2017 REPORT DIVERSITY & INCLUSION IN THE BC TECH SECTOR

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• TECH GROUP

SECTOR LABOUR MARKET PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

MINISTRY OF ADVANCED EDUCATION, SKILLS & TRAINING



Prepared by HR Tech Group November 2017

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The 2017 Report on Diversity & Inclusion in the BC tech sector is an industry-led initiative facilitated by HR Tech Group and funded by the Canada-British Columbia Labour Market Development Agreement. The Labour Market Partnership Program (LMP) helps industry and employers understand and respond to changing labour market demands. The Program also provides funding for partnership-led projects that address broader sector and regional labour market issues within British Columbia's diverse economy.

HR Tech Group is an association of human resources professionals employed in BC tech companies. We produce the leading BC Tech Salary Survey, advocate for talent management issues in the sector, provide news and benchmark data that keep our members up to speed on best practices in tech. We serve over 150 member companies in all tech sub-sectors, including: Information and Communications Technologies (ICT), Life Sciences, Interactive and Digital Media, Clean Tech and Engineering Sciences.

HR Tech Group is pleased to lead the environmental scan and assessment of the BC tech sector's Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) practices, identify shortfalls and works with our industry and advocacy partners to make recommendations to elevate the sector's practices.

We are grateful to all those who contributed to this report and recommendations, particularly the industry stakeholders who shared their experiences and ideas through interviews, survey feedback, and participation in the online discussion. HR Tech Group would also like to thank our advisory partners at the Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills & Training, Vancouver Economic Commission, BC Tech, The Minerva Foundation, First Nations Technology Council and Immigrant Employment Council of BC. Additionally, we'd like to thank Thought Exchange for their support in facilitating our online discussion on diversity & inclusion in BC tech.

ALLISON RUTHERFORD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR HR TECH GROUP

The views and opinions expressed in this report are those of its author(s) and not the official policy or position of the Government of British Columbia.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The BC tech sector continues to grow rapidly but has a projected talent shortfall and low levels of diversity and representation from key groups. Building a larger, more diverse talent pool is critical to the sector's success and would have significant benefits for BC, tech companies and those who want to be part of this growing sector.

BACKGROUND AND APPROACH

The BC tech sector contributes \$15 billion annually to the provincial GDP, consists of 9,500 companies and employs an estimated 100,000 employees in 5 subsectors (Vancouver Economic Commission, 2017).

Recent reports by BC Tech and Vancouver Economic Commission identified that there is continued concern over lack of talent to meet the demand from this growing sector and that the sector would benefit from a number of initiatives, including increasing participation from specific underrepresented groups, including; women, people with disabilities and First Nations and Indigenous Peoples (BC Tech Association, 2016). The industry's opportunity to increase the size of the talent pool and the diversity within it, complements the BC Government's commitment to build a strong, sustainable, innovative economy that works for everyone (Horgan, 2017).

This project was initiated to understand BC tech sector's current Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) practices, how they

compare to leading practices and recommend strategies and solutions that would create a more diverse and inclusive tech talent pool to fuel the sector's continued growth and success.

To understand leading diversity and inclusion practices, we conducted a comprehensive review of literature and resources and examined leading practices within and outside the technology sector. To gain insight to the BC tech sector's D&I practices, we interviewed leading BC tech companies and advocacy groups and gathered broader feedback through an industry survey and online discussion.

This report provides an analysis of the current BC tech diversity and inclusion practices and a comparison with leading practices. This assessment has informed our recommendations to help create a more diverse and inclusive industry where more people can participate in and share in the prosperity of the growing sector.

FINDINGS

The business case for organizations becoming more diverse and inclusive has been made repeatedly in numerous studies, however, implementing impactful D&I strategies is elusive for many tech companies, including the majority of companies in the BC tech sector.

Information gathered through interviews, survey and online discussion shows that while there is a strong belief in the industry that D&I is important to ongoing company success and competitiveness, there is still low representation of women, people with disabilities and First Nations and Indigenous Peoples. In addition, while there were a few companies with well-established and comprehensive D&I practices, many of companies interviewed were in the early stages of developing and implementing D&I programs and/or wanted to learn more.

This gap between the belief in the importance of D&I and the actual diversity statistics and practices in the BC tech sector is not from lack of interest, but due to:

- 1. Limited understanding of D&I and its business benefits
- 2. Limited tech executive engagement in D&I strategies and programs
- 3. Limited knowledge & capacity to embed D&I in talent management practices
- Lack of funds and resources within small to mid-sized tech companies to focus on D&I
- 5. Lack of regular measuring and reporting on D&I at an industry level
- 6. Limited diversity in technical talent pool

RECOMMENDATIONS

The industry is interested in doing more, but considering the resource constraints of a typical BC tech company, diversity levels and inclusion practices are unlikely to change significantly without a collective effort and an investment in a comprehensive, multi-year plan.

Our recommendations are based on key project findings and are focused on elevating the D&I practice in the tech sector through actions to reach the following goals:

- 1. Increase industry's D&I awareness and understanding of benefits
- 2. Increase company's D&I capability by engaging & educating CEOs/Senior Leaders & HR
- Drive D&I progress through reinforcement & measurement
- 4. Increase the talent pool and its diversity
- Increase Reconciliation commitments and opportunities with First Nations & Indigenous Peoples

By working together to implement these recommendations, we can make real change happen and achieve our vision:

An innovative and growing BC tech ecosystem that is fuelled by a diverse & talented group of individuals who contribute to and benefit from its success.

OUR VISION

An innovative and growing BC tech ecosystem that is fuelled by a diverse & talented group of individuals who contribute to and benefit from its success.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

BC's Technology Sector is experiencing significant growth and is an important contributor to British Columbia's strong economy. From 2004 to 2014, the industry experienced a 6% compounded annual growth rate in revenue and from 2001 to 2015, the BC tech sector grew by 91% to generate over \$15 billion dollars in GDP per year (*BC Tech Association, 2016*). One of the critical elements of sustaining the growth of this innovative sector is access to enough qualified talent. During this time there has been tremendous competition for tech talent, both locally and globally, with many companies experiencing difficulty filling positions.

