



THE POWER OF DIVERSITY:

Open minds.

Open conversations.

Creating Innovation.



CONTENT

• DIVERSITY DRIVES INNOVATION AND STRENGTHENS COMMUNITIES	PAGE 1
Why diversity benefits everyone and creates stronger, more inclusive societies	
• DON'T FEAR CURIOSITY	PAGE 2
This section explores how curiosity can overcome barriers to inclusion	
• WHY DID WE DO THIS STUDY	PAGE 3
The motivation behind this research and the real-world challenges that led us to investigate	
• HOW DID WE INVESTIGATE	PAGE 4
Our approach: workshops, interviews, and research to understand barriers and solutions.	
• WHAT DID WE FIND OUT: 1. SOCIAL ISOLATION & CONFIDENCE	PAGE 5
How a lack of opportunities and confidence affects people with additional needs.	
• WHAT DID WE FIND OUT: 2. EXPANDING ACCESS TO TRANSPORT	PAGE 6
This section highlights challenges and creative solutions to make travel accessible for all.	
• WHAT DID WE FIND OUT: 3. CREATE PATHWAYS AFTER EDUCATION	PAGE 7
How can we rethink jobs, volunteering, and lifelong opportunities?	
• WHAT DID WE FIND OUT: 4. ADVOCATE FOR INCLUSION	PAGE 8
Breaking down stigma and creating a society where accessibility is the norm.	
• WHAT DID WE FIND OUT 5. SIMPLIFY SUPPORT SYSTEMS	PAGE 9
Why navigating support services is so challenging, and how we can make the system easier.	
• BIG THINKING: BOLD IDEAS FOR REAL CHANGE	PAGE 10
We need more than small fixes. We need bold, creative solutions to rethink systems.	
• WHAT NATURE CAN TEACH US ABOUT INCLUSION AND CHANGE	PAGE 14
How nature's diversity and interdependence can inspire a more inclusive society.	
• WHAT'S NEXT	PAGE 16
Uppertunity and Porphura's next steps in taking action and creating real change.	
• FULL REPORT AND MORE INFORMATION	PAGE 17
How to access the full study and get involved in building a more inclusive world.	

DIVERSITY DRIVES INNOVATION AND STRENGTHENS COMMUNITIES



WHAT IS DIVERSITY?

Diversity means that people are different in many ways. We have different interests, beliefs, abilities, perspectives, and appearances. Everyone is unique, and that's a good thing!

When we embrace diversity, we learn from each other, support one another, and create stronger, more innovative, and inclusive communities. Different voices bring new ideas, fresh solutions, and a more sustainable future for all. Diversity makes society fairer, more creative, and more connected. It benefits everyone.

WHAT IS THIS REPORT ABOUT?

This summarised report was created by two Dundee-based organisations (Uppertunity and Porphura) who wanted to move beyond frustration and find real solutions to making diversity a reality. In this report, we will:



Porphura

- ✓ Celebrate what's going well in terms of inclusion.
- ✓ Highlight current barriers and the challenges people face.
 - ✓ Explore ways to overcome these barriers.
- ✓ Look to nature for lessons on achieving diversity and inclusion.
- ✓ Present bold, big thinking ideas to create real change.

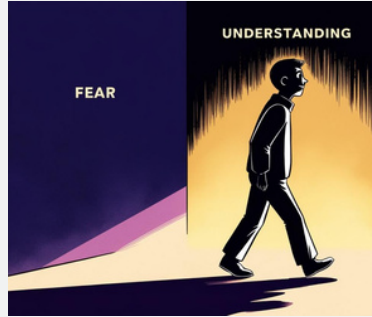
THE IMPACT OF NOT BEING DIVERSE

Imagine a world where everyone thought the same, looked the same, and did the same things. It wouldn't just be boring, it would hold us all back. Without diversity:

- ✗ New ideas wouldn't emerge, limiting creativity and progress.
- ✗ People wouldn't learn from each other, making it harder to accept and celebrate differences.
- ✗ Exclusion would increase, leading to stereotyping, discrimination, and social division.
- ✗ Communities would weaken, becoming less inclusive, less supportive, and less innovative.

