

Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Public Relations Institute of Australia

15 November 2016



pria.com.au

PRIA's commitment to the public relations and communication industry

The Public Relations Institute of Australia is the peak body for the public relations and communication profession. The Institute represents public relations and communication professionals and consultancies, and tertiary education institutions, providing a strong framework for professional development, and promotion and advocacy for an increasingly diverse profession.

The PRIA is proud to deliver an Australian first - the industry's first Diversity and Inclusion policy. This will be a living document that will act as a point of reference for progress, and a standard that will be used to promote the benefits of diversity and inclusion.

Diversity and inclusion are increasingly at the heart of many of the programs that the PRIA members develop and promote, and are central to the organisations that benefit from embedding these behaviours.

The PRIA is committed to the promotion of the PRIA Diversity and Inclusion policy to members and the broader profession. The PRIA will develop and provide programs that promote Diversity and Inclusion to address systemic gaps, while promoting ways in which individual members can influence the communities that they work and live in.

The PRIA will work closely with industry stakeholders to address areas of concern, while providing members with the tools and programs to take it upon themselves to action areas under their influence. The PRIA will track and report on this policy every two years.

The PRIA thanks senior leaders within the industry and key subject experts who have contributed to the development of this policy, and who will champion the PRIA Diversity and Inclusion Policy into their communities.

What is diversity and inclusion in the workplace?

In the context of this policy, diversity and inclusion refers to acceptance and respect of the differences between people in the workplace. These differences can include gender identity and intersex status, Indigeneity, age, cultural background, religion, sexual orientation, family or carer status and physical, health and mental abilities.

Why PRIA members are committed to diversity and inclusion in the public relations and communications industry?

Simply put, because it's the right thing to do. We believe it's important to provide work environments where people from different backgrounds and personal circumstances are valued, free from prejudice, and able to work and contribute successfully.

As an industry, we advise organisations on how to engage audiences of all types. To ensure our communication activities are authentic and credible, it is our priority to ensure our workforce is reflective of the diverse Australian population.

Drawing on a diverse range of experiences, abilities, viewpoints and beliefs is crucial to fostering creativity and innovation in public relations and communications – which are all crucial to the growth and longevity of our industry.

Finally, commitment to diversity and inclusion leads to more engaged employees, which helps attract and retain talent, and deliver sustainable benefits to organisations.

HOW DIVERSE IS OUR INDUSTRY IN 2016? *INSIGHTS INTO ACTION*

As part of the development of this policy, PRIA undertook a survey of 500 practitioners to measure the current makeup of the industry. The survey found that while the industry performs well in terms of flexible working, Indigenous and LGBTQI participation, there is work to do in other areas, such as attraction and inclusion of people with a disability and encouraging people over 45 to remain in or join the industry. There was one standout from the survey which the PRIA has adopted as an area of key focus – addressing the gender imbalance.

Gender balance is a growing concern for the industry, as it appears the number of males entering the industry are dropping. Further research is required to appreciate what career paths men are taking in our industry, so that more education and employment pathways can be more clearly recognised and encouraged.

If this trend is not addressed as a matter of priority the participation rates for men will continue to decline.

ACTIVELY ADDRESS THE INDUSTRY'S GENDER IMBALANCE

The Australian public relations and communications industry is predominantly female with strong representation at management and executive levels.



Insight: The public relations and communications industry is undergoing a generational gender shift – while numbers of men and women are even in the 44-54 age bracket, men aged under 25 represent just 18% of practitioners. Some 81% of industry practitioners have a university degree or higher.



Action: Partner with educational institutions to recruit more males into communication, media and other recognised degrees; explore and accredit additional pathways into public relations and communications, eg VET courses and technical qualifications. Actively engage and profile male members of the industry with the aim of increasing consideration from young males.



Target: The proportion of men aged under 25 rises to 40% by 2025.

PROMOTE WORK LIFE INTEGRATION

To encourage people of all backgrounds to work long-term in our industry, it's important that we provide them with the flexibility to meet their changing life needs – parenting, caring, work, study, volunteering and personal interests.



Insight: Some 60% of our workforce already utilise flexible working (including part-time, remote working and flexible work hours); but the majority of these are parents. Further, 89% of practitioners say flexible working is important for all staff.



Action: Highlight best practice among practitioners, promote new technologies that allow flexibility, encourage members to expand flexible working to all staff.

SUPPORT AND PROMOTE PARTICIPATION OF OUR NATION'S FIRST PEOPLE

PRIA acknowledges the traditional custodians of Australia and recognises that Indigenous disadvantage continues to be a challenge. We recognise the benefits of inclusion of Indigenous culture into the fabric of organisations, and we will continue to welcome and support Indigenous practitioners.



Insight: Indigenous representation in our industry is on par with the general population.



Action: Seek out and promote internships, scholarships, and mentoring programs to foster Indigenous participation.

ENCOURAGE CROSS GENERATIONAL DIVERSITY

Each generation brings a range of communication references, approaches and preferences, and the PRIA recognises that practitioners of all ages make valuable contributions to public relations and communications.



Insight: Some 67% of our workforce is aged 44 and under, and just 14% is aged over 54.



Action: To encourage people of all ages to continue working in our industry, the PRIA will educate against unconscious bias in hiring methods and develop and promote participation in inter-generational mentoring programs.

EMBRACE DIFFERENT CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS

Australia's population is made up of a rich variety of cultural backgrounds. In order to engage these audiences effectively and authentically, the PRIA is committed to encouraging people from all ethnic and religious backgrounds to join the public relations and communications industry. Further, we want to actively recognising the unique insights, perspectives and knowledge individuals from diverse cultural background provide.



Insight: Some 52% of our workforce was born in Australia compared with 41% of the general population. Some 51% of public relations and communications practitioners say they have no religion, compared to 25% of the general population.



Action: To encourage people of all backgrounds into our industry, the PRIA will educate against unconscious bias in hiring methods, as well as profiling both members from a range of backgrounds and campaigns that embrace cultural diversity.

CONTINUE TO WELCOME LGBTQI PEOPLE

The PRIA recognises that all employees, including lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual and intersex (LGBTQI) 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. We want LGBTQI people to know that they are not just valued and welcomed, but empowered to think freely and to be themselves.



Insight: The proportion of our industry that identifies as diverse in sexual orientation, gender or identity is 18%, higher than the general population at 11%.



Action: Continue to welcome LGBTQI people to the industry, and promote the industry to others.

MAKE OUR WORKPLACES ACCESSIBLE

Some 4.2 million Australians have a disability, a number which is likely to increase as our population ages. To better understand, represent and draw on the expertise and experience of these people, the PRIA is committed to increasing their representation in our workforce.



Insight: Just 6% of practitioners identify as having a disability compared with 18% of the general population.



Action: Seek out and promote ways to include more people with a disability, including modifications to workplaces, flexible working, specialist equipment and support programs.

More information

Contact Blake Mason
National Marketing and Communication Manager
Public Relations Institute of Australia
blake.mason@pria.com.au // +61 2 9331 3346