The concern over availability of talent continues, with the 2016 Tech Talent BC Report identifying a potential 30,500 unfillable positions by 2021 and the need for investment in a number of strategies, including sourcing additional talent from other industries and underrepresented groups: women; people with disabilities and First Nations & Indigenous Peoples. To tap into this local talent, the Vancouver Economic Commission's Technology Talent Strategy recommended outreach and removing barriers to entry (Vancouver Economic Commission, 2017).

SIZE OF BC TECH SECTOR & COMPANIES

British Columbia has one of Canada's leading tech ecosystems with nationally respected companies such as Ballard Power Systems, Hootsuite, Sierra Wireless, STEMCELL Technologies and TELUS who reside in BC alongside multinational tech giants like Microsoft, SAP, Sony Imageworks, Amazon and Electronic Arts. Collectively, there are over 9,500 tech companies operating in BC ranging from startups to large publically listed companies (Vancouver Economic Commission, 2017).

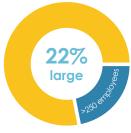
Many of BC tech's small to medium size companies struggle with access to enough funds and talent to sustain and grow their businesses, making it challenging to prioritize and resource diversity and inclusion initiatives. However, with access to centralized resources, training, industry support and follow up, smaller companies can be successful in building a culture and workforce that attract and retain diverse talent.

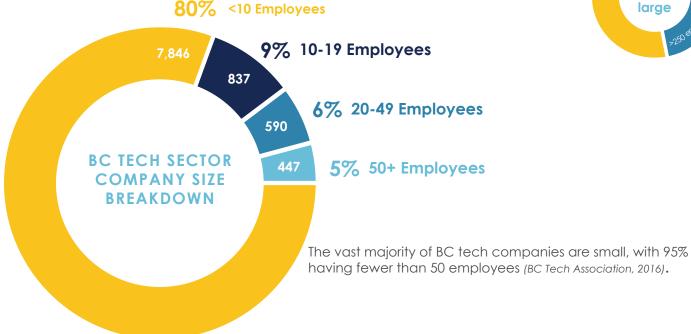
HR TECH GROUP 2017 SALARY SURVEY PARTICIPANTS SIZE BY FTE (FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES)

In 2017, 116 of some of the largest BC tech companies participated in the HR Tech Group salary survey, showing 50% had less than 100 employees, 28% had 100-250 employees and 22% had over 250 employees (Mercer Consulting, 2017a).









PROJECT GOALS

The goals of the project are to understand and make recommendations to improve the level of diversity and D&I practices in the sector. These goals will help companies open new pathways to access a **larger pool of talent**, with diverse thinking and experiences that can positively contribute to company performance and innovation.

METHODOLOGY

The project approach was consistent with its purpose, engaging a diverse group of stakeholders to provide perspectives on current state and future solutions. The project included a diverse Advisory Committee and an environmental scan of the D&I practices in BC tech.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND KEY INFORMANTS

The project used an Advisory Committee to review and validate the project deliverables and engaged other Key Informants who provided information and advice critical to the project outcomes. These groups had representatives from the BC tech sector, as well as groups that advocate for the following groups:

- Women
- First Nations and Indigenous Peoples
- People with Disabilities
- Immigrants
- LGBTQ/2S members (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Two-Spirited)

ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

The environmental scan included a literature review of leading D&I practices, as well as information gathered from the BC tech companies through interviews, a survey and online discussion.

LITERATURE REVIEW OF LEADING PRACTICES

A comprehensive literature and marketplace review was conducted to understand leading practices, solutions and lessons learned on effective diversity and inclusion strategies. This review included Canadian and international literature and resources on a variety of D&I topics, including the following themes:

- D&I Strategy
- Leading practices
- Measurement
- Business benefits
- Unconscious bias
- Integrating D&I into talent management
- Inclusive business practices

A complete list of literature can be found in Appendix I.

STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEW

A variety of stakeholders were interviewed to gather their information on current diversity and inclusion practices and priorities. These stakeholders included 13 HR Leaders from BC tech companies; ranging in size, age, sector, geographic area and diversity & inclusion maturity, as well as 7 members of advocacy groups that support the tech industry or underrepresented groups (Appendix III).

SURVEY AND ONLINE DISCUSSION

An online survey and discussion were used to gather quantitative information on diversity and inclusion practices and opportunities in BC tech. The target audience for these feedback tools was HR Professionals, Leaders and Employees working in tech companies in various locations across the province.

The survey was completed by 161 leaders and employees and included 40 questions that assessed the level of commitment to diversity and inclusion at an organizational, leader and employee level and the types of practices being used. The respondents were from a cross-section of companies, ranging from startups to companies with 500+ employees, located in various geographic regions within BC.

Ninety-six respondents participated in the online discussion hosted by Thought Exchange and shared their 90 thoughts/ideas on "What more could be done at a company and industry level to support a diverse and inclusive BC tech sector". The participants also rated others' ideas by assigning stars to identify popular thoughts/ideas. The majority of the respondents were people from companies with 50-plus employees.

Further information on the survey and online discussion can be found in Appendix III.

Interviews with BC based companies & advocacy groups:



Diversity & Inclusion Survey

161 responses

HR Professionals, Leaders & Employees in BC tech, including:

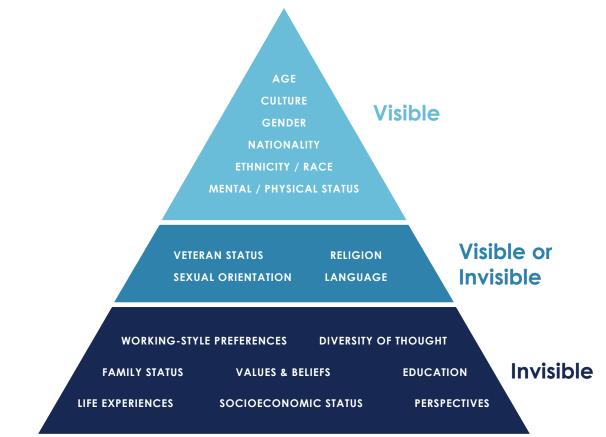
- All companies size; start-ups to 500+ employees
- All sub-sectors; with largest from Information & Communications Technologies sub-sector (ICT) (46%)
- Companies headquartered across the province; majority from Lower Mainland (58%) & Vancouver Island/Coast (21%)
- All genders; majority female (71%)
- All ages from 20 to 60+ years of age; majority 30-49 years old (66%)
- Majority HR Professionals (72%)

OVERVIEW OF LEADING D&I PRACTICES

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION DEFINITIONS

Diversity is the variety of people and ideas within an organization (*Sherman Garr, 2014*). Variety includes visible and/or invisible differences, such as: age, culture, gender, race, mental/physical status, religion, sexual orientation, language, education, socioeconomic status, life experiences, family status, perspectives, etc.

