

# **We Belong Here**

## **GLA Workforce Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2022-25**

### **Key information**

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## **1. Our EDI Strategy**

### **GLA Statement on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion from the Chief Officer, Mary Harpley**

London is best served by a GLA that is equal, diverse, representative and inclusive.

Our aim is to create a fairer, more equal city for all Londoners – whatever a person's race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, disability or socioeconomic background. To do this to the best of our ability, we must have a workforce that reflects London's diversity.

The keys to our success include our knowledge of the lived experience of Londoners; the breadth of our perspectives; our reach into communities; and our capacity to innovate to bring about positive change. These all depend on us attracting and retaining amazing staff, at all levels and in all teams, who collectively represent the city we serve.

Being an inclusive organisation is central to our values. We want all staff to have the same, positive experience of working, progressing, and feeling they belong in the GLA. We want everyone to be respected for who they

are, and to be able to have their voice heard. We are determined to eliminate our ethnic, disability and gender pay gaps, and we value the contributions of our many brilliant staff networks. We are committed to being an anti-racist organisation. We do not tolerate discrimination in any form.

Until our workforce is representative of London, and until all staff have the same, positive experience of working here, we have more to do. We are committed to taking all possible steps to ensure that our entire workforce fully reflects the diversity of London.

That means that, more than ever, we need to put equality, diversity and inclusion at the heart of how we work and how we engage with each other. This means we:

- expect all managers to contribute proactively to embedding an inclusive culture at the GLA, and will hold them to account for this
- expect all staff to take personal responsibility for understanding and appreciating colleagues whose lives, for whatever reason, are different from their own
- ensure our core recruitment, progression, learning and development, and other processes are fair to all current and prospective members of staff
- ensure there are spaces for discussion where staff can share their lived experiences of working at the GLA directly with senior management; this will help ensure their voices are heard
- all be responsible for speeding our progress towards being an equal, diverse, representative and inclusive GLA in the coming year, by meeting our own objectives.

We will be a better, more effective organisation for being a truly inclusive one.

## **2. What do equality, diversity and inclusion mean to us, and why does it matter?**

We want and need a working environment that is welcoming, open and safe for all staff – one where everyone can be themselves, give their best work and progress their career.

We appreciate and celebrate the positive value that the diversity of our workforce brings, in all its variety. That diversity enriches the organisation. It also means we can better serve all Londoners through the GLA's policies to achieve a fairer and more equal capital city.

We know that structural discrimination persists in our society; and that inequality continues to affect the lived experience of our staff, both personally and professionally. We know that this experience of discrimination can be altered and compounded by our many identities.

We are determined to tackle inequality in all its forms – including inequality because of age; caring responsibilities; disability; ethnicity; gender; gender identity and gender expression; marriage and civil partnership; nationality and accent; pregnancy and maternity; religion or belief; sexual orientation; and socio-economic background. We have a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, harassment, victimisation and bullying in any form, and are committed to becoming an anti-racist organisation.

As an organisation we will work to tackle the barriers that prevent staff from different backgrounds from having the most positive working experience here. We know that we must take steps to address these barriers to ensure greater equality of opportunity, access and outcomes for all our staff.

We understand that achieving a workforce that is more reflective of London depends on fostering a genuinely inclusive environment where all staff can thrive. We want to create a culture of belonging – where all staff feel heard, valued and accepted to be themselves, so they can shine.

### **Some definitions**

Language in this space is dynamic and always changing. What we mean by these terms is set out below:

- **Equality** – recognises that discrimination persists, and that it is not yet a level playing field. To achieve this, we must remove barriers to enable equality of opportunity, access and outcomes.
- **Diversity** – recognises and celebrates difference in all its forms, and the positive value it brings to the organisation's performance.
- **Inclusion** – ensuring everyone feels valued and part of the organisation.
- **Belonging** – a destination we are working towards. This is a shared culture of total acceptance, safety and openness, where everyone feels heard, valued and able to succeed.

## **3. Why an equality, diversity and inclusion strategy?**

This strategy concerns only our ambitions for greater equality, diversity and inclusion within our workforce and our working culture and builds on related activity. We commissioned an independent review to understand the structural barriers affecting different groups of staff. It had a specific focus on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff, but particularly Black staff. This strategy details a clear strategic approach to achieving our ambitions for a genuinely inclusive culture – one that fosters a sense of belonging, and a workforce that reflects London at all levels.

