LASTING LEADERSHIP

GUIDE TO...

EQUALITIES

4

Sustainable leadership in non-profit organisations

THE LASTING DIFFERENCE

Sustaining nonprofit organisations, leaders & impact

OTHER GUIDES IN THIS SERIES:

There are four key capabilities of sustainable leadership. Each has its own Lasting Leadership guide.

LASTING LEADERSHIP GUIDE TO... LATERAL LEADERSHIP — Sustainable leadership in non-profit organisations

LASTING LEADERSHIP GUIDE TO... SUCCESSION PLANNING AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT — Sustainable leadership in non-profit organisations

LASTING LEADERSHIP GUIDE TO... SUSTAINING ENERGY, FOCUS AND SELF-CARE — Sustainable leadership in non-profit organisations

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CONTENTS

FIVE WORD STRESSECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Value diversity, address structural barriers.

50 WORD EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Addressing inequalities requires focused attention and sustained action if leadership in the sector is to be truly accessible to all. We must acknowledge and address the structural barriers that exist within organisations that inhibit leadership diversity. In a sector committed to social justice, diversity and inclusion are fundamental to success.

FOREWORD

Graeme Reekie, Director,
The Lasting Difference

There is no organisational sustainability without sustainable leadership.

During 2019 we undertook research to better understand sustainable leadership. This included a global literature review; focus groups with over 70 non-profit leaders; learning sets; workshops; and conference inputs.

We launched the Lasting Leadership guide in 2020. This new, updated suite of guides builds on recent learning to help organisational leaders explore, assess and prioritise sustainable leadership. We hope this guide contributes to further conversations about this vital but little-understood topic.

THANK YOU

To everyone who has commissioned or contributed to our focus groups, workshops and action learning programmes since 2019.

With particular thanks to all those who have taken part in our Lasting Leadership action learning and e-learning programmes and contributed the quotes used throughout this guide. Particular thanks to:

- **Cathy Magee**, Dyslexia Scotland
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- **Neil Bird**
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- **Pam Hunter**, SAY Women
- **Suzanne Munday**, MECOPP
- **Thomas Parker**, Sense Scotland
- **Umar Ansari**, One Parent Families Scotland

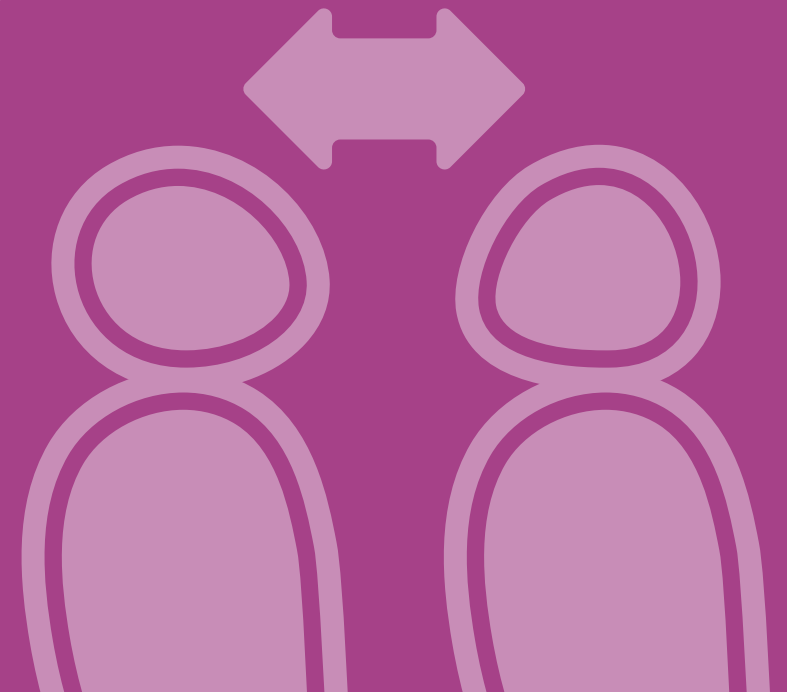# PART ONE:
BACKGROUND AND CHALLENGES

BACKGROUND

There is a wealth of information on leadership styles, models and approaches – but far less exists on the topic of leadership *sustainability*.

