

Diversity Atlas

TechDiversity Awards

Location:
Australia

Overview

May 31, 2022



Acknowledgment

Cultural Infusion acknowledges the people of the Kulin Nations as the traditional owners of the land from which Diversity Atlas was founded, and pay respects to their Elders past, present and future.

Overview

This report was prepared by Cultural Infusion using data obtained from TechDiversity Awards's Diversity Atlas platform, to provide a high level summary of their data. The Mutuality analysis was completed comparing this data with the most recently published Australian census data. The results and analysis are distributed TechDiversity Awards with their consent. The focus is to provide statistical insights, and further suggestions and recommendations are available on request.

About Cultural Infusion

Cultural Infusion is Australia's leading cultural enterprise, established in 2002 to foster global harmony through intercultural understanding. Its expertise is in the field of culture, education, technology and diversity measurement. Cultural Infusion delivers programs to 350,000 students annually across Australia and the globe, and has developed a range of digital products that foster intercultural understanding. In 2017 Cultural Infusion launched its professional services arm, which supports companies, governments and organisations to understand diversity and benefit from a diverse workforce.

Its flagship innovation has been the development of a world first diversity analytics tool, called Diversity Atlas. Diversity Atlas enables organisations to manage and thrive from diversity, helping them develop data driven diversity and inclusion strategies, and to use diversity to improve business performance, meet compliance targets, and more.

Cultural Infusion assumes no responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions in the content of this report. The information contained is provided on an "as is" basis with no guarantees of completeness, accuracy, usefulness or timeliness.



WHO ARE WE NOW?

