

Curious Catalyst

Joy of Learning



INCLUSIVE RECRUITMENT FOR INDIAN WORKPLACES

Powering tomorrow, today

ISO 9001:2015 CERTIFIED | INDIA DIVERSITY FORUM
- DEI TOOLKIT IMPLEMENTATION PARTNER

FOREWORD

"Our vision is to help organisations hire for potential, not privilege – and build workplaces where every voice contributes to progress."

As workplaces evolve faster than ever, inclusion is no longer a moral conversation — it's a strategic one. The future of recruitment lies not in finding the "perfect" candidate, but in recognising the power of difference.

India's workforce is one of the most diverse in the world — across gender, age, region, language, and experience.

Yet, many organisations still recruit from a narrow lens of familiarity and comfort. This handbook is an invitation to reimagine how we hire, lead, and grow — not by chance, but by design.

May this handbook serve as a practical companion for HR leaders, business heads, and DEI champions who are ready to build organisations that hire for potential, not privilege — and create workplaces where every identity finds a voice and every voice adds value

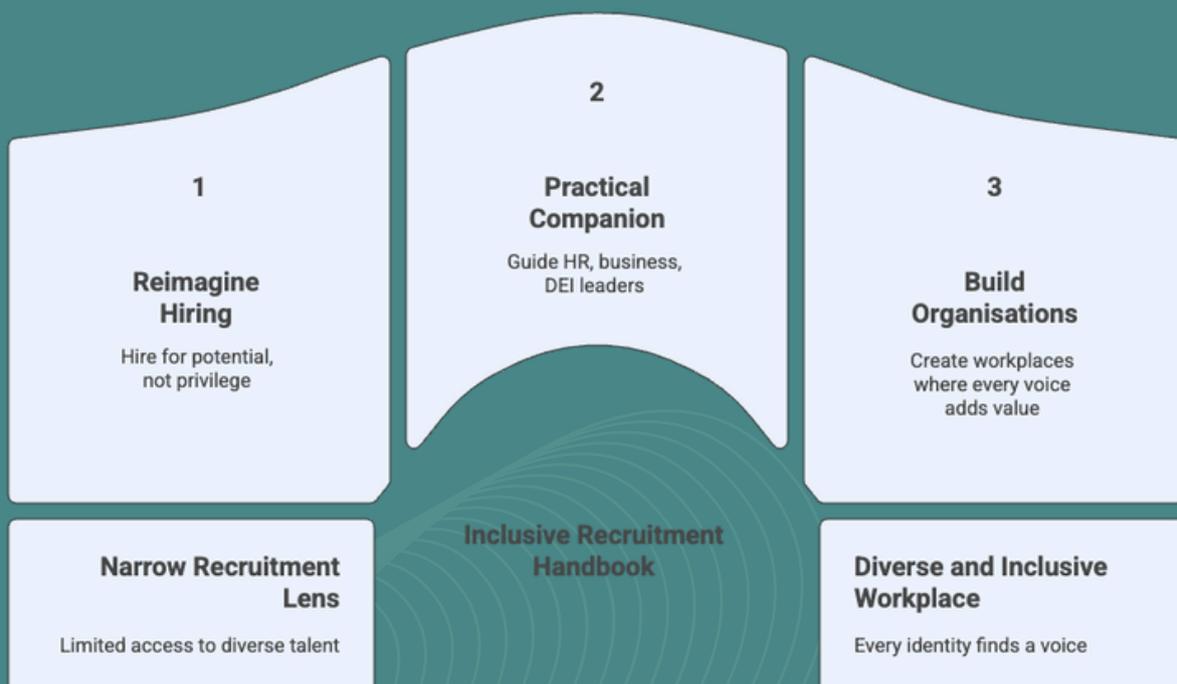
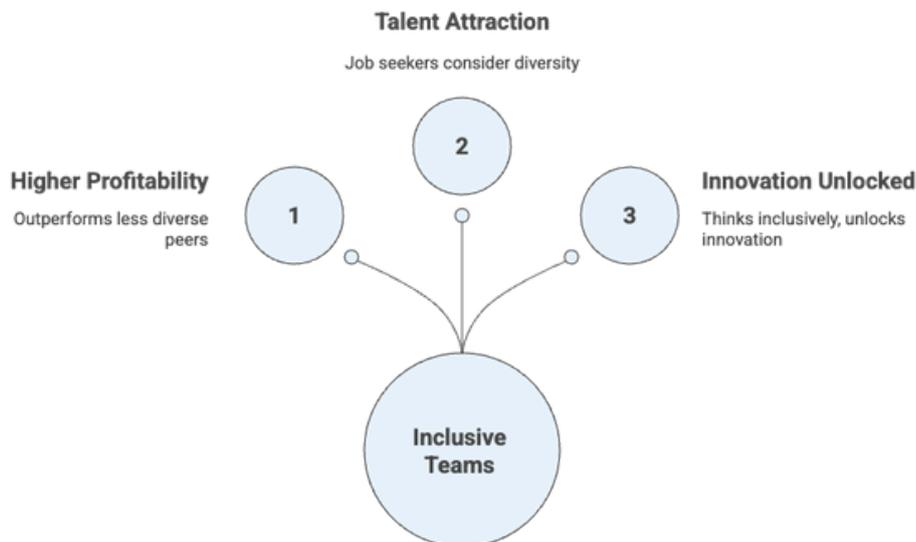