Sustainable leadership, like organisational sustainability, is challenging and complex. It requires organisations and their leaders to respond to the technical and adaptive[1] challenges of complex, evolving environments. Complexity requires leaders to be comfortable with uncertainty, open to challenging the status quo and facilitating leadership across their organisations. These ideas are easy to grasp but at an organisational level they are harder to translate. And at an individual level, they are extremely challenging. They contradict the ways we have been brought up to think about organisation, control and influence – assumptions that run very deep in our society and organisational systems. This can be anxiety-provoking for everyone involved: it takes trust to promote ownership, participation, agency and self-direction.

Our approach to sustainable leadership is therefore rooted in systems thinking. It is informed by complexity theory, design thinking and sustainability principles from *The Lasting Difference* toolkit, which defines sustainability as *the capacity to make a lasting difference.*[2]

Sustainable leadership requires:

- **PROVIDING COORDINATION, NOT CONTROL**
- **GIVING INFORMATION, NOT INSTRUCTION**
- **OFFERING CHALLENGES, NOT CERTAINTY**
- **SEEKING COMMITMENT, NOT CONFORMITY**

1   The Practice of Adaptive Leadership, Ronald Heifetz
2   The Lasting Difference: tools for organisational sustainability, www.thelastingdifference.com

DEFINITION:

We define sustainable leadership as:

DEVELOPING CAPACITY TO ENABLE LEADERS TO EMERGE, EVOLVE AND EXCEL

CHALLENGES AND PARADOXES

Our *Lasting Difference* research and consultancy with hundreds of organisations since 2013 reveals common sustainable leadership challenges, paradoxes and principles.

THE TIME CHALLENGE

Time is our most precious resource, but we don't protect or use it well

THE LEADERSHIP MYTH

The exhilarating side of leadership gets fetishised – the exhausting reality gets ignored

THE CARE PARADOX

Organisations that care for people, society and the environment don't always care for themselves

THE CONTROL PARADOX

The more that managers try to control, the more resistance they encounter

THE TRUST PARADOX

Delegation requires trust, but without delegation, trust won't exist

THE EQUALITY PARADOX

Organisations that promote social justice and equality don't always embody those values in their approach to leadership

Our Lasting Leadership elearning course is an excellent way to explore these ideas in more detail. 93% of previous participants said it changed their leadership practice.

Visit **TheLastingDifference.com** for more details.

PRINCIPLES

Sustainable leadership:

1. Requires time and space for development, planning, sharing knowledge and learning.
2. Connects with vision and purpose: focusing on why, not what or how.
3. Prioritises self-care as an essential part of the job – not a perk or a luxury.
4. Devolves authority and shares power. Sustainable leaders trust themselves to let go.
5. Builds capacity. Sustainable teams trust that leaders support their efforts and decisions.
6. Requires equality and diversity, committing to inclusion. It reflects our society and challenges stereotypes of what a good leader looks like.

IN THIS GUIDE:

SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP:

REQUIRES TIME	☑
CONNECTS WITH VISION AND PURPOSE	☐
PRIORITISES SELF-CARE	☐
DEVOLVES AUTHORITY AND SHARES POWER	☑
BUILDS CAPACITY	☑
REQUIRES EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY	☑