Participants & response rates

271



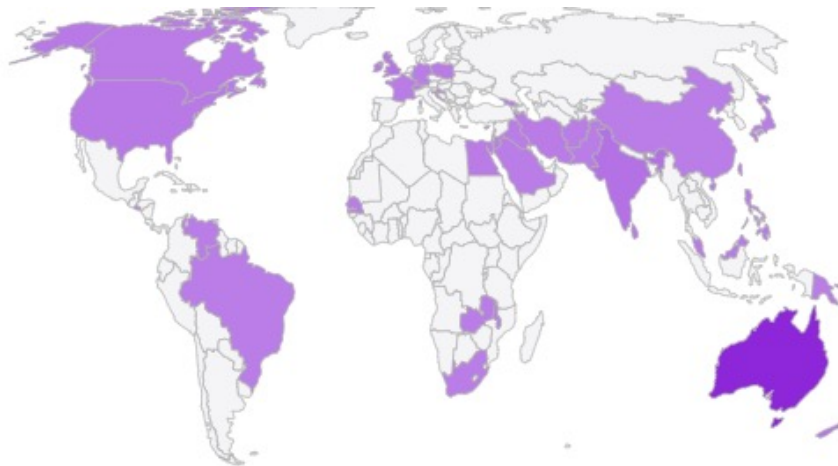
Anonymous,
opt in

When

Start: May 26, 2022

End: May 31, 2022

- 41 Countries
- 86 Cultural Heritages
- 70 Languages
- 18 Worldviews



Age range - All



Diversity Index



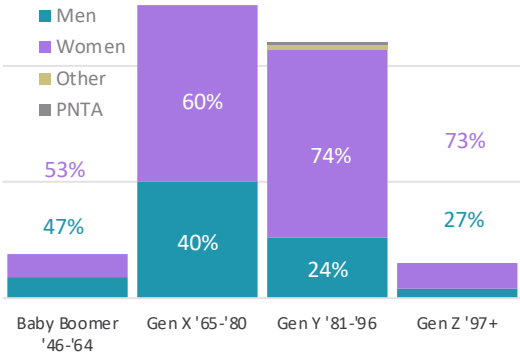
By each pillar



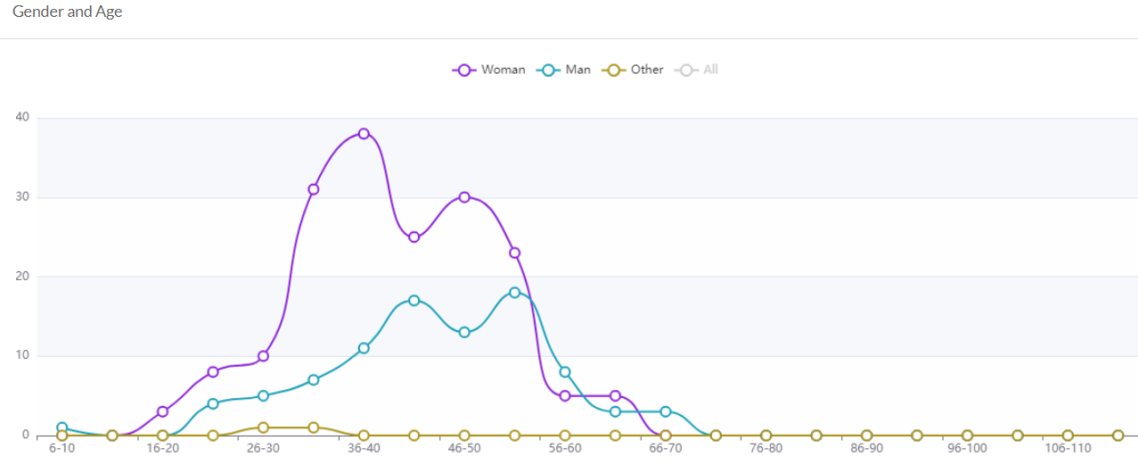


Demographics & attributes

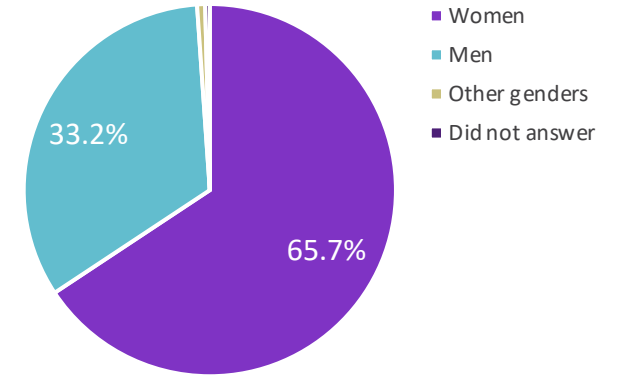
Generations



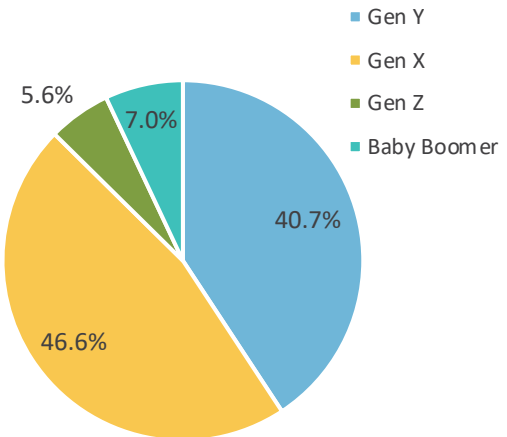
Age Gender – Men, Women, Other



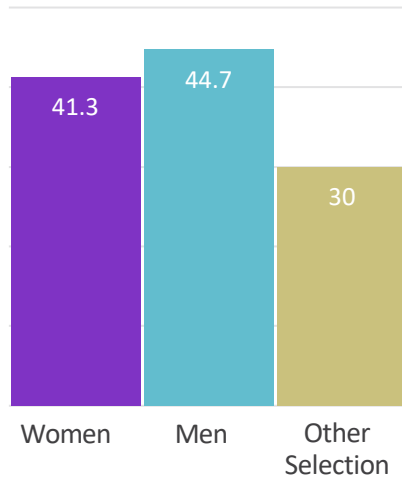
Gender - All



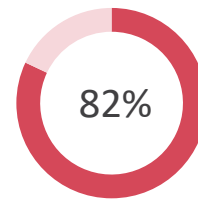
Generational distribution



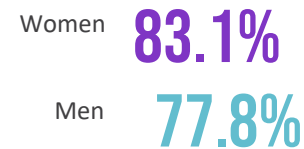
Average age



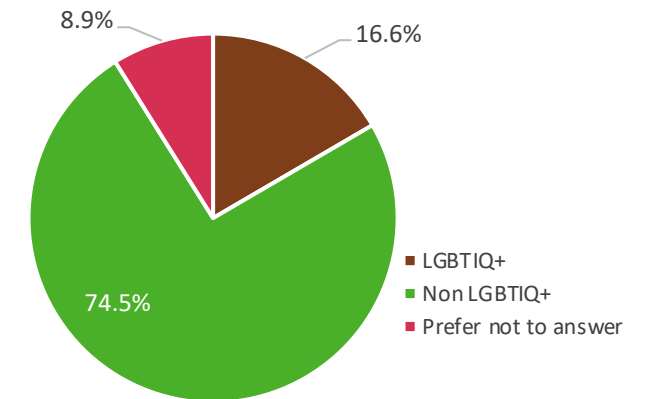
People with tertiary education



Tertiary education by gender

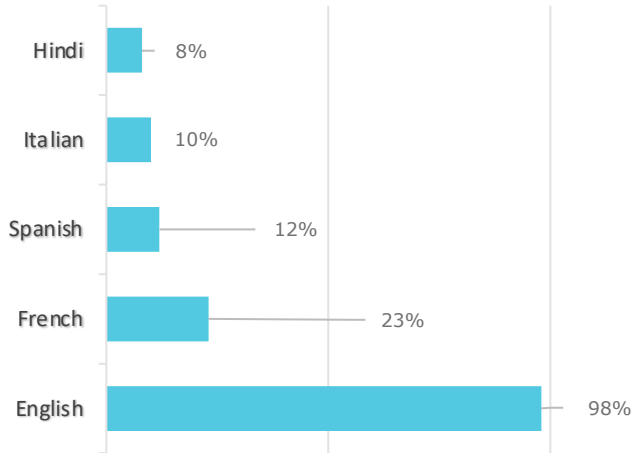


LGBTIQ+



Languages

Most common spoken – aggregated by language family



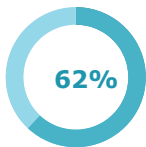
Total Languages & dialects spoken at some level

70

Languages & dialects spoken at **advanced** level

44

Multilingual people (aggregated)



Average known languages

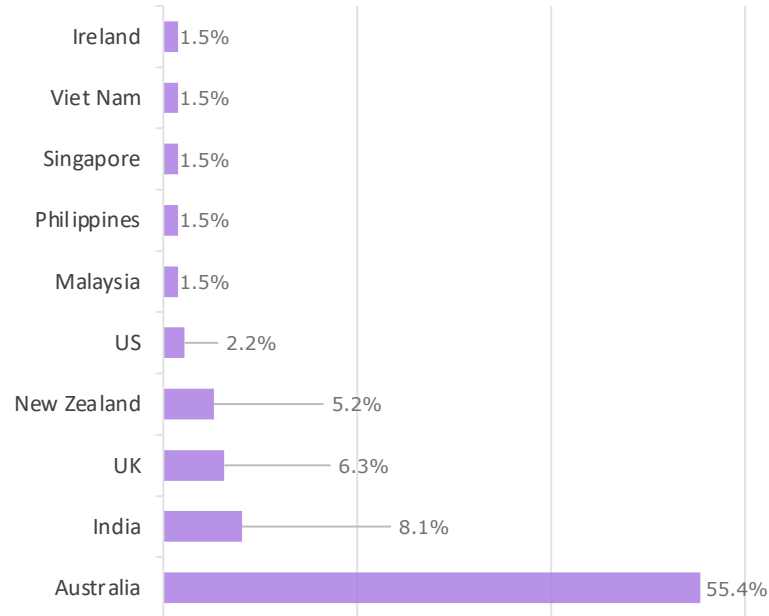
Women **2.2**

Men **2.2**

Other genders **3.3**

Countries

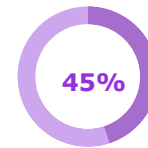
Most common Countries of Birth – Top 10



Have lived in at least one country that has impacted their lives (not CoB)

