PLAN OF ACTION ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
2020-2022

STERRE MKATINI (DE&I OFFICER)

5 JULY 2021

UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE.

COLOPHON

MANAGEMENT
General Affairs
Public

DATE
5 July 2021

VERSION
1

STATUS
Final

AUTHOR(S)
Sterre Mkatini

EMAIL
diversity-ga@utwente.nl

POSTAL ADDRESS
P.O. Box 217
7500 AE Enschede

WEBSITE
www.utwente.nl/en/oranisation/about/diversity

PREFACE

This is the first plan of action on Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) for the University of Twente (UT). Its focus is on how we can actively work at bringing together the array of activities, programs and hard work that are contributing to making the UT a university that is attractive to a diverse group of people.

In line with the strategy Shaping2030, UT's ambition is to be a university where people from all walks of life come together and find a sense of belonging; a place where every individual not only feels seen and heard but also feels included and safe to participate and develop themselves to their full potential.

In the four chapters of this plan of action we will be looking at the short-, medium-, and long-term goals that we want to achieve in the coming years to work towards creating a UT where diversity in all its forms is celebrated and where equity and inclusion become completely embedded in all the work we do and research we conduct.

We are fully aware that the plan of action needs to be a living and breathing document that will be adapted annually in order to evolve to relevant realities as and when they present themselves. For this purpose, a concise annual plan will be produced, reflecting on lessons learnt in the past year and setting the main parameters for the new year.

The ambitions are clear, the passion exists. It is now up to us to provide the tools with which we can really make the difference and make sure matters of D&I are part and parcel of the agenda and are actively being acted upon by every person connected to the UT. We aim to become a front runner in the academic community, sharing our best practices whilst motivating and encouraging both our own community and those connected to us to be proud D&I agents wherever we go.

TABLE OF CONTENT

1. SUMMARY

In this plan of action we delve into what is needed in the area of D&I at UT in the short-, medium-, and long-term. By understanding the context we find ourselves in and in bringing together initiatives and work that has already been done, we can now move forward to actively work on reducing obstacles that members of our UT community face in feeling recognized and included.

Chapter one is a short introduction into the 60-year history and context of UT, the relevance of focusing on diversity, inclusion and equity and our ambitions in these three domains.

The second chapter looks at the short-term goals that are important for creating awareness and common ground, so that we all understand and agree on the direction we are headed to. An important part of this direction is the UT Shaping 2030 strategy, whereby six Shaping Expert Groups (SEGs) have been set up to address the different overarching themes. So far close collaboration has been started with the SEG Inclusion and recently also with the SEG Individuals and Teams. Gaining an understanding of where we stand now in terms of current obstacles and potential discrimination that is being faced by members of our community, allows us to identify the low hanging fruit that we will start working on immediately (see appendix 1 for a clear overview of what actions have currently been started – as discussed during UCB 06-04-2021, CvB-D 14-04-2021 and UCOW 13-04-2021).

In the third chapter we look at the medium-term goals, whereby we are making sure the UT is committed and showing accountability to its community and beyond. Within our own internal structures this means working closely with the different service departments, with the five faculties (faculty D&I planning support) and with student representatives (Student Union, student assessors, student associations, study associations – as discussed in UCOW meeting 13-04-2021). On a regional level this means working together with the two other educational institutions (Saxion, ROC Twente), the Municipality of Enschede and other partners. On a national level the UT is committing itself to the National Action Plan *for more Diversity and Inclusion in higher education and research* (OCW, August 2020), signed by all Dutch universities in September 2020. This plan focuses on working with other Dutch universities towards a joint commitment for elevating educational and research standards to alongside a diversity and inclusiveness measure. Lastly, on an international level (EU focused) we are exploring how to make smart connections with universities committed to the ECIU vision, but also looking at other universities in Europe and seeing how we can learn from each other with regards to best practices.

In the fourth and final chapter, a start is made with an in-depth exploration of strategic longer-term goals for the UT on how to fully and truly embed inclusion in all aspects of UT life both academically (inclusive education and research) and socially. These goals include positioning the D&I Officer as a change agent, looking at expanding the mentorship program and looking at how to work at actively creating role models at the UT (recognition & rewarding). Another important aspect is to start working actively on a (qualitative) monitoring, evaluation and learning cycle in order for us to start understanding how the activities we undertake support our inclusive ideals.

2. FROM VISION TO ACTION

2.1   INTRODUCTION

Our aim is to foster an open-minded and accepting learning community with a supportive and creative organizational culture where diversity and equity are the quality standards upon which systems, policies and processes are built to offer inclusive higher education.

A community which embraces the many facets of both our students and employees. An organizational culture that aims to create common ground and proud collective ownership of our educational and institutional practices and experiences; that aims to create a platform that facilitates dialogue by addressing people's needs in a respectful, safe and inclusive manner. One that inspires and develops solutions for those who need support, that manages to encourage, cultivate and celebrate the creativity, innovativeness, and forward thinking that only understanding and honoring diversity and inclusion can bring about (This is an intrinsic why as discussed with CvB-D on 14-04-2021).