PART TWO:
EQUALITIES
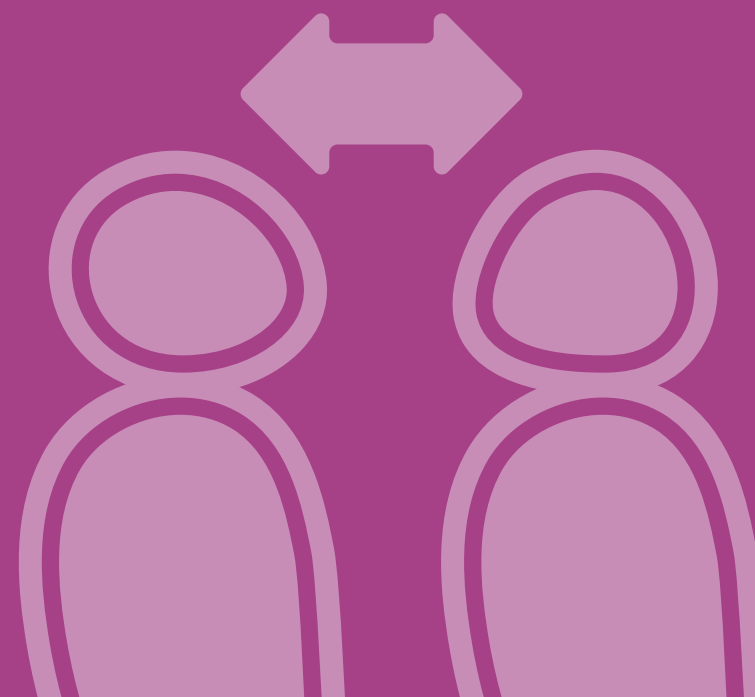
EQUALITIES

Equality, diversity and inclusion are critical to sustainable leadership. If organisations and their leadership do not reflect the communities and issues they exist to serve, they run the risk of perpetuating the structural barriers they seek to address.

Different people and groups will have their own unique perspectives and experiences of the barriers they face. However, at their core, these are connected by the experience of unequal access to power. Supporting leadership equality, diversity and inclusion therefore requires non-profit organisations to:

- Acknowledge that structural inequalities exist in their organisations

- Listen to people's experiences with openness and humility

- Commit to action at all levels of the organisation to level the playing field.

Diversity of experience, thought and background bring such significant value to organisations, it's a no brainer that proactively supporting leadership diversity and inclusion should be a priority. Benefits include:

- Improved adaptability to respond to changes in the environment and the needs of different people and groups

- Improved problem solving and idea generation

- Better understanding of the needs of communities

- Improved decision-making, with a balance of views being considered

- Increased trust in the organisation and its values

- Better recruitment and retention

- Happier workplaces and teams

- Compliance with legal requirements (e.g. Equality Act 2010) as a minimum

The non-profit sector has a real opportunity to lead the way and show the value and benefits diverse leadership brings. This starts in individual organisations and their approach to leadership.

A NOTE ABOUT LANGUAGE USED IN THIS GUIDE

Leaders / leadership

Leaders exist in every corner of an organisation. The Lasting Leadership Guides recognise that leadership is more than positional authority or a job title. Everyone in the organisation has the capacity to lead, given the right opportunities, support and resources. (We suggest using this guide alongside our **guide to Lateral Leadership**).

Equality and equity

Equality is about ensuring everyone has access to the same opportunities and resources. Equity recognises that structural barriers exist meaning different people need different levels of support and resources to level the playing field. Equality and equity go hand in hand, one will not be achieved without the other.

Diversity and inclusion

Recognising, encouraging and valuing the different experiences and perspectives people can bring to the organisation's work and to its success.

THE CHALLENGE AND CAPABILITY

THE CHALLENGE

Under–representation in leadership roles remains a significant challenge in the non–profit sector.[3]

Structural inequalities create barriers within organisations resulting in unequal access to leadership and progression opportunities. Being the only person in the organisation who notices these barriers and raises concerns is not only energy sapping but can lead to being viewed as 'troublesome'. Alongside this, managing everyday prejudice is exhausting and leads to people putting up with unacceptable attitudes and behaviours. Barriers to inclusion affect a range of people and groups, including but not exclusively, women, people of colour, those from LGBTQ+ and disabled communities. Intersectionality means that these barriers are compounded for many.

THE CAPABILITY

Improving equity of access to leadership and progression opportunities requires attention and action in the following three areas:

1. **LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD:** ACKNOWLEDGE AND ADDRESS STRUCTURAL BARRIERS AND POWER IMBALANCES

2. **ENSURE ACCESS:** DESIGN WORK AND LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES SO THEY ARE INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE TO ALL

3. **SUSTAIN MEANINGFUL CHANGE:** EMBED EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ACROSS ORGANISATIONAL PRACTICES