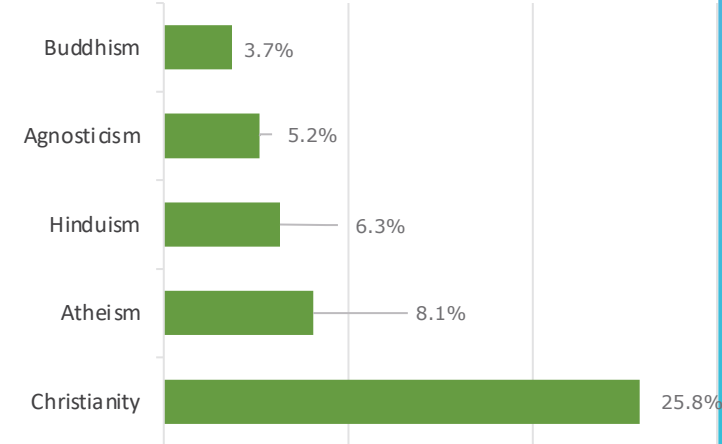
65%

Born outside Australia



Worldviews

Most common selections – excluding PNTA and No Worldview



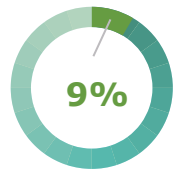
No worldview

30.6%

Prefer not to answer

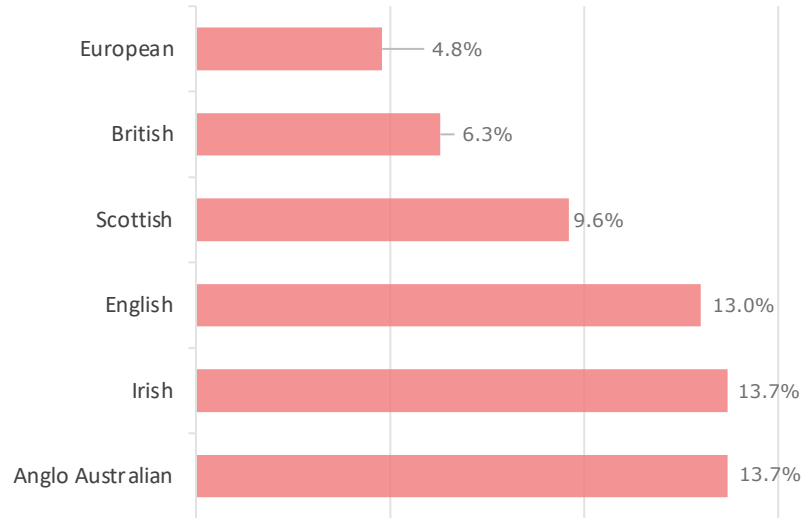
14.4%

More than One worldview



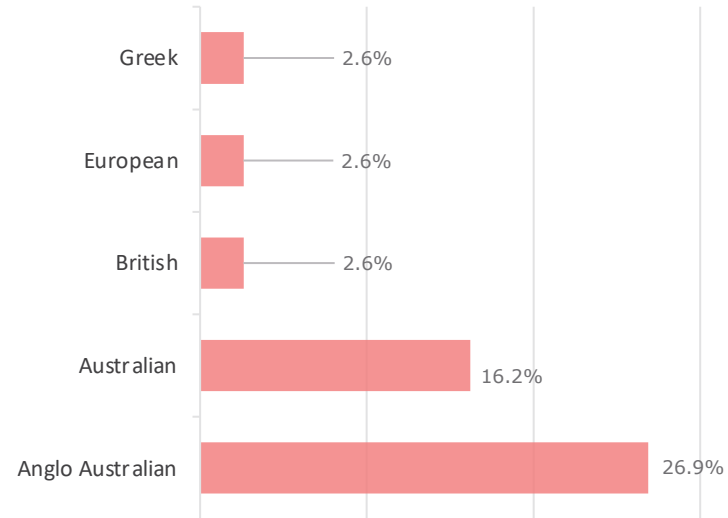
Ancestry

Most common Ancestries



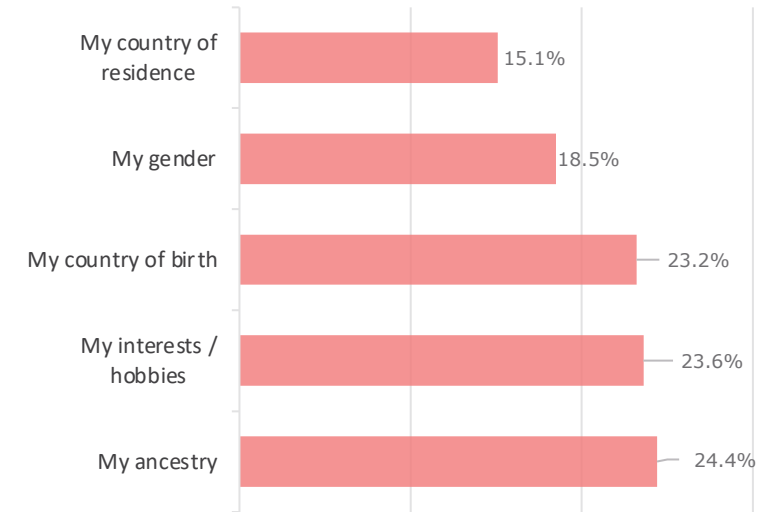
Cultural Belonging

Most common selections – Top 5

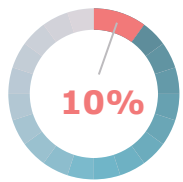


Identity Priorities

Most common selections – Top 5



Prefer not to answer



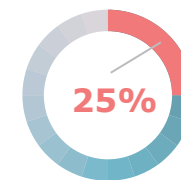
Total Heritages Selected

86

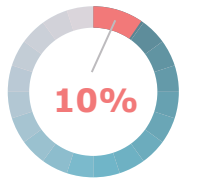
Total Heritages including 'impacted'

