

#CSW70



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# Turning To Meritocracy and Pluralism To Overcome Structural Barriers



Carolyn Savage  
Architect and Senior Development Manager

# Agenda



- Meritocracy and Pluralism a New Zealand perspective
- Meritocracy
- Pluralism
- Pluralism and Trade Unions
- Culture and Diversity in the Workplace
- Meritocracy more norm for small business
- Pluralism and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)
- SDG5, 8 and 10 - Pluralism in the workplace



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# Meritocracy and Pluralism a New Zealand perspective

- Meritocracy and pluralism represent two different, and sometimes conflicting, approaches to organizational structure and culture.
- Meritocracy focuses on rewarding individual competency e.g. reviewed based on privilege and ignoring systemic barriers.
- Pluralism is valuing the diverse perspectives, accommodating different group interests, acknowledging multiculturalism and Te Tiriti o Waitangi Treaty.



# Meritocracy



- Meritocracy: to employ individuals based on personal achievements including:
  - Key drivers: Individual Competency
  - Assessed through a Top-down review, based on performance metrics
  - Hierarchical (best on top), old ‘boys club’
  - Perception of fairness, although unconscious bias based on local perceptions, school attended, or area lived e.g. Canterbury pre-2011 earthquakes was extremely bias to ‘outsiders’, results in structural barriers across multiple employment sectors.



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# Pluralism



- Organizational structures with multiple dynamics reflecting:
  - Inclusion, diversity, and gender equity
  - Multiple representation from ethnicity, gender and neurodiversity in decision-making
  - Encourages consultation, negotiation, and collective bargaining to manage conflict and reach consensus
  - “Co-governance” and honouring the partnership between Māori and Pākehā.
  - Trade Unions and their power to negotiate across multiple sectors.



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# Pluralism and Trade Unions



- 2024: 126 Registered Trade Unions operate across New Zealand:
  - Public Service Association (PSA): Largest union, representing public service, health, and local government workers.
  - New Zealand Nurses Organization (NZNO): Represents nurses, midwives, and health workers.
  - NZEI Te Riu Roa: Represents educators and school staff.
  - Rail & Maritime Transport Union (RMTU): Covers rail and port workers.
  - New Zealand Professional Firefighters Union (NZPFU): Represents firefighters.



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*Legitimate representative of workers' interests, to be the mediator when negotiations and workplace issues breakdown.*