3   Scotland's top charity leaders: how diverse are they?, David Hume Institute, 2022.

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES

1. LEVEL THE PLAYING FIELD:
ACKNOWLEDGE AND ADDRESS STRUCTURAL BARRIERS AND POWER IMBALANCES
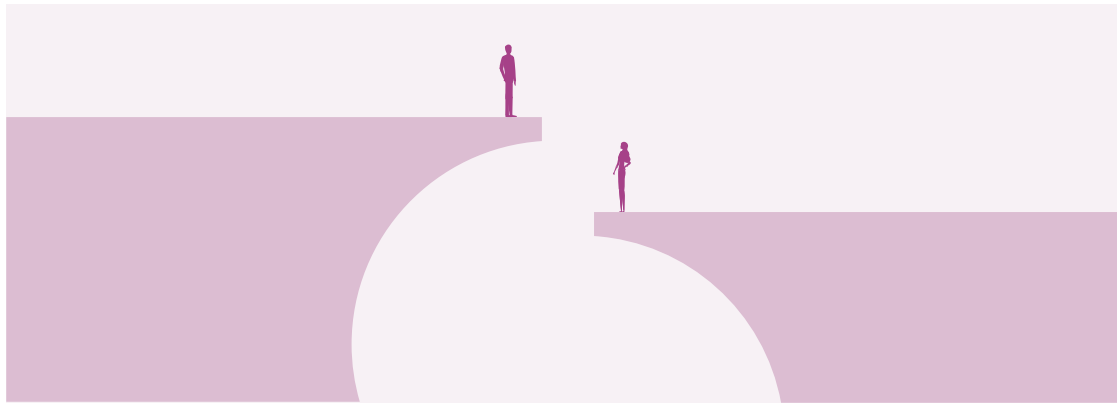
PRINCIPLES

Structural inequalities and existing power structures create barriers which inhibit the development of diverse leadership.[4] To begin to address these barriers, long-held assumptions of what a leader looks like must be challenged. Leadership is about more than personality traits and power (e.g. charisma, connections and profile). It's about diversity of experience, behaviours that can be learned and styles that can be adopted and adapted. To make organisations and leadership roles more accessible and attractive to those who are currently under-represented, sustained attention and action to improve equality and diversity are required.[5] To support under-represented leaders and improve equity and inclusion, organisations need to examine their structures, policies and processes through an equality lens. It is likely they are currently, if unconsciously, inhibiting the recruitment, retention and progression of diverse leadership. Encouraging and supporting people to have honest conversations about the barriers they face is key to improving workplace policies, practices and culture.

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WE NEED TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE UNCOMFORTABLE TRUTH. EXISTING SYSTEMS DON'T SUPPORT US (OR WANT US?) TO SUCCEED.

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4   Charities need to change how they value diversity. Civil Society News, 2019

5   Time to deliver on diversity. Third Force News, 2022

PRACTICES: IDEAS FOR ACTION

REDEFINE WHAT A LEADER LOOKS LIKE

- Collectively explore and define what leadership looks like in your organisation (our **Lateral Leadership Guide** can help).

- Create an environment where different leadership approaches and styles are valued. Everyone has knowledge, skills, professional and/or lived experience to help achieve organisational outcomes.

- Challenge the assumption that leaders from under–represented communities should only manage equalities organisations, or are the only people who should lead action on inequality. Leaders from some communities report being typecast by institutional or structural discrimination.

"This diversity...allows our colleagues and volunteers to bring the best and most genuine version of themselves to work every day. And it's this that shines through to the people we support."

DEVELOP INCLUSIVE, EQUALITY–FOCUSED POLICIES

- Create leadership and organisational policies that comply with legal requirements (e.g. the Equality Act (2010)) as a minimum, and proactively promote equity of opportunity.

- Seek the support of organisations who have expertise in equality, diversity and inclusion to understand the structural barriers to access faced by different people and groups.

- Work with others to review leadership development policies and opportunities to make sure they are accessible to all and don't include unconscious bias.

- Take an intersectional approach to equality and diversity. Often, removing barriers for some people and groups has wider benefits for others, for example providing spaces for prayer also benefits people who need to take quiet time out, breastfeed etc.

EXAMPLES

- Policies that support specific needs, such as menopause policies that recognise the need to support women in different ways at different times in their lives.

- Talking to people with lived experience or to equalities organisations to understand how to do things differently, access resources, challenge biases – and better understand what more needs to be done to actively support and encourage diversity and inclusion.

PROVOCATION

WHAT KIND OF PERSON COMES TO MIND WHEN YOU PICTURE A 'LEADER'?