124

Have more than one ancestral heritage

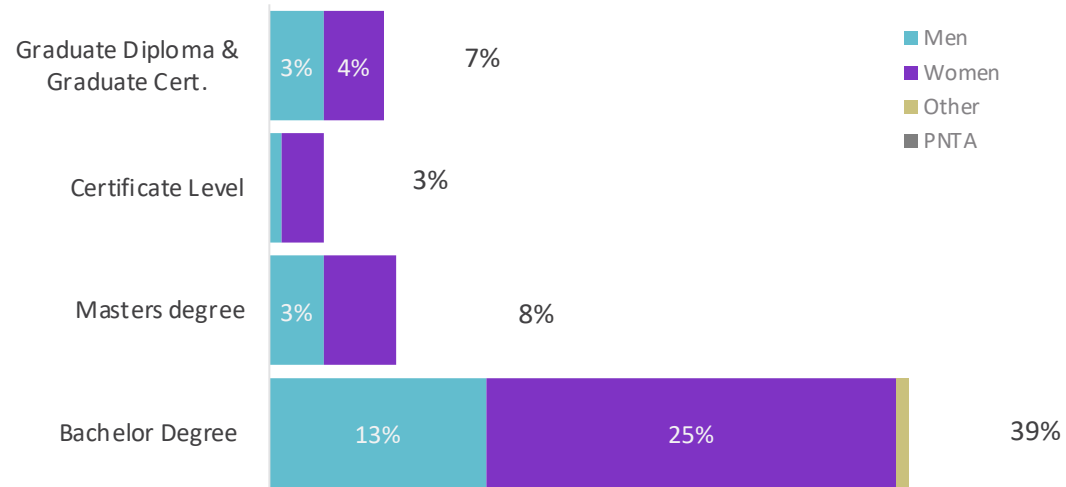


Have ancestral connections that no one else nominated

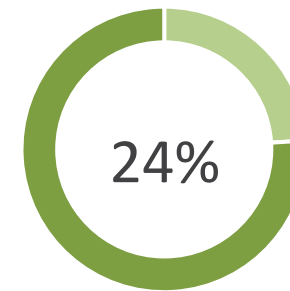


Demographics & attributes

Education level – most common



People with disability



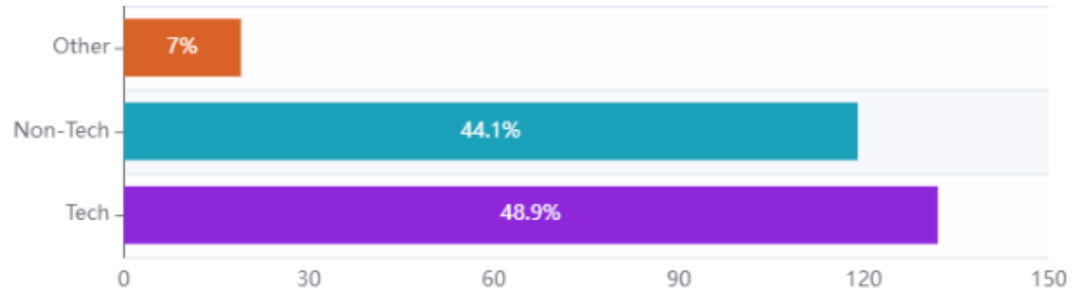
Most common:

1. Mental Health
2. Neurodiversity

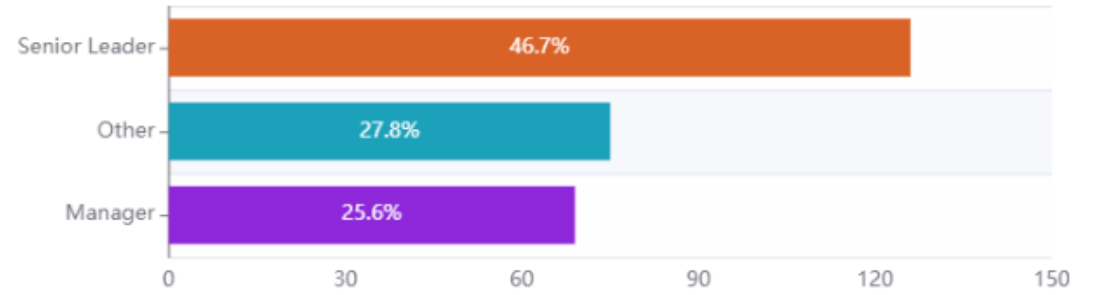
TechDiversity Awards – Extra Questions



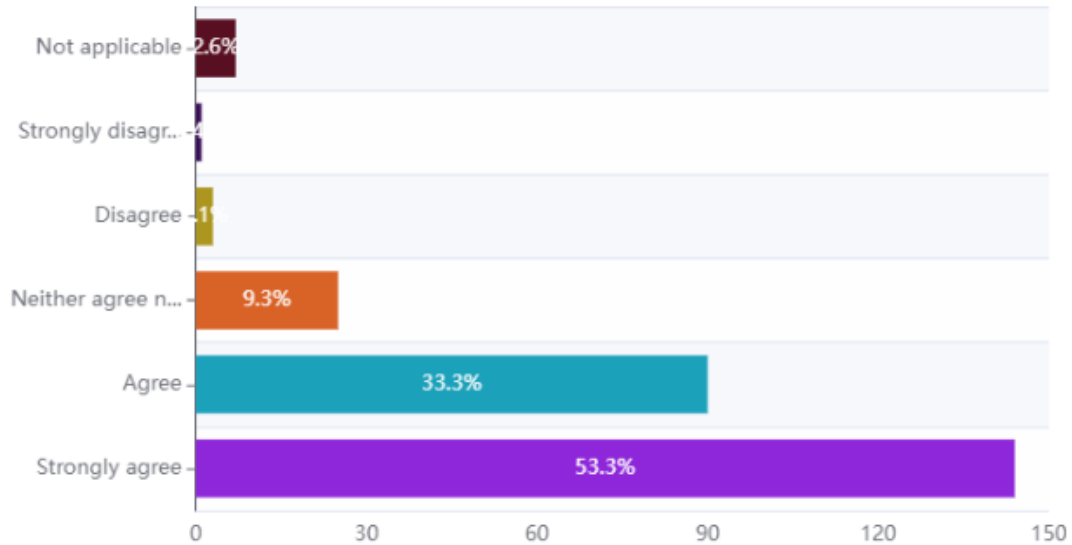
1-Is your role...



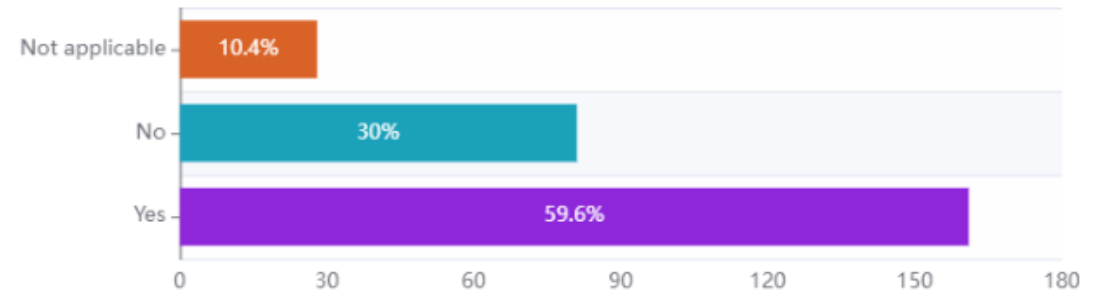
2-Are you a...