WHEN WE WELCOME AND INCLUDE EVERYONE, OUR COMMUNITIES GROW STRONGER, BUSINESSES THRIVE, AND NEW IDEAS CAN FLOURISH. DIVERSITY ISN'T JUST THE RIGHT THING TO DO, IT MAKES LIFE BETTER FOR EVERYONE.

DON'T FEAR CURIOSITY



FEAR AND MINDSET: A MAJOR BARRIER TO INCLUSION

Many barriers to inclusion don't come from prejudice, they come from fear and uncertainty.

DON'T BE SCARED... EMBRACE YOUR CURIOSITY!

People often hold back from engaging with diversity because they fear: Saying the wrong thing; Making mistakes; Asking an offensive question; Feeling uncomfortable in new situations.

But curiosity isn't a bad thing, it's how we grow!

- ◆ Research shows that resistance to diversity often comes from fear of the unknown, not a lack of willingness (Mannaz.com).
- ◆ Ignoring curiosity creates barriers to inclusion and keeps people from learning about one another.
- ◆ When we embrace curiosity and allow ourselves to ask questions, we open doors to understanding, connection, and progress.

★ Curiosity Creates Change ★

Being curious about people with different experiences, abilities, and backgrounds helps break down barriers: It helps us learn and understand each other; It builds meaningful relationships; It shifts our mindsets, leading to personal growth and a stronger, more inclusive society.

So, ask questions. Listen. Explore. Lean into curiosity instead of fear. Because when we choose learning over fear, we create a world where everyone belongs.

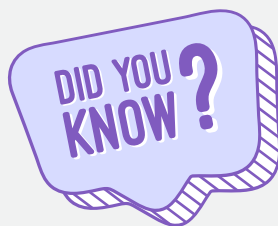


WHY DID WE DO THIS STUDY?


At Uppertunity and Porphura, we work with adults with additional support needs and their carers, breaking barriers and creating opportunities.

But we kept hitting the same roadblocks—again and again: Limited opportunities; Lack of visibility for inclusive spaces; Struggles to expand connections and services.

We wanted to dig deeper to understand the barriers, explore solutions, and take action.



THE REALITY: A WORLD THAT STILL EXCLUDES

 1.3 billion people...17% of the world's population...live with a disability (WHO).
Yet, accessibility and inclusion remain afterthoughts.



The Isolation Crisis

82% of families and carers say their loved ones often feel lonely due to rarely being able to leave their homes (Mencap, 2022). 70% say loneliness harms their mental health (Sense, 2021).



Mental Health Struggles

88% say their loved one always or very often feels sad, and nearly a third (32%) struggle with mental health issues (Mencap, 2022).



Barriers to Inclusion

Limited employment, transport challenges, and stigma keep many socially isolated (MacDonald et al., 2018).



Health Inequality

People with learning disabilities die 20 years earlier, often from preventable illnesses (O'Leary et al., 2017).



The COVID-19 Impact

Support services shut down, leaving many lonely, anxious, and without vital help (SCLD, 2020).

HOW DID WE INVESTIGATE?



THE BIG PICTURE: TIME FOR CHANGE

These barriers aren't permanent, they can be changed. With action, understanding, and inclusive solutions, we can build a society that works for everyone.

So, instead of just talking about the problem, we asked ourselves:

🤔 What if we explored this further?

🤔 What if we focused not on what's wrong, but on what we could do?

🤔 What if we could make Dundee a destination for all?

WE WANTED TO HEAR FROM AS MANY VOICES AS POSSIBLE: PEOPLE WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE, CARERS, BUSINESSES, EDUCATORS, AND LOCAL COUNCILS. SO, WE GOT CREATIVE.

🗣️ Interviews: We spoke to an amazing mix of people: Carers and support staff; Individuals with learning disabilities and physical disabilities; Dundee City Council; Carers Centre; Local businesses; and Educators.

