

DIVERSITY POLICY TOOLKIT

TOWARDS A DIVERSE & INCLUSIVE VU



How do you make your faculty more future-proof and resilient in terms of diversity and inclusion?

This document offers an overview of possible interventions, organized in three (interrelated) themes: (1) diversity among staff and students (in numbers), (2) inclusion of staff and students (equal opportunities and belonging), (3) diversity and inclusion of our primary processes (research and education).

Many steps have been taken already and there is no one-size-fits-all approach. Every situation is different. Organisational culture differs, as do educational and research practices. Furthermore, the present and aspired diversity and inclusion among staff (WP and OBP) and students is likely to differ. This toolkit is meant as a source of inspiration that can be used and tailored to specific situations.

Themes

Diversity among staff and students

- How diverse is the **staff (WP & OBP) and student population** of the faculty, including decision-making bodies?
- On **what dimensions** is more diversity desirable? (Ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, able-bodiedness, class background, and intersections of these)
- How inclusive are the **recruitment processes** for staff & students?

Inclusion of staff and students

- Do all staff members and students...
- ... have **equal opportunities** (study success, subsidies, promotion)?
 - ... experience the environment as **safe and inclusive**?
 - ... experience a sense of **belonging**?
 - How does the environment allow for, invite, and utilize non-mainstream, **marginalized views**, perspectives, opinions and styles?
 - Is everybody **aware** of mechanisms of exclusion, privilege and the power of social and academic norms? (E.g. what constitutes 'excellence', 'talent', 'leadership'?)

Diverse and inclusive research and education

Research

- How do research projects make use of and contribute to **diverse and inclusive knowledge**? Or do they only strengthen dominant scientific ideas and existing academic and societal hierarchies?

Education

- How does our education allow students to develop into **all-round, diversity-sensitive professionals**, who know the strength of diversity and inclusion, and know how to tap into this potential? (Diversity in people, knowledge, methods, perspectives, experiences, communication- and learning-styles)

Possible interventions

Diversity among staff (WP & OBP)

Inclusive recruitment & selection processes:

- Make processes open and transparent
- Check for inclusive language (language tool)
- Stimulate minorities to apply
- Expand reach by using multiple channels
- Compose diverse selection committee
- Train recruiters and selection committee (e.g. cultural awareness, implicit bias)
- Reduce bias in reviewing process, remove non-competency-based markers
- Use an inclusive approach for interviews (competency-based; fixed question list)
- Evaluate reasons for exit (exit-interview)
- Set and monitor targets for staff diversity

Diversity among students

- Make promotion texts inclusive
- Use multiple communication channels, focus on schools with underprivileged pupils
- Recruit pupils of underprivileged groups for Pre-University College and Better Prepared programs
- (When selecting:) use inclusive procedures
- Reconsider barriers for entry, such as language tests and motivation letters
- Preserve and facilitate access for HBO and refugee students
- Set and evaluate targets for student diversity

Inclusion of staff (WP & OBP)

- Set and monitor targets for diversity in higher, decision-making functions
- Make promotion procedures transparent
- Design inclusive tenure track policies
- Strengthen people-oriented, inclusive leadership (offer and promote trainings)
- Implement and use affirmative action for certain positions and groups (e.g. Fenna Diemer Lindeboom, NWO Aspasia)

Inclusion of students

- Offer small-scale, activating education
- Have role models for all students
- Use multiple teaching strategies
- Encourage underprivileged students to take on specific/leadership roles (studentassistant, etc)
- Offer financial or ECTS compensation for extracurricular activities
- Encourage and help student organisations to become more inclusive

- Respond to particular needs: jobs, family care (mantelzorg), disabilities, health problems
- Ensure accessibility of buildings and events for all
- Make extracurricular gatherings more inclusive (drinks, food, accessibility location, audio, etc.)
- Set up and promote specific buddy, mentor, coaching programs
- Make support system more visible (study advisors, confidential counsellors, psychologists)
- Provide serious, safe and effective follow-up on complaints
- Enhance awareness of inclusion and exclusion for all staff & students (e.g. implicit bias training)
- Use inclusive language and images in internal and external VU communication
- Explicitly denounce discrimination and exclusion
- Invite and include the expression of diverging opinions and perspectives

Diverse & inclusive research

- Compose diverse research teams
- Use non-mainstream methods & perspectives
- Attend to underprivileged and under-researched groups: respondents, target groups, stakeholders, experts, panels, audience
- Create awareness of power dynamics in science/academia, and in the development and use of knowledge (funding, valorization)
- Evaluate diversity in and inclusiveness of research projects

Diverse & inclusive education

- Compose diverse teacher population
- Teach about Diversity & Inclusion in relation to discipline and academic skills
- Offer diversity in perspectives, authors, teaching strategies (curriculum scans)
- Use participatory education
- Offer Mixed Classroom/ABM education
- Train teachers (e.g. Mixed Classroom)
- Let students evaluate the diversity in and inclusiveness of courses