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INTRODUCTION

Why Diversity Matters in Indian Workplaces?



Diversity is no longer an HR initiative — it's a **business strategy**. Organisations with inclusive teams outperform less diverse peers by up to 36% in profitability (McKinsey, 2023).

In India, where workforce demographics span across regions, languages, castes, genders, and generations, inclusive recruitment ensures that teams reflect both the markets they serve and the values they stand for.

50% of Indian job seekers consider a company's diversity record before applying (LinkedIn Workforce Insights, 2024). Yet, only 29% of Indian organisations have a structured Diversity Hiring Policy (India DEI Report, 2023). A truly diverse workforce does not simply "look" inclusive — it thinks inclusively, unlocking innovation, empathy, and long-term business resilience.

THE BUSINESS CASE FOR DIVERSITY IN RECRUITMENT

Enhanced Innovation and Market Insights

Teams that include diversity in gender, age, ability, and culture generate:

35% higher ideation rates in problem-solving sessions (BCG, 2022).

Broader consumer insight across India's multi-lingual, multi-cultural markets.

Improved Retention and Morale

THE BUSINESS CASE FOR DIVERSITY IN RECRUITMENT

Representation enhances belonging

Inclusive organisations in India report:

30% lower attrition

2x higher engagement scores (NASSCOM DEI Pulse, 2023).

Reputation and ESG Alignment

Clients and global partners increasingly value organisations that demonstrate DEI compliance.

Inclusive hiring improves brand image and ESG ratings — a strategic advantage in bids and investor reports.

CHALLENGES IN DIVERSITY HIRING IN INDIA

Diversity Hiring Challenges in India

Socioeconomic Diversity

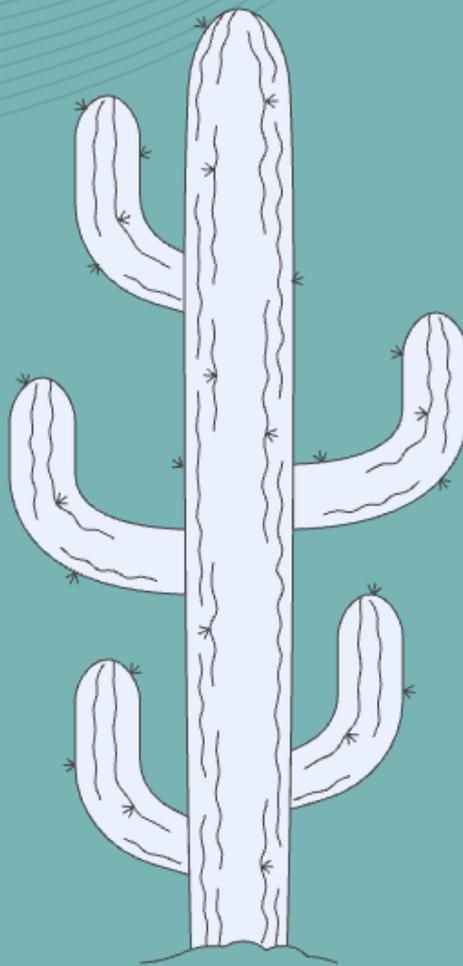
Tier 2/3 candidates
underrepresented

Disability Inclusion

Low PwD workforce
participation

Gender Gap

Few women in leadership



LGBTQIA+ Inclusion

Limited inclusive
organizational policies

Regional Bias

Accent affects hiring
decisions

CHALLENGES IN DIVERSITY HIRING IN INDIA

Socioeconomic diversity Tier 2/3 candidates underrepresented Skill-based assessments, vernacular outreach