📊 Surveys & Questionnaires: We ran online surveys and hit the city centre, stopping to chat with anyone open to sharing their experience.

🧑‍🤝‍🧑 Workshops at the V&A Dundee: We hosted three interactive workshops where the general public and diversity-focused organisations joined the conversation. Each session featured 3-4 organisations dedicated to inclusion.

📖 Desk Research: We read... a lot. We gathered reports, data, and research to back up real-life stories with real-world numbers.

📓 Everywhere we went... we listened! This wasn't just a formal process. Three of us carried notebooks everywhere. Whenever we heard something insightful, whether at events, casual chats, or just observing the world, we wrote it down. We kept our ears perked up and minds open to amazing organisations and individuals offering solutions.



WE WEREN'T JUST COLLECTING DATA. WE WERE LISTENING AND LEARNING!

WHAT DID WE FIND OUT?

1. SOCIAL ISOLATION & CONFIDENCE

THE PROBLEM:

- Social isolation is a significant issue, with many individuals with additional needs feeling "forgotten" after school or college.
- There is a lack of accessible, structured social spaces, making it difficult for people to form friendships or build confidence.
- Fear and stigma still persist, causing discomfort in public spaces, workplaces, and social settings.
- Post-pandemic impact—COVID-19 disrupted social habits, leaving many struggling to reintegrate.
- Parents often limit independence out of fear, unintentionally holding back their children's ability to socialise.

KEY LEARNING:

- Confidence comes from opportunities. When individuals engage in inclusive spaces, they develop friendships and skills previously thought impossible.
- People aren't resisting inclusion out of prejudice, but uncertainty. Fear of saying or doing the wrong thing stops engagement.
- Society underestimates people's capabilities. Education and exposure are key to changing misconceptions.

WAYS FORWARD:

- Reframe accessibility as a social benefit for all. Encourage businesses, schools, and organisations to see inclusion as a strength, not a challenge.
- Introduce social confidence workshops, focusing on communication skills, self-expression, and boundary-setting.
- Educate early. Implement school programs where young people interact with individuals with disabilities, normalising inclusion.
- Promote inclusive community events—accessible meet-ups, activity groups, and networking spaces for disabled and non-disabled individuals alike.
- Change the language of disability. Shift from deficit-based language (e.g., "struggles with") to empowerment-focused language (e.g., "thrives with the right support").



WHAT DID WE FIND OUT?

2. EXPANDING ACCESS TO TRANSPORT

THE PROBLEM:

- Public transport is unreliable and inaccessible: limited routes, unsafe conditions, and lack of understanding from drivers create daily challenges.
- Taxis are too expensive, yet often the only option for people with disabilities.
- Fear of public transport: many individuals (especially those with autism or anxiety) find buses overwhelming due to noise, unpredictability, and rushed journeys.
- Drop curbs, pavements, and road design are major accessibility barriers.
- Many individuals with additional support needs need support to travel to a destination, though they may not need support at the destination.

KEY LEARNING:

- Transport is about independence, not just mobility. If people can't get around, they can't socialise, work, or contribute to their communities.
- Small changes can make a big difference. Better driver training, clearer accessibility information, and affordable transport options could open up the world for many.

WAYS FORWARD:

- Introduce sensory-friendly travel options—such as "calm travel" hours on buses, reducing noise and distractions for autistic individuals or those with anxiety.
- Improve accessibility awareness among transport staff. Train bus and taxi drivers to be more patient, supportive, and disability-aware. Promote Journey Assist Cards for smoother communication.
- Develop a travel mentoring program, pairing individuals with mentors or support workers to help build confidence using public transport.
- Implement real-time tracking and safety systems: GPS monitoring, text-based emergency alerts, and real-time updates for disabled travellers.
- Reintroduce subsidised, community-led transport solutions such as on-demand accessible minibuses, offering an affordable and reliable alternative to taxis. This will also encourage use of community services that are under used due to individuals not being able to get to these services.



