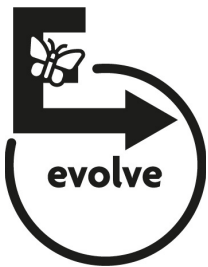# Evolve Pillar
Horizon Scanning

The Inclusive Employers Standard is built upon six pillars of inclusion, which serve as its framework. These pillars—Engage, Equip, Empower, Embed, Evaluate, and Evolve, determine the success and impact of inclusion efforts within the workplace.

To support organisations at all stages of their inclusion journey we host a panel event series focusing on one pillar at a time. Out of these events we have produced a suite of resources sharing insights and experiences on a specific topics.

The evolve pillar explores how you develop understanding beyond the walls of your organisation, by engaging and learning from others, to become a role model and thought leader for your industry. In this resource we will focus on effective horizon scanning.

Working as an internal inclusion lead can often feel lonely at times, which is why connecting with and learning from others is a vitally important part of evolving your inclusion approach.

Who should I be learning from?
The easy answer is anyone and everyone. There is so much we can learn from others regardless of where they are in their inclusion journey. Connect with people within and outside of your industry with the view to bringing that learning back into your organisation to adapt it to your context.

How can I connect with others?
Horizon scanning can look very different depending on the challenges of your organisation or industry. Budget can often be the biggest challenge. Whilst you might wish you could attend international inclusion conferences or visit organisations around the globe to understanding how they apply inclusion to different cultural contexts, this might be impossible for you. However, with the internet networking and horizon scanning does not have to cost a penny. There is so much information, communities, and events online for free to connect and learn.

Want to learn more?
Email us at standard@inclusiveemployers.co.uk

There are no universally accepted approaches for horizon scanning and seeking inclusion learning but below are some suggestions:

Inter-organisation inclusion networks

LinkedIn is a great place to look for a wide range of inclusion-focused networking opportunities. Joining virtual networks can help you connect with people outside of your industry and gain innovative insights. Inclusive employers run Member Community events through the year, to allow members to connect with other organisations on a range of topics.

Industry specific networks

Many industries have industry-specific inclusion networks, where I&D professionals or others working in the industry can connect and collaborate on different projects. Some examples are:

- Black Sports Professionals Network (BSPN) – Focuses on racial equity and career development in sports.
- Women Who Code – Supports and advances women in tech and software engineering.
- Women in Pharma – Focuses on gender diversity in the pharmaceutical industry.
- BAFTA Elevate – Supports underrepresented groups in film, TV, and gaming.

Explore if your industry has a network like this, and if not, why not get together with some other organisations to start one.

Memberships and subscriptions

You may already have a membership to Inclusive Employers, if not, why not? Memberships and subscriptions to inclusion support can be a great way to gain insights and support on topics you may not be confident with. It can however add up, so be purposeful in the partnerships you decide to invest in and make sure you are getting the most out of them.

Conferences and events

Attending virtual or in person events and conferences can be a good way to expand your support network and hear new ideas. Again this can get pricey so consider what are the most important events to help you with the challenges you are facing right now. Alternatively, seek out free events, or put on your own to bring people together.

Academic or industry research

Often once we leave school we never want to read academic literature again, but there is a wealth of knowledge to be gained from academic and grey literature around inclusion. Using Google Scholar or other academic search engines is an easy way to rind new research on inclusion topics.

Continued professional development

Often many people responsible for inclusion are doing it on top of other roles. Meaning it might not be something you have trained in or are even very confident with. Why not explore our open entry CMI courses to increase your knowledge and your network.

One to one support

Don't forget you can learn a lot from talking to people you know. They may be in a similar role to you or they may be in a totally different industry, Look at how you can support or mentor each other to expand your knowledge and bring new ideas into both your organisations.

How do I become a thought leader and role model to my industry?

Contrary to popular belief, you do not need to be getting everything right to be a role model. People can learn just as much from mistakes as they can from successes. By publically sharing your insights both good and bad you can support others to develop on their inclusion journey. You could:

- Speak at or host an event for other I&D professionals
- Publish blogs or articles sharing your insights externally
- Invest in or contribute to academic research to explore challenges in your industry
- Campaign for change if you feel there is a practice or procedure in your industry that needs to change

Holding your industry to account can seem like a terrifying thing to do, but it doesn't have to be. Change can only happen when we question the way things are done and suggest alternative solutions. By openly sharing alternative solutions that have worked for you, others in your industry can start to make a change too.

It's also important to keep track of the impact of all these activities to understand if and how you can bringing learning back into your organisation, and maybe even shaping your industry for the better. Make sure you:

1. Identify key objectives you want to achieve from your horizon scanning or knowledge sharing.
2. Map horizon scanning insights to actually translate to decisions made.
3. Get a baseline and benchmark yourself

Progressing Inclusion through Knowledge Sharing

Volkswagen

Aman Sidhu
Diversity, Equality and Inclusion
Business Partner

Even before achieving Gold on the Inclusive Employers Standard, Volkswagen Group UK were actively involved in speaking at local, national and international events, such as events hosted by the Automotive 30% club, the Women Automotive Network and Milton Keynes Pride, to share their insights and learnings around inclusion.

In May 2023, Alex Smith, Managing Director of Volkswagen Group UK, was approach to speak at the Automotive 30% Club conference, which was attended by 166 leaders from across the automotive industry, on the topics of using data to drive diversity decisions. 72% of attendees identified Alex as the most interesting industry speaker. A video of Alex's talk is available here.

"It's essential for Volkswagen Group UK and the broader industry to share DE&I learnings because it creates a culture of continuous improvement and innovation. By openly discussing challenges and successes, we can accelerate progress towards a more inclusive workplace and industry, benefitting not only our employees but also our customers and society as a whole." Aman Sidhu, Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Business Partner.

Inclusive Employers   Inclusive Sport

Want to learn more?
Email us at standard@inclusiveemployers.co.uk