



THE CODE

DIVERSITY &
INCLUSION

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DIVERSITY & INCLUSION CODE

What is the Diversity & Inclusion Code?

The Diversity & Inclusion Code is a code of conduct for and by the Dutch cultural and creative sector committed to diversity and inclusion.

The code is an instrument of self-regulation that serves to ensure that the Dutch cultural and creative sector represents the broad diversity of Dutch society. A basic requirement is that the sector is equally accessible to everyone: from creators and producers to workers and audience members. The sector will only be owned by everyone when everyone can contribute in their own way, when everyone is valued, respected, and heard, and when everyone feels at home in the sector.

Why the code?

Social relevance: the cultural and creative sector is owned by everyone, exists for everyone and is made by everyone

The society we live in is highly diverse: a reality the sector as a whole cannot ignore. To relate to this reality means to respond to the diversity present in society. You can achieve this by making your work, products, services and organization accessible to everyone. This is key to remaining relevant and attractive as a cultural and creative organization. Failure to utilize the potential of diversity necessarily means excluding part of society.

Artistic relevance: being inclusive enriches quality

A diverse and inclusive sector brings unique experiences and unknown perspectives to the fore. You can harness the power of diversity by being inclusive, which will enrich the quality of your work, the cultural landscape, and society itself. This calls for a systematic review of your own artistic and professional choices and requires awareness of the role that your identity and implicit biases play in creating your artistic and professional products. This cannot be achieved without an open and enquiring attitude to the various perspectives in your environment and how you integrate these into your work. Your organization should be a safe space in which everyone feels at home and at ease to explore different outlooks and perspectives.

Commercial benefits of an inclusive organization

It is also commercially important to remain attractive and relevant, with Diversiteit in bedrijf (Diversity at Work¹) listing the following benefits for an inclusive organization:

- Attracting and retaining talent (especially top talent);
- Responding more effectively to the needs and expectations of a diverse customer base;
- Access to new markets;
- Enhanced ability to adapt to change;
- A more positive image;
- More innovative and creative teamwork;
- Better cooperation between colleagues;
- Better decision-making, drawing from a range of cultural perspectives;
- Greater employee satisfaction;
- More committed and loyal employees.

¹ Diversity at Work is an initiative of Stichting van de Arbeid (the Dutch Labour Foundation), the consultative body of the central employers' and employees' organizations VNO-NCW, MKB-Nederland, LTO-Nederland, FNV, CNV and VCP. The Diversity Charter drawn up by Diversity at Work now has over 180 Dutch and over 10,000 European signatories.

Who is the code for?

The code is meant for everyone who works in the cultural and creative sector, for all organizations involved in the sector, for everyone who supports the sector, and for all consumers of art, culture, and creative products and services. The code applies to both subsidized and non-subsidized organizations.

For the cultural and creative sector

The definition of the cultural and creative sector used in this code is the same as that used by the Netherlands Institute for Social Research (SCP).²

For everyone who works in the sector

The code applies to professional organizations active in the sector, including trade associations, employers' and employees' organizations, advisory bodies, executive organizations, research institutes and programmes of artistic and professional education.

For all organizations involved in the sector

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For everyone who supports the sector

For public authorities (central, provincial and local government), funds and foundations (public and private) and for other sponsors such as the business community or private individuals.

How the code works

The code is aimed at those working in the cultural and creative sector and is therefore relevant to all the people and organizations mentioned above. The code consists of five principles for effectively shaping and promoting diversity and inclusion in your organization and in your work.

The five principles

- 1 You know where you stand on diversity and inclusion
- 2 You integrate diversity and inclusion in your vision
- 3 You generate support within your organization for compliance with the code
- 4 You draw up an action plan aimed at continuous improvement
- 5 You monitor and evaluate compliance with the code and hold yourself accountable for it

The five principles are expressed in five steps. These five principles and five steps combine to form the Diversity & Inclusion Code. By taking these steps, you implement the code. The code is not a checklist, and the effectiveness and strength of the code depend on your willingness and ability to think and act inclusively in everything you do on a daily basis.

Implement and explain

Implement the code and explain how you are going about it. Think and act in accordance with the code, reflect critically on how you do this, and hold yourself publicly accountable. In your annual report and in other publicly accessible communications, say which steps you have taken and which you are yet to take.