3-My organisation has the full support of its leadership and management for ongoing DEI initiatives and programs



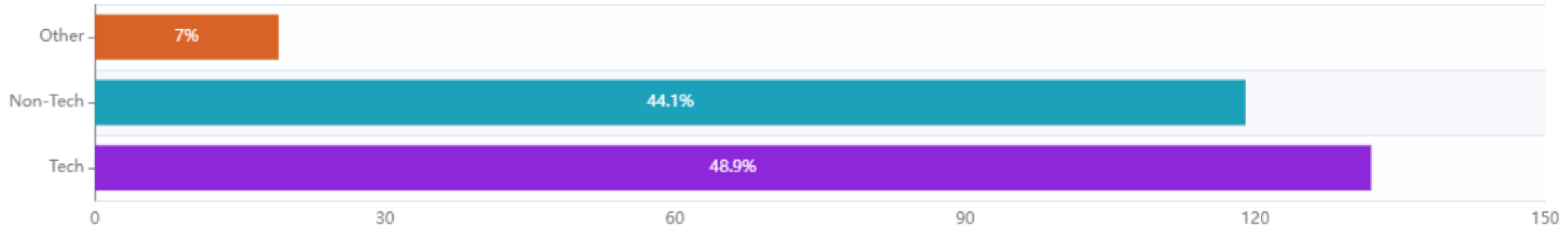
4-My organisation regularly runs diversity surveys and/or audits.



TechDiversity Awards – Extra Questions with Filtered Results



1-Is your role...



Men

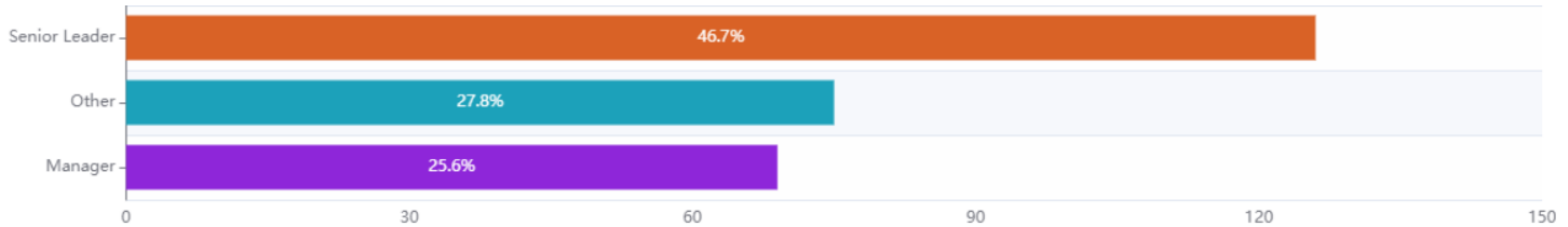
Women

| | | | |
|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Tech: | 64.4% (58) | Tech: | 40.7% (72) |
| Non-Tech: | 27.8% (25) | Non-Tech: | 53.1% (94) |

TechDiversity Awards – Extra Questions with Filtered Results



2-Are you a...



| | Men | Women |
|----------------|------------|------------|
| Senior Leader: | 47.8% (43) | 46.3% (82) |
| Manager: | 32.2% (29) | 22% (32) |

Insights & suggestions.

Rapid Insights to celebrate and inspire: by Quincy Hall, Cultural Attaché

Languages

- When we look at languages spoken filtered by aggregation and proficiency, we see that HINDI is the second most common, followed by FRENCH, MANDARIN CHINESE, SPANISH and CANTONESE (YUE). Translations of staff contracts, training documents, policies and procedures and of course any documents relating to health and/or safety should take into account the linguistic make-up of a cohort.
- Five participants selected AUSLAN at basic proficiency, none at intermediate or advanced. We saw in a Japanese deployment recently that 8% of the staff were at 'advanced' proficiency with Japanese Sign Language, which is a credit to the Japanese Secondary School system.
- In Australia, both Vietnamese and Arabic are among the 10 most commonly spoken languages. At this event, neither were in the Top 10. Being representative of one's customer base or community across multiple demographics, attributes and cultural markers is paramount to DEI success, and linguistic representation must be taken into account.
- One selection of advanced proficiency in CHALDEAN NEO ARAMAIC (SURET) - a language to have an estimated native-speaking population of less than a quarter of million.
- Staff born outside of Australia speak on average 2.4 languages / dialects; against the 2.2 languages of the group as a whole.

Cultures

- 'My Interests / Hobbies' being the second most commonly selected 'identity priority' seems to anecdotally be a peculiarity confined to Australia, NZ and UK. In other countries (eg: Pakistan and South Africa) we see 'My Religion and/or Spiritual Values' in much higher positions, (France) 'My ethnicity' (ironic, given the French government have not collected ethnic data since 1978), and (USA) 'My politics'. What this tells us is that companies that operate in multiple countries should be wary of attempting to deploy a monocultural set of DEI programs and initiatives across multiple borders.
- 'My Ancestry' was clearly the most commonly selected Identity Priority, and when we take a look at the Ancestry fields we see 87 selections, 42 of which were selected only once. IRISH and ANGLO AUSTRALIAN were the equally most common selections, and we see high numbers of EUROPEAN, INDIAN, and four selections of ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIAN (mobs/nations not noted).
- There were 87 Ancestral People-Groups nominated and 74 People-Groups nominated as 'Cultures' to which the team belonged. Over time we will build an understanding as to the levels of erosion, reverberation or continuation between one's ancestry and one's culture/s.
- When we examine the 10 most common 'Cultures' to which the team belong, IRISH disappears from the list, INDIAN remains, but we see GREEK, TAMIL and MALAYSIAN all appear.
- EUROPEAN, HAN CHINESE, JEWISH and ARABIC were the four most common selected cultures that were not necessarily tied to what we consider a 'National' identity / Culture.

Rapid Insights to celebrate and inspire (continued).

Countries

- The cohort were born in 41 different countries, with 22 of those countries being selected only once.
- 55.4% were born in Australia, and just over 40% of those Australian-born participants indicated they had at least one parent born in another country.
- When filtering by those who live with disability and/or condition, 71% are Australian born.
- Less than 1% of the cohort were either born in South America or indicated they had any two-generational birth connection to South America.
- Less than 3% of the cohort were either born in Africa or indicated they had any two-generational birth connection to Africa.
- More than 60% of the group have lived in another country that has impacted their lives.
- The gender split of the group was, interestingly, an exact replica of the gender split of those born overseas.
- When looking at the Australian census results of Top 5 'countries of birth', our cohort had four out of five in common (AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, UNITED KINGDOM, INDIA). The one that did not 'match' was CHINA, which was equal 20th on the list (3rd most common country of birth of Australians in last census).