Inclusion is the environment where people feel involved, respected, valued, connected and where individuals bring their authentic selves to the team and business (*Sherman Garr*, 2014).



Source: "The Diversity & Inclusion Framework: Transforming Organizations for Greater Business Value", Sherman Garr, 2014.

In the past, organizations often focused on diversity to comply with governance regulations, but today, **organizations are taking a much broader view of diversity** and pursuing progressive D&I practices because of its business benefits.

While bringing diverse talent into an organization can help a business understand new markets and ways of doing things, the greatest benefit is realized when organizations also create inclusive cultures where people are encouraged to use their diverse perspectives and experiences to work together to solve problems and capitalize on opportunities.

An example of one tech company that exemplifies this approach to diversity and inclusion is Microsoft. Microsoft's D&I strategy is aligned with its company vision and recognizes it takes both diversity and inclusion to achieve success. This strategic direction is supported through programs such as; training, inclusive recruitment processes, and integrating diverse thinking into product design. Their commitment to D&I is underscored by their measurement and public reporting of their workforce diversity, pay equity and involvement in public programs. Microsoft also believes that D&I is a journey that requires constant self-assessment and re-commitment (Microsoft, 2017).

Even though there are examples of companies who have well-established practices, this more contemporary approach to D&I is relatively new for many companies. In 2014, 49% of Canadian organization surveyed had only been focused on non-compliance D&I for 5 years or less (Sherman Garr, et al, 2014).

BUSINESS BENEFITS OF DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

The increased focused and interest on diversity and inclusion is fuelled by the proven business benefits:

- Increased Revenue and Productivity Diverse organizations are more likely to financially outperform non-diverse organizations by up to 35% (McKinsey & Company Consulting, et al., 2015)
- Increased Innovation, Adaptability and Financial Performance - Inclusive cultures outperform others in innovations (6x), responsiveness to change (6x) and financial performance (2x) (Bersin by Deloitte Consulting, et al., 2017)
- Attractive to Global Talent Diverse & inclusive industries /regions are more attractive to top talent from around the world and other sectors (Momani, et al, 2017)
- Improved Team Performance Inclusive teams outperform their peers by 80% in teambased assessments (Deloitte Australia, 2017)

CURRENT DIVERSITY & INCLUSION LANDSCAPE

There has been significant focus by US tech companies, large multi-nationals and other industries to improve diversity and inclusion practices in order to attract and retain the best talent and improve their business performance.

However, despite the interest and effort, the global technology industry has struggled implementing D&I strategies and still has low representation rates of women and minority groups and pay inequity. This includes lack of diversity and role models in senior executive and technical roles. A recent survey by PwC's Diversity & Inclusion (*PwC*, 2017a) on the Technology Industry illustrated this missed opportunity by highlighting that:

- Few tech companies are connecting D&I directly to achievement of business results, such as innovation and improved financial performance
- Only 35% of tech companies have senior leadership support and structured D&I programs
- 16% of technology organization's D&I programs reach the highest level of maturity; where D&I is fully integrated with business and talent management strategies

Often the lack of diversity in the pipeline is cited as a primary contributor to the problem, "but research clearly demonstrates that this is not simply a 'pipeline problem'. Company culture plays a significant role in driving women and underrepresented groups away from these jobs." (Ashcraft, 2015). As stated, there are significant D&I examples from the US tech sector, but more relevant to this report is a recent CBC article that explored what Canadian tech companies were doing about diversity. When they asked 31 Canadian tech companies to provide details on their diversity stats, they got little information. Only 2 Ontario-based companies were willing to share their diversity stats and another Toronto-based company responded that they were beginning their first diversity survey. Understanding and reporting on the current level of diversity within an organization is an important part of an effective diversity program, and is a practice that has been adopted by large US tech companies. The lack of response on diversity data suggested that Canadian tech "companies are at least three years behind when it comes to making similar data public" (Braga, 2017).

Even if a company measures its level of diversity, there can often be a "disconnect between measuring diversity and inclusion efforts, and doing something to improve them." (*Sherman Garr, et al 2014*).

Our literature review found a significant amount of information and resources on diversity and inclusion programs, and strategies for inclusive business practices for women, people with disabilities, immigrants and the LGBTQ/2S members. Further work needs to be done to source and tailor information for the tech sector on inclusive business practices for Indigenous peoples and reconciliation.

A common key theme in helping organizations understand actions and behaviours that are limiting their ability to find, develop and keep diverse talent is unconscious bias. Unconscious bias "refers to the information, attitudes, and stereotypes that inform our subconscious information-processing and dictate the process by which we make mental short-cuts." These mental shortcuts can often present significant barriers to creating a diverse and inclusive organization. These biases if not managed, can influence who a company attracts, selects, develops and keeps in their organizations (*Paradigm IQ Consulting, 2017*). Many organizations are incorporating training on unconscious bias into their diversity programs and actively looking for ways to reduce its influence on talent management programs.



KEY SUCCESS FACTORS FOR DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE COMPANIES

One of the most relevant D&I studies in the field of HR practices and business performance was by Bersin by Deloitte Consulting (Bersin by Deloitte Consulting, et al., 2017). They identified six principles that are key to becoming a more inclusive organizations; 1-6 below. Other key literature identified 2 additional success factors that organizations should incorporate into their D&I work.

KEY SUCCESS FACTORS FOR D&I TO WORK:

- 1. Treat D&I as a business priority (Strategy, plans, funding)
- 2. Focus on both Inclusion and Diversity
- 3. Senior leader sponsorship and accountability
- 4. Embed D&I in all talent management practices
- 5. Provide D&I Resources that empower individual action & ownership
- 6. Publicize D&I intentions and measure and publicly report progress
- 7. Partner with community groups who represent diverse groups (Modley, 2016)
- 8. Involve 'majority groups' in the change efforts (Ashcraft, 2015)

COMMON REASONS FOR FAILURE

Bersin by Deloitte Consulting also studied why D&I programs failed and highlighted 3 main factors (*Sherman Garr, 2013*).

