Choose a few tools from the box and get started. Don't let it stop you, even if it's not always easy. Because you know: this is going to help me move me forward, this is going to make my organization better.

We are very curious to see which steps you will take! Keep us posted, so we can learn from it too, just like everyone else in our network.

Colophon

This toolkit was developed by Leonie Ebbes (NOM) and Jellie Tiemersma, Personal Too, in collaboration with a large number of relationships and partners.

Texts: Jean Paul Taffijn.

Design: Manisch Creatief.