Disability inclusion Only 0.5% of India's workforce is PwD (ILO, 2023) Accessible hiring tools, job redesign

Gender gap at senior levels Women hold only 18% of leadership roles (Grant Thornton, 2024) Leadership mentoring & succession planning

LGBTQIA+ inclusion Only 22% of organizations have inclusive policies Awareness sessions & benefit alignment

Regional and language bias

Accent or English fluency bias in interviews Recruiter training on communication vs. competence

BUILDING A DIVERSITY-FOCUSED RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

STEP 1: DEFINE DIVERSITY FOR YOUR ORGANISATION.

1. Move beyond gender. Include region, language, age, disability, neurodiversity, and LGBTQIA+ representation.
2. Develop a Diversity Charter aligned with your company's mission.

STEP 2: SET MEASURABLE, TRANSPARENT GOALS

1. Establish metrics: % women hires, PwD representation, regional spread.
2. Review progress quarterly; link hiring KPIs to diversity outcomes.

STEP 3: MAKE JOB DESCRIPTIONS INCLUSIVE

1. Avoid gender-coded language (e.g., “aggressive”, “dominant”).
2. Highlight flexibility, accessibility, and inclusion in job ads.
3. Translate listings into regional languages to widen reach.

STEP 4: TRAIN HIRING MANAGERS AND PANELS ON BIAS

1. 64% of Indian hiring managers have never attended a bias training (SHRM India, 2024).
2. Equip them with frameworks to recognise unconscious bias, halo effect, and similarity bias.

STEP 5: SOURCE FROM DIVERSE TALENT POOLS

1. Partner with women's returnee programs (Avtar, JobsForHer).
2. Collaborate with disability networks (Enable India, BarrierBreak).
3. Engage regional skilling institutions and rural youth programs.

STEP 6: STANDARDISE EVALUATIONS

Adopt skill-based assessments and panel interviews to reduce subjectivity.

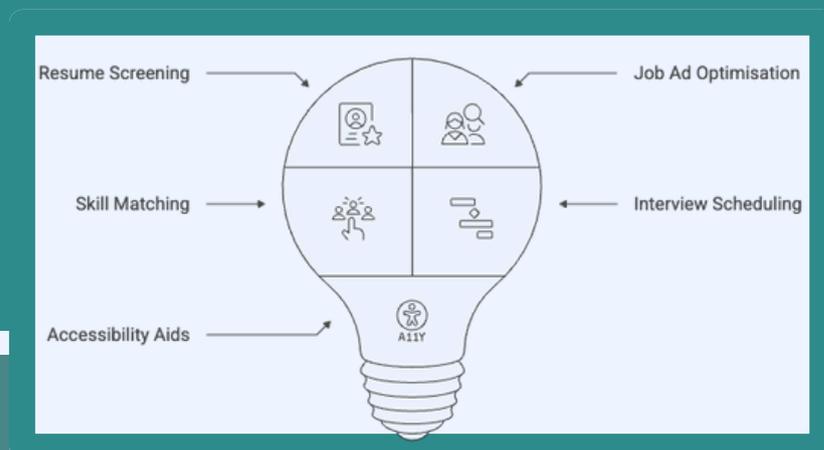
THE ROLE OF AI IN INCLUSIVE RECRUITMENT

AI, when designed ethically, can revolutionise equitable hiring.

It automates bias-free screening, enhances access, and personalises candidate experiences.