HAVE OPEN AND HONEST CONVERSATIONS

- Be brave and willing to feel uncomfortable. Acknowledge that organisational policies or practices create barriers or exclude people. Be willing to really listen to people's experiences, ask for their ideas for what would help – and take action based on their feedback.

- Use your organisational values to guide your approach to leadership and progression. What would it look like if you genuinely applied your values to your recruitment, succession, progression and development programmes?

- Make conversations about equality, diversity and inclusion a regular part of your team development processes.

- Consider how fully people can be themselves and live their values at work, or how much they have to conform and 'leave themselves at the door'. Create safe spaces that allow people to be honest about their experiences.

"We need to normalise conversations about equalities. This might make us feel uncomfortable at first – but we need to ask uncomfortable questions like 'Is our organisation truly representative of the communities we work with?' or 'Who is not on our team – and why not'? Having regular conversations about equalities is essential and becomes easier the more we do it."
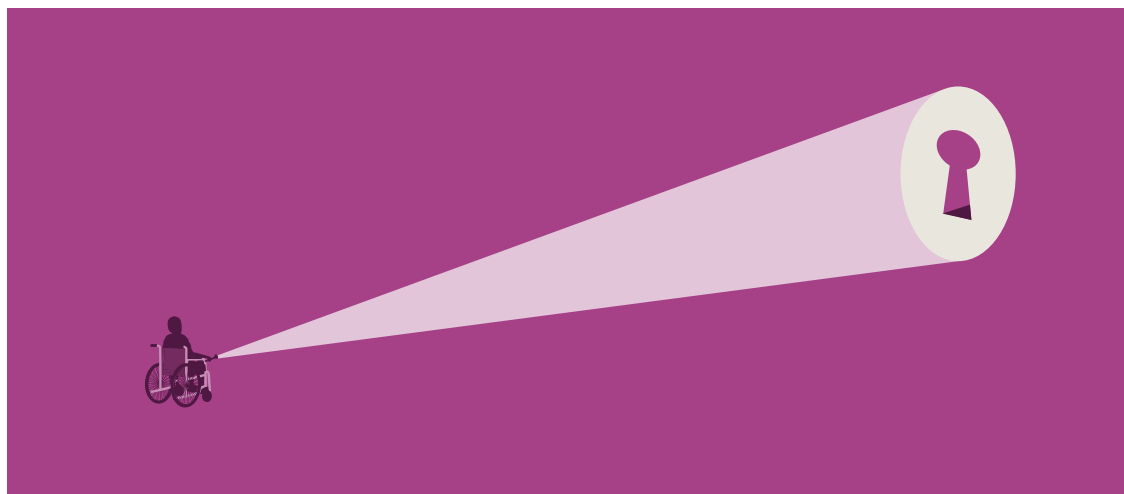
PROVOCATIONS

WHAT MESSAGES ARE YOU SENDING? AND RECEIVING?

WHO AND WHAT GETS AMPLIFIED?

HOW MUCH CAN PEOPLE BE THEMSELVES AT WORK?

2. ENSURE ACCESS: DESIGN WORK AND LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES SO THEY ARE INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE TO ALL

SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP MEANS REVIEWING WHAT IS NEEDED TO BEST RESPOND TO THE CHANGING ENVIRONMENT AND THE NEEDS OF DIFFERENT PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

PRINCIPLES

The world is becoming increasingly complex, requiring adaptive responses to multi-faceted challenges. Having a more inclusive and diverse team (employees, volunteers and trustees) brings fresh perspectives, different experiences, knowledge and skills. Sustainable leadership in this context means reviewing what skills, experience and knowledge are needed to best respond to the changing environment and the needs of different people and communities. The way in which roles, recruitment processes and progression opportunities are designed, can enhance or inhibit how attractive and accessible they are to people. For example, women are less likely to apply for jobs if they don't meet all the criteria than men.[6] Board recruitment often seeks people who have extensive experience, access to influential networks and free time to give. This limits access and leads to board membership being dominated by older, highly educated, well-connected and more affluent people.

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6   Gender Insights Report: how women find jobs differently, LinkedIn, 2019

PRACTICES

INCLUSIVE RECRUITMENT

- When recruiting cast the net wide and go beyond traditional recruitment methods. For example, use your supporter networks or advertise posts through channels that reach wider audiences, such as equalities networks and publications, to proactively reach under-represented groups.