As the University of Twente (UT), we have unequivocally evolved in the past 60 years. We want to maintain our unique atmosphere, which can be best described as intimate and no-nonsense, whilst expanding our horizon (as discussed in UCB meeting 06-04-2021). Opening our doors to students and staff from around the world and fostering a community where everybody is welcome, where an organizational culture of understanding is nurtured and differences are celebrated. We want to focus on creating an inclusive, equal and just university for all.

As UT develops and expands, we are also critically reflecting on our own structures and are more than willing to institute change where necessary. By rolling out our new strategic plan Shaping2030 and employing a Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Officer, concrete steps have been taken in our aim to cultivate a community where all students and staff feel welcome, safe and confident to raise their voices, to listen to and to dialogue with others sharing their different (and at times uncomfortable) realities and engaging in any action resulting there from. By doing so the UT recognizes the urgency to address matters of D&I and the need to live up to the expectations that come from calling ourselves a *People First* university.

As a technical University in the east of the Netherlands we acknowledge that our challenge lies in creating inclusive policies that are specific to our community next to creating a sense of ownership and accountability for these policies. The UT wants to be a depiction of the society around it and also sees a crucial role in positively influencing that very society – thinking globally and acting locally.

In doing so we acknowledge that academic institutions are culturally and structurally complex entities and that having access does not automatically equate to inclusion. Having an inclusive university is the ultimate goal to make sure we attract talent, create growth opportunities and achieve higher retention rates for our students and staff. Making the UT a place where people can see themselves working and studying for the long run and tapping into our lifelong learning, challenged-based educational ideals.

Diversity for us means the vibrant individuals we attract to and retain at our university as students and staff. We recognize that every individual is unique and that society and community life greatly benefit from recognizing, embracing, celebrating and engaging the unique blend of these differences regardless of beliefs, ethnic backgrounds, religion, language, race, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, socio-economic status, disabilities (physical and mental), nationality, culture, age and other characteristics or ideologies.

Inclusion then is the focus on making sure we create a community for all its members to come together to fully participate and perform at their best. A community where everybody is welcome and respected and feels a sense of belonging. A place where by valuing, recognizing and rewarding the different outlooks on life and bringing them together, we foster well-being and thrive as a university.

Equity is the guarantee of fair treatment, access, opportunity and advancement for all, whilst striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. The principle of equity acknowledges that there are

historically under-served and under-represented populations and that fairness regarding these unbalanced conditions is needed to assist equality in the provision of effective opportunities to all groups[1].
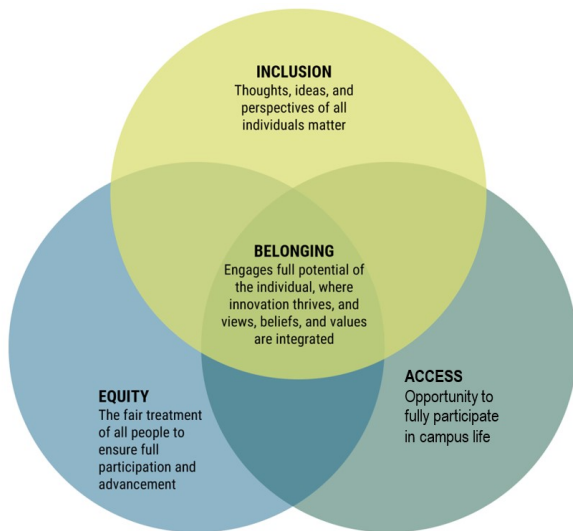

Figure 1: A sense of belonging is created for UT's diverse community by focusing on inclusion, access and equity

2.2   THE NEED FOR A PLAN OF ACTION ON D&I

Over the years UT has been working on improving gender diversity, supporting students and staff with international backgrounds and supporting students with disabilities and personal circumstances. During this time it also became clear that a broader approach was necessary to further the D&I efforts UT envisioned. This eventually resulted in May 2020 in the official request to the Executive Board by the Ambassadors Network and the D&I HR Policy Advisor to appoint a D&I Officer. The position of D&I Officer falls under General Affairs (GA) with the thought that the legacy of all that has definitely already been done at the UT can be better pushed forward and expanded further from this service department. This also allows for the UT to further comply with several legal frameworks and codes of conduct. Thus, this Plan of Action on D&I should be seen as a next steps document in the process to further our goal of being a fully inclusive university, along with and reinforcing the many policy frameworks and instruments that are already in place.