Government assessment

Public bodies looking to use the code when awarding grants will monitor compliance to the 'implement and explain' principle. The approach and accountability of the organization in this regard give rise to a recurring discussion about promoting diversity and inclusion. Quantitative decisions alone do not adequately reflect the spirit of the code.

² SCP, 2018, p. 9

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The definitions below clarify what the cultural and creative sector understands by diversity and inclusion.

Diversity

The code uses the term diversity to indicate that people differ from and are similar to one another with regard to a range of visible and non-visible characteristics. Diversity is a given: people are different from one another. The differences hold significance for everyone's position in society and the opportunities available to them. Even though they influence our behaviour and our thinking, not everyone is always aware of this.

Differences are never absolute or isolated, occurring in unique combinations to form what we know as identities. The code initially focused on cultural diversity, but has since been expanded to also apply to differences in other areas, such as gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, socio-economic status, level of education and age.

Diversity in your organization and in your work boils down to the extent to which the diversity of society is represented in four key elements: programme, audience, employees and partners.

Inclusion

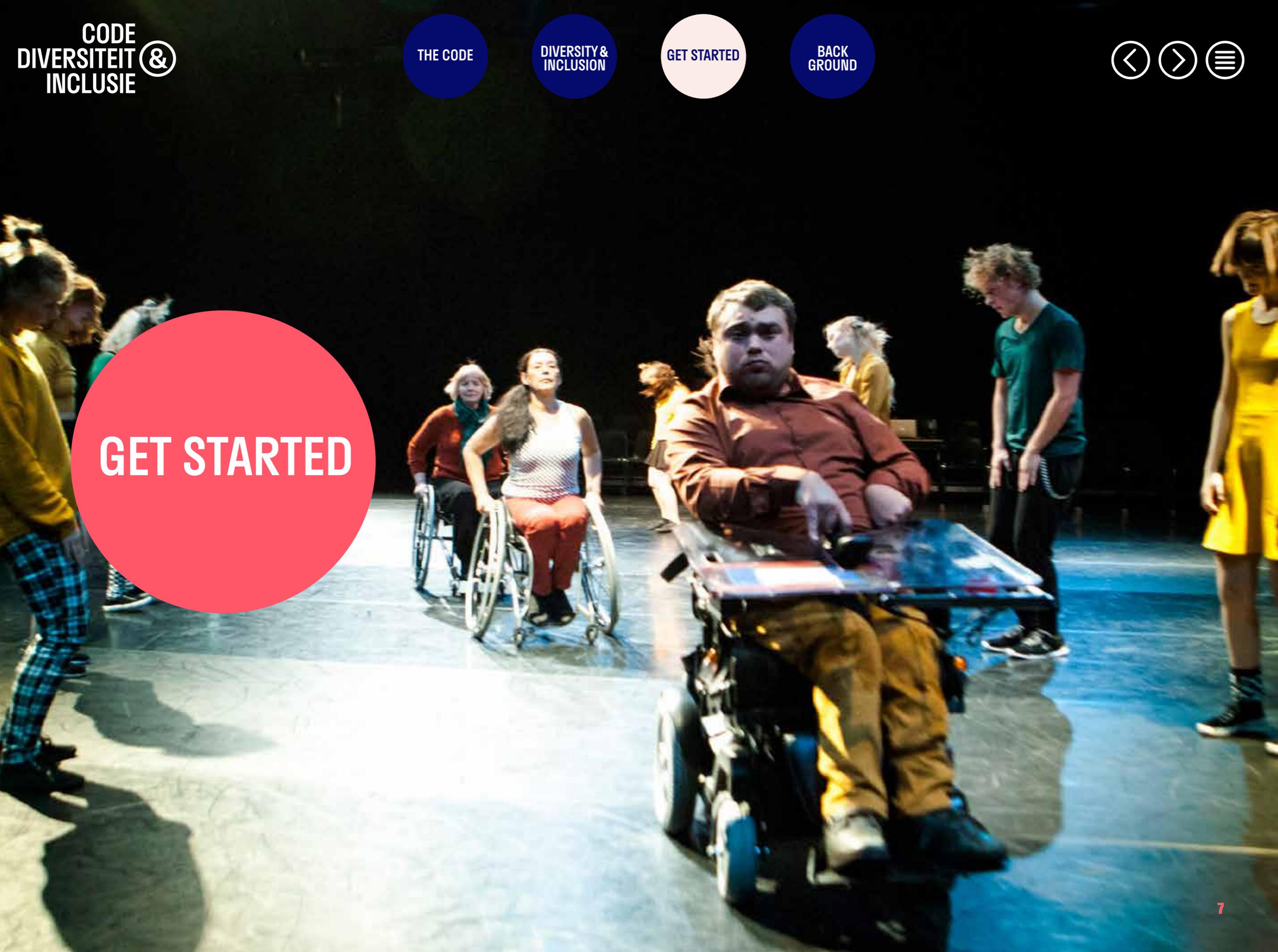
The term inclusion refers to how you deal with differences and similarities. The power of diversity and its benefits are harnessed when the uniqueness of each individual is acknowledged, recognized and welcomed. Achieving this means learning to appreciate one another, not in spite of but because of our differences and similarities. It is essential that everyone is included in the decision-making process and has the opportunity to contribute ideas. Inclusion is the extent to which creators, producers, workers and audience members of all identities – visible or not – can be themselves and feel safe and respected.