WHAT DID WE FIND OUT?

3. CREATE PATHWAYS AFTER EDUCATION

THE PROBLEM:

- Young people with additional support needs often “fall off a cliff”. There is no structured transition from school to employment, volunteering, or further education.
- Colleges offer education but no extracurricular activities, leaving students isolated and without social opportunities compared to their non-disabled peers.
- Parents are left to fill the gap, often quitting jobs or reducing work hours to provide support when no services are available.
- Employers lack awareness of reasonable adjustments, making job-seeking difficult for those who need flexible or supported working environments.
- Volunteering can impact benefits, discouraging many from getting involved.

KEY LEARNINGS:

- A structured transition into adulthood is essential. Without a plan, many lose confidence, skills, and opportunities. Some great solutions already exist, but stronger partnerships between schools, businesses, and service providers are needed.
- Employment and volunteering need to be redefined and reimaged. Not everyone needs to follow a traditional job path, but everyone deserves meaningful opportunities to contribute to society in a way that fits their abilities and aspirations.
- Businesses are often willing to be inclusive but lack guidance. With the right support and training, more workplaces could adapt and hire diversely.

WAYS FORWARD:

- Subsidised employment support for businesses, offering financial incentives, training, and mentorship programs to help businesses hire and retain employees with additional needs.
- Expand post-education support services. Establish clear, structured pathways from school into work, volunteering, or community engagement. There are current projects doing this, but stronger partnerships are needed for it to flourish.
- Rethink traditional employment models. Explore micro-jobs, social enterprises, flexible work, and co-working opportunities designed for neurodivergent and disabled individuals.
- Strengthen life-skills education post school education and college. Offer life long learning opportunities.



WHAT DID WE FIND OUT?

4. ADVOCATE FOR INCLUSION

THE PROBLEM:

- Society often sees disability as "other" rather than an integral part of human diversity.
- Many businesses don't know how to communicate their accessibility features. Some have accessible spaces but fail to promote or explain them effectively.
- Fear of the unknown discourages interaction. People often avoid engaging with those who seem different, not out of prejudice, but due to discomfort or uncertainty.
- Parents of disabled children face judgment, even within disability communities, due to differing views on education, support, and independence.

KEY LEARNING:

- Inclusion is more than just physical access, it's about creating welcoming, respectful, and empowering spaces where everyone feels valued and understood.
- Many businesses and communities want to be inclusive but don't know how. Small, cost-effective changes can make a huge difference in accessibility and perception.
- Education is key. Without exposure and awareness, fear and misunderstanding persist.

WAYS FORWARD:

- Train and support businesses, schools, and community leaders, providing practical guidance on inclusive practices, communication, and accessibility.
- Encourage more interaction between disabled and non-disabled individuals. Creating community events, school engagement programs, and workplace inclusion initiatives to break down barriers of fear and discomfort.
- Recognise and celebrate businesses embracing accessibility through awards, incentives, and public campaigns, showing that inclusion benefits both society and the economy. There are some current programmes running, but further awareness is needed.
- Shift public perception. Promote the message that accessibility isn't about compliance; it's about creating spaces where everyone can thrive.
- Make information about accessibility easy to find. Encourage businesses to list their accessibility features online, and develop city-wide accessibility directories to support inclusive tourism and community participation. There are various websites online, but more partnership work can help amplify these resources.



WHAT DID WE FIND OUT?

5. SIMPLIFY SUPPORT SYSTEMS

💡 THE PROBLEM:

- The system is overly complex—families spend more time battling bureaucracy than actually receiving support. Many are left feeling exhausted and overwhelmed.
- Short-term funding creates instability. Organisations struggle to plan long-term, constantly chasing small grants instead of focusing on long term impact.
- Social care is in crisis. Only those in severe crisis receive help, leaving many individuals unsupported until they reach breaking point.
- Carers feel undervalued and unsupported. Low pay, high stress, and a lack of career progression result in high turnover and workforce shortages.
- Different services don't communicate, forcing families to navigate multiple systems on their own, often receiving conflicting advice or missing out on key support.

