Incremental and Transformational Change over the Past Ten Years

While most of the growth driven by the Disability Equality Index has unfolded incrementally over the past decade, there have been bursts of transformational change in high leverage practice areas like disability-focused Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), accessibility requirements, recruiting, accommodations, and sourcing from disability-owned businesses.

Multimarket Disability Self Identification Rate* Map

Across the world, the workforce is seeing an influx of talent with disabilities, as evidenced by the percentage of new hires who are self-identifying their disability status during onboarding.

Multimarket Aggregate: Total Employees: 2%; New Hires: 3.6%

Among the markets new to the Disability Equality Index, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is not a predictor of success.

- Brazil had the highest percentage of non-U.S. top scorers (82%), followed by Canada (73%) and the UK (70%).

Achieving a top score in the U.S. does not guarantee similar results in the benchmark's new markets.

- Although many companies adopt a global approach to developing a disability strategy, some industries are more localized and may be influenced by local regulations and customs.

In-Country ERG + In-Country Executive Ally Yields Companies that are More Likely to Commit to Digital Accessibility, Inclusive Interviewing, and Candidate Accommodations.

- 79% are top scorers.
- 85% have made a commitment to ensuring that individuals with disabilities can access digital content.
- 63% have a requirement in place that ensures that digital products are accessible.
- 62% ask during the interview process if candidate needs accommodations.

View the 2024 Disability Equality Index Report here.
Improving disability inclusion in workplaces worldwide

• The Disability Equality Index has evolved into a tool for companies seeking to identify disparities in their workplace culture, recruitment, and infrastructure (buildings and facilities, technology, etc.). The next decade of the Disability Equality Index will globalize the benchmark, questions, scoring, methodology, and metrics for universal use to ensure that companies around the world can mitigate risk and achieve long term value.

Supporting companies with disability reporting in sustainability disclosures

• The internationalization of the Disability Equality Index coincides with the first major legislative mandate to integrate disability into accountability standards designed to assess business’ environmental and social impact. As global regulators recognize and codify disability as a dimension of sustainable business performance, the Disability Equality Index is poised to help expedite the reporting process for multinational companies that must now substantiate their inclusion efforts for all stakeholders. Regional legislation such as the Accessible Canada Act and the European Accessibility Act are outlining clear compliance mandates that companies operating in certain jurisdictions must be prepared to follow.

Ensuring organizational resilience in an evolving market landscape

• Disability inclusion is widely recognized as a sustainability matter. Sixty five percent (65%) of Global Fortune 500 companies already report about disability in the workforce. Disability inclusion is material imperative for companies seeking to develop sustainable workforces amidst demographic change, aging populations, and global migration. The pending enforcement of legislation like the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) will make disability reporting a material issue for more than 50,000 employers upon its full implementation.

Take Action to Accelerate Disability Inclusion

1 Encourage Employee Self Identification
   Implement a confidential and voluntary process for employees to self-identify as individuals with disabilities, enabling accurate tracking and improved workforce support.

2 Leverage Disability-Focused Employee Resource Groups
   Utilize the cross-functional expertise and lived experiences of employee resource groups to gain valuable insights and enhance inclusivity strategies.

3 Conduct Internal & External Accessibility Audits
   Audit for compliance under World Wide Web Consortium’s Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1 AA (W3C WCAG 2.2 AA) to guarantee that digital content is accessible to all users.

4 Modernize Corporate Governance
   Revise corporate governance charters to include prospective directors with disabilities in the definition of board diversity as most already do with gender, race, and ethnicity.

5 Accelerate Expenditure with Disability-Owned Businesses
   Include disability in supplier diversity/inclusive procurement efforts.