

# Tips for an inclusive student community



# Diversity and inclusion for student associations

## Making a diverse and inclusive association happen!

Studying at Erasmus University means having the opportunity to study amongst a diverse student population in a diverse city. The EUR acknowledges the strength and the added value of diversity and inclusion (D&I). We offer equal opportunities for everyone and an inclusive culture in which everyone feels at home and is able to excel. In line with this ambition we also strive to stimulate student associations at EUR to be appealing, inviting and inclusive to a diverse group of people. Therefore we offer you this toolkit with tips and tricks to ensure D&I in your association.

### Topic 1

Diversity and inclusion in your association

### Topic 2

Diverse and inclusive events

### Topic 3

Inclusive communication

### Topic 4

Diverse and inclusive boards and committees

# Topic 1. Diversity and inclusion in your association

## What is diversity?

Diversity encompasses all those differences that make us unique, including but not limited to color, ethnicity, language, nationality, sexual orientation, religion, gender, socio-economic status, age and physical and mental differences.

## What is inclusion?

Inclusion is about the act of including. Being included means that you are a part of the group, that you are welcomed for who you are, and that you can feel at home. In an inclusive culture, the dignity and worth of individuals and groups is recognized and their involvement and empowerment is promoted. In an inclusive culture people feel safe and valued.

### Tip 1. Talk about it!

What do D&I mean to your association? Open, or continue, the dialogue in your association. The following questions could inspire this:

- Are there groups that are over- or underrepresented at your association? How could you reach the underrepresented groups?
- Do people feel safe and included at your association? How can you check this?
- Is your association open and attractive for international students?
- Think about other questions that are important for your association

### Tip 2. Action and evaluation

The continuing dialogue about D&I will provide you with valuable input. How are you going to deal with the D&I challenges that your association faces? Turn words into action!

For example by:

- Writing an action plan
- Talking with other associations to hear about their best practices.
- Incorporating D&I plans into your year plan
- Reviewing your code of conduct
- Evaluating progress, successes and challenges





## Topic 2. Inclusive & diverse events

### Tip 1. Have a diverse team creating events

If people from different backgrounds, gender etc. are involved creating an event, then this event will be more attractive for a larger group of people. Every team member looks at the event from their own perspective. Thereby contributing the attractiveness of a event.

### Tip 2. Collaborate with other associations

Working together with other associations will help creating new and innovative events. It's a great way to benefit from each others experience and knowledge. Challenge yourself to find a collaboration that is outside your comfort zone.

### Tip 3. Spread the communication for events through diverse channels

Communicating via diverse channels will help you reach a diverse audience. Communicate your event via

Twitter	Facebook
Instagram	Uni-Life
Your Website	Networks

### Tip 4. Experiment with different settings for your event

Different settings appeal to different people. When organizing for example a network event you can vary between a network drink, a network brunch, a speed date event etc. Take in account that not everyone will feel equally as comfortable in a café, and not all people will feel at ease in a (very) formal setting.

### Events about Diversity & Inclusion

Making your events D&I-proof is important. However, organizing events about specific D&I related themes can stimulate the dialogue. Themes you could use for events are:

- Equality & equity
- Diversity & Inclusion
- LGBTI+
- Social safety: inappropriate behavior & consent
- Discrimination
- Racism
- Mental health
- Gender
- Accessibility

### Tip 5. Make sure to cater to people's needs

Provide (possible) attendees a way to communicate their needs. Think about:

- Accessibility of the location for people with limited mobility
- Catering options (vegan, gluten free, alcohol free etc.)



## Topic 3. Inclusive communication

### Tip 1. Use inclusive language

Avoid language that excludes people in your communication (for example discriminating, sexist or denigrating language). A way of writing more inclusive is by using neutral language.

- Find inspiration on inclusive language on the following [blog post](#)
- On [Genderdecoder](#) English texts can be quickly screened for gender-specific language.

### Tip 2. Use inclusive images

If communication contains a video or photo, we advise to pay attention to the people who are shown on these.

- The images should be a reflection of the diversity in general of our student population and the city of Rotterdam.
- Make sure your images exclude no groups. Avoid images that are for example: confirming sexist stereotypes.

### Tip 3. Avoid a language barrier

Be aware that if English is not your primary language of communication, and if you are not offering English communication as a second option, you might exclude group of students. Therefore, always aim to provide communication for your associations and events in English.

### Tip 4. Draw up a Diversity & Inclusion statement

A statement about Diversity & Inclusion can send a strong message about what your association is about. Place this statement on your website and in your yearly plan. Draw up this statement together with members of your association, what is important to you?

An example of a statement:

*In this association we believe in the strength of diversity and inclusion. We believe that everyone benefits when there is an environment where people from a wide variety of backgrounds learn from one another, share ideas, and work together.*



# Step 4. Diverse and inclusive boards and committees

## Tip 1. Create diverse boards and committees.

Having diverse and inclusive board and committees, (gender, study, ethnicity, sexual orientation etc.) will lead to more innovative, more diverse and more inclusive ideas. It will also help you attract diverse members.

✓ Make sure to have a diverse selection committee to help you reach or secure this goal

## Tip 2. How to communicate the position

Be aware of the communication tips in this toolkit when your search for new board and committee members. Questions you could ask yourself are:

- Who will I reach with this vacancy?
- Am I using inclusive language?
- Is this vacancy appealing to a diverse group of people?
- Is the image I use inclusive?

## Tip 3. Have a fixed pattern during the selection interviews

Use the [STAR method](#) to structure the conversation so that each candidate:

- has the same amount of time (per question),
- gets the same open questions, and
- is assessed in the same objective way.

## Tip 4. Check your implicit bias

These are unconscious shortcuts in your brain to process large amounts of information quickly. Based on these shortcuts, implicit preferences are formed with regard to certain groups in society. Curious about your own implicit bias? [Take the test now!](#)





---

# More ways to get inspired

---

Let's keep in touch!

Do you have questions, suggestions or feedback regarding this toolkit or other matters regarding diversity and inclusion? We welcome you to contact us via [Diversity@eur.nl](mailto:Diversity@eur.nl) or visit us at our office at AB-47 (Erasmus Building)

## More quick tips to make your association more inclusive

- ✓ Have a coffee with someone you don't know (well!)
- ✓ Find out something new about someone in your association.
- ✓ Ask a fellow member– “are you ok?”
- ✓ Offer your help to a new member.
- ✓ Be curious and ask open questions.
- ✓ Say hello and introduce yourself to someone you don't know.

Find even more tips via [this](#) link

**More information: [eur.nl/diversity](https://eur.nl/diversity)**

# Diversity and inclusion for student associations

## Diversity and inclusion in your association

Tip 1: Talk about it

Tip 2: Action and evaluation

## Organize diverse and inclusive events

Tip 1: Have a diverse team creating events

Tip 2: Collaborate with other associations

Tip 3: Spread the communication for events through diverse channels

Tip 4: Experiment with different settings for your event

Tip 5: Make sure to cater to people's needs

## Inclusive communication

Tip 1: Use inclusive language

Tip 2: Use inclusive images

Tip 3: Avoid a language barrier

Tip 4: Draw up a Diversity & Inclusion Statement

## Diverse and inclusive boards and committees

Tip 1: Create diverse boards and committees

Tip 2: Communicate the position in an inclusive way

Tip 3: Have a fixed pattern during selection interviews

Tip 4: Check your implicit bias