📌 KEY LEARNING:

- Prevention is more effective than crisis management. Investing in early support saves money in the long run and prevents unnecessary suffering.
- Stable, long-term funding leads to better outcomes. Organisations need security to build meaningful, sustainable services rather than relying on short-term fixes.
- Carers are essential to society. They enable independence, reduce healthcare burdens, and contribute to the economy, yet they remain undervalued and underpaid.
- Accessing support should be simple. Families should spend time living, not navigating.

🚀 WAYS FORWARD:

- Reimagine the role of carers: increase pay, career progression, and training to attract a skilled and motivated workforce while supporting young people into care careers.
- Create a 'One-Stop-Shop' Support Hub. A single, streamlined system where families can access all relevant services in one place, rather than having to piece together fragmented support. Various resources are available, but partnership is needed to streamline.
- Improve coordination between services. Ensure that different support systems talk to each other, making processes easier for families to navigate.
- Invest in preventative services. Expand respite care, early intervention, mental health support, and practical assistance for carers and individuals with additional needs.



BIG THINKING...

BOLD IDEAS FOR REAL CHANGE



Addressing these challenges isn't about small tweaks, it's about shifting how we think about inclusion entirely. The research highlights a shared desire for connection, independence, and real opportunities.

We need to be creative, ambitious, and disruptive in our approach. Instead of making small adjustments to a broken system, we must rethink the way society functions.

HERE ARE FOUR BOLD WAYS TO MOVE FORWARD—NOT JUST DIFFERENTLY, BUT BETTER...

1. ADVOCATE FOR INCLUSION: MAKE IT UNFORGETTABLE

Inclusion needs to be fun, loud, and everywhere. It shouldn't feel like a chore, it should be exciting, inspiring, and something people WANT to be part of. Let's make inclusion the norm, not an afterthought.



SLOGAN CAMPAIGN: WEAR THE MOVEMENT

T-shirts, tote bags, and posters with bold, thought-provoking messages: "Talk to Someone Different Today" – an everyday challenge to step outside comfort zones; "Fear Less, Connect More" – addressing the core issue of fear-based exclusion. By making inclusion a visible movement, we spark conversations, and challenge stereotypes.



REVERSE INCLUSION IN SCHOOLS: LEARNING THROUGH EXPERIENCE

Inclusion education often focuses on teaching kids about disabilities, but what if we flipped the model? What if adults with additional needs spent the day leading fun activities in primary schools? Children naturally embrace diversity when it's part of their daily life. By shifting the perspective, kids grow up seeing disability as normal, not as something 'other.'



FEAR-BREAKING WORKSHOPS: TEACHING CONFIDENCE, NOT CAUTION

Many people avoid interacting with disabled individuals, not out of prejudice, but out of fear of saying or doing the wrong thing. Let's fix that: Interactive workshops in shopping centres, businesses, and public spaces to teach people HOW to engage comfortably with individuals with disabilities; Fun, engaging role-playing exercises—turning "fear of the unknown" into curiosity and connection.



BUSINESS INCLUSION LABS: 1-DAY ACCESSIBILITY CHALLENGES

Most businesses want to be inclusive but don't know where to start. Let's show them. Businesses sign up for a 1-day challenge where they: Redesign a service, space, or event with accessibility in mind; Learn that accessibility doesn't just mean wheelchair friendly. Walk away with practical, affordable ways to make their business more welcoming. Teach businesses to focus on what they DO have on offer, not what they don't.



BIG THINKING...

BOLD IDEAS FOR REAL CHANGE

2. EXPAND ACCESS TO TRANSPORT: RETHINK MOVEMENT ENTIRELY

Transport isn't just about getting from A to B, it's about freedom, independence, and connection. Right now, too many people with additional needs can't travel easily, leading to social isolation and lost opportunities. Instead of minor tweaks, we need to reimagine how transport works for everyone.