Key AI Tools for Recruitment

- Function AI Tool / App Use Case
- Resume screening HireVue, Talocity, TurboHire Skill-based shortlisting
- Job ad optimisation Textio, Gender Decoder Neutral, inclusive job descriptions
- Skill matching [Eightfold.ai](#), Relevel Identifies hidden talent pools
- Interview scheduling ModernLoop Streamlines candidate experience
- Accessibility aids Microsoft Seeing AI, Google Lookout Enables PwD-friendly recruitment



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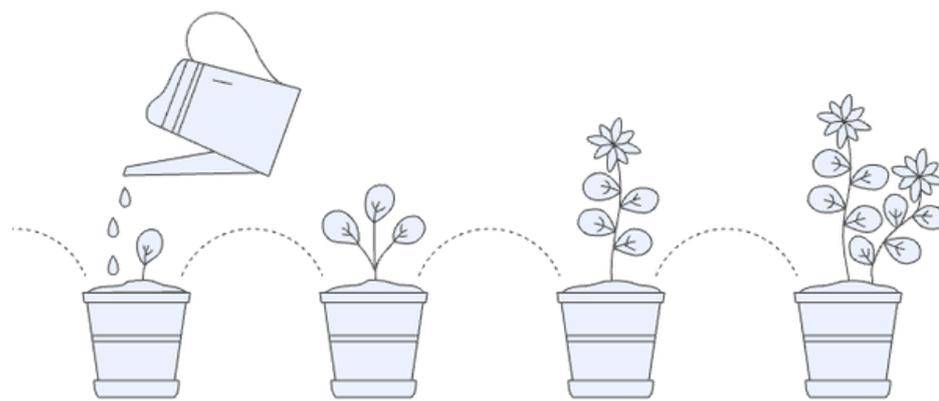
Driving Inclusive Transformation Across India



At Curious Catalyst, we believe **inclusive recruitment is the foundation of organisational excellence** — and that diversity is not a goal, but a growth strategy.

We are an ISO 9001:2015 Certified Organisation and proud Implementation Partner for the India Diversity Forum’s DEI Toolkit, supporting corporates in embedding inclusion at every level of their systems and culture.

With 14+ years of learning, development, and HR expertise, Curious Catalyst empowers organisations to build equitable, productive, and future-ready workplaces through strategy, consulting, and immersive training.



DEI Implementation

Embedding inclusion at all levels

Strategy & Consulting

Tailored solutions for each organisation

Immersive Training

Empowering employees with new skills

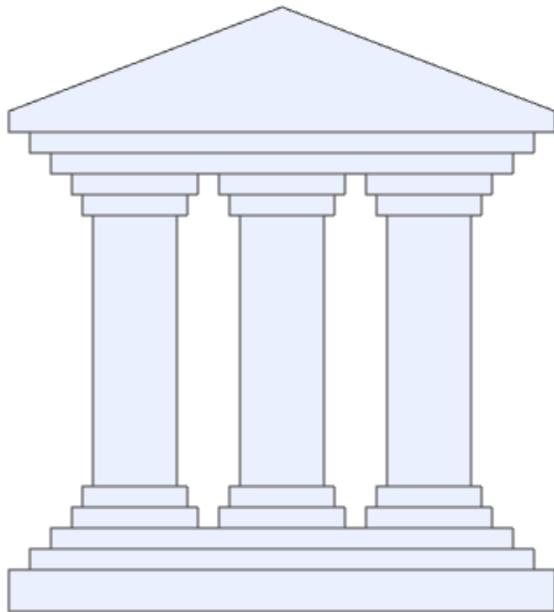
Inclusion

Equitable, productive, future-ready

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Our Core Services

Our Core Services



DEI Consulting & Strategy

Developing inclusive policies and recruitment strategies



Training & Capability Building

Providing experiential learning to foster inclusive practices



Advisory & Ongoing Support

Offering guidance and integration for sustained inclusion

DEI Consulting & Strategy Development

- DEI Policy and Framework Creation
- Recruitment Strategies for Inclusive Hiring
- DEI Toolkit Implementation (India Diversity Forum)
- DEI Audits and Data Diagnostics

Training & Capability Building

Flagship Programs Include:

- DEI Council Capability Building
- Gender Sensitisation
- Disability Sensitisation & Accessibility Training
- Unconscious Bias & Microaggressions
- Managing a Multi-Generational Workforce
- Inclusive Leadership
- Recruitment Strategies for DEI
- DEI Toolkit Implementation Workshops

Advisory & Ongoing Support

- DEI Strategy Rollout & Impact Assessment
- PoSH, DEI & Human Rights Policy Integration
- Coaching Leaders to Drive Everyday Inclusion