- 1. Lack of Focus Not a corporate priority for leaders or HR, not aligned with business and talent strategy
- 2. Lack of Funding Inadequate funding or investments, no funding for a resource to focus on it
- 3. Lack of Follow Through No goals, measurement or reporting, and little public accountability for D&I outcomes

OVERVIEW OF BC TECH SECTOR'S DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION PRACTICES



CURRENT DIVERSITY IN BC TECH SECTOR:

The following Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Dashboard shows the current diversity of the BC tech sector.

| | Diversity Statistics in BC Tech | |
|--|---|---|
| | Gender Diversity 15-20% Female ²⁰¹⁶ TechTalentBC Report 27% Female ²⁰¹⁷ HR Tech Group Salary Survey | vs. 45% of the Cdn Workforc vs. 25% of the tech labour marke |
| First Nations & Indigenous Peoples <1% 2016 TechTalentBC Report | People with Disabilities <1% 2016 TechTalentBC Report | Ethnicity & Sexual Orientation N/A |
| Gender Diversity on Boards 7% Minerva 2016 Scorecard - small sample size Global Benchmark for Tech Companies: 13.5% | Gender Diversity in Execs 9.8% Minerva 2016 Scorecard - small sample size Global Benchmark for Tech Companies: 11% | Gender Diversity in Tech Roles 14% Female (Software Developer - SWD)' 2017 HR Tech Group Salary Survey |
| Age Diversity Average age 38 75% of incumbents under age 45 2017 HR Tech Group Salary Survey | Pay Equity in Tech Roles Females are paid 5-6% less (Software Developer - SWD)' 2017 HR Tech Group Salary Survey | |
| | Survey Benchmarks | |
| Companies committed to creating a diverse & inclusive workplace 61% | Senior leaders actively & visibly supporting D&I 62% | Belonging: Feel comfortable being themselves at work 93% |

Sources: 2016 TechTalentBC Report, 2017 HR Tech Group Salary Survey, Minerva's 2016 Scorecard and the project survey.

1. The Software Developer role was used to examine female representation rates and pay equity in BC tech since it provides the largest number of incumbent in a technical role in the sector, has 5 levels of experience and represents 2500 individuals. Also, Software Developers are the most predominant and in-demand technical role in the ICT sub-sector (Information & Communications Technologies), which represents over 50% of the BC tech sector.

CURRENT D&I PRACTICES IN BC TECH SECTOR:

Information gathered through the interviews, survey and online discussion showed overall:

- A high interest and belief in D&I importance in supporting ongoing company success
- Some excellent examples of well established and emerging D&I practices, but many companies are in the early stages of exploring or practicing D&I
- Low representation rates for women, people with disabilities and First Nations and Indigenous Peoples
- D&I practices and implementation appear to lag behind other US tech centres

Like the findings in the literature review, there is a significant discrepancy between the desire for D&I and the actual diversity statistics and practices.

SURVEY FINDINGS

Feedback from 161 individual tech employees working in the sector showed there is:

- Strong belief that D&I is important and there are some practices in place
- Strong feeling of inclusion and belonging among the current workforce
- Need to improve leadership support and corporate commitment to D&I
- Strong correlation between a corporate culture of D&I and the belief in the company's performance, employee engagement and ability to innovate

Strong belief D&I is important and there are some practices in place

| 96 % | believe D&I is important to ongoing company success and competitiveness |
|-------------|---|
| 94% | believe diverse teams produce better outcomes and business results |
| 66% | believe more should be done at their compay to raise awareness about diversity & inclusion |
| 83% | have a flexible work culture to accomodate family commitments |

High feeling of Inclusion & Belonging with current workforce

| 97 % | are comfortable working with people who are different than them |
|-------------|---|
| 93 % | feel comfortable being themselves at work |
| 90% | are confident voicing opinions, even when it's different than those around them |

| But more can be done | | |
|---|---|--|
| 62% of leaders support a diverse & inclusive workplace | 61% believe their company is committed to creating a diverse & inclusive workplace | |
| 58% of companies positively recognize people who foster a culture of inclusion | 55% believe their company has a diverse leadership team (gender, race, culture, perspective) | |
| 47% have D&I as part of their company's values or competencies | 33% offer D&I training to leaders | 28% offer D&I training to employees |

The business benefits of diverse and inclusive corporate cultures highlighted in the literature were also evident in the survey responses. The respondents that 'strongly agreed' their companies were committed to diversity and inclusion were also more likely to agree that they believed their company was a top performer in industry and had high levels of employee engagement and strong ability to innovate.

| Strong correlation between a culture of D&I practices and belief in the company's performance, employee engagement & ability to innovate | | |
|---|---|--|
| Respondents that 'Strongly Agreed' that: Their senior leaders actively and visibly support a diverse & inclusive workplace Their company is committed to creating a diverse & inclusive workplace At their company, people who foster a culture of inclusion are positively recognized | Had a much stronger belief in their company's ability to: ✓ Be a top performer in industry ✓ Have a high level of employee engagement ✓ Successfully innovate new products, services and solutions | |

COMMON THEMES:

Survey respondents and participants in the online discussion had consistent comments when asked to identify the challenges and opportunities to improve the D&I practices in the BC tech sector.

| Challenges | Opportunities |
|---|---|
| Lack of diversity in pipeline Lack of time & focus on D&I Lack of resources for training, programs, etc. Lack of leader engagement or commitment | D&I training for HR, leaders and employees Centralized D&I resources, information, case studies, rationale, toolkit, etc. Free or low cost expert advice Collaboration between companies Promote sector to underrepresented groups Financial support for technical training & internships for underrepresented groups Industry-wide employee resources groups |



INTERVIEW FINDINGS WITH BC TECH COMPANIES

Interviews with HR Leaders from top BC tech companies (13) showed a wide range of D&I practices. The companies were interviewed to gather information on lessons learned, challenges, and ideas to improve diversity and inclusion.

A few of the companies interviewed had mature D&I practices that are integrated into the company's business and talent management strategies, but these examples tend to be found in larger multi-nationals, such as SAP and Microsoft. These organizations have top leadership commitment, dedicated resources, training, and measurement and have taken a strategic approach to integrating D&I in their talent management practices. Both SAP and Microsoft have shared information on their D&I practices through local conferences and events to help other organizations elevate their practices. Their continued contribution to industry learning and collaboration on D&I is beneficial to the sector.