COMMUNITY MINI BUS: AFFORDABLE, RELIABLE, SHARED

Right now, taxis are too expensive and public transport feels unsafe or unreliable. What if we introduced a subsidised mini-bus service running on key accessible routes? Funded partly by local businesses (who benefit from increased customer traffic). Passengers pay a small fee, affordable but still sustainable. Trained drivers and staff to support individuals with different needs. A reliable, shared system could replace taxi dependence, increase independence, and create social travel opportunities.

CITYWIDE TRANSPORT CHALLENGE: WALK (OR ROLL) IN THEIR SHOES

The best way to understand a problem? Experience it first-hand. Challenge city leaders, bus drivers, and council members to spend a day navigating the city with a mobility impairment. Blindfolded bus journeys: how accessible is information for the visually impaired? Wheelchair travel across the city: how easy is it to board buses, cross streets, or access shops? Autism-friendly travel simulations: how overwhelming is the noise, lighting, and unpredictability? Nothing teaches change better than living it. Let's make decision-makers feel the struggles first-hand.

ON-DEMAND TRAVEL BUDDIES: A COMPANION SYSTEM FOR SAFE TRAVEL

Many people could use public transport if they had support getting there. What if we created an app where volunteers sign up to accompany individuals on their journeys? Like Uber, but for companionship and navigation help. Volunteers could be students, retired individuals, or community members offering time to support others. Could be linked with a "confidence-building" system, where people gradually move towards independent travel. With the right support, education, and investment, transport can be more than just a service, it can be a lifeline. Let's make movement possible for everyone.



BIG THINKING...

BOLD IDEAS FOR REAL CHANGE



3. RETHINK JOBS & PATHWAYS: IT'S TIME FOR SOMETHING RADICAL

Traditional employment doesn't work for everyone. Many individuals with additional needs are locked out of jobs due to rigid structures, inflexible hiring practices, and fear from employers. Instead of forcing people into a broken system, let's redefine what work, contribution, and success look like. There are already incredible initiatives making a difference. These should be seen as the norm and standard, not as exceptional.

SKILL SWAP PROGRAM: A DIFFERENT MEASURE OF VALUE

Not everyone fits into a standard 9–5 job, but everyone has skills to share. What if we created a community skills exchange? Individuals with additional needs offer their talents (e.g., art, coding, gardening, storytelling) in exchange for: Mentorship; Training opportunities; Small stipends. Encourages learning and contribution without pressure, not just about money, but building confidence, independence, and skills.

THE BUSINESS ACCESS FUND: DE-RISK HIRING FOR EMPLOYERS

Most businesses want to be inclusive, but fear financial risk or don't know how to adapt. What if we created a fund to subsidize salaries for workers with disabilities? Instead of businesses covering full wages, the fund supports part of the salary, encouraging hiring. Helps businesses trial inclusive employment models with less risk.

SHORT-TERM, FLEXIBLE JOB PLACEMENTS: WORK THAT FITS THE PERSON

Many people can't commit to a full-time job, but that doesn't mean they can't contribute. What if companies created flexible, project-based, or short-term roles? 1-month placements, seasonal work, or task-based projects rather than rigid contracts. Individuals gain experience, confidence, and connections without pressure.

SOCIAL WORKSPACES: A NEW KIND OF COLLABORATION

Instead of co-working spaces, let's create co-learning spaces. Imagine places where: People with disabilities, students, and businesses work on real projects together; Companies gain insight into accessibility and inclusion while benefiting from unique talents; Individuals learn skills in a dynamic, supportive environment. Not just work experience, but real collaboration.



BIG THINKING...

BOLD IDEAS FOR REAL CHANGE



4. BUILD BETTER CONNECTIONS: RADICAL COLLABORATION

Inclusion thrives when people, businesses, and services connect. We don't need more isolated solutions, we need an ecosystem where partnerships, shared spaces, and collaboration become the norm, not the exception.

WHY DO WE ALL HAVE SEPARATE BUILDINGS? LET'S SHARE.