Accessibility

The code's use of accessibility covers a broad definition, consisting of:

- physical accessibility
- accessibility of facilities
- accessibility of information
- digital accessibility
- social accessibility
- financial accessibility

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The five principles have been developed into five steps for effectively shaping and promoting diversity and inclusion in your organization and in your work. Be aware of the following points.

Diversity and inclusion are integral to your work

In itself, a code of conduct changes little or nothing. You bring about change by actively implementing the code as a permanent criterion for your thinking and your actions. Inclusion is not a goal in itself but part of the overall development of an organization. These are not five 'extra' steps you are required to take alongside your existing work; they are an integral part of your work.

Not everyone has to do everything, but everyone has to do something

The nature of your organization, the nature of your products and services, and the nature of your working environment determine what diversity and inclusion mean for your organization. Make informed choices, explain them and stick to them.

Becoming an inclusive organization is a process of change

Optimizing diversity and being inclusive do not simply happen. Working towards diversity and inclusion is not a project, but a process of change that requires the investment of time and budgetary resources to achieve success. As in all change processes, you will encounter resistance and friction.

Management commitment is a precondition

The intrinsic and unambiguous motivation and commitment of the people who lead your organization – the Board of Directors or Supervisory Board, senior and middle management – are key to making diversity and inclusion a success. But more is needed. The commitment required of management does not mean that others can stand aside. Involve everyone in the change process.

Use benchmark values if appropriate

Inclusion is difficult to define, let alone quantify. Even so, benchmark values can help you get to grips with where your organization stands and help formulate targets that guide you towards progress. The five steps contain suggestions for benchmark values. Determine which potential values you use as an instrument.

More information on this aspect can be found at www.codedi.nl.

The five steps

The five steps are structured as follows:

- The five principles of the code shape the five steps.
- Each step involves actions: what you have to do to take the step.
- There is no single right way to implement these actions.
The website www.codedi.nl offers tips, tools and support on how to implement the actions.



STEP 1 KNOW WHERE YOU STAND

Make sure you know where you stand on diversity and inclusion. You do this by being aware of what is going well, by identifying areas of concern and by understanding the unconscious biases within your organization.

- **Know your strengths and areas for improvement.** Make sure you know what is going well and what can be improved with regard to diversity and inclusion in your organization. The scan at www.codedi.nl can help you determine where your organization stands.

- **Identify and understand unconscious prejudices.** Everyone has unconscious biases. The trick is to recognize them. Our opinions and views about ‘the other’ are determined by our own cultural frame of reference. This has a permanent impact on our thinking and actions.

Becoming aware of your unconscious biases, and understanding your own blind spots and those of your organization are essential in working towards diversity and inclusion. Your workers have not always been personally affected by the lack of diversity and inclusion. Make it clear what this means.

STEP 2

STEP
2

INTEGRATE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN YOUR VISION

In your organization's mission, vision and objectives, express what diversity and inclusion mean for your organization.

By integrating diversity and inclusion into your organization's vision, you make it clear where the need for change lies.