---

[1] One example when explaining **equity** is *The Equal Pay for Women* campaign, which is based in part on equity, as women have historically been under paid and underrepresented in executive roles. Many employers are beginning to reevaluate their compensation packages to increase the likelihood of comparable benefits and incentives for men and women. (Armstrong, 2019)

Our ambitions are as follows:

In general:
- Build a vibrant, inclusive climate that draws people together across differences in backgrounds, experiences and interests.
- Provide great and transparent connections between organizational goals by placing consistent emphasis on social safety and inclusion next to combatting all forms of discrimination in our work and learning environment.
- Expand the capability of the UT to successfully create and navigate a diverse and inclusive work and learning environment.
- Develop and provide instruments and tools that assist in reaching and retaining our target constituencies: students, faculty and staff.

Staff:
- Improve diversity of staff at all levels of the university.
- Expand on hiring processes that tap into talent in the area of Twente, national and other relevant talent pools.
- Promote expertise on D&I and inclusive leadership for all employees.
- Increase UT's ability to embrace change.

Students and student life (on campus):
- Improve diversity amongst our incoming student population.
- Promote study success in order to retain these students.
- Assess the impact of our programs, services, and learning environments in contributing to UT's mission with special relevance to D&I.
- Develop practical ways to encourage inclusive student activities, student life and student associations.

Education:
- Discover and develop opportunities for inclusive curriculum development.
- Improve the overall teaching and learning we offer by outreach practices, advise and in the classroom.

Research:
- Advocate for advancing the need for a consistent focus on D&I in all grant proposals and requests to promote and ensure inclusive research (NWO, Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, etc).

3. SHORT TERM: CREATE AWARENESS AND COMMON GROUND

A first step towards shaping an inclusive community is to create awareness, common ground and a safe environment. These are prerequisites for initiating the dialogue about D&I.

In order to create awareness, conversations are being held with as many people as possible within the various faculties, services, interconnected units, student union, university council, student associations, study associations and education officers (as discussed in UC-OW on 13-04-2021). The importance of this step is to sensitize our community to the fact that not everyone comes to the university under the same circumstances and that individuals face various challenges based on their specific backgrounds. The main aim is to make everyone understand the importance and urgency of incorporating inclusion into their work. We want to change the narrative from "D&I is something that has to be done so we are doing it" to "D&I is crucial to our success as the University of Twente". It is imperative for all members of the UT community to feel a strong sense of commitment to making our ambitions of an inclusive university work. Only then can we truly gain results and become the UT we want to be.

In this chapter we present the work the D&I Officer has been and is engaged in since the start of her contract (October 2020). The following aspects are all part of the D&I Officer's engagement and will be further worked out in the coming year. All are relevant and currently ongoing also in her working together with the SEG Inclusion. They are presented in no particular order of priority.

- to really unearth challenges faced by some of our more marginalized groups;

- creating collaborations with our internal stakeholders;

- creating an overview of the status quo of our current D&I policies;

- offering unconscious bias training in collaboration with HR and CELT;

- making a start with a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) tool;

- working on UT's anti-discrimination statement;

- working on an inclusive Marketing and Communication strategy;

- working out the best way to create an information sharing platform.

3.1 DIALOGUES AND ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS BY SHAPING EXPERT GROUP (SEG) INCLUSION

First we need to understand where the biggest obstacles are that need to be resolved in order to create an inclusive university. Figuring these out allows us to identify the "low hanging fruit". This will enable us to work on issues directly and swiftly that create more visibility for D&I issues. The UT is a diverse environment with many dimensions. Through in-depth conversations and by working together closely with the Shaping Expert Group (SEG) Inclusion, 6 themes so far have been decided upon. We believe that immediate action on these themes needs to be taken for the UT to be seen to work towards a more inclusive community.

Figure 2: SEG Inclusion focus themes

Recognizing their significance in creating a diverse and inclusive UT, we have decided to first focus on the six themes as presented in figure 2: Internationals; Disability; First Generation Students; Ethnicity, Race & Religion; Gender (Identity); Sexual Orientation. As of yet, there are no fully established support systems around these themes at the UT. The organizational support that already has been created around the themes of Disability, Gender (Identity) and Sexual Orientation are not yet as well established as previously thought and are in need of some new perspectives.

As said before, we first need to establish what the obstacles are and the impediments that stand in the way. Also we need to identify the causes that prevent people from feeling welcome and at home. Furthermore we need to explore the opportunities that people may already see for improving the organizational culture, institutions and infrastructures at the UT.

In order to figure this out, we have decided to start dialogues with the different target groups under these six themes (see Figure 3). The (ongoing) dialogues are conversations with people who are directly involved in one of the themes. This means that not only students or employees belonging to the target groups take part, but also staff members who arrange matters for these minorities. The idea is that these round tables dialogues will allow for a clearer understanding of the obstacles faced and can contribute to come up with potential solutions. The problems, their root and scale will be discussed and analyzed in the SEG Inclusion. We expect to be able to identify a trend for common subjects and thus be in a better position to propose possible solutions for each focus theme by way of a specific articulation of actions for the UT to undertake.

These dialogues take place in different ways, depending on the situation and the appropriateness of the method chosen. This may vary from having a round table discussion with several people to having one-on-one conversations on some themes. Each theme asks for a different approach depending for example on the availability of staff in place arranging things. This is not yet the case for all themes.

