

Framework 2: Writing Gender-Neutral, Inclusive Position Descriptions (Board and Team)

OBJECTIVE

Equal access to your organisation by all genders, in order to recruit a more gender diverse team/board.

KEY OUTCOME/USES

Position descriptions that are well-balanced and do not appeal to any gender more than another.

WHY IT MATTERS

Position descriptions are one of the first impressions your company can make on a prospective applicant. You want to capture your company's culture and language, and be aware of how those may appeal to specific genders.

REFERENCE TO THE MAIN TOOLKIT

Board Recruitment
Team Recruitment

FRAMEWORK

1. Review your existing position descriptions and look out for the following:

Language

- What words are commonly associated with certain gender traits within your ecosystem/country/culture? Are women perceived as collaborative and nurturing, whilst men are competitive or ambitious? How are other genders perceived? Can you use descriptors that don't appeal to any gender more than another?
- What language do you use to convey your organisational culture? Does it highlight a culture that will appeal to any gender more than another within your context?
- What pronouns are you currently using? Are they associated with a specific gender?
- What language are your position descriptions written in? Does a certain language favour a particular gender group (e.g. English vs local languages). What is the level of literacy required to understand your position descriptions?



FRAMEWORK

Requirements

- What are your job requirements, and how many do you have? Are they deterring certain genders from applying? Which ones are essential? And which ones are just nice to have? Are some requirements more likely to have been acquired by one gender group versus others? (e.g. a certain level of education)
 - Can you add a statement that encourages people of all genders, and people who do not precisely match those requirements to apply?
 - Values, culture and policies
 - If you have defined values and an internal culture that promotes inclusion, diversity, and equality, are they currently featured in your position descriptions? If you don't, is that a detractor for people who identify with certain gender groups?
 - If you have specific policies that aim to promote equality, are they mentioned in your position descriptions? (e.g. Parental Leave for primary caregivers, flexible working hours to cater to other commitments)
2. Test the revised position description/s with a diverse group of people, and make sure that it doesn't only appeal to one gender group more than another.