Many disability organisations have their own venues, yet often struggle with resources, funding, or foot traffic. What if we opened up spaces to each other? A rotating shared space model where organisations, businesses, and creatives collaborate under one roof would create more interaction, less duplication, and richer experiences for everyone. This can also provide a platform for a "One-Stop Access Hub".

COLLABORATION SPEED-DATING: RADICAL NETWORKING FOR REAL SOLUTIONS

We don't just need more ideas, we need action. Picture a fast-paced, high-energy event where businesses, disability organisations, and local creatives sit down for 5-minute conversations to spark partnerships and co-design solutions on the spot. Not a talk shop: a think-and-do space.

ACCESSIBILITY BOOTCAMPS FOR BUSINESSES: BEYOND COMPLIANCE

Many businesses want to be inclusive but don't know how. Instead of dry compliance training, let's create interactive, hands-on bootcamps where business owners, staff, and managers experience accessibility barriers first-hand and actively redesign their spaces and services with expert guidance, and lived experience.

TEACH THE ART OF PARTNERSHIP

Most collaborations fail not because of bad intentions, but because people don't know how to work together effectively. Let's teach businesses, non-profits, and community groups the actual skills of partnership-building, so inclusion efforts don't just start, but succeed.

BIG PICTURE VISION:

Imagine a city where inclusion isn't just an initiative but a built-in part of how we work together. Where businesses, disability groups, councils, and the public collaborate seamlessly, sharing spaces, ideas, and resources to create a thriving, accessible, and welcoming community for all.

WHAT NATURE CAN TEACH US ABOUT INCLUSION AND CHANGE



Nature thrives because of diversity, balance, and connection. Every tree, flower, and creature has a role to play in creating a strong, sustainable ecosystem. If nature understands the power of diversity, why don't we?

DIVERSITY MAKES US STRONGER

A healthy forest has many different trees, plants, and animals. This diversity protects against disease and keeps the ecosystem balanced. The same applies to society. When we include people with different perspectives, backgrounds, and abilities, we create more resilient, innovative, and connected communities.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- ✓ Be open to new perspectives: connect with people who have different experiences.
- ✓ Support inclusive workplaces, events, and communities.
- ✓ Encourage diversity in leadership, decision-making, and creative spaces.



EVERYONE HAS A PLACE

Different plants and animals thrive in different environments. Some need shade, others need sunlight. People are the same. We all have strengths, but we need the right environment to grow. Inclusion isn't about making everyone the same; it's about making sure everyone belongs.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- ✓ Help create inclusive spaces where everyone can contribute, whether in workplaces, schools, or social groups.
- ✓ Challenge assumptions about who belongs where. Everyone deserves opportunities to grow.

NATURE DOESN'T TRY TO MAKE EVERYTHING THE SAME. IT VALUES DIFFERENCES, ADAPTS, AND GROWS STRONGER.

WHAT NATURE CAN TEACH US ABOUT INCLUSION AND CHANGE

FAIRNESS MEANS SUPPORT, NOT SAMENESS

In a forest, strong trees share nutrients through their roots to help weaker trees survive. Equity works the same way—some people need more support to thrive, not less. Treating everyone the same isn't fair if people start from different places.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ✓ Advocate for accessible spaces, flexible work, and fair opportunities.
- ✓ Recognize that some people face barriers we don't see—be willing to listen and adjust.



SAMENESS IS RISKY

A farm that grows only one crop is vulnerable to disease and disaster. But a wild meadow with many different plants can adapt, survive, and thrive. Communities, workplaces, and organisations that lack diversity become stagnant and fragile.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ✓ Push for diverse teams, ideas, and perspectives—it leads to better decisions and innovation.
- ✓ Support inclusive hiring and leadership opportunities.
- ✓ Encourage businesses, schools, and social groups to embrace variety.