- When designing roles use an Equality Impact Assessment or talk to equalities organisations to ensure you are not creating barriers for some people or groups. For example, consider how 'essential' criteria could automatically or indirectly exclude some people.

- Be explicit in recruitment materials about how you support equality and diversity. For example, actively encouraging people from under-represented communities to apply; providing additional support during the recruitment process or to undertake the role if needed; outlining the commitments you have made and action you have taken to support inclusion and diversity.

- Ensure interview panels are diverse and representative and recruitment processes support people to perform at their best.

- Monitor the diversity of staff, volunteer and board applications and appointments against wider demographic data to ensure representation.

"We need to think about how we design job roles and identify where essential criteria creates barriers and excludes people from applying. It's about more than removing potential discrimination – it's about actively encouraging and supporting inclusion and diversity."

INCLUSIVE PROGRESSION AND DEVELOPMENT

- Send out a clear message that your organisation is a place where diversity is valued – and where people are supported to develop and progress.

- Review leadership and progression opportunities to ensure they are inclusive and accessible to all. Talking with the team is the first step to understanding what barriers exist.

- Remember equality and equity are not the same thing. Recognise that some people will require more support to take up progression and development opportunities. Ask team members what progression and development looks like for them, and what support would help them take up opportunities.

"People have a range of talents, knowledge, skills and expertise that they can, and do, bring to leadership roles. It's about levelling the playing field and providing equity of access to leadership opportunities."
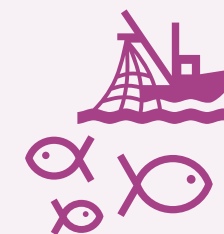
WHEN RECRUITING CAST THE NET WIDE AND GO BEYOND TRADITIONAL RECRUITMENT METHODS

EXAMPLES

- Offering flexible working hours or patterns to ensure people are not excluded from applying for roles.

- Ensuring the board and team reflect the communities the organisation supports.

- People who use services being involved in recruitment e.g. in role redesign; interviews; selection and induction.

PROVOCATION

WHAT GETS MEASURED GETS MANAGED. WHAT DO YOU MEASURE?

INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE

- Provide trustees with the same requirement and access to training on equality, diversity and inclusion that the workforce has.

- Conduct an audit of board skills and diversity (our **Sustainable Governance self-assessment** can help).

- Facilitate board discussions about their diversity so that misconceptions about tokenism do not hold trustees back from tackling lack of representation. The critical principle is to ensure the board reflects the society the organisation exists to serve.

- When undertaking recruitment or planning for succession, consider what requirements will automatically exclude some people from applying e.g. the timing or location of board meetings; asking for extensive professional knowledge, experience or connections.

- Provide support to trustees who may have less experience of being involved in organisational governance. For example, co-option provides board insight and experience without the associated responsibilities; sub-committee membership or responsibilities help familiarise people with governance processes.

"Who can afford to subsidise their work for a charity?"

EXAMPLES

- A board equality and diversity self-assessment which assesses equalities characteristics and diversity of background and outlook.

- Supporting people to prepare for leadership and governance opportunities e.g. developing user-group committees so that when board vacancies arise people can make informed decisions about stepping up.

PROVOCATION

WHERE IS THE POWER? WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE IT TO BE?

3. SUSTAIN MEANINGFUL CHANGE:
EMBED EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

PRINCIPLES

Organisations want to be inclusive and recognise the benefits diversity can bring. Many have developed organisational policies to improve equality and diversity. Equalities training has become part of organisational development programmes. However, policies and training courses alone are not enough. To move beyond equality and diversity being a tick box exercise and make meaningful and sustained change, consistent action is required. Resources and time must be committed. Policies need to be brought to life, by involving teams in their development, implementation and review. Commitments to diversity and inclusion need to be clear, consistent, overt and accountable. Workplace opportunities must be designed in ways that make them as inclusive as they can possibly be. Without these commitments to embed actions to improve equality and diversity, the structural changes that are desperately needed will not happen.

PROVOCATION

IF NOT NOW, WHEN?
IF NOT YOU, WHO?

PRACTICES

ENCOURAGE AND ENABLE TEAM INVOLVEMENT

- Actively seek team involvement when developing and implementing equality and diversity policies and practices.

