

“We’ve Learned What Works:” Diversity Collegium Sponsors Inclusion Benchmarks

How does an organization know if its D&I program will show results in today’s sometimes contentious multicultural climate? Ninety-seven experts from organizations of all sizes, types, industries, sectors, and locations have reached agreement on what makes for success in Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmarks: Standards for Organizations Around the World (GDIB), and offer it at no cost.

In the 2016 edition, the tenth anniversary, released globally today, the Global Diversity & Inclusion Benchmarks provides updated standards, keeping pace with present-day, real world matters. Driven by the two ultimate goals of diversity and inclusion — improving organizational performance while also creating a better world — GDIB is research-based and practical. Lynda White, president of [The Diversity Collegium](#), states, “The GDIB describes what is necessary to do D&I work well, so that organization and community and world goals can be achieved. Effective D&I work is achievable when it is strategic, tied to the mission and goals of the organization, led with competence and care, and implemented in a sustainable manner. The GDIB tells us what works. The Diversity Collegium is dedicated to supporting the best D&I work possible — we’re focused on making it happen.”

Agreed upon by [95 experts and 2 authors](#), the GDIB’s 266 benchmarks encompass fourteen categories with five progression levels: Inactive, Reactive, Proactive, Progressive, and Best Practices. It is offered at no cost to the user, along with Expert Panelist and Author biographical sketches, customizable GDIB user tools, applications, and articles through The Diversity Collegium website.

“At MassMutual, we’re committed to creating a diverse and inclusive environment that drives ideas and innovation that will help us better meet the financial needs of our customers. The benchmarks are critical to ensuring we’re focusing on the right initiatives at every level of the firm and continuing to build on the progress we have made,” says Lorie Valle-Yañez, a GDIB Expert Panelist and vice president and chief diversity officer at Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company, Springfield, Massachusetts.

“With the support of the Japanese government and recent legislation on requiring companies to disclose [gender targets and female advancement](#) plans, this action for transparency is a great time for the 2016 GDIB Launch,” remarks Expert Panelist Janelle Sasaki, executive director of diversity & inclusion services, Ernst & Young Advisory Co., Ltd., Tokyo, Japan. “We customized the GDIB for cultural, localized meanings. When diversity and inclusion was first introduced in Japan several years ago, it was seen as a western concept. In fact, there is not a Japanese character for the word ‘inclusion.’ The benchmarks accurately guided us when we broke ‘inclusion’ down into traits and other descriptive statements,” Sasaki adds.

Nene Molefi, managing director of [Mandate Molefi](#), Johannesburg, South Africa, emphasizes the GDIB’s applicability to her varying clientele sectors in oil, mining, manufacturing, construction, financial services, and academic institutions. “The GDIB offers a unique opportunity to leverage diversity and promote inclusion at multiple levels and multiple arenas. The practical steps and incremental nature of the GDIB provides a clear sense of where you are and where you want to be,” Molefi, also an Expert Panelist, states.

“The GDIB truly offers a systemic perspective on managing diversity and inclusion, validating a point of entry

in a number of different places and areas in your organization,” remarks Ralph de Chabert, senior vice-president, global chief diversity officer, Brown-Forman, Corporation, Louisville, Kentucky and a GDIB Expert Panelist. De Chabert asserts “The GDIB spells out what good, better, and best work is. It readily frames where an organization can focus its capabilities.”

For Cindi Love, executive director of the American College Personnel Association (ACPA), Washington, DC, the GDIB helped in guiding the creation of ACPA-College Student Educators International’s baseline performance against their core equity and inclusion values. Early in 2016, [ACPA](#) began adaptation of the GDIB specifically for transgender identified persons on campuses and within the association. Love, an Expert Panelist, explains, “The GDIB is a great tool to telescope from the macro to micro context when there are specific concerns or issues that must be reconciled.”

Duncan Smith, founder and principal, ADC Associates, Melbourne, Australia, points to research supporting the design of a more innovative product when obtaining diverse viewpoints. Smith, also an Expert Panelist, emphasizes, “The GDIB was created through a systematic and rigorous consensus of D&I experts. The co-authors, Julie O’Mara and Alan Richter, Ph.D., led us through a year-long research process where the viewpoints of a significantly diverse group of experts – many of whom approached D&I work in very different ways – came to agreement on the outcomes that are needed. Modeling both diversity and inclusion throughout this process reminded us that while this work can be challenging, it is also hugely rewarding.”



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