— Team Curious Catalyst

MEASURING DEI IMPACT

- Metric Measurement Method Frequency
- % Diversity Hires Gender, region, PwD, LGBTQ+ metrics Quarterly
- Interview Panel Diversity Gender and representation ratio Bi-annually
- Candidate Experience Post-interview feedback Every hiring cycle
- Bias Reduction Evaluation audits Annually
- Retention & Promotion Diversity vs. non-diversity comparison Annually

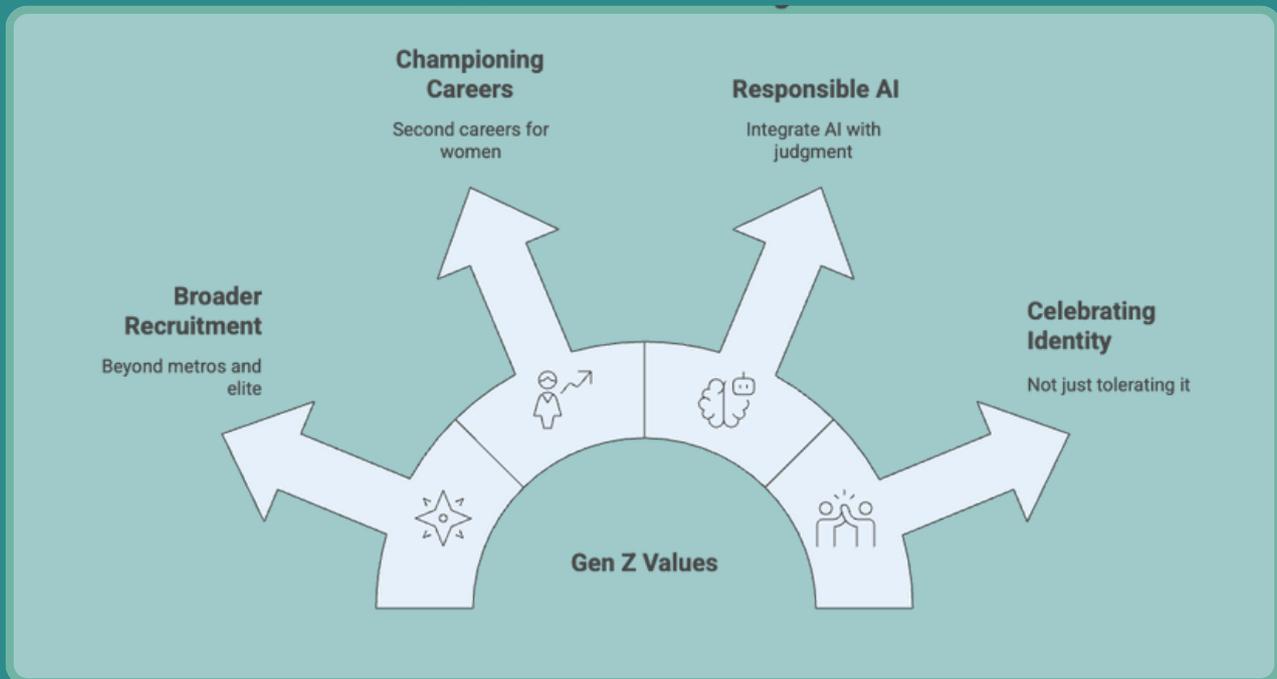


THE FUTURE OF DIVERSITY HIRING IN INDIA

As Gen Z reshapes workplace values, diversity will no longer be a metric — it will be a mindset.

Tomorrow's organisations will:

- Recruit beyond metros and elite institutes.
- Champion second careers for women and veterans.
- Integrate AI responsibly with human judgment.
- Celebrate identity, not just tolerate it.



By 2030, inclusive hiring will evolve from "good to have" to a business essential — driving creativity, retention, and resilience.

CONCLUSION

Diversity-focused recruitment is more than compliance — it's a catalyst for productivity and innovation.

When hiring reflects inclusion, organisations unlock not just better teams, but better thinking.

In the Indian context, where diversity is cultural DNA, embracing it at every hiring stage builds stronger, smarter, and more sustainable enterprises.

Connect With Us

Transforming workplaces through awareness, inclusion, and action.



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