Interviews with tech companies headquartered in BC showed mixed levels of progress towards creating more diverse and inclusive workplaces. Some were just beginning to focus on D&I, while a few have been using some D&I practices over the last couple of years. Many small to mid-sized companies shared that ensuring the necessary funds and focus on D&I is a challenge in a rapidly growing business, especially where cash is limited and funders can often be more interested in how quickly one can hire staff to scale the business, rather than the quality of a D&I program. Regardless of where they were in their journey, the interviewees believed D&I was important to company success and the majority had a desire to learn and do more.

From our work, many companies are interested, but are still looking for ways to create a more diverse and inclusion workplace.

A couple of local tech companies have shared their stories (see next page) on what diversity and inclusion means to them and what they're doing to understand their level of diversity and creating workplaces where everyone feels included and has an opportunity to succeed.



"We are continuing to build our learning and understanding of diversity and inclusion in the organization and have spent close to a year getting feedback from the organization, creating dialogue, and identifying opportunities for change. The more we learn, the more we realize that conventional approaches to diversity and inclusion aren't going to solve the problem and new thinking is required."

"Our purpose is to champion the power of human connection. **Connection is at the heart of inclusion.** We are building a diverse, inclusive, results-oriented culture, one which encourages people to be who they are and creates an environment where all employees have the opportunity to excel."



RYAN HOLMES



VP LEARNING, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

"Companies with more gender diversity are more innovative, more profitable and generally happier places to work" and "the new generation starting their professional careers are choosing to work with companies that share their values and diversity is top of the list."



"Unbounce is creating a diverse and inclusive business culture for everyone by;

- Monitoring diversity statistics
- Increasing women in leadership roles
- Making corporate intentions public. Unbounce has taken the Minerva Pledge to actively support women in leadership
- Sourcing a more diverse applicant pool
- De-biasing the recruiting process
- Ensuring company events appear to a diverse workforce
- Ensuring employee benefits work for a diverse workforce"



LESLIE COLLIN DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE AND CULTURE

For HR professionals, "it's never too early to start educating yourself on D&I, as it shifts your perspective and is key to influencing leaders and developing effective programs. Also, if you can't find talent, go to where the talent is. Take a different approach and be the first person to the table with untapped groups."



RICK PERREAULT CEO

ADVOCACY GROUP FINDINGS:

Interviews with 7 members of advocacy groups that support the tech industry or underrepresented groups showed there are very good local resources and/or initiatives available that can help tech companies understand how they can hire and create more inclusive work environments for women, people with disabilities and immigrants. There are numerous organizations that advocate and provide resources specifically to women in the tech sector, as well as advocacy groups and resources for creating inclusive workplaces for differently abled people and newcomers. Gaps exist and improvement is needed in sector-specific initiatives around Indigenous peoples inclusion and reconciliation.



SOME OF THE UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS IN BC TECH SECTOR:

WOMEN

Women are significantly underrepresented in the BC tech sector as technical experts, in senior executive ranks, and on Boards. While female representation is much discussed and there are many initiatives in the industry, low female representation and pay equity persists in BC tech.

Statistics Canada data shows Canadian females are slightly over 50% of the population, yet the 2016 Tech Talent BC Report shows women are only 15-20% of the BC tech workforce. Another data point, the HR Tech Group's 2017 Salary Survey, reported 27% of the workforce for 116 small to large BC tech companies We need to attract more females to the industry and help BC tech companies develop effective plans to **include more women in all levels and roles**. are women. Gender diversity in the BC tech sector is lower than major US IT companies and the top 50 US Companies (Mercer Consulting, 2017a)². When examining gender diversity in technical roles, the 2017 HR Tech Group Survey reported that women held only 14% of all Software Developer/Engineering roles. Gender diversity was greater at the entry level (20%) and lower in senior roles. The percentage of women employed as Software Developers in the BC tech sector is also lower than the average percentage of female graduates (32%) from Math and Computer Science programs³ in BC Public Post-Secondary Institutions between 2011 and 2016 (British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education, Skills and Training, 2017). The gap between female Math and Computer Science graduates who could potentially enter the tech sector and existing entry level Software Developers in BC might suggest there is a greater supply of technically trained females than the industry is able to attract. And on the retention side, "according to a 2016 Catalyst report, 53% of women who begin their careers in tech business leave for other industries (compared to 31% of men)." (MoveTheDial, 2017).

Minerva's 2017 Face of Leadership BC Scorecard (Minerva Foundation, 2017) shows significantly low numbers of women on boards and in senior executive ranks in BC companies, and the same was seen in the few BC tech companies featured in their report. The low number of women represented in these leadership roles is troubling, especially when "McKinsey and Co. and Catalyst found that businesses with the most female board members and executives outperform their industry peers by 15 per cent and achieve a 53 percent higher return on equity." (Shore, 2017). To get a more accurate understanding of the percentage of women leaders in BC tech companies, Minerva will conduct its first BC Tech Scorecard in 2018. This report will gather and report the percentage of women on boards and in executive leadership roles in 25-30 of the top BC tech companies headquartered in BC.

Additionally, pay equity in the BC tech sector needs to be further explored and addressed. In 2015, Statistics Canada reported women in Canada were making 87 cents for every dollar earned by their Canadian counterpart. (Moyser, 2015). The 2017 HR Tech Group Salary explored pay differentials for Software Developers/ Engineers in 116 participating companies. The data indicated females in non-entry Software Developers/ Engineers roles may be paid 5-6% less, on average, compared to their male counterparts. However, further analysis is required to fully understand any pay differentials overall and further support is warranted at an industry level to ensure tech companies have the knowledge and information to support pay equity within their own companies. An annual industry salary survey, such as the HR Tech Salary Survey, could be a key measurement and reporting tool to support pay equity within companies and tracks progress at an industry level.

According to the 2017 Benchmark Report done by MoveTheDial, women represent a small percent of founders in Canadian tech companies, with only about 5% of Canadian tech companies having female founders and 13% having female and male co-founders (MoveTheDial, 2017). Further analysis would be beneficial in understanding the diversity of founders in BC tech and what can be done to ensure an environment where all founders are encouraged and supported to achieve success.