Target group	Internationals	Disability	First generation	Ethnicity, Race & Religion	Gender	Sexual orientation
Students						
Employees						
Staff that arranges things for students			X	X		
Staff that arranges things for employees	X		X	X		
Dutch students/employees						

3.1.1 Type your tekst here

Type your tekst here

Define Action Plan (per theme)

Figure 3: SEG Inclusion Plan of Approach in talking to people belonging to various theme groups

3.2 FIRST IMPRESSIONS (WORK IN PROGRESS)

a. International perspectives

Over the years the UT has officially become an international university. The implications that this brings with it are ample. Much has already been put in place to make sure we live up to the standards of an internationally recognized institution. However, in reality and on the ground it is clear there are still issues that need to be resolved in order to be fully inclusive to both the international faculty, staff and students as well as for the Dutch faculty, staff and students that are now confronted with being a part of an international community in a Dutch setting. Issues of inclusive language being spoken, work groups being formed, housing opportunities, internship opportunities etc. are at the heart of many frustrations faced and feelings of exclusion not allowing for many internationals to be their authentic selves.

The UT attracts a large volume of international staff and students. This is a diverse group. A large effort has been put into place by the UT to support this stream of international newcomers. We know by (personal) experience and data from surveys and research that international staff and students[2][1] have different experiences from their Dutch peers.

b. Disability

These include both students and employees with a physical, sensory, intellectual or mental impairment (mobility, hearing problems, vision impairment, chronic fatigue, ADHD, dyslexia, autism, depression, etc.). As a university we score relatively high when it comes to physical accessibility for those that live with any type of a disability. However, when looking at the realities on the ground, it becomes clear that although we offer a lot, more needs to be done to be truly an inclusive community. At the moment our way of working seems very focused on a reactive way of dealing with those that join us with special needs. However, we need to be able to foster an anticipatory community, which is clearly structured for those that need extra attention and which is easily accessible. This is because it is a prerequisite that people at all levels of the community are aware of what needs to be provided for this group of people.

c. First Generation

Here we distinguish students and staff.

Students: at present the focus is mainly on Dutch first generation students and the (potential) challenges they are facing in being a part of our university community. Research shows that specifically first-generation students from a lower socio-economic background face difficulties, so we would like to focus on them first.

Staff: the imposter syndrome for first generation staff means that many do not fully understand how to go after their goals and how to get a foot in the door for certain opportunities. Often the feeling of not being good enough lurks under the surface.

---

2 [1] Annual International Student Survey (AISS) **2019**; recently UT Student wellbeing during Covid19, 26 October 2020, Ir. Annet de Kiewit PDEng

d. **Ethnicity, Race & Religion** – Work on this theme is ongoing in the SEG Inclusion
e. **Gender Identity** – Work on this theme is ongoing in the SEG Inclusion
f. **Sexual Orientation** – Work on this theme is ongoing in the SEG Inclusion
g. **Anti-Discrimination** – although not lifted out as one of the six themes, this is a cross-cutting issue of paramount importance. The reality is simply that members belonging to any of these communities may face discrimination. We need to understand what micro and macro aggressions happen at the UT and how this manifests itself. We need to ensure that we come up with clear solutions on how to tackle realities of day-to-day discrimination.

3.3   ENGAGE WITH INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS AND CREATE COLLABORATION

Also important is creating partnerships whilst supporting and understanding the workings of all the various stakeholders at the university. The UT has set up a House of Integrity that upholds best practices on our codes of conduct and codes of ethics. The House of Integrity is a major achievement and our D&I work needs to fully merge with all that has already been set up here. The D&I Officer also intends to work closely with the SEG Individuals & Teams in their efforts to create voice and visibility for all and on making sure people are recognized and rewarded for their work.

The D&I officer has further become an active member of the Ambassadors Network (leading the Incentive Fund winners), Think with Pr!de, Female Faculty Network (FFNT), Supportive Staff Female Network (OBP-VN) and Student World Associations UNITE. The main reason for engaging is an attempt to fully grasp what is happening at various levels of the university. From here it is imperative to create a clear and shared vision on D&I for the university that can resonate with all members of our community. This is an ongoing process that has started by presentations given by the D&I Officer to various groups and needs to continue in order to reach as wide an audience as possible. Aiming to unearth barriers within the UT that conceal the "low hanging fruit" which we could then immediately start working on.

3.4   OFFERING TRAININGS FOR STUDENTS AND STAFF

Another aspect of sensitization is to start offering unconscious bias training for both students and staff in collaboration with HR and CELT. Several programs are already being offered. What do these look like and how do we rework them to cater to our specific target groups. Furthermore, offering anti-discrimination workshops to students is in the works. We are considering also to potentially offer something similar to staff members. Working together with the Incentive Fund and articulating what D&I issues are at play within the university are both good ways to see how we can connect and offer trainings to students and staff as well.