- Review equality and diversity policies to ensure they are having the intended impact. Change them if they are not.

- Appoint an equality and inclusion group to understand and raise issues and represent otherwise marginalised views.

- Create regular opportunities to discuss equality and diversity as a team. Seek and value different perspectives and experiences. For example, encouraging people to share their experience of barriers or inequity in the workplace however they feel comfortable to do so and making changes as a result.

"Over the last few years I've been working hard with colleagues to instil a culture of honesty, curiosity and willingness to learn when it comes to equality and diversity. We can't know it all, but it's important to equip ourselves as managers and leaders with as much information as possible and to empower people to feed back to us about how we can improve."

MAKE YOUR COMMITMENT TO INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY VISIBLE AND EXPLICIT

- Be clear on what action you take to support equality and inclusion – make what you do and how you do it specific and explicit.

- Use external diversity standards (such as the LGBT Charter; Gender Matters Roadmap; Disability Confident, Carer Confident, Equality Action Pledge – see Reading and references) to review and improve practice.

- Publish your results, making your commitment to inclusion visible to all and find people who can hold you to account.

"When we say we are disability aware, or we support equal opportunities – what do we actually mean? We need to get more explicit about how we do this."

EXAMPLES

- Equalities and diversity awareness training and events to keep knowledge up to date and enable open and honest conversations.

- Gender inclusive bathrooms.

- Engaging with team members to understand any barriers to development or progression – and then taking action to remove these.

PROVOCATION

HOW WILLING ARE YOU TO CHALLENGE – AND BE CHALLENGED?

BUILD EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION INTO LEADERSHIP AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Consider how best to support equity, diversity and inclusion across wider organisational and leadership developments (e.g. flexible working; leadership development programmes; succession planning; health and wellbeing programmes).

- Ensure line managers and those with team development responsibilities have appropriate training and knowledge to support team members with diverse experiences, or who face barriers.

- Develop policies or guidance that recognise and respond to different needs (e.g. menopause; carers; anti–bullying and harassment).

- See leadership through the lens of intersectionality. People have unique experiences – understanding and valuing this is key to sustainable leadership. For example, offering flexible working options (flexible hours; home or hybrid working) can benefit a wide range of people, including those with caring responsibilities or disabled people.

"Developing equality–focused recruitment is only one aspect. We need to go further and make sure supporting equality and diversity is part of our whole organisational culture".

ADDRESS STRUCTURAL BARRIERS

- Commit resources to understanding and addressing structural barriers that exist in your organisation. For example, time needs to be invested in team discussions and training. Resources may be needed to address any barriers identified, or to make recruitment and progression processes more inclusive.

- Link with membership and equalities organisations to collectively challenge the structural barriers that exist in the sector. These barriers are not unique to individual organisations. Collective action is required across the sector for real change to be made.

- Consider what additional wellbeing supports may be required to respond to experiences of structural inequalities. For example, the impact of discrimination or online bullying on organisations and individuals; the effect of events in the wider world such as hate crimes.

"We need to proactively engage with people to find out about barriers. And people need to know that if they offer, or are asked for, their views about equality and diversity in organisational policies and practices, that these will be listened to, valued – and that something will happen as a result."

COMMIT RESOURCES TO UNDERSTANDING AND ADDRESSING STRUCTURAL BARRIERS THAT EXIST IN YOUR ORGANISATION

PROVOCATIONS

WHO OR WHAT GETS REPRESENTED?

HOW GOOD ARE YOU AT ASKING FOR HELP?

SELF-ASSESSMENT: EQUALITIES

The self-assessment section encourages you to assign a score to each indicator, using this suggested scoring guide:

2 = We have good consistent evidence | 1 = Our evidence is mixed or patchy | 0 = We cannot evidence this

However, there is also space for you to make notes and comments, for example if you are discussing the indicators with colleagues or reviewing progress over time. These notes will often be more meaningful than just a score.