Worldviews

- 'Prefer not to Say' (14.4%) and 'No Worldview' (31%) are both slightly higher figures than seen in Australian deployments by average, however it is quite consistent with Tech Industry deployments in Australia.
- 'Christianity was at 26%. This was consistent with the figure for those under 35 years old (25%). Of those identifying as LGBTIQ, that figure was 20%.
- Two Jedis... may the force be with them.
- Islam, Buddhism, Judaism and Hinduism combined were selected by 12.5% of the cohort.
- Spiritualism & Spiritism combined were selected by almost 7% of the cohort, 77% of which were women.
- Those born overseas were more inclined to nominate a worldview (76%, against 64% from Australian born participants).
- On the metric by which the Australian census collects religious and worldview data, Islam is the third most common religion/worldview in Australia. When applying the census metric to our cohort, Islam is 6th.



Rapid Insights to celebrate and inspire (continued).

Demographics & Attributes (both acquired and intrinsic)

- Women with a tertiary degree or above were at 83%, men at 78%. This is a trend we see around the globe, whether those figures are low or high. It infers that there exists a slightly increased requirement for women to hold a higher educational qualification to gain employment alongside men in the same industry / organisation / job role.
- 24% of the participants indicated they live with disability and/or a condition, with Mental Health being the most common selection.
- ‘Appearance’ was the question that had the highest ‘Prefer not to Answer’ count (almost 15%). Of those who did answer, 20 out of 26 options were chosen, and when we combine White / Caucasian with Central, North and Western European they accounted for 53% of the cohort.
- The gender split was 66% women and 34% men. Less than 1% identified as neither.
- 16.6% of the group identified a sexuality that was not heterosexual / straight, and comprised 16% of the women participants and 17% of the men.
- 49% of the cohort identified that their role was in ‘tech’. 64% of the men were in ‘tech’ and only 41% of women.
- The average age of men was 44.7, and women 41.3. The mode (or spike) in age was for women in late 30s, for men early 50s.
- Gen X accounted for 46.5% of the cohort, and 53% of those with disability.
- Almost 9% of the cohort chose not to answer the sexuality question. This is a figure consistent with Australian surveys, but a figure we’d like to see decrease over time. Our UK deployments see an average of 4% (for instance).

Further Analysis by Roman Ruzbacky, Cultural Infusion's DEI Director.

Key insights - This is what the survey told us about the participants at the event. Note: An 'event' analysis is very different to an organisational one, and thus potential actions and transformational change suggestions are not necessarily applicable or achievable.

24% people with disability or health condition with mental health being the most common selection, and neurodiversity the second most common selection. This compares to [20% of Australians](#) with disability ([with approximately 10% in the workforce](#)).

In response to the question, "My organisation has the full support of its leadership and management for on-going DEI initiatives and programs", 53% strongly agree and 33% agree. 60% of organisations run regular diversity surveys and/or audits.

1.5% Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander participants. This compares with 3.3% of the Australian population (ABS). A low response rate could mean that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants did not share personal information in the survey, or that there is under-representation in the cohort.

65.7% women, 33.2% men and other genders 0.7%. 65.6% women were in senior leadership positions and 52.5% women in manager roles. This is higher than the percentage of women in leadership according to [WGEA's gender equality score card](#).

There was 55.4% women in technical roles and 79.0% women in non-technical roles.

There was a high percentage of people with disability or health condition (24%) and high rate of mental health conditions.

People aged between 15 and 64 years with disability have both [lower labour force participation \(53.4%\)](#) and higher unemployment rates (10.3%) than people without disability.

There was a high representation of people who were LGBTIQ but still 9% preferring not to respond to this question.

Prefer not to answer responses to select questions ranged from 9 to 15% for questions that may be perceived to be sensitive.

It was a richly culturally diverse group of respondents, with a high percentage of people born overseas (45%) compared to the national percentage 29.1% from 41 countries, 86 different cultural heritage people-groups, 70 spoken languages and >60% of the group have lived in another country that has impacted their lives.



Further Analysis by Roman Ruzbacky, Cultural Infusion’s DEI Director (continued)

Low percentage of Generation Z (5.6%) and between 60% to 74% women in the Generation X and Y cohorts respectively. The [labour force participation rate](#) for all people aged 55 to 64 years was 66.6 per cent in March 2018.

The results show that stronger leadership support is required to move people from agreeing (33%) to strongly agreeing (at 53%) that their organisations support ongoing DEI programs.

The survey results showed 60% of organisations run regular diversity surveys and/or audits but it is unclear how many different organisations were captured in the response, and how many representatives from each organisation responded. For example, a large firm with 10+ people at the dinner may have all had a yes response.

Gender

- 65.7% women, 33.2% men and other genders 0.7% and 0.4% did not answer.
- 48.9% of the participants were in tech roles and 44.1% in non-tech roles
- Of all the respondents who worked in technical roles, 55.4% were women, compared to 44.6% men
- Of all the respondents who worked in non-technical roles, 79.0% were women, compared to 21.0% men
- 46.7% were senior leaders, 25.6% managers and 27.8% other
- Of all the respondents who were senior leaders, 65.6% were women, compared to 34.4% men
- Of all the respondents who were managers, 52.5% were women, compared to 47.5% men

| Category | Women (%) | Women no. | Men no. | Total no. |
|------------|-----------|-----------|---------|-----------|
| Tech roles | 55.4% | 72 | 58 | 130 |
| Non tech | 79.0% | 94 | 25 | 119 |
| Total | 66.7% | 166 | 83 | 249 |

| Category | Women (%) | Women no. | Men no. | Total no. |
|---------------|-----------|-----------|---------|-----------|
| Senior Leader | 65.6% | 82 | 43 | 125 |
| Manager | 52.5% | 32 | 29 | 61 |
| Total | 61.3% | 114 | 72 | 186 |

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

- 53.3% strongly agreed that their organisation has the full support of its leadership and management for on-going DEI initiatives and programs, 33.3% agree, 9.3% neither agree nor disagree and <1.5% disagree or strongly disagree
- 59.6% of participants said that their organisation regularly runs diversity surveys and/or audits, and 30.0% do not.



Further Analysis by Roman Ruzbacky, Cultural Infusion's DEI Director (continued).

