IBM Canada Ltd.

Diversity & Inclusion @ IBM
Frequently Asked Questions

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This information was created to provide you with additional details regarding IBM's commitment to diversity and creating an inclusive environment where all employees can perform at their full potential. Diversity & Inclusion related questions may be directed to your Manager, Human Resources Partner or directly to Deenah Patel, Manager of Corporate Diversity & Inclusion. Additional information about IBM Canada's Diversity Programs is available at the following web site. For example, you'll find details on our diversity network groups, councils, initiatives and accommodations.

URL: w3.can.ibm.com/hr/diversity

Diversity FAQs

Question: Why should we celebrate diversity?
Response: At IBM, we acknowledge, value and respect diversity. To succeed in a dynamic industry we have created a work environment where all employees can realize their full potential. Our people reflect the communities in which we live and work and bring a broad range of thought and experience. Their diversity is an integral part of IBM's success as a leader in innovation.

Question: How do we benefit from diversity?
Response: Diversity removes barriers to ensure that every employee has the potential to succeed in reaching their personal and professional goals. It also allows us to attract the best and brightest employees and uncover new business opportunities.

Question: What is IBM's commitment to diversity?
Response: The employees at IBM represent a talented and diverse workforce. Achieving the full potential of this diversity is a business priority that is fundamental to our competitive success. Business activities, such as hiring, training, advancement and retention of employees is conducted without regard to race, colour, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or age.

Question: What are the advantages of our diverse workforce?
Response: IBMers around the world have described what kind of company they want to work for. Workforce diversity is clearly seen as a competitive strength and a leverage point toward industry leadership. Some specific advantages include:
- Teaming and collaborating is clearly seen by IBMers as important in accomplishing our goals.
- Goal achievement is our ability to listen to each other and appreciate different perspectives and is important to the success of a diverse team.
- Workforce Diversity is a global topic – in the workplace and marketplace. Successful businesses have a borderless view and an unyielding commitment to ensuring that workforce diversity is part of their day-to-day business conduct.
- Workforce Diversity results in customer satisfaction.

Question: How can I get my location more involved with Diversity at IBM?
Response: Learn more about the different programs and groups that we have in IBM Canada and globally by visiting w3.can.ibm.com/hr/diversity. Engage your Senior Location Leader and start planning. Beyond involvement at the business unit level, you may consider volunteering with a Diversity Council or join one of our Diversity Network Groups.

Diversity Councils are voluntary teams covering specific constituency group needs. In Canada we have the Canadian Women's Leadership Council and the Visible Minority Council. There are also informal councils or groups of volunteers that you can become involved in if you are interested.

Diversity Network Groups are comprised of employees who volunteer to help advance IBM's Diversity Goals. In Canada we have an Aboriginal Peoples Network Group, Black IBM Network Group, Blue Q (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender employees), East Asian Diversity Network Group, Latin American Network Group, South Asian Network Group, Men's Association and a People Enablement Network Group focused on Persons with DisAbilities.

Diversity Network Groups are focused on helping fellow members become more effective in the workplace through:
- Meeting, teaming and networking
- Mentoring and coaching
- Community outreach
- Social, cultural and educational events
- Developing professional skills, and
- Enhancing recruitment and welcoming of new employees.

Anybody can join any of the diversity network groups. Our goal is create an environment of inclusion.

Question: Should I reach out to the Diversity Network Groups to execute Diversity events in my location?
Response: Yes, the Diversity Network Groups and Councils consider it a part of their mandate to reach out and get you involved. Many volunteers in Network Groups have already offered to help broaden the reach across Canada. Rest assured that they are also focused on building the networks across the country and are looking forward to getting you engaged.

Question: Does IBM have a religious observance policy?
Response: IBM recognizes every employee's right to practice the religion of his/her choice. The company will make every reasonable effort to accommodate its work schedule to the religious needs of employees and prospective employees when this can be done without undue hardship on the conduct of the business. Undue hardship might exist when the employee's (or prospective employee's) work could not be performed by another employee of similar qualifications during the requested period of absence. Occasionally, it may be necessary to adjust an employee's work schedule or grant hours and/or days off from work when they are obliged to be absent from work on all or part of certain days or to attend religious services at the employee's local place of worship. IBM also offers Reflection Rooms and Prayer Preparation Facilities based on employee needs.

Reflection Rooms are located at the following facilities:

245 Consumers Road, Toronto	44 Capital Blvd., Edmonton
3500 Steeles Avenue East, Markham	4175 14th Avenue, Markham
3600 Steeles Avenue East, Markham	1360 Rene-Levesques, Montreal
8200 Warden Lab, Markham	275 Viger Est, Montreal

*these locations may change, for details please contact the Diversity Office.

Question: Does IBM provide accommodations for persons with disabilities?
Response: IBM has established an Accommodation Fund to cover the cost of adaptive equipment that is not part of the standard workstation setup. In this way, we create a level playing field for all employees. Hiring managers can focus on hiring based on merit and skill without needing to take into consideration additional equipment costs. We also cover the cost of services such as interpreter services for hearing impaired employees. If you have any questions or require details on accommodation practices please visit the diversity intranet site or contact Deenah Patel @ 905.316.1616.

Question: Does IBM have corporate instructions regarding Accessibility?
Response: Yes, IBM has a long history of making its information technology widely available and accessible without regard to the ability of the user. IBM's competitiveness in the worldwide marketplace depends on satisfying its customers' demands for products that meet their varying requirements. To enable people with disabilities to use IBM's products and to help IBM to meet government purchasing regulations, IBM must include important accessibility features and functions, so that products are either directly accessible or compatible with assistive technology. CI 162 also applies to the products, tools, applications and services we use internally worldwide.