## **4. What have we achieved and where are we now?**

- Since 2016 we have increased the diversity of our workforce, but there is still more to do.
  - We have doubled our number of Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic staff, who now make up 32 per cent of our workforce. Representation at head of service and above is only 14 per cent, but has increased from zero per cent.
  - Just over half of staff at head of service level and above are women.
  - Across the organisation, 7 per cent of our staff have a disability. At head of service level and above, this rises to 11 per cent.
- We have narrowed our pay gaps, but must do more to eliminate them altogether. Changes include:
  - the ethnicity pay gap fell by 5 per cent between 2018 and 2021, to 11.1 per cent
  - the disability pay gap, published for the first time in 2021, is 8.58 per cent
  - the gender pay gap fell by 4 per cent between 2017 and 2021, to 2.08 per cent.
- We have developed strong partnerships with our staff networks, the Race Equity Action Group and UNISON.
- In response to the Race Equity Network's 'Corporate Asks', following George Floyd's murder and the growth of the global Black Lives Matter movement, we have:
  - commissioned an independent analysis of structural barriers preventing Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority staff, particularly Black staff, from progressing here

- established and extended a professional and emotional support offer for Black and Black mixed-heritage staff with Black Thrive
- facilitated “Let’s Talk About Race” sessions with over 650 staff.
- We have developed new policy and practice, including a new Workplace Adjustment Policy; a Domestic and Gender-Based Violence and Abuse Policy; a Menopause Policy; and a Trans and Gender Identity Policy.
- We achieved 30<sup>th</sup> place in Stonewall’s list of top 100 employers in their Workplace Equality Index. We also received a Stonewall Gold Employer award.

## 5. What do we want to achieve?

We’re making progress, but must do more, and act quicker – particularly for our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff, and our disabled staff. This is what we want to achieve:

1. Develop collective and individual accountability on equality, diversity and inclusion. All staff work towards these goals and we hold each other to account.
2. Grow a genuinely inclusive working culture that fosters a sense of belonging. This is one where everyone feels safe, and where everyone can be themselves, give their best work and progress their career.
3. Establish a workforce that reflects London’s diversity across all directorates and at senior level.

## 6. Recognising the challenge ahead

We understand the scale of the challenge ahead. This is not a new priority for the GLA. However, like other organisations, we’ve not progressed at the pace that either we or our staff would want. Structural inequality has deep roots across our institutions, laws and social structures. This means it takes time to shift outcomes. We are committed to taking sustained collective and individual action to dismantle the barriers in our organisation.

## 7. Strategic aims and enabling objectives

1. **Strategic aim:** Develop collective and individual accountability on equality, diversity and inclusion. All staff work towards these goals and we hold each other to account.

Enabling objectives:

- Establish organisational values that enable our ambitions and objectives on equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Build confidence in our capacity to hold each other to account.
- Build on our practice of setting clear objectives on equality, diversity and inclusion – and hold staff and managers to account against these objectives.

2. **Strategic aim:** Grow a genuinely inclusive working culture that fosters a sense of belonging. This is one where everyone feels safe, and where everyone can be themselves, give their best work and progress their career.

Enabling objectives:

- Increase our understanding of the diversity and lived experience of our staff. This will enable us to support a genuinely safe, open and welcoming working environment where everyone feels they belong. It includes, but is not limited to:
  - running “Let’s Talk About Race” sessions for all staff
  - delivery of disability e-learning and training for managers
  - provision of support through Black Thrive for Black and Black mixed-heritage staff
  - reciprocal mentoring
  - ensuring complaints of discrimination are addressed and resolved.
- Share our experience, and learn from others, to inform the action we take through:
  - collaborating with staff networks, the Race Equity Action Group and UNISON; this will ensure that staff voice is a central feature of the organisation’s development on equality and inclusion, and on its performance measurement
  - development of new spaces for staff to come together and share their views and experience – including a Lived Experience Forum
  - collaboration with GLA Group organisations and other partners to share our progress and learn from others to improve our performance.
- Develop policy that supports an inclusive culture, underpinned by best practice; and ensure its consistent implementation

3. **Strategic aim:** Build a workforce that reflects London’s diversity across all directorates and at senior level.