- **Make it explicit.** In your organization's vision, be explicit about how important it is for your organization to work on diversity and inclusion. Share this vision with everyone in your organization.
- **Outline the context.** In your vision, give a clear account of the environment or professional field in which your organization is active, the characteristics of that environment with regard to diversity and inclusion, and how your organization relates to that environment.

STEP
3

CREATE COMMITMENT AND SUPPORT

Working on diversity and inclusion calls for support and personal commitment. Not just at management level or within a project group, but throughout the organization. Make working on diversity and inclusion a personal choice, so that everyone gets involved.

- **Involve the whole organization.** While it's essential for the management of your organization to show intrinsic and unambiguous motivation and commitment, more is needed. Invite colleagues at all levels in the organization to be co-owners of your action plan. Make sure that you are not alone in your understanding of unconscious bias, but that people throughout the organization are aware of their blind spots. Within your organization, discuss both the formal process steps needed to bring about change and the thoughts or emotions associated with them. Involve everyone in the change process.

STEP
4

DRAW UP AN ACTION PLAN

Draw up your action plan based on the four key elements: programme, audience, employees and partners.

For all four elements, state where you are now and where you want to be. Formulate clear objectives for that desired situation and, where possible, support these objectives with targets based on the proposed benchmark values derived from each element.

Determine the actions you need to achieve and implement your goals. Make sure the people in your organization are fully aware of these goals and why they are important.

The four key elements

Programme

The products and services of your organization.

- **Provide scope for different perspectives in your products and services.** Artistic and professional quality comes first. Given the diversity of society, quality always goes hand in hand with variety. Give diversity and inclusion a permanent place in the way your professional and artistic choices are made. Be aware of how your unconscious biases and your own identity can influence your artistic and professional choices.

Possible benchmark values: general audience satisfaction, reviews in relevant media.

Audience

The people who make use of your products and services.

- **The people who make use of your products and services.** Map all potential target groups. In addition to existing target groups, map out all the potential target groups, based on the diversity in your field of work. Identify what attracting potential target groups means for your organization. Don't lose sight of your existing target groups in this process.
- **Investigate how accessible your organization, products and services are to potential target groups.** Determine the extent to which your products, services and your organization reflect the needs and possibilities of potential target groups.
- **Involve people from potential target groups.** Involve key figures from potential target groups in the further development of your products and services and in attracting potential target groups. Investigate the extent to which they feel genuinely connected to, at home with and valued by your organization.
- **Words matter: adopt the right language and tone.** In your marketing and communication, use the specific channels and media relevant to potential target groups. In all your communication, show that inclusion defines the nature of your organization and how it thinks and acts.

Possible benchmark values: general audience satisfaction (among all potential target groups), reach figures, turnover in the desired target group.

Employees

Everyone working in your organization.

- **Make sure your organization represents the diversity of your environment.** Strengthen your organization with people who represent the diversity of your environment. Ensure that your organization is accessible to everyone. Facilitate inclusion, for example by marking culturally specific holidays and ensuring that the workplace is readily accessible to people with disabilities.

- **Prevent rapid staff turnover.** Do not simply focus on recruiting diverse employees, but also devote time and resources to keeping them and enabling them to rise through the organization. In case employees leave, conduct exit interviews to gain insight into the reasons for their departure.
- **Be aware of the knowledge and skills you lack.** Make sure that people in your organization are well-equipped to think and act inclusively. Identify any knowledge and skills they lack and bridge those gaps.
- **Chart your progress.** In a recurring employee survey or job appraisal interview, ask specific questions about the worker's personal involvement in diversity and inclusion.

Possible benchmark values: the number of employees with the various diversity characteristics mentioned in Chapter 2; how these characteristics are spread across the various job levels; duration of employment; levels of recruitment, promotion and outflow; frequency and duration of absence due to illness; prevalence of inclusive skills; the extent of inclusion in the work setting; general employee satisfaction.

Partners

External individuals and organizations with which your organization collaborates or to which it gives assignments.

- **Determine whether current partners are in tune with your wishes and views on diversity and inclusion.** Enter into partnerships that broaden your own perspectives. Seek collaboration with external individuals and organizations that can help you achieve your diversity and inclusion goals. Be prepared to let partners challenge your own perspectives. Join new networks that can help broaden your own artistic and professional perspectives.