Potential Actions - based on insights

- Conduct intersectional analysis of data, including countries of birth and cultural heritage by gender to further understand the diversity of women in leadership and technical roles.
- Conduct further comparative analysis of women in technical roles using the [WGEA data explorer](#)
- Explore ways to create a culturally safe industry, to welcome Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants and explore pathways into the Tech Industry including university completion rates and career opportunities, such as [career trackers](#).
- It would be good to explore issues that may have contributed to the high response rate of mental health, for example, increased comfort in sharing information, or impact of Covid19, workloads, employment challenges or other factors.
- On the other hand, it would be good to understand the reasons for people choosing not to answer questions in relation to being LGBTIQ (9%), their Worldview (14.4%), Appearance (15%) and cultural heritage (10%), especially being an anonymous survey.
- Gain an understanding of generational diversity in the Tech industry from a gender perspective lens and make comparisons with this survey sample.
- A richly culturally diverse cohort working in the Tech Industry is worth celebrating as is the development of career pathways and actions to continue to create equitable and inclusive environments is essential.
- **Promote Tech Diversity's rich cultural diversity** via marketing materials and communication channels, employee forums and employee value proposition collateral
- With 30% of organisations not collecting regular data or audits, more organisations can be encouraged to collect diversity data to inform their DEI work.
- Further engage senior leaders in DEI initiatives, and with those who participated. What a great opportunity to show how DEI can leverage business outcomes. Perhaps use these results to show that these forums can help to accelerate diversity in Tech and women in STEM.



cultural infusion

Building Harmony & Wellbeing

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Addendums

- Key definitions
- What is the Diversity Index?
- Further reading for learning and insight

Terms used by Cultural Infusion within the Diversity Atlas platform

WORLDVIEW

Worldview is the term we use to encompass both secular and religious beliefs. We acknowledge that the term 'worldview' can have a variety of meanings, and in this context we draw from the sociology of religion, and its use in reference to both religious and non-religious worldviews. We use the term 'worldview' to refer to profound questions such as those about the nature of reality. Our aim is to formulate a question that is inclusive to people regardless of their beliefs, and invites all users to participate. Our database incorporates religious beliefs, spiritual and folk traditions, and secular frameworks.

ANCESTRAL / CULTURAL HERITAGE

We use the term ancestral and/or cultural heritage to describe groups of people who have shared ideas of culture, language, history, and customs. A person's ancestral and/or cultural heritage may be intertwined with their nationality, 'ethnicity', 'appearance', tribal affiliation or citizenship status, or it may widely differ from these things. People may have more than one 'ancestral and/or cultural heritage' they align with and so our survey enables a participant to select up to eight. We have over 8,500 options listed in our database which has been curated by Cultural Infusion's anthropologists, linguists, sociologists, artists and historians.

LANGUAGES

Diversity Atlas collects data on not just languages in isolation, but dialects and speech communities. Where possible, the data is aggregated and referred to as 'Language' (for example: English) and at other times, "...and dialects" is added to a description to indicate that the data is raw (for example: British English, American English).

MUTUALITY

Mutuality is simply a snapshot / measurement of how your own organisation compares with the community, jurisdiction, state or country that your organisation represents or serves. This is achieved by loading census data (for instance) or other external demographic data that either the customer or Cultural Infusion research and load into the database.

LGBTQ+

As at September 2021, the 'LGBTIQ+' (and variations thereof) nomenclature refers to those participants who indicated they were not heterosexual / straight, including the selection of 'not listed' in our Sexual Orientation question. Note: As 'T' and 'I' are not technically options within the Sexual Orientation question, moves are afoot to re-name this field as simply, 'Not Heterosexual'.

APPEARANCE

We use the term appearance to refer to the grouping of people into broad categories based on differences in *physical* appearance. We have been asked previously, "Why not just put 'race'?" The answer to that is that 'race' has no proven basis in scientific fact. Historically, notions around the concept of 'race' have sadly been weaponised and have often formed the basis of racism – that is, the use of racial differences to establish a social hierarchy and system of power that privileges or advantages certain groups and unfairly disadvantages other groups. Race *can* be something that a person identifies with but it can also be an unnecessary or nefarious classification that is assigned to them by others.

DISABILITY

Disability is any self-reported personal, physical, mental or emotional condition that impacts a person's life long term. We use the term 'disability' rather than other nomenclatures for reasons best expressed by the Australian Network on Disability, who write on their website:

"Differently abled", "people of all abilities", "disAbility", "diffAbled", "special needs" and the like, are all euphemistic and can be considered patronising. While the intention is usually good, these phrases tend to fall into the trap of making people with disability out to be special or inspirational, just for living with disability."

What is the Diversity Index?

Benchmarking and tracking the dynamics of your Cultural Diversity - see [our research here](#).

- The Diversity Index is a weighted measure created across 5 views, on any Group created in the platform:
 1. Overall
 2. Countries
 3. Languages
 4. Worldviews
 5. Cultural Heritages
- It allows an organisation to measure levels of diversity over time, creating a benchmark whereby changes may be tracked
- It is a measurement, not a “score”
- The higher the index, the more variety there is
- A larger number is not necessarily “better”
- It allows you to compare the diversity of different groups – countries, states, departments, teams etc.
 - Determine which areas of an organisation that may be richer in diversity, too diverse, or the very opposite.
 - Determine what are the implications when tracked against further metrics:
 - Engagement
 - Belonging
 - Health/ absenteeism
 - Business performance
 - Staff attraction / retention



Countries

Countries and nations create and shape culture. The formation of countries are fairly modern developments in the history of the world. They are often amalgamations of older tribes and ethnic groups that come together, either by force or desire, to form larger, stronger groups with expanded territories.

Like most human groups, modern countries require rules and regulations designed to ensure that individuals can live together in close proximity and in relative harmony. These rules and regulations often form a basis of the national culture along with religious doctrines and secular philosophies. The dominant social or ethnic group is often the group that dominates government and determines (or has the largest input on) the national culture, which is taught in schools and reified in the media and within the arts.

Understanding the national make up of your organisation, its departments and teams can help the company in numerous ways.

- Provide teams with insights into the different ways people from other countries view and solve problems.
- Provide businesses and organisations with information about foreign markets and facilitate making new contacts.
- Enable companies to gain greater insights into the cultural rules and norms of their clients and customers in other countries, avoiding embarrassing and costly mishaps and misunderstandings.



Languages

Language is one of the factors that make us human and sets us apart from all other animals. It is the prime form of communicating information between one person and another, and is one of the indicators of the social nature of all humans. If humans were not first and foremost social animals there would have been no need to develop such advanced ways of communicating between one another. Long before humans were scratching symbols onto rocks and onto hides they were uttering sounds, eventually forming them into words and then into sentences in order to convey meaning and ideas to assure the survival of the group. Each language is shaped by the culture and environment of the group. Languages have structures known as grammar, which consist of syntax, morphologies, phonologies and semantics, which differ from language to language and are shaped by cultures.