3.5   STATUS QUO OF CURRENT POLICIES

The D&I officer is working on understanding and creating an overview of existing policies that support D&I for students and staff. As mentioned before, the history of D&I work at the UT is vast, so it is important to understand how clear these structures are for the community, how accessible they are when one needs support and how much they are actually being utilized. Through this appreciative inquiry, we then need to analyse how useful these existing structures actually are, how we can build on them to cater to our ever expanding community and what policies still need to be added.

3.6 MAKE A START WITH LEARNING, MONITORING & EVALUATION

It is further extremely important to start a monitoring, evaluation and learning cycle. We need to understand where we stand today and what outcomes we want to achieve in the next couple of years. Figuring out what we are allowed to measure (under Dutch AVG privacy laws), how we store this information and how we can use it in proactively working on positive inclusive change measures, is a challenge. We are aiming that by collaborating with the BI studio, BMS research group and with the start of soft audits by our internal auditors, we can start shedding some much needed light on D&I issues and realities within the UT. This will then allow us to set clear goals of what we want to achieve in the coming years and clear benchmarks that we want to work towards.

3.7 DRAWING UP A COMMUNICATION PLAN TOGETHER WITH M&C

The department of Marketing and Communication (M&C) plays an essential role in creating an inclusive UT. It is essential to create a D&I communication plan for the next year, where we clearly highlight days for raising awareness and celebrating diversity. We will further work together to make sure that the messaging of important UT events (New Year's Breakfast, Open Days Bachelors/Masters, Kick-In, Faculty Borrel/Informal Meeting) is inclusive. Also that we all remain aware of the need to use inclusive language and what the consequences are when we do not. Further we want to look into opportunities to celebrate diversity in our community. This can be done by highlighting projects that have a D&I focus and putting diverse individuals in the picture that are willing to share their academic success stories. In short, we work actively on creating voice and visibility for those that do not necessarily get these.

Lastly, we need to work together on making sure new inclusive language is being developed that is unique to the UT and its members. This will help us in fostering changes and highlighting a safe UT environment.

3.8 SHARE INFORMATION - WEBSITE AS DIGITAL PLATFORM

Last but not least, it is necessary that we have a clear and structured information sharing platform. Ideally a well-structured D&I UTwente website will be created to inform our community of what is happening at the UT, where resources can easily be accessed, suggestions can be made and events pertaining to D&I are highlighted. Furthermore, creating (online) safe spaces where relevant D&I dialogues on various topics will be started. This might possibly be in the form of an online UT YouTube show, where we delve into difficult topics and start conversations. Also the idea of a "D&I Corner" in the UToday is under discussion, where inspirational stories are shared on a bi-weekly basis. These stories discuss challenges faced, possible solutions and outcomes next to how this has/can strengthen UT's inclusive community.

4. MID-TERM: COMMITMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

In the midterm, it is a necessary and logical next step to ensure that D&I as a cross cutting issue is on everybody's agenda and is part and parcel of all the work that is being undertaken at the UT. This implies that D&I needs to structurally connect with all relevant projects that are currently under way and with potential projects coming up. Connections need not only to be made within the UT, but also on regional, national and international levels (Figure 4).
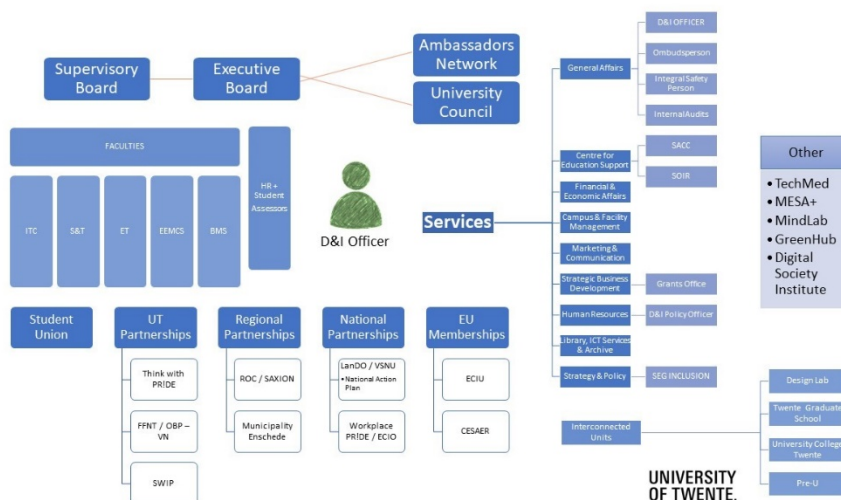