Enabling objectives:

- Ensure an inclusive recruitment policy and process – reviewing our approach to recruitment, including our policy and processes, to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion are an integral feature throughout.
- Invest in our staff by nurturing their development.
- Increase the diversity of our senior leadership, with a focus on G10 and above, through the following actions:
  - set and measure our performance against workforce diversity targets at organisational, G10 and above, and Senior Leadership Team levels
  - undertake scrutiny of appointments at G10 and above
  - develop and deliver targeted development programmes to under-represented groups of staff – focusing on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff, and disabled staff
  - use positive action where appropriate as a tool to support greater equality of opportunity, access and outcome.
- Eliminate pay gaps between different groups of staff through the following actions:

- calculate, analyse and publish the GLA's pay gap annually in relation to ethnicity, disability and gender
- ensure plans in place to reduce and eliminate existing pay gaps identified through pay gap analysis.

## 8. How will we achieve our strategic aims and objectives on equality and inclusion?

**We will be driven by the evidence** – both quantitative and qualitative, drawing on a range of sources including workforce data, pay gap data and staff surveys. The voice of our staff and their lived experience plays an important role in, and is a key source of, engagement with staff networks, the Race Equity Action Group and UNISON; and through other forums for staff we will develop, including a Lived Experience Forum. This will create new spaces for staff to come together to share their experience and learn from each other.

**A three-year strategy (2022-25) with annual priorities** – this strategy is inclusive of the broadest range of diversity of background. Alongside this we will set annual priorities based on what we know. In 2022-23, our focus will be both on race equality and disability equality, to improve the experience and representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic staff, and of disabled staff, equally. We will review this emphasis, based on the evidence, for years two and three of this strategy.

**Improve our understanding of intersectionality** – we know that discrimination is altered and compounded by multiple identities and disadvantage. We want to improve our understanding of how intersectionality affects the experience of staff in the GLA. In addition, we will look at how to improve our response through our practice on data analysis and decision-making.

**Clear plans of action** – we will roll out our strategic aims and enabling objectives through clear action plans to be reviewed each financial year:

- corporate equality, diversity and inclusion action plan – setting out corporate activity on policy and programmes to achieve our strategic aims and objectives
- directorate equality, diversity and inclusion action plans – setting out how every part of the organisation will contribute to achieving our strategic aims and objectives.

**Everyone has a role to play** – we will set clear equality, diversity and inclusion objectives for all managers and staff hold everyone to account.

## 9. How will we know if we're making a difference?

We will use a range of methods to measure our performance against this strategy to understand the impact we're making. These methods will include:

- quantitative and qualitative feedback from staff, including from staff surveys, staff networks, UNISON, the Race Equity Action Group, and other staff forums we will develop (this will include the Lived Experience Forum)

- workforce diversity data and performance against workforce diversity targets we set at directorate and team levels
- scrutiny of new appointments at directorate and team levels, particularly at G10 and above
- analysis of ethnicity, disability and gender pay gaps, including intersectional analysis
- internal and external benchmarks – including the GLA Group Diversity and Inclusion Action Standard, the BITC Race at Work Charter, Disability Confident and the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index.

## **10. How will we be held to account?**

Everyone has a role in achieving our goals in this strategy, and will be held to account according to their responsibilities. This will include through equality, diversity and inclusion objectives; and delivery of corporate and directorate (and unit) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plans.

Understanding the views and experience of our staff will be vital in assessing the impact of this strategy on our aims and objectives. We will continue to work with our staff networks, the Race Equity Action Group, UNISON and the new spaces for staff we develop.

The Diversity and Inclusion Management Board, the Senior Leadership Team and the Corporate Management Team will monitor performance; and scrutinise and challenge delivery against the strategy.

Accountability ultimately lies with the Chief Officer, who will hold Executive Directors and Assistant Directors to account.

The GLA Oversight Committee will scrutinise our performance, informed by our established twice-yearly workforce reports.

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