Currently, there are numerous organizations that advocate for females in tech at all levels and frequent meetings and regular conferences to advance the issue. While the advocacy groups are important, it can be a challenge for BC tech companies and females to find the right organization(s) to partner with to support their success. BC Tech is helping address this challenge by listing all the women in tech organizations on their website and bringing advocacy groups together to collaborate and increase synergies.

Even though there is significant effort to advocate for females in tech, more must be done to attract more females to the industry and help BC tech companies develop effective plans to include more women in all levels and roles.

^{2.} Comparative data was publicly reported data of Facebook, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Twitter, YouTube and Microsoft, as well as the average from Top 50 US Companies.

^{3.} B.C. Public Post-Secondary data for Mathematics and Computer Sciences Credentials are collected as an aggregate.

PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

People with disabilities represent less than 1% of the BC tech workforce (BC Tech Association, 2016) and are a pool of relatively untapped talent. Statistics Canada data shows that there are 334,000 British Columbians aged 15-64 who have a disability (Statistics Canada, 2017). Many of these people "are highly educated and have comparable skills to people without disabilities. Yet the unemployment rate for people with disabilities is 4.5 percentage points higher than for people without disabilities." (Presidents Group, 2017).

There are several organizations in BC that help people with disabilities and employers find mutually beneficial employment relationships. One tech company, SAP, has been leading the way with their Autism at Work Program and demonstrating how tech companies can benefit from employing people with diverse abilities. SAP has made a global commitment to hire 650 colleagues with autism by 2020 (SAP, 2017). SAP Vancouver has partnered with Specialisterne and the Pacific Autism Family Network to identify great candidates, and as of April 2017, employed 15 colleagues on the autism spectrum. SAP continues to publicly share information about this program to help other companies understand and scale a similar model for their business (*Carreirro*, 2017).

The President's Group, with the support of the BC government, recently launched **www. accessibleemployers.ca**, an excellent resource for employers wanting to learn more about the business benefits of hiring people with disabilities, what other companies are doing and resources to support successful workplace inclusion.

Even though there is some early work being done, more needs to be done to help BC tech companies include more people with diverse abilities and benefit from their valuable contributions.



INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Today, more than 200,000 Indigenous peoples live in BC (Welcome BC, 2017), and Indigenous people represent the fastest growing segment of the Canadian population. Currently, less than 1% of the tech sector's workforce are Indigenous Peoples, which suggests the sector is missing out on the opportunity to meaningfully engage and benefit from the unique perspectives of Indigenous peoples (BC Tech Association, 2016).

As a vibrant and progressive industry in British Columbia, the tech sector has a unique opportunity to deepen understanding, respect and recognition of Indigenous Peoples as a necessary step for diversifying the sector. Elevating Indigenous voices and responding meaningfully to reconciliation will help to generate innovative new approaches and perspectives across the sector.

Meaningful engagement with Indigenous peoples in the provincial tech sector is not only beneficial, but a necessary response to the Calls to Action of the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report (Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015) as well as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which has been identified as the basis of Nation to Nation relationships by both the provincial and federal government.

One way in which Indigenous innovators are being empowered in the province is through a skills development initiative being developed by the First Nations Technology Council. This 5-year program will begin in 2018 and enable 1,000 First Nations youth (18-29 years old) to explore careers in technology and innovation and access the skills and certifications to contribute to and lead technology sector organizations. The 200 annual graduates will have the necessary skills to secure full time technical jobs across the province. This program is supported by Employment & Social Development Canada, Ministry of Indigenous Relations & Reconciliation, and Western Economic Diversification.

Equally as important as addressing the technology skills gaps is addressing the sector's knowledge gaps of the province's diverse Indigenous peoples, their histories and their cultures. Increasing dialogue and commitment to reconciliation is fundamental to ensuring a future where Indigenous Peoples participate in and benefit from the sector.



Equally as important... is addressing the sector's knowledge gaps of the province's diverse Indigenous peoples, their histories and their cultures..

OTHER GROUPS

While other minority groups, such as newcomers and members of the LGBTQ/2S community, were not identified as underrepresented in the 2016 Tech Talent BC Report (BC Tech Association, 2016), it's important that BC tech ensures an inclusive environment to support their success.

The Diversity Dividend Report highlights the economic and social imperative for Canadian companies to leverage the talents of Canadian newcomers through creating inclusive workplaces that support their success at all levels. In terms of business benefits, the report identified that organizations with a one percent increase in ethno cultural diversity, experienced "on average a 2.4 increase in revenue and a 0.5 percent increase in workplace productivity. The relationship between ethno cultural diversity and performance was strongest in creative and innovation sectors" (Momani, 2017). In terms of economic imperatives, when competing for global talent to fuel the Canadian workforce and population growth, we want to ensure we can draw the best talent with a reputation of a country and sector that is inclusive and where immigrants can excel.

Immigrant advocacy associations, like Immigrant Employment Council of BC (IEC-BC), provide excellent resources to connect employers with immigrant talent, as well as information to help employers inclusive of newcomers (Immigrant Employment Council of BC, 2017)⁴. Additionally, LGBTQ/2S advocacy groups, such as Qmunity, offer education and training for employers on building safe, inclusive environments for LGBTQ/2S members (Qmunity, 2017).

We want to ensure we can draw the best talent with a **reputation of a country and sector that is inclusive** and where immigrants can excel.



^{4.} Immigrant Employment Council of BC website. Available at https://iecbc.ca/

BC TECH SECTOR'S D&I GAPS

There is a significant gap between the belief in the importance of D&I and the actual diversity statistics and practices in the BC tech sector. This gap is not from lack of interest, but due to:

- 1. Limited understanding of D&I and its business benefits
- 2. Limited tech executive engagement in D&I strategies and programs
- 3. Limited knowledge & capacity to embed D&I in talent management practices
- 4. Lack of funds and resources within small to mid-sized tech companies to focus on D&I
- 5. Lack of regular measuring and reporting on D&I at an industry level
- 6. Limited diversity in technical talent pool



RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations include a series of goals and objectives to address the D&I gap in BC tech sector and work towards the vision of an innovative and growing BC tech ecosystem that is fuelled by a diverse and talented group of individuals who contribute to and benefit from its success.⁵

Through a multi-year, collective effort, the industry will be able to achieve more and begin to move the dial on this important issue. Instead of being behind, we'll be an industry and regional leader on diversity and inclusion and can provide a model to guide other's success.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 1. Based on key D&I success factors
- 2. Address key challenges and other information from the scan
- 3. Leverage D&I initiatives by industry & advocacy associations

VISION AND GOALS



5. This vision was proposed to and agreed on by the Project Advisory Committee in October 2017.

CALLS TO ACTIONS

Tangible progress on diversity and inclusion in the BC tech sector can only be done through multistakeholder collaboration with an integrated plan to address systemic issues. Sporadic tactics and stand-alone initiatives will not move the sector as a whole. There is a tremendous opportunity for the sector to work collectively to improve practices and make fundamental change and realize the business advantage of a more diverse and inclusive industry.

