

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: The First Mile.

"Our ability to reach unity in diversity will be the beauty and the test of our civilization" Mahatma Gandhi

Studies have proven that diverse and inclusive businesses are more innovative, more resilient, and more competitive in the market. But **many companies don't know where or how to start**. Learn how to get your diversity and inclusion program off the ground.

Why Invest in a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Program?

Businesses perform better when workplaces are Diverse, Equitable, and inclusive. *Studies show increases in revenue, innovation, and recruiting/retention of top talent*

[Josh Bersin](#) of Deloitte Consulting noted that diverse and inclusive companies “are not just ‘better at HR,’ – they are higher performing companies measured by business, financial, and talent outcomes.”

- Companies with more diverse management teams have 19% higher revenues due to innovation. ([Boston Consulting Group Study](#))
- Inclusive companies are 1.7 times more likely to be innovation leaders in their market. ([Josh Bersin](#))
- Gender-diverse companies are 15% more likely to outperform their peers and ethnically-diverse companies are 35% more likely to do the same. ([McKinsey Study](#))
- Diverse and Inclusive workplaces attract and retain top talent. 47% of Millennials consider Diversity and Inclusion an important factor when searching for a new job ([Weber Shandwick Study](#))

Businesses can make a significant impact on at-risk communities. *These impacts can last generations.*

COVID 19 hit minority communities disproportionately in the United States:

- In April 2020, less than half of the adult black population in the United States had a job. ([Economic Policy Institute](#))
- More than 45 percent of Black and Latino adults said that in the past month their families experienced material hardship; such as food insecurity or the inability to fully pay their mortgage, rent, or utilities—almost double the share of white adults and their families. ([Urban Institute](#))

Aiming for High Impact *and* Low Risk.

Business leaders want to make an positive impact but are concerned missteps can impact their legal risk, or worse, their reputation.

We get it, a DEI program is complicated. Leaders often ask questions like these:

- Can I target specific job candidates characteristics without discriminating against others?
- How do I eliminate bias when resumes are full of indicators of one's identity?
- How can I get honest and candid feedback from under-represented groups on their experience within my company?
- How do I maintain fairness in the promotion process while still specifically advocating for diversity in leadership?
- How can I help prevent feelings of loneliness, disillusionment, and disappointment for diverse individuals?
- I love the idea of affinity groups, but do they make people feel even more isolated? How do I make them effective and empowering?
- Should I ask candidates about their race, sexual preference, etc, if that's the type of diversity i'm looking for?
- Can an organization sponsor or support specific diversity-focused organizations like Black Lives Matter, NAACP, or others? Is there legal risk by doing so?
- Im worried about reverse-discrimination, and the impact it may have on my workforce. How do we avoid it?
- How do I communicate the importance of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusions to my non-diverse workforce?

Why don't more businesses have DEI programs?

Diversity, Equity, and inclusion programs can be complex and legally challenging.

Under federal, state, and local antidiscrimination laws, companies are prohibited from making hiring decisions on the basis of race, national origin/citizenship, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender, or disability. How, then, can you proactively foster more diversity?

- Hiring a minority applicant over a non-minority applicant because of the minority applicant's race is prohibited, even if the hiring decision was made in a good faith effort to increase the representation of an underrepresented group in the workplace
- Even Affirmative Action Plans made in compliance with the law may be illegal if they impede the interests of employees without protected characteristics, or are used to maintain racial balance.
- While hiring on the basis of race or sex is prohibited, many businesses are *required* to ask employees, but not applicants, for their race and sex -- and must report that data to the EEOC annually

The law allows businesses to take certain measures to increase diversity and inclusion in the workplace, but businesses must tread very carefully to avoid breaking the law. SixFifty and Wilson Sonsini have the requisite expertise to help you understand your options, and build a plan that's right for your business -- all from a single dashboard.

What kind of Investment do I need to make in DEI?

Diversity, Equity, and inclusion programs can be expensive and inaccessible.

Traditional Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion solutions can be prohibitively expensive. According to the Society for Human Resource Management, [“Costs can range from \\$10,000 to more than \\$2 million.”](#)

- While there are many options for “Diversity Training,” resources for the legal framework required to implement a DEI plan can be harder to find.
- Because attorney and consultant costs can vary significantly, many businesses are unable to plan and budget for these expenses.
- Most organizations don’t have a clear understanding of their current DEI, what they need to do, or where to start.
- An effective DEI program requires buy-in at every level of an organization, but the value of DEI can be difficult to communicate.

Many companies, even those that recognize the value of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, are overwhelmed by the costs and complexity of traditional means to improve DEI. Affordable solutions are difficult to find, particularly in the wake of the COVID pandemic and its economic impacts.

Office closures, remote work, and other effects of the COVID pandemic also present logistical barriers to traditional Diversity and Inclusion solutions.

How can SixFifty help with my DEI program?

SixFifty is the technology subsidiary of the law firm Wilson Sonsini, consistently recognized as one of the most Diverse, Equitable, and inclusive law firms in the country.

In cooperation with Wilson Sonsini's Employment Law attorneys, Diversity Team, and Affinity Groups, SixFifty's toolset delivers world class legal expertise and best practices in an affordable, streamlined solution.



SixFifty helps you perform an Assessment and create a Plan of Action

SixFifty's Assessment and Plan of Action help you understand the legal landscape related to Equal Employment Opportunity in the workplace, then plan how to diversify your workforce and create a more inclusive company culture. This is accomplished through a web-based questionnaire and Plan of Action document generated upon completion. The questionnaire is comprehensive, covering Federal laws and regulations, as well as best practices.

SixFifty helps you communicate your DEI plan to employees.

Employee communication is critical to a successful DEI plan. From surveying employees, to managing complaints and feedback, SixFifty's toolset an intuitive platform and auditable system of record.



SixFifty will provide the tools you need to implement your DEI plan.

SixFifty's DEI Assessment, Plan of Action, Legal Policies, Documents, and Employee Communication Tools, are all accessed from a single dashboard. Training, Consultation, and access to Wilson Sonsini attorneys, are available through SixFifty as well at an affordable cost.

Visit SixFifty.com today for more information and to schedule a free demo. Turn your good intentions into action, and take the lead on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