Figure 4: D&I Officer connecting within UT structure

4.1 STRUCTURAL CONNECTIONS WITHIN UT

From the start it has been recognized that a standalone D&I Officer cannot set up the structures necessary for all D&I aspects. The D&I plan (spring 2019) includes a budget for a D&I Policy Advisor within the HR department (appointment by June 2021). Many D&I policy aspects are taken care of within HR and thus actively collaborating with the HR D&I policy advisor to structurally implement the HR Policy Plan is necessary (May, 2021). Furthermore commitments have been made and discussions are being had within every faculty and service department to have a contact person for D&I. This person advises and works together with the D&I Officer on specific issues, on possible solutions to these issues, looking at best practices and helping to create tailor made solutions (as discussed in UCB 06-04-2021, CvB-D 14-04-2021). The ambition is for every faculty to create its D&I plan in order to work and promote inclusive research and learning. In order to get a D&I work group started within every faculty, the D&I Officer has been having conversations with student assessors (faculty contact persons who bring in a student perspective), HR faculty advisors (staff perspective) and the Faculty Boards. As for now, it seems strongly advisable to also have an academic staff member within each faculty, that could give attention to D&I aspects in research and education. This would be a great start to the work group and enable us to create tailor made solutions per faculty. Lastly, work has been started with the Integral Safety Manager to look into how social safety standards can be upheld.

4.2   REGIONAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS

On a regional level the D&I Officer is strengthening the already existing strategic alliances with the Municipality of Enschede, who has committed itself to creating the most inclusive study region of The Netherlands. We are further strengthening such alliances with the other educational institutions Saxion and ROC Twente to see how we can offer an inclusive learning environment for all our students, next to retaining and stimulating the progressive flow of students from one institution to the other. As the three educational institutions in the East of the Netherlands, we aim to further develop our own Declaration of Twente (re. Declaration of Amsterdam) that clearly states our commitment to offering inclusive academic excellence. The UT is also in touch with other initiatives, such as the Future of Twente, WTO Twente Initiative and Keeping Talent in Twente, and are in the process of finding out how best to connect with them from a UT perspective.

On a national level the D&I Officer is actively engaged with the National Platform for D&I (LanDO) through the National Action Plan (OCW). This platform allows us to understand what is happening within other universities in the Netherlands and to learn from their best practices whilst collectively setting a D&I university standard for the Dutch context. Also, we have become members of Workplace Pr!de to further help develop UT's inclusivity for the LGBTQI+ community. We, together with the Diversity Coordinator (CES, SACC), are also in talks with the ECIO (Expert Centre Inclusive Education) on furthering our efforts for inclusive education and student well-being for those with a disability or other special circumstances.
Lastly, on an international level our current scope is that of the EU as we are part of the ECIU (European universities) but also as a member of CESAER. These partnerships allow for active information sharing between the universities across Europe and to learn from best practices. Also a Gender Equality Plan will need to be produced by all universities that want to be able to tap into the Horizon Europe funding opportunities. This is a planned 7-year European Union scientific research initiative to raise EU science spending levels by 50% over the years 2021-2027. The need for a Gender Equality Plan shows the commitment the European Commission has given to diverse and inclusive research from a gender perspective. Furthermore, a toolkit is being developed for all the ECIU universities to make sure we are in alignment with the inclusive education we want to offer. From a Dutch perspective this is done with the National Action Plan (OCW) as a benchmark that allows us to further navigate our mid and long term goals and ambitions on a European scale.

4.3   STRENGTHENING THE UT IDENTITY

Another important aspect we have started working on is the creation of a clear UT Identity that moves us forward and allows for a structured approach as to how and why we deal with issues that arise along the way. As part of this we are working with the M&C team in order to understand how we use and create inclusive language and define how we communicate with the UT community to advance an inclusive learning environment. This is being done through ongoing interviews with Joost Steppé (Director M&C) and Bertyl Lankhaar (Spokesperson Executive Board), where we are interviewing various stakeholders to understand their views. Our aim is again to strengthen and contribute to the inclusive culture we want to create.

5. LONG TERM GOALS TO ESTABLISH AN INCLUSIVE UT COMMUNITY

For the long term, we need to bring about a shift in UT's organizational culture. A shift that gives every student, staff and faculty member a strong sense of ownership and pride over the fundamental cornerstones that D&I provides for life at the UT. Questions arise such as:

- How do we become a leading university in matters of D&I?
- How do we create accountability for the structural implementation of D&I into everything we do as a UT community and as an individual?
- How do we exemplify that the UT is innovative and courageous in challenging the status quo and that we are creating a learning environment where we can safely challenge our own thinking and that of others based on mutual respect?

Important is to set specific and measurable goals that need to be reached. What do we want to achieve as a university? For instance: the female professor targets that we as UT have set for ourselves by 2025 is 25% and ideally by 2030 we can get this to 30% to make sure a shift is really seen. On matters pertaining to the LGBTQI+, we now have a benchmark to work with as provided by Workplace Pr!de. On becoming an inclusive educational institution for those with a disability, we will be creating standards based on the UN Declaration of Intent that will be signed later this year. Lastly, based on the National Action Plan (OCW), signed by all Dutch universities including the UT (September 2020), we can clearly and structurally work at being a

part of the Dutch ambitions for promoting D&I within higher education. We need to further consider how we can add our wisdom and values, and how to translate the overall goals to our university such as:

- assessment of research proposals and accreditations;
- better and broader monitoring of diversity in education and research, including social security and inclusion;
- establish an award system to make policy and funding diverse and inclusive;
- pool and support institutions' diversity plans so that more cooperation can take place;
- establish a national knowledge center for diversity and inclusion. This knowledge center will develop, pool and share knowledge and expertise.