Possible benchmark values: The number of partners that share your vision on diversity and inclusion.

STEP
5

MONITOR AND EVALUATE

Monitor and evaluate the implementation of your action plan. Take measures to ensure that you work towards diversity and inclusion. Designate people within your organization to monitor progress and results and to evaluate how you hold yourself accountable.

Chart progress and results using the benchmark values and targets you have selected. Value and reward the achievement of goals. Celebrate your successes, learn from your mistakes. Identify points for improvement and determine follow-up actions.

Share the results with the entire organization and in publicly accessible communication. Do not restrict the results to part of the organization.

● **Talk and evaluate.** Carry out regular evaluation discussions about working towards diversity and inclusion, both at board level (Board of Directors, Supervisory Board) and at individual employee level. Get the Works Council involved, if you have one.

● **Provide inclusive leadership.** Your goals with regard to the four key elements are not an aim in themselves: make sure you manage them as part of the bigger picture. When using benchmark values, do not focus exclusively on hard figures but include softer targets such as appreciation and how people feel.

● **Be alert to funding conditions.** Be alert to the conditions set by financiers with regard to performance on and accountability for diversity and inclusion.

More tips, tools and support to get you started can be found at www.codedi.nl. Even if you have been working on diversity and inclusion for some time, you are sure to find useful and relevant information here.

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BACKGROUND

From cultural diversity to diversity and inclusion

In November 2011, the cultural and creative sector developed the Cultural Diversity Code. This was a highly significant step which placed this issue firmly on the agenda in the cultural and creative sector. The core content of the Cultural Diversity Code and its status as an instrument of self-regulation in combination with the four key elements provides the foundation for the Diversity & Inclusion Code.

Continuously alert

Since the development of the Cultural Diversity Code, much has been done to promote diversity in the sector. It is now time to take the code's implementation to the next level. This will enable structural change through products and services that focus on diversity and inclusion and an audience and customer base that is representative of society. Representation will also determine the composition of staff and cooperation with partners.

An eye for all differences and similarities

The perspective on this issue has expanded from cultural diversity to diversity and inclusion. This new perspective – in addition to cultural diversity – incorporates an eye for other forms of difference. It recognizes that each person's unique identity is formed along various strands simultaneously. The Diversity & Inclusion Code replaces the Cultural Diversity Code.

Approach

The collective associations in the cultural and creative sector joined forces to rewrite the Cultural Diversity Code as a code of conduct for the advancement of diversity and inclusion: the Diversity & Inclusion Code. It forms part of the Culture and Creative Inclusive Action Plan (ACCI), which is led by a steering committee from the participating sector associations. Consultancy firm Bureau & MAES was commissioned by the steering committee to write the report, following a tender process in which several parties were invited to compete.

Consultation and advice

The new Diversity & Inclusion Code came about after broad consultation with stakeholders and experts, both inside and beyond the cultural and creative sector. An expert session was held to discuss the cornerstones of the code: society's need for an inclusive cultural and creative sector, the definition of diversity and inclusion, and the translation of principles into daily practice by cultural institutions and creative companies. In a series of dialogue sessions, the content of the code and its practical implementation were discussed with a wide range of representatives from the cultural and creative sector.

The composition of the expert group and dialogue participants ensured that those actively consulted came from a broad group of stakeholders with far-reaching knowledge of diversity and inclusion, and who reflected the code's definition of these concepts to the greatest possible extent.

Government bodies, advisory councils and funds

Consultations were also held with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the Council for Culture, the advisory councils of Amsterdam and Rotterdam, the national culture funds affiliated with the Funds Consultative Body, the Amsterdam Fund for the Arts and the city executives of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht.

Preliminary research

The process underpinning the renewal of the code incorporated recommendations made by Channa Benders, a student at Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences, in her Bachelor's thesis "How can the Cultural Diversity Code be adapted to promote compliance and implementation in the cultural sector?"

Links to other codes of conduct

The Diversity & Inclusion Code was drawn up with due observance of the two other codes of conduct that apply to the cultural and creative sector: the Governance Code for Culture and the [Fair Practice Code](#). In terms of their content, the three codes of conduct follow from and reinforce one another.

