



DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

Phase 1: Strategic Imperative



like no
other.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION is not only the right thing to do, it is the SUSTAINABLE thing to do. It creates space for innovation, creativity, and excellence.

The success of Toronto Humane Society's strategic plan for 2020-2025 is dependent on multiple critical success factors such as putting our animals and people first, engaging hearts and minds of staff and volunteers, and building trusted relationships with our stakeholders.

Who are our stakeholders? They are:

- Our Employees
- Our Volunteers (including Board of Directors)
- Our Customers and Clients
- Our Supporters and Donors
- Our communities
- Our Partners



Our new strategic plan for 2020 to 2025 is about shifting the focus from solely delivering animal welfare programs to contributing to both animal and human welfare programs. A strong commitment to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, and a working DEI strategy will help us deliver and will act as a means to address other areas:

Improving the Lives of the Animals and Enriching the Human-Animal Bond

Toronto Humane Society's vision is to be a leader in animal welfare, working for a compassionate society where all animals are respected and valued. What we often forget is humans are our fuel and keep our cause running. A DEI Plan will ensure humans feel valued, supported, included, and heard, which will preserve the integrity of the human animal-bond, improving the lives of both.

People and Engagement

In any organization, how engaged people are directly impacts their productivity, and productivity in turn drives strategic outcomes. The results from the first three employee engagement surveys show an incremental growth in employee satisfaction, however, there are still concerns and there is always scope to improve employee morale and satisfaction. Also, with the volunteer engagement surveys, we have seen an increase in engagement from 2019 to 2020 but there are still some volunteers who want more support, and want to feel more connected. A DEI plan will help by giving them inclusive spaces to function.

Fundraising, a Key External Business Driver

Almost 85% of our financial budget is supported by donations from individuals (in form of online giving, monthly giving, telephone raising, gifts, and events). The analysis undertaken as part of Toronto Humane Society's strategic planning process has shown decreasing donor support as a prominent threat. Showcasing commitment to DEI (externally and internally) and putting effective DEI practices in place can help us **to attract diverse donors with different backgrounds and views**, leading to an increase in funding.



Recognition as a Leading Center for Learning, Knowledge Creation, and Sharing

With our concentrated intervention and focus on DEI, we will eventually become an outstanding leader in our sector, **an institution that sets an example for the animal sector from a DEI perspective**, and a major resource for other organizations, giving them and us the opportunity to collaborate and grow together.

An Opportunity to Diversify Our Clients

According to a report released by Canadian Pet Market Outlook 2014, almost half (if not more in some cases) of the Canadian pet owners are racialized. However, at Toronto Humane Society, a surface level analysis shows that we have not been serving a diverse group of clients and pet owners. A DEI plan will give us the chance **to tap into this underserved pool**, thereby addressing this missed opportunity.

A Community-Led Organization

Our society is quite heterogeneous in terms of backgrounds, culture, economic status, etc. At the moment, we are not prepared to optimize this diversity. A well thought out DEI plan will help us in equipping our employees and volunteers with the right knowledge and skills to deal with our diverse communities. It will help us to move from **a community-based organization to a community-led organization**, *from a space where we define what our communities need, to a space where our communities feel free to identify their needs, communicate them to us without hesitation, and ask for any support they require.*

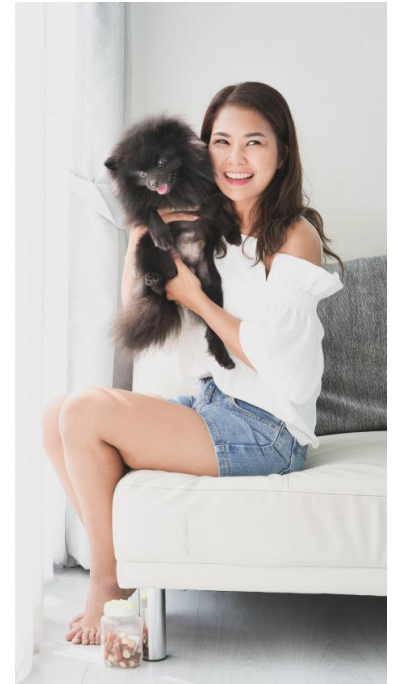
Representation

According to Statistics Canada, 50% of Toronto's population is ethno-cultural. For us, this fact poses various questions:

- Are we, Toronto Humane Society, representative of Toronto's population?
- How are we planning to attract and retain candidates who are increasingly reflective of Toronto's diverse population? How will we address issues within our diverse communities if we don't bring in individuals with varying views and distinct knowledge?
- Do diverse stakeholders perceive us as a welcoming organization?

A DEI plan will play a huge role in providing us with a road map to tackle the above important concerns. a workplace needs to be representative of the community and the society it serves. Studies have shown a diverse and inclusive workforce can bring skills, talent, and experiences that contribute to an organization's overall success. A more inclusive culture feeds into (and draws from) a wider talent pool. Also, if candidates perceive a workplace as alienating - whether through research or interviews - they are less likely to join or stay in that environment.

The above points clearly demonstrate that actively committing to DEI and creating an inclusive environment will help us to move multiple steps closer to fulfilling Toronto Humane Society's intent of being an exemplar of care and contributor to the capacity of the sector, improving the lives of animals and people, and shaping a better world.



The process to create and execute a DEI program for Toronto Humane Society has been inspired by **Michael Bach's (Founder and CEO, CCDI-Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion) newly published book, Birds of All Feathers: Doing Diversity and Inclusion Right**. A huge thank you to him for authoring this book, it is an excellent guide for all organizations starting their DEI journey. if you are interested to know more about the process and ideology, buy the book [here](#).

You can also refer to **CCDI's toolkit to create a strategic imperative**. Click [here](#) for more details on this part of the process.