The languages we speak determine how we think and view the world around us, because we think within the cultural parameters of our given language. Many cross-cultural misunderstandings come from attempting to convey and translate meaning from one language to another. Expressions and concepts expressed in one language don't always translate and make sense in another. Language also shapes how we process information.

The cultural applications of language can lead to misunderstandings amongst members of multicultural or multinational teams and have to be considered when creating an inclusive environment.

 **Worldviews**

Worldview is the term we use to encompass both secular and religious beliefs. We acknowledge that the term 'worldview' can have a variety of meanings, and in this context we draw from the sociology of religion and use its reference to both religious and non-religious worldviews. We use the term 'worldview' to refer to profound questions such as those about the nature of reality. Secular views, religious, spiritual or indigenous traditions and many other worldviews shape our values, attitudes, behaviours and the manner by which we interact with others.

Religions form the basis of all human worldviews and nearly all religious dogma commences with a creation story that explains the genesis of the group and places them into an order of 'being' or a hierarchy of 'life forms', i.e., humans, animals, deities, spirits, plants and landscapes to name but a few.

Likewise, the worldview of those who view themselves as non-religious will have been shaped by the parent culture of the society they have grown up in, which ironically is often based on a religious narrative.

Religion plays an integral part in the beliefs and values of many people around the world in the 21st century. These spiritual values are often inseparable from the actions of people's daily lives, guiding what they think and say, what they can and can't do, what is right and wrong.

An awareness of the major religions and the basics of their doctrines allows an employer to consider and plan for how people talk to and address each other, dietary law, physical and spatial distancing and of course, festivals and holidays.



Ancestral & Cultural Heritage Belonging

We use the term 'culture' to describe groups of people who have shared ideas of language, history and customs. A person's ancestral and/or cultural heritage may be intertwined with their nationality, ethnicity, beliefs, appearance, tribal affiliation or citizenship, or it may even widely differ from these things.

Cultures and ancestral heritages are expressions of the ways of living developed by a community or country that is subsequently passed on from generation to generation. Irrespective of whether we're talking about ethnic or tribal heritage they still include both tangible and intangible factors. Cultural heritages (and appearances) often form the basis of a person's identity and are the most obvious visual indicators of difference between the members of one ethnic group and another. Identities are forged both intrinsically and extrinsically, meaning they are co-created with others. Individuals often have multiple, or more than one identity.

At some point in a person's life they are given names and sometimes titles by their parents, guardians or the socio-cultural group they belong to. These identities are given (imposed) on the individual with little or no input from them. As they grow and mature, they do so within the culture of the society or group they belong to, learning laws, rules, customs and traditions. These aspects of culture become the norm for the individual members of the collective and become ingrained into the psyche and the identity of the individual.

Demographics & attributes

Education / Position

While not always obvious at first sight a person's education and profession often marks their Identities. The level of education attained by a person can indicate several things and may be viewed in a number of ways in different countries and cultures. It is an indicator of wealth and sometimes it is used erroneously to judge a person's intellectual capabilities, even though access to education or professional qualifications have more to do with status and economic capabilities than they do with intellect. Nevertheless, a person's education presumably indicates a level of knowledge attained and an ability to learn and retain information. Education levels are usually a defining factor in an individual's career choice, when applying for positions or employment or further training. Recent anthropological research has shown that diverse teams of professionals are much better than a homogenous team at solving a range of problems. Companies like Intel and Nissan successfully employ multidisciplinary teams, consisting of engineers, programmers, designers and social scientists such as anthropologists in the design and delivery of new products. It is incredibly useful for an engineer designing a product to be able to talk to an anthropologist about how people around the world use and appropriate technologies in their everyday lives because it tends to lead to more useful and better designed products.

Demographics & attributes

Age is an indicator of many things in different cultures. In most social groups attaining a certain age can bring with it a change of identity and status. such as becoming a teenager, attaining the age of legal adulthood, or reaching middle age and then old age. These milestones may differ from country to country, culture to culture and sometimes even differ from one region to another within the same country, such as the US, where in some states adulthood is reached at the age 18 years whereas in other states it is 21. Attaining certain ages also requires individual members of the group to partake in rituals, ceremonies and in some cases tests and rites of passage bestowing upon them and forging new identities and statuses once completed and allowing them special and specific rights and obligations. As such age can be a vital indicator of a person's social and cultural identity.

Disability

For centuries people with disabilities have been marginalised, shunned from society, hidden away and even locked up. Fortunately, many nations have progressed and evolved over the last two or three decades to make the world more inclusive for people with disabilities. Unlike other categories of classification many people with a disability do not want to be defined by a disability. While progress toward inclusion has been made, we still live in a world where many buildings including offices, factories, public spaces, schools and stores still lack wheelchair access or facilities for people with disabilities. To compound things even further people with disability are often ignored in conversations, left out of after work activities and skipped over for promotions, if they find employment in the first place. Professor Stephen Hawking, the eminent British Physicist, demonstrated that his brilliant mind was not affected by the limitation of his body brought on by a disease, and as such businesses cannot afford to overlook the skills a person brings to the table.

Demographics & attributes

Gender forms an inseparable part of a person's identity and their psyche. Some researchers argued decades ago that not only do men and women look different from one another but they also think and behave differently. However, while it might first appear that these differences are biological, most are social constructs. They are prescribed and proscribed by the group or society the individual belongs to. They are taught behaviours and roles based on the collective's ideas of value and worth. Many people assume that most cultures around the world classify gender into the binary categories of male and female, however this isn't the case. In some cultures there have existed a third, fourth and fifth gender, such as amongst indigenous peoples and groups in Polynesia, parts of Asia, Europe, the Americas as well as in Africa. While non-binary gender classifications are currently prohibited in many countries, depriving individuals of the right to be who they are often has negative effects on the mental health of non-binary people. Inclusion, improving social relationships and building trust prevent isolation. Attending to this can improve the company culture and increase motivation and productivity.

Sexuality and biological sex is often conflated with gender, but they are separate concepts. While gender is a socio-cultural classification, sex and sexuality are biological and biochemical phenomena. In the same way that gender is an inseparable part of a person's identity, so too is sexuality for the vast majority. While sexuality may have little to do with workplace performance at first glance, having employees who have to constantly hide their sexuality may have a negative effect on the person's mental health and well-being which in turn affects the motivation and productivity of the individual, and can ultimately affect how the team functions and operates.