WE ARE ALL CONNECTED

In nature, everything is linked: trees, rivers, animals, and fungi work together to sustain life. The same is true for people. When we help each other, we all grow stronger. Inclusion isn't just about helping others. It's about building a healthier, more sustainable society for everyone.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ✓ Recognise how inclusion benefits everyone, not just those who are excluded.
- ✓ Support initiatives that bring people together rather than creating barriers.
- ✓ Start small: a conversation, an open mind, a helping hand can lead to real change.

WHAT'S NEXT?



UPPERTUNITY & PORPHURA TAKING ACTION

We don't just want to talk about inclusion, we want to make it happen. This isn't just about highlighting problems; it's about creating real solutions and building a movement that challenges fear, shifts mindsets, and makes inclusion the norm, not the exception.

Here's what we're doing next:

1. THE SLOGAN CAMPAIGN: TURNING AWARENESS INTO ACTION

We're bringing bold, creative messaging to the streets, sparking curiosity, breaking down fear, and making inclusion something people WANT to be part of. Our next step is to amplify or create a campaign, incorporating a bold statement. This will involve T-shirts, tote bags, and posters with impactful slogans designed to start conversations. The campaign will also offer fear-breaking workshops. Interactive, thought-provoking sessions in public spaces, schools, and businesses, teaching people how to engage without fear. The campaign will also involve reverse inclusion events. Instead of just talking about inclusion, let's live it. Adults with additional needs will lead activities in schools, businesses, and community spaces, turning the usual roles upside down.

2. BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS & EXPANDING IMPACT

Change doesn't happen alone, we're creating a network of changemakers. Collaboration Speed-Dating: We'll bring together businesses, community groups, and creatives to rapidly brainstorm and co-create real solutions. Creating more partnership working, and sharing this learning with others. Hosting monthly workshops at Uppertunity, showcasing what is on offer in Dundee. More Inclusive Social Events: We'll host collaborative community meet-ups, merging different groups in fun, natural, and engaging ways.

3. EDUCATING & SUPPORTING BUSINESSES: MAKING ACCESSIBILITY EFFORTLESS

Businesses want to be inclusive, but many don't know how. We're changing that. Accessibility Bootcamps: Hands-on workshops where businesses experience barriers first-hand and learn practical, cost-effective ways to improve inclusion. Inclusion Audits & Support: We'll work directly with businesses to assess, enhance, and communicate their accessibility efforts, helping them make small, meaningful changes that attract more customers and employees.



FULL REPORT AND MORE INFORMATION

We have completed a full report that includes all interviews, raw data, and deeper insights from this study. You can find it on our website at [uppertunity.org.uk] or [porphura.co.uk]

This research isn't meant to sit on a shelf, it's meant to create real change.

BE PART OF THE MOVEMENT

We're looking for partners, businesses, creatives, and individuals who want to help turn these ideas into action. Inclusion isn't just an idea, it's something we can build together.

✉️ Get in touch if you'd like to:

- ✓ Collaborate on a project
- ✓ Join an event
- ✓ Bring these ideas into your workplace, school, or community

Email info@uppertunity.org.uk or hello@porphura.co.uk

USE THIS REPORT TO DRIVE CHANGE

Please feel free to use this research to support your own work, start conversations, and push for change in your communities, businesses, and decision-making spaces. If you'd like to discuss any of the findings further or co-create solutions, we'd love to hear from you.

A HUGE THANK YOU

This study would not have been possible without the insights, experiences, and contributions of so many individuals, organisations, and businesses.

🙌 A full list of contributors and partners can be found in the full report.

TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY THE NORM, NOT THE EXCEPTION.



THE BIGGEST LEARNING OF ALL? WE NEED TO START HAVING MORE CONVERSATIONS.

🗣️ Conversations with people different from us, because connection breaks down fear.

🤝 Conversations between organisations, so that we can work together, share resources, and stop operating in silos.

💡 Conversations that challenge our own mindsets, because change starts when we're willing to listen, learn, and grow.

If we talk more, we understand more. If we understand more, we change more.

**OPEN MINDS. OPEN CONVERSATIONS.
CREATING INNOVATION**