SOURCES

Steering group for the Culture & Creative Inclusion Action Plan

- Gerbrand Bas – Federation of Dutch Creative Industries (FCI)
- Bente Bergmans – Museums Association
- Jan Brands – Cultuurconnectie
- Iris Daalder – Dutch Association for the Performing Arts (NAPK)
- Syb Groeneveld – Creative Industries Fund NL
- Arthur Schellekens – Association of Public Libraries
- Sanne Scholten – National Centre of Expertise for Cultural Education and Amateur Arts (LKCA)
- Joan Tol – Project Manager for the Culture & Creative Inclusion Action Plan
- Siebe Weide – Chair of the Steering Committee for the Culture & Creative Inclusion Action Plan

Project group for the Culture & Creative Inclusion Action Plan

- Joan Tol, Project Manager for the Culture & Creative Inclusion Action Plan
- Siebe Weide, Chair of the Steering Committee for the Culture & Creative Inclusion Action Plan

Experts

- Paul Abell – member of the Council for the Administration of Criminal Justice and Protection of Juveniles (RSJ)
- Stephanie Afrifra – Curator and presenter
- Mavis Carrilho – Organizational consultant and coach
- Martine van Dijk – Holland Dance Festival
- Martin van Engel – Van Gogh Museum
- Raja Felgata – Head of Press and PR for Het Concertgebouw / De Kleurrijke Top 100
- Irene Hemelaar – Heavenly Creature
- Carlien Lammers – Studio i Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam Alice Ode – Diversity at Work
- Hanne Overbeek – expert in inclusive entrepreneurship at Locus Netwerk

Participants in dialogue sessions

- Sanne den Adel, Association of Science Museums and Science Centres (VSC)
- Idris Ahmed, Rozet
- Gerbrand Bas, Federation of Dutch Creative Industries (FCI)
- Bente Bergmans, Museums Association
- Kees Blijleven, Theater de Krakeling Karima Bouchtaoui, Theater Inclusief
- Jan Brands, Cultuurconnectie
- Ernestine Comvalius, Bijlmer Park Theatre
- Iris Daalder, Dutch Association for the Performing Arts (NAPK)
- Cees Debets, Het Nationale Theater
- Nynke Feenstra, Wat Telt!
- Anne de Haij, Gemeentemuseum Den Haag
- Suzanne Henning, Dutch Photographers
- Sofía Hernandez Chong Cuy, Witte de With
- Yolande de Heus, Topsector Creatieve Industrie
- Arjo Klingens, Popcoalitie
- Aline Knip, Creative Industries Fund NL
- Maarten Lammers, Amsterdam Public Library
- Harrie van de Louw, Theater De Vaillant
- Gabbi Mesters, Dutch Association of Theatres and Concert Halls (VSCD)
- Caspar Nieuwenhuis, HKU University of the Arts Utrecht / Theatre department
- Sarah van Overeem, Witte de With
- Oscar van der Pluijm, Grounds
- Kevin de Randamie, Braenworks Aziza Sbiti, Delft Fringe Festival
- Berend Schans, Association of Dutch Pop Music Venues and Festivals
- Tido Visser, Netherlands Chamber Choir

Other interviewees

- Annabelle Birnie, the Amsterdam Fund for the Arts
- Doreen Boonekamp, Netherlands Film Fund
- Pieter Bots, Council for Culture Diana Chin-A-Fat
- Barbara Ferdinand, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
- Syb Groeneveld, Creative Industries Fund NL
- Sara Knijff, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
- Carolien Labib, City of Utrecht
- Eelco van Lingen, Mondriaan Fund
- Jeroen Mul, City of The Hague
- Kadija Omer, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science
- Corynne Oude Avenhuis, City of Amsterdam
- Guikje Roethof, Amsterdam Arts Council
- Tiziano Perez, Dutch Foundation for Literature
- Henriëtte Post, Performing Arts Fund NL
- Laurien Saraber, Amsterdam Fund for the Arts
- Olga Smit, City of Rotterdam
- Hedwig Verhoeven, Dutch Cultural Participation Fund
- Jakob van der Waarden, Council for Culture
- Renske van der Zee, Council for Culture
- Rento Zoutman, Rotterdam Council for Art and Culture

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Learn more about the Diversity & Inclusion Code at www.codedi.nl