The Advisory Committee is requesting industry and government invest in a multi-year plan to help BC tech increase its diversity and inclusion, through the pursuit of the following goals and objectives. The success of these goals and objectives will be monitored and measured through key indicators reported on an annual Diversity & Inclusion Dashboard for BC tech sector.

GOAL 1 Increase Industry's D&I Awareness & Understanding

OBJECTIVES

Α

- Increase Industry's D&I Awareness through communication campaigns and a website of curated information, including:
 - General D&I information, business benefits, local case studies, list of diversity & inclusion resources and associations, events, etc.
 - Advocacy Association Events
 - Industry-wide Employee Resource/Affinity Group Contact Information for First Nations and Indigenous Peoples, People with Diverse Abilities, Newcomers, LGBTQ/2S community groups, etc., with allies from the tech sector
 - Mentoring opportunities through local advocacy organizations, such as: Minerva, IEC-BC, First Nations Technology Council, Disability services organizations, etc.



OBJECTIVES

| Α | Increase D&I awareness through Inclusive Business Learning Events(s) for CEOs/Senior Leaders & HR. |
|---|---|
| | Learning topics could include: |
| | Benefits of and leading D&I in the workplace Unconscious bias and how to manage it Inclusive leadership practices |
| | Truth & Reconciliation and fulfilling the Calls to Action for companies |
| В | Increase HR D&I knowledge through website and toolkit. |
| | Topics could include: |
| | Diversity and Inclusion fundamentals |
| | Links to D&I information and advocacy groups |
| | D&I events and opportunities |
| | Truth & Reconciliation and supporting the Calls to Action |
| | Case studies from various size companies |
| С | Increase HR's ability to implement D&I practices through practical training and advice. |
| | Topic areas could include: |
| | Assessing a company's level of diversity and inclusivity |
| | Creating a high impact D&I strategy |
| | Integrating D&I into how to attract, hire, develop and retain talent |
| | Evaluating and ensuring pay equity |
| | Measuring D&I progress |
| D | Design and pilot D&I learning material for 'Second Stage' tech companies, including: |

• How to develop and grow a diverse and inclusive business

| GOAL 3 Drive D&I Progress Through Reinforcement & Measurement | | |
|--|--|--|
| OBJECTIVES | | |
| Α | Drive progress through a D&I Pledge Group - Coalition of companies & associations committed to improving D&I in BC tech: | |
| | Members companies pledge to improve D&I through: Participation in Inclusive Business Forum, HR D&I training, diversity reporting, pay equity, mentoring underrepresented groups, reconciliation dialogues, etc. In exchange, companies receive subsidized training, D&I advice, participation in industry employment marketing, etc. Industry & advocacy associations pledge to collaborate to maximize benefit | |
| В | Measure progress through a D&I Annual Dashboard for BC tech: | |
| | Measure & report industry progress with key indicators. (Could include: representation rate, pay equity, Minerva scorecard, graduate placement rate from Indigenous Skills Development Initiatives, number of Reconciliation Action Plans in the sector, etc.) | |
| с | Explore ways to improve D&I through capital/funding practices: | |
| | Analysis of D&I considerations in current funding practices and identify improvement opportunities. (I.e. – Engage & educate private funders, require D&I training for access to public venture capital funding, etc.) | |
| | | |
| | GOAL 4 Increase Talent Pool & its Diversity | |

| OBJECTIVES | |
|------------|---|
| Α | Promote and expand internships programs for underrepresented groups: Promote existing internship programs for underrepresented groups Explore partnerships to create technical training and internships for underrepresented groups |
| В | Market industry employment and education opportunities to: Underrepresented groups (Women, newcomers, people with diverse abilities and First Nations and Indigenous Peoples) High School counsellors, students and parents Current and potential newcomers from other provinces and internationally through marketing campaigns |
| С | Encourage post-secondary and technical schools to have policies and practices that support D&I in STEM programs. |

| GOAL 5 Increase Reconciliation Commitments and Opportunities with First Nations & Indigenous Peoples | |
|--|---|
| OBJECTIVES | |
| Α | Increase CEO/Senior Leaders & HR's comprehension of Truth & Reconciliation and the Call to Action for business: |
| | Inclusive Business Learning Event on reconciliation and what it means for the tech sector, which could include key note and dialogue sessions |
| В | Commitment to the advancement of Truth & Reconciliation awareness in tech sector through activities, such as: |
| | Dialogue workshops for tech managers and employees Content for Industry & HR website(s) |
| | Resources to fund continuous learning opportunities on Reconciliation Build a sustainable plan for ongoing learning for the sector |
| С | Create participation/understanding opportunities. |
| | Potential options could include: |
| | Mentoring of Indigenous Peoples in the sector |
| | Employee Resource/Affinity Groups for Indigenous Peoples |
| D | Creation of Reconciliation Action Plan for the sector and support for individual companies to create their own plan |

NEXT STEPS

MOVING FROM RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPLEMENTATION

The findings and recommendations in this report have been validated by the project Advisory Committee and there is consensus to continue the work and collaborate on the implementation of these recommendations. In fact, the Advisory Committee has acknowledged that in order to achieve the overall strategy of increasing diversity & inclusion practices in the sector, it must be a multi-faceted, multi-year commitment from all members of the sector.

Ultimately it will be a cohesive BC tech sector, working collaboratively that will be able to make progress on these recommendations, as well as to ensure their sustainability. We believe implementing these recommendations will help BC tech companies acquire a larger, more diverse talent pool to fuel their growth and performance. As well, these recommendations will help more British Columbians participate in and prosper from this thriving sector.

