

Inclusive Recruitment



BETTER PRACTICE FROM THE BOOST CHANGE PROJECTS (2023-2024)

Each organisation that takes part in BOOST is charged with adopting a BOOST strategy to create cultural change and embed learning. This strategy should include a cultural change project in each year. The organisation's mentee, mentor, Change Champion from both Cohort 1 and 2 (where applicable) should meet with their CEO once every other month to discuss progress with their BOOST strategy and cultural change project.

In Year One most organisations implemented a project based on recruitment, with different organisations experimenting and learning in different parts of the recruitment and selection process.

The shared learning coming out of these projects has been collated into the following better practice guide.

Corporate Commitment

- Valuing the knowledge, skills and experience of ethnically diverse colleagues as a technical skill and critical to service delivery.
- CEOs & Execs seek out diversity in their networks and bringing this into decision making.
- EDI colleague networks having white allies and exec sponsorship. Supported to play an active role in cultural change.



Recruitment and Selection Policies

- Regularly reviewing.
- Specifying whether the organisation always advertises every vacancies or reserves the right not to - giving clarity as to why not.
- Policies supported by effective training for recruiting manager - which includes cultural awareness.

Guaranteed Interview Schemes (GIS)

- Many organisations already had this in place (for disability and Armed Forces) but extended their reach.
- For ethnically diverse candidates and social housing tenants.
- This scheme must be communicated carefully so all colleagues understand its intention and how it is used.

44% of Black African households and 40% of Black Caribbean households are social housing renters, compared to 18% of White British households.

Job Descriptions/ Role Profiles

- Reviewing essential criteria each time a role is recruited to ensure this is still relevant.
- Where qualifications are required, it should be made clear that similar level/equivalent qualifications will be accepted (as these may have been gained outside of the UK).
- Lived experience in social housing or in the communities we serve should be considered a technical skill.
- ‘Organisational fit’ should not be a focus, but rather we should value ‘cultural add’ - candidates that will enhance our workplaces and engage with our values.



Job Adverts

- Checking the wording of adverts to ensure words that are gender and/or culturally coded are avoided.
- Allowing candidates to use AI tools such as ChatGPT to support with cover letters (this may help those who are neurodivergent or not confident in written English. It is suggested that job adverts could require candidates to disclose if they have used AI tools for their cover letter etc.

Reaching out

- Utilising links with community groups, using community days and job fairs.
- Working with schools and colleges in diverse areas.
- Friend/family referral schemes and ensuring ethnically diverse colleagues are bought into this.

76% of candidates state they would feel more confident that a recruitment was fair if characteristics are anonymised (1)

Anonymised Shortlisting

- At minimum, name, address, email, date of birth and educational establishments should be redacted.
- Having clear means of tracking applicants when name, date of birth, email have been redacted.

The Rooney Rule

- This was mainly talked about for senior roles - but there was an acknowledgement that the pool of diverse talent at this level is small and therefore runs the risk of tokenism.
- Utilising data to inform the decision on when to use this and when not to.
- Organisational clarity on the difference between positive action and positive discrimination.
- Clear and transparent internal communication.



(1) Tribepad Stop the Bias Report 2024

Interviews

- All recruiting managers should be trained on bias and unconscious bias.
- Interview questions should be shared in advance.
- There should be at least one question that explores attitude to EDI - nuanced to the role.

Diverse Interview Panels

- It was agreed that this introduces more challenge and focus into decisions.
- Was positive for the personal development for colleagues invited to the panel - it gives insight into how to answer questions and how panels make decisions.
- Helps put candidates at ease.
- The role of diverse panel members must be clear - they are not there to tick a box.
- Training for panel members is essential.

Assessment of Candidates

- It was felt that values based recruitment is more effective for our sector.
- In-tray exercises, job related tasks and tests, role play, psychometrics can be used but need to be aligned to the job requirements.
- Tenants and residents should be involved in the assessment of customer-facing roles, with their feedback being given full consideration. They should also be trained appropriately.

“What do you think some of the barriers are for ethnically diverse tenants when they communicate with us?”



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