About You Diversity & Inclusion Profile FAQs

Question: Why does IBM collect diversity information in the About You Diversity & Inclusion Profile?
Response: The Diversity & Inclusion Profile provides employees with the opportunity to self identify, or declare voluntarily, based on their understanding of the definitions, that they are a member of one or more of the designated groups. Your responses will help us ensure equity within IBM's learning and developmental opportunities, networking, mentorship, leadership seminars, and other similar diversity related initiatives designed to engage our regular employees. Information from this profile will also allow us to understand the diversity of our hiring, advancement and retention practices in compliance with Canadian legislation.

Question: What is the data being used for?
Response: Your personal information is considered highly confidential. All gathered data is used at an aggregate level to carry out IBM's obligations under the Employment Equity Act and Federal Contractors Program.
Your responses will be used at an aggregate level to:
• analyze the composition of IBM Canada's workforce by designated group,
• enable IBM to create innovative diversity strategies, and
• provide information to develop targeted inclusive programs to lead in the marketplace.

Question: Can an IBM employee update their profile at any time?
Response: Yes, you can update your Diversity and Inclusion Profile at any time. It's as simple as visiting About You on IBM Canada's HR - You & IBM intranet site, selecting < Personal > and then clicking on <Diversity & Inclusion Profile>. You will need your IBM intranet identification and password to ensure confidentiality. You can self identify in more than one group.

You will not be identified by name unless you provide IBM with your permission to access the profile results. If you do not provide IBM with permission then we will not be able to include you in specific diversity related outreach programs and initiatives.

Question: Can you provide more information regarding the Global Diversity Initiative to include our Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender constituency?
Response: For the purposes of inclusion, IBM added Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) to the Diversity & Inclusion Profile. The GLBT self-identification indicator is managed exclusively at a Global Workforce Diversity level so GLBT information is not viewable in Canada by your manager or management teams. Access is restricted to Global Workforce Diversity staff so that they can produce summary reports and e-mail distributions for specific programs with your permission. GLBT self-identification data will be encrypted so that database administrators will not be able to see your information yet will be able to perform necessary database maintenance services. This is not a designated group based on the Canadian Employment Equity Act.

Question: What is the definition of Aboriginal Peoples?
Response: For the purposes of Employment Equity "Aboriginal" refers to persons who are of First Nation, Inuit or Métis descent. If you are of Aboriginal origin, please select one of the following sub-groups: First Nation, Inuit, Métis or Other.

Question: What is the definition of Members of Visible Minorities?
Response: For the purposes of Employment Equity, "Members of Visible Minorities" refers to persons, other than aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white colour. Examples of Visible Minority groups include: Black, East Asian, Latin American, South Asian and any other visible minority heritage group.

Question: What is the definition of Caucasian?
Response: For the purposes of inclusion, IBM added the "Caucasian" constituency group to the Diversity & Inclusion Profile. This is to ensure that we understand the composite of our employee workforce. Caucasian is commonly a North American term that refers to people who have a white skin complexion. This includes persons from Europe, North Africa and parts of West, South and Central Asia. This is not a designated group based on the Canadian Employment Equity Act.

Question: What is the definition of Persons with Disabilities?
Response: For the purposes of Employment Equity, "Persons with Disabilities" refers to persons who have a long-term or recurring physical, emotional, sensory, or learning impairment and who:
a) consider themselves to be disadvantaged in employment by reason of that impairment or,
b) believe that an employer or a potential employer is likely to consider them to be disadvantaged in employment by reason of that impairment.

This includes persons whose functional limitations owing to their impairment have been accommodated in their current job or workplace. Examples of disabilities include hearing, speech, mobility or coordination impairments, visual impairment not corrected by glasses or contact lenses and non-visible disabilities including mental and learning disabilities.

Question: Why is IBM asking for permission to use the About You profile information at an individual level?
Response: This information is being collected to support IBM's Global Diversity Programs, to allow for specific communication with self-identified regular employees about HR programs, education and learning opportunities, networking, mentoring, and leadership seminars for targeted diversity initiatives. If you choose not to self identify or do not give us permission to use your individual information, IBM will not be able to communicate with you directly.

Question: Can an employee choose to not provide personal information?
Response: IBM must seek your permission to use your data at a name level for the explicit purpose of IBM diversity related programs, development and inclusion initiatives. IBM is collecting this information to allow for specific communication with regular employees about HR programs, education, learning and developmental opportunities, networking and mentoring, leadership seminars and for outreach programs to targeted diversity groups.

This will also enable IBM with confidential information about our workforce and help us to continually evolve our diversity programs to meet the needs of our regular employees. Please consider giving us permission to leverage your information at the individual level for specific employment equity programs, in compliance with the legislation. For example, if you are a regular employee who is Asian and you provide your permission, you may be invited to a Leadership Education for Asia Pacific (LEAP) program. If you choose not to give permission for usage of your data, IBM will not be able to communicate with you or your management team about the initiatives described above.

Question: Is it mandatory for an employee to complete their Diversity & Inclusion Profile?
Response: Although you are strongly encouraged to complete the IBM Diversity & Inclusion Profile to comply with Employment Equity, you are not required to respond to the designated group questions or provide personal information; participation in this aspect of the Profile is completely voluntary. By selecting 'not to participate' it demonstrates that you have still gone into the survey and provided your response.