We are grateful that this initial environmental scan has been done with financial support by government, and acknowledge that making progress on these recommendations is ultimately the responsibility of industry. However, on behalf of the BC tech sector, members of the Advisory Committee would welcome support from the Provincial Government to assist initial implementation and evaluation of these recommendations. This initial funding would assist the sector in launching the recommendations with a focus on longevity and self-sustained programming for the sector. This would include methods of evaluation like tracking key indicators annually on a Diversity & Inclusion Dashboard for the BC tech sector.

We believe these recommendations will drive real change and provide a leading example of a uniquely British Columbian approach to creating a more inclusive and diverse tech sector that fuels a strong, sustainable, innovative economy that works for everyone.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE: 2017 REPORT ON DIVERSITY & INCLUSION IN THE BC TECH SECTOR

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I – LITERATURE

APPENDIX II – ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND KEY INFORMANTS

APPENDIX III – STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED

APPENDIX IV – SURVEY AND ONLINE DISCUSSION (THOUGHT EXCHANGE) OVERVIEW

APPENDIX I – REFERENCE SECTION (LITERATURE AND RESOURCES)

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APPENDIX II – ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND KEY INFORMANTS

Advisory Committee

The project used an Advisory Committee to review and validate the project deliverables. The committee included representatives from BC tech industry, as well as associations that advocate for underrepresented groups in the tech sector. Advisory Committee members included:

| MEMBER NAME | ORGANIZATION | TITLE |
|-------------------------|--|--|
| Allison Rutherford | HR Tech Group | Executive Director |
| Bryan Buggey | Vancouver Economic Commission | Director, Strategic Initiatives & Sector Development |
| Denise Williams | First Nations Technology Council | Executive Director |
| Kraig Docherty | BC Tech | Director, Talent Programs |
| Sangeeta Subramanian | IEC BC - Immigrant Employment Council of BC | Senior Manager, Workplace Development |
| Sean Elbe | Vancouver Economic Commission | Sector Development Manager, Technology |
| Stacey Wallin | BC Tech | Director, Growth |
| Tina Strehlke | The Minerva Foundation | Interim CEO |

Key Informants

In addition to the Advisory Group, Key Informants were identified to provide advice and insight on how to create more accessibility and inclusion of underrepresented groups in BC tech. These individuals didn't have the capacity to be part of the Advisory Committee, but still provided key information and advice critical to the project outcomes. Key informants included:

| KEY INFORMANT | ORGANIZATION | TITLE |
|---------------|----------------------|--|
| Marco Pasqua | The Presidents Group | Accessibility and Inclusion Consultant |
| Mahin Rashid | The Presidents Group | Accessibility and Inclusion Consultant |
| Tara Kemes | Qmunity | Board Member |

APPENDIX III – STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

Tech Companies

Completed 13 interviews with tech companies; ranging in size, age, sector, headquarter location and diversity & inclusion maturity. Interviewed companies and individuals include:

| COMPANY | INTERVIEWED |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Microsoft | Director, Human Resources and Manager, Human Resources |
| SAP | Senior Program Manager, Global Diversity and Inclusion Office; Head of Human Resources, SAP Canada |
| Global Relay | Director, Human Resources |
| Sony Pictures Imageworks Canada | Vice President, People and Organization |
| Hootsuite | Vice President, Learning, Diversity and Inclusion |
| Unbounce | Director of People & Culture |
| Eventbase | Senior Talent Acquisition and Culture Advisors |
| Ballard Power | Director, Human Resources |
| Metalab | People Operations representative |
| Radical I/O Technologies | Co-Founder and COO |
| Sierra Wireless | Director, Strategic HR Programs |
| Bench | Director of People, HR Generalist and Recruitment Manager |
| Clio | Director of Talent |

Advocacy Groups

Completed 7 interviews with members of advocacy groups that represent underrepresented groups or the BC tech sector. Interviewed groups included:

| ADVOCACY GROUP | INTERVIEWED |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| BC Tech | Director, Growth Programs |
| First Nations Technology Council | Executive Director; Manager of Strategy and Engagement |
| Immigrants Employment Council of BC | Senior Manager, Workplace Development |
| Minerva Foundation | Interim CEO |
| The Presidents Group | Accessibility and Inclusion Consultants |
| Qmunity | Board Member |
| Vancouver Economic Commission | Sector Development Manager, Technology |

APPENDIX IV – SURVEY AND ONLINE DISCUSSION (THOUGHT EXCHANGE) OVERVIEW

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION SURVEY

Survey Timeline: September 6 - 29, 2017

Survey Questions: 40 survey questions to assess the level of commitment to diversity & inclusion and the types of practices being used.

Target Audience: HR professionals, senior leaders managers and employees working in the BC Tech Sector.

Response Rate:

- 161 respondents completed the entire survey
- An additional 25 respondents completed some of the questions

Profile of Respondents:

- All sizes of companies; from small startups to companies with 500+ employees
- All sub-sectors; with Information & Communication Technology companies being the largest percentage of respondents (46%)
- Companies headquartered in various geographic regions across the province; with the majority from Lower Mainland (58%) & Vancouver Island/Coast (21%)
- All genders; with the majority being female (71%)
- All ages from 20 to 60+ years of age; majority between 30-49 years old (66%)
- Majority of respondents were HR Professionals (72%)

ONLINE DISCUSSION: THOUGHT EXCHANGE

Thought Exchange Timeline: September 6 - 29, 2017:

Objective: An open-ended dialogue on the following question - "What more could be done at a company and industry level to support a diverse and inclusive BC Tech Sector". The dialogue was facilitated online through Thought Exchange's communication platform.

Method of participation: Respondents can respond to the question by posting their idea online and/or rating others' ideas.

Response Rate:

- 90 thoughts/ideas provided
- 96 people participated in the exchange; providing thoughts or rating others'
- 1043 ratings were given to the 90 thoughts

Both the Survey & Thought Exchange were promoted by:

Email and social media announcement to members of the following associations:

• HR Tech Group

VIATEC

• DigiBC

• BC Tech

- Kamloops Innovation
- T-Net

• Accelerate Okanagan

Announcements and marketing at the HR Tech Group - 2017 Talent Conference:

- Postcard Promotion
- Announcement

SURVEY RESULTS ARE AVAILABLE THROUGH THE BC GOVERNMENT LABOUR MARKET & INFORMATION DIVISION IN THE MINISTRY OF ADVANCED EDUCATION & SKILLS TRAINING