All along, it remains of paramount importance for the UT to keep on reflecting and thinking about what we want as an institution. For instance: when do we decide that we are successful in working in an inclusive manner? This is definitely an important discussion point with SU. And also what other topics can we think of in the long term to influence our community to be more diverse and inclusive?

5.1   STRATEGIC GOALS

In order to achieve this, it is clear that we need to formulate strategic goals that can guide the universities programming across all spheres of UT life. These goals can then be addressed and translated into policies, guidelines and actions can be laid down in an up-to-date annual plan. This will also make clear who we engage with outside of the UT. See also section 4.5.

5.2   THE D&I OFFICER AS CHANGE AGENT

In order to achieve long term ownership within the UT it is essential to embed D&I in all aspects of the university. The D&I Officer's main focus is on facilitating/ guiding/ coordinating/ leading the process of incorporating D&I at all levels of the UT community. To make sure we are all interweaving D&I into our everyday work and life, the formation of work groups is essential within each faculty (being composed of at least a student assessor, HR advisor and a faculty member) and within the various services. Ideally the D&I officer will become redundant over time as we witness how D&I becomes part and parcel of the workings of UT life at all levels and in all dimensions.

5.3   ROLE MODELS / MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Furthermore, fostering and developing a strong role model/mentorship program through showcasing alternative pathways is part of celebrating diversity and creating the voice and visibility we want for our members. We want to recognize and reward those that have, in spite of all barriers and challenges encountered, managed to get to where they are today. We could look at building on mentorship programs that are currently being offered to our female academic staff and by exploring how best we actively can create role-models in our community. This work is ongoing and will need to develop and evolve as we roll it out.

5.4   STRIVE FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH (PROPOSALS)

Working together with internal stakeholders (S&P, SBD, CELT, platform PIA, Grants office, faculties, UCOW etc.), is crucial to promoting inclusion at the UT. With many research grant providers (NWO, Erasmus +, Horizon Europe) D&I has become part and parcel of grant giving: a substantial focus on D&I in grant proposals is being demanded. It is clear that in the past often female and other diverse researchers were overlooked and did not get the relevant recognition they deserved. This has led to these measures. We also see this clearly reflected in the National Action Plan (OCW) stating the need for more focus on D&I in research. The UCOW further suggested we insert the D&I theme firmly into the University Teaching Qualifications (UTQ/BKO in Dutch) requirements for our new teaching staff members. This is also in line with another of the ambitions of the Dutch National Action Plan (OCW). The Ambassador's Network is also passionate about how we go about talent management and how we explicitly coach staff in building diverse and inclusive networks. This is further in line with the work outlined in the HR Policy (May 2021). Lastly, with our connection to Cesaer we can work together with other EU universities to learn from each other: share information and best practice in the areas of higher education, research, innovation and university governance A lot of gains are to be had here and will allow us to get D&I structurally placed within all levels of education and research at the UT.

5.5   MONITORING, EVALUATION AND LEARNING (MEL)

Lastly, setting up an adequate and strong Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning cycle is essential to keeping track of where we come from, where we have reached and where we want to go. An important part of the MEL cycle is to provide structures to

monitor and evaluate the progression of D&I policies and activities for the community as a whole and specifically per faculty and amongst the services. This will allow for more structured, tailor-made solutions that will justify why we are focusing on certain areas over others in the various departments (not talking about KPIs and rather focusing on best practices as discussed in CvB-D on 14-04-2021).

Working together in external networks and with internal stakeholders, understanding what is allowed to be asked under the Dutch privacy laws (AVG) and also indicating the need for volunteering information for the betterment of our community from UT-members is important. It is necessary to learn from best practices at other universities and to see how we can implement these at the UT. Appendix II shows an example of information sharing of best practices by University College Dublin, where over the past 6 years they have worked on a whole-institutional approach to inclusion. Their initiative brings together the entire university community to work together to achieve their goal of becoming a fully inclusive, diverse institution. In doing so a questionnaire was developed that they send out to students and staff annually (see appendix II). Creating such questionnaires and strong toolkits that enable us to further foster and anchor the rich diverse community at the UT where everyone is welcome is important. Finally, working together nationally and internationally with other universities is important to make sure that we are working with the same indicators (both quantitative and qualitative) and that we are indeed progressing.