# Culture and Diversity in the Workplace

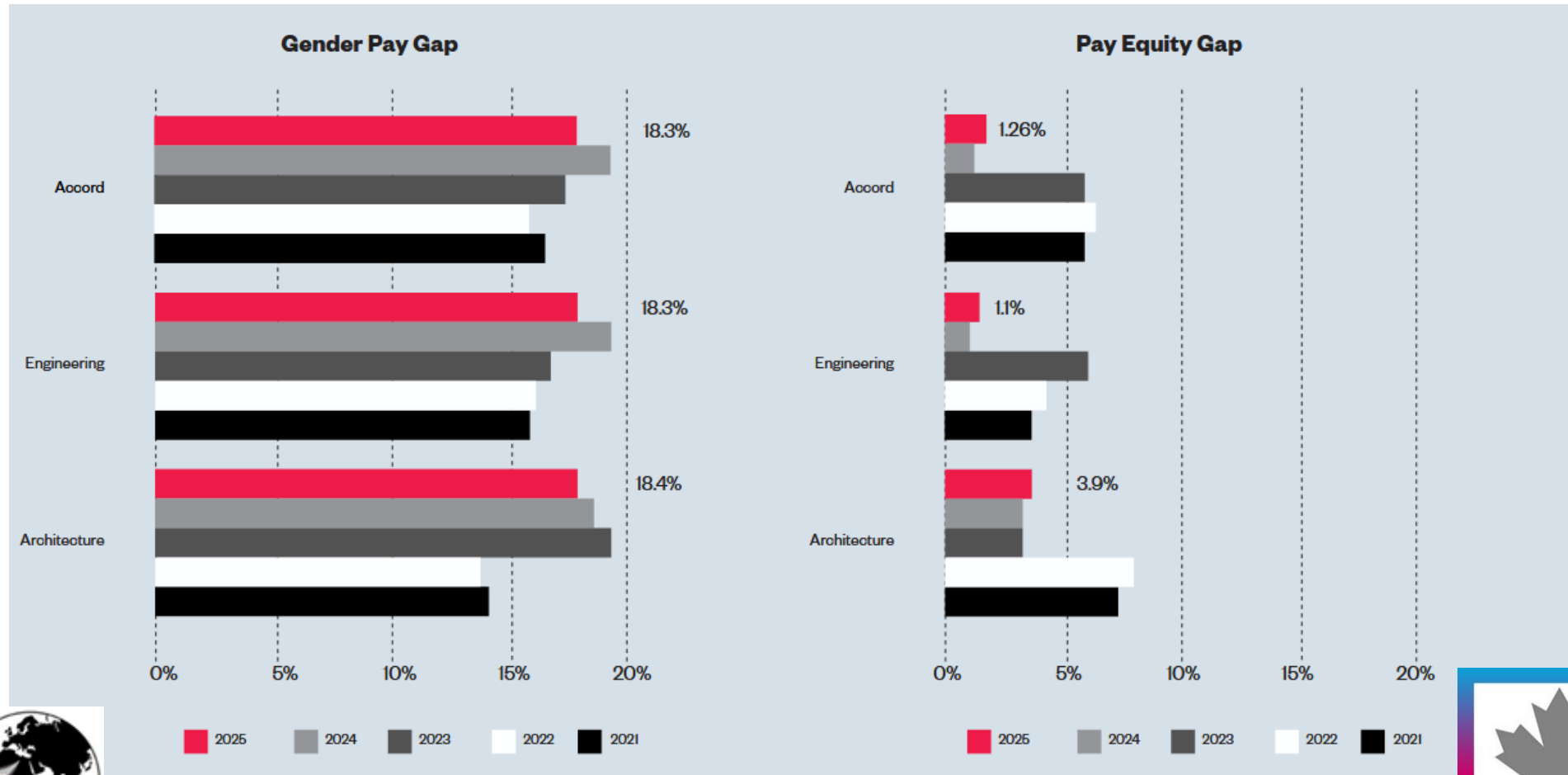
- 2020 New Zealand Government implemented requirement for 5% of total number of government agency procurement contracts awarded to Māori or Pasifika owned companies.
- A shift in employment advertisements, with specific focus on cultural abilities:
  - the ability to speak Te Reo
  - having experience or knowledge of Tikanga / Te Tiriti o Waitangi
  - being comfortable with a Māori world-view



*Companies advertising diversity, ethnicity, gender diverse, neurodiversity and people with disabilities will not be discriminated against when applying for the role.*



# Meritocracy more norm for small business



*In different professions the full embodiment of 'pluralism' is missing, negotiations by individuals.*



Table 2 Importance of DEI-related topics for organisations, by percentage

DEI-related topics	DEI responsibility (%) N=378	Non-DEI responsibility (%) N=174
Inclusive workplace culture	57.3	40.4
Te ao Māori	50.3	45.9
Mental health support	41.3	33.9
Leadership development	40.6	30.3
Anti-bullying and harassment prevention	40.6	23.9
Pay equity	39.2	35.8
Te Tiriti responsiveness	36.7	42.2
Equal opportunities in recruitment	32.9	19.3
Bias awareness and mitigation	31.8	24.8
Cultural intelligence	28.7	29.4
Diverse representation	28.7	27.5
Anti-discrimination	28.0	18.3
Inclusive career development	25.9	17.4
Training and education on DEI	25.2	14.7
LGBTQIA+ inclusivity	23.8	24.8
Accessibility and accommodations	14.7	11.9
Allyship	11.5	13.8
Intersectionality awareness	7.0	5.5
Microaggressions awareness	6.3	7.3
Supplier diversity	4.5	4.6

# Pluralism and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

*Pluralism with engaged DEI processes in place, provides the opportunity for reporting on key issues in the workplace*



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# SDG5, 8 and 10 - Pluralism in the workplace

- SDG 5: when negotiations are achieved through a collective voice, then less pay disparity e.g. public sector 10%, architecture 18%
- SDG 8: creating inclusive, productive and decent work environments for all, addressing diversity, gender equity, ethnicity and neurodiversity.
- SDG 10: when inequalities in the workplace have been identified and reported. Ensuring disabilities, ethnicity, gender or neurodiversity would not be a barrier to work equality.



# Thank You!

**Carolyn Savage**

**Executive Secretary (2024-2027)**

BPW New Zealand Past President

New Zealand Registered Architect

MSDG (Merit), MArch, BArch (Hons), BAS, NZCAD

Contact: [carolyn.savage@bpw-international.org](mailto:carolyn.savage@bpw-international.org)

WhatsApp: +64 22 423 7963

LinkedIn: Carolyn-Savage-NZ



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