

From: [Justin Stevens](#)
To: [Justin Stevens](#)
Subject: Update on our diversity and inclusion work
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Dear News colleagues,

Six months ago I emailed you about issues around diversity and inclusion in News and talked about the experiences of some of our colleagues with discriminatory, non-inclusive and at times racist behaviour.

At the time I said actions would speak louder than words and promised to keep you posted on what we do on this. Since then we've done a lot more work, on top of our previous efforts on this front. I want to update you on that and talk about next steps.

First, I want to express my gratitude to everyone who has helped lead this work and contributed to it. So many of you have given your time, effort, thought and care. Talking about these issues can be awkward and uncomfortable – but it's vital we do in order to make the workplace positive for everyone.

A key message from our people is that while we're improving the diversity of our workforce we have a way to go to create a truly inclusive environment for all our people. Every one of us has a role to play in that.

Everything we do in this area improves our journalism, making it more accurate and authentic, ensuring we're delivering for *all* Australians.

Some of the main pieces of work we have undertaken since June are:

Inclusive workplace team action plans: In the new year all News teams will be creating inclusive workplace action plans to meet their individual needs and those of our division. These will include identifying concrete actions to ensure an inclusive culture and setting achievable milestones to measure progress.

To support people to do this Managers will complete an **Inclusive Leadership program** so they can effectively lead their team's discussions and planning. We will also roll out **Inclusive Workforce online training** for all employees and provide materials to guide you. This is being led by News employees supported by a staff working group and working in partnership with the ABC's Learning and Indigenous, Diversity & Inclusion teams.

Inclusive journalism training: Fanou Filali has done fantastic work running these sessions both virtually and in person across various bureaus to support and increase diverse voices and greater thoughtfulness of tone in our content. We'll roll this out more broadly across News with additional trainers to support Fanou.

Diversity forums: Led by MD David Anderson we discussed people's current experiences, heard feedback on the initiatives implemented following the last round of forums two years ago and got input on how to move forward. Staff members who took part were candid about where they think we need to do better. These forums provided an important snapshot on where we have improved over the past two years and where we still have room for improvement. The feedback will be crucial going forward.

Gender equity forums: From a meeting initiated by Juanita Phillips and the women in the NSW newsroom we went on to hold forums with women from a wide range of News teams across the country, asking for feedback on how to make the workplace better for women and how best to support them throughout their working lives at the ABC.

Hundreds of women took part in these discussions, which finished last week. We're now collating the feedback and identifying the recurring themes and challenges, which will include issues around career progression and flexible work, among others.

We're also seeking independent external advice, which has included talking with Champions of

Change and having Women in Media co-chair Kathy McLeish and Petra Buchanan brief the News Executive on the Women in Media Industry Insight Report 2022.

Equality in the workplace benefits us all. I'd like to stress that, while this work has so far only involved women, achieving it also means male colleagues participating as active and equal partners. We'll have more information on our next steps in this area early in the new year.

Talent Diversity Tracking: Building on the 50:50 project, almost all News teams have now moved to the new talent diversity tracking system, designed to measure the representation of people with disability, women, Indigenous and culturally and linguistic diverse Australians.

Despite another challenging year, with COVID and other illness continuing to affect our people and the availability of talent, News has achieved on average 48% female representation across the past 12 months. This is thanks to a lot of hard work to find new expert voices and ensure the experiences and perspectives of women are being reflected in our coverage and stories.

ABC Your Voice database: To help continue to increase the diversity of voices and faces in our coverage, the ABC is inviting all Australians to become part of our new **Your Voice** database. Teams across News and R&L will use Your Voice to source and store as many new diverse contacts as possible. Already during the pilot testing phase more than 1500 people of many different backgrounds, locations and professional/lived experiences have made themselves available as experts and case studies.

Elevating our Indigenous Journalism: It's crucial we meet the Reconciliation Action Plan targets for the ABC's Indigenous workforce and also foster a positive and supportive environment for First Nations employees.

I recently announced the appointment of Suzanne Dredge as Head, Indigenous News and she has started work building our Indigenous Reporting team. This will be key to further elevating our Indigenous journalism, particularly with the Voice Referendum on the horizon.

These initiatives will help create a more respectful and inclusive environment, making News and the ABC a better place for us all to work.

They also ensure our workforce and content more accurately reflect modern Australia, which makes our journalism richer, stronger and more relevant and valuable to the entire community. Thanks everybody.

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