6. IN CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we recognize that Diversity & Inclusion are a lifelong learning process and that this Plan of Action 2020-2022 is a living document. We envisage that this will form the basis for an UpToDate Annual Plan to ensure that we are in tune with the needs of UT's community at large. We share a joint responsibility to continue to actively promote, foster and persistently work towards building an inclusive organizational culture at the UT. We can only do this if we recognize that this is a constant work in progress. We have a collective responsibility for reflecting on, examining and changing our intrinsic beliefs and practices in order to achieve the inclusive community that does justice to the People First University we strive to be.

7. APPENDICES

7.1   APPENDIX I – SHORT TERM ACTION POINTS 2020 – 2022

Action	Why	Timeline
Create Safe Spaces	Work on creating safe spaces for dialogue on difficult topics of diversity and inclusion. Currently perhaps through an online webseries	ongoing
HR D&I Policy Advisor	The need for an HR staff member working directly on D&I is needed	May 2021
Co-optation	Support re-strategizing the housing culture at the UT	Draft Plan May 2021
Erasmus + program	Working together with VSNU D&I workgroup for the EU subsidy program	ongoing
Wellness Surveys Students/Staff	Bigger focus on D&I in the questioning	ongoing
Workplace PR!DE	implement barometer for providing safe inclusive work environment for members of the LGBTQI community	May/June 2021
Incentive Fund	New cohort of Incentive Fund for Ambassadors Network – really understanding Bottom-up D&I issues and working on solutions	June 2021
UT Anti-discrimination statement	We do not have one and is important to clearly set up a framework within which we allow our community to grow and develop themselves in an inclusive way, whilst fostering a sense of belonging for all	June 2021 (or together with the launch of the inclusive statue that will be revealed opposite the Rector Magnificus wall)
Round Table Discussions SEG Inclusion	Understanding issues faced by International community,	July 2021 round tables to be concluded and

Action	Why	Timeline
	Disability (mental, physical) community, First Generation students and staff, Ethnicity/Race/Religion, Gender Identity, LGBTQI+	plan of action on various topics to be presented
2nd round Hypatia Chair	LNVH Female Professor Target of 25% for the UT, Lead HR D&I Policy advisor, supported by D&I Officer	July 2021
Kick-In Inclusive Programming	Support inclusive programming for the Kick-In held for new students in September	August 2021
Diversity & Inclusion Week	Full week planned after UT Sustainability Week, to highlight and celebrate all matters of D&I at the UT	October 2021
UN Declaration of Intent for Inclusive Learning for students with a disability	Signing of ECIO declaration (Saxion signed 30/03/2021), but making sure together with Carla Bruynel that we as an institution are adhering to the requirements before we sign	October 2021
First ALL Gender Toilet on UT Campus	Opening of the first official ALL Gender toilet on the UT campus during the Coming Out Week	October 2021
Sexual Safety	Roll out a sexual safety campaign for the UT against sexual violence	
D&I webportal	Launch the D&I webportal	October 2021
UT D&I YouTube channel	Work out a fun interactive show that tackles tough conversations	October 2021
Horizon Europe Gender Equality Plan	Requirement by Horizon Europe. Also important in creating strategy to attract / retain more female talent by 2025 as based on figures presented to the LNVH – in collaboration with the Grants office	November 2021
UT woordvoeringslijn gesprekken	Talks with Joost and Bertyl	ongoing
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy + guidelines for its implementation (see example)	Ideally this will be done with HR D&I Policy advisor	ongoing
Marketing & Communication Plan - Linda Pasqual	- Critically look at all the days that are celebrated within the UT and how to make them more inclusive (Kick-In, Open days, New year's breakfast, Christmas, Sinterklaas, etc) offer new moments to celebrate (Chinese New Year, Ramadan, Day for Women and	November 2021

Action	Why	Timeline
	Girls in Science, Transgender Rights Day, etc)	
	- Communication strategy for the UT as a whole	January 2022
Diversity & Inclusion Awards	Recognizing and Rewarding members at the UT for their work to advance D&I in their fields of work. (this is done at other universities like UU, UvA, ULeiden) Perhaps done during Diversity Week in October?	ongoing / Diversity Week October/ embed this in an existing Awards program

7.2   APPENDIX III – CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS PLAN OF ACTION

- UC-OW
- CvB-D
- UCB
- Members Shaping Expert Group Inclusion
- Members Ambassador's Network
- Susanne Wichman (GA) – Secretary General
- Renate van Luijk (SP) – Senior Policy Advisor
- Carla Bruynel (CES/SACC) – Diversity Coordinator – Disability Advisory Services
- Fred de Vries (SP) – Head of Cluster International Affairs
- Nicole Torka – Support Staff / lead on House of Integrity
- Lucelle Dankbaar (SACC) – Student Counsellor
- Mette Strubbe (HR) – Policy Advisor HR: Recruitment & Internationalization
- Annemiek Baars (HR) – Manager HR Policy
- Linda Pasqual-van der Landen (MC) – Communication Advisor
- Lotte Sträter (MC) – Communication Officer
- Arnold Enklaar (BMS) – Senior Research Associate
- Bregje Walraven (SU) – Student Union portfolio holder communications, internationalization and student well-being