	EQUALITIES	SCORE	YOUR NOTES
1	Our organisation reflects the communities and issues we serve.		
2	We understand the barriers experienced by people in our team. We take action as a result.		
3	We review our organisational policies and procedures to ensure they proactively support diversity and inclusion.		
4	Our recruitment procedures and processes proactively encourage and support diversity and address barriers to access.		
5	We seek advice and support from others with expertise in equality and diversity to ensure our policies and practices are inclusive and equitable.		
6	Our team (managers, trustees, staff and volunteers) undertake training in diversity and inclusion to keep knowledge and skills up to date.		

SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP ACTION PLAN

PRIORITY Or areas of development:	ORGANISATIONAL ACTION What does the organisation need to do?	INDIVIDUAL ACTION What do I need to do?	TIMESCALES When will it be done?	REVIEW When and how will progress be reviewed?

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ## THE BEST TIME TO START IS NOW

  Planning for sustainable leadership is best done before a crisis happens.

- ## PRIORITISE ACTION

  The self-assessment will help identify where things are going well and where action is required.

- ## SHARE THE IDEAS ACROSS YOUR TEAM

  The approaches and actions required to improve leadership sustainability are adaptive – they need discussion, sharing ideas and exploring challenges and solutions together. We strongly encourage you to share the ideas in this guide across your team to develop collective responses and build ownership of the process.
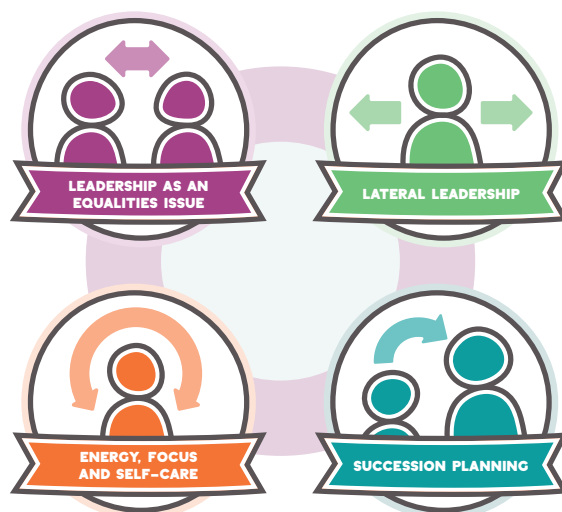
- ## TAKE A HOLISTIC APPROACH

  The four Lasting Leadership guides support the development of sustainable leadership. Action in one area will undoubtedly have an impact on the others. Taking a holistic approach will bring benefits across each of the capabilities:

- ## LEADERSHIP AS AN EQUALITIES ISSUE

- ## LATERAL LEADERSHIP

- ## SUCCESSION PLANNING

- ## ENERGY, FOCUS AND SELF-CARE

LEADERSHIP AS AN EQUALITIES ISSUE

LATERAL LEADERSHIP

ENERGY, FOCUS AND SELF-CARE

SUCCESSION PLANNING

START NOW

PRIORITISE ACTION

SHARE IDEAS

TAKE A HOLISTIC APPROACH

FINAL REFLECTIONS

When we wrote the first edition of the Lasting Leadership Guide in late 2019, it felt almost controversial to state that 'one day soon, we may look back on practices that are considered normal and be appalled at what was acceptable in early 21st century workplaces'. How the world has changed in two years.

The pandemic has unequally impacted different parts of our community; political polarisation has seen a rise in intolerance and division; the Black Lives Matter movement has laid bare the structural racism faced daily by people of colour; Me Too has exposed the level of sexual discrimination and misogyny experienced by women; the trans rights movement has shown equity for those in LGBTQ+ communities has a long way to go. Alongside this, toxic cultures have been exposed within non-profit organisations in several high-profile investigations and reports.

These societal shifts have led to organisations becoming increasingly aware of the need not just to be non-discriminatory, but to be actively anti-discriminatory. To be involved in, and to lead on, the significant changes that are required to ensure society and non-profit organisations are truly inclusive and diverse.

It has also been interesting to observe the rise in interest in our equalities work in the last two years. Initially our equalities workshop was the least requested of the four Lasting Leadership capabilities, leading us question what this meant about equality and diversity in the sector. Did organisations think they had equality and diversity 'sorted'? Did it make people and organisations feel uncomfortable? Was it seen as less of a priority, always falling to the bottom of the list?

These seismic societal changes and our discussions with organisations over the last two years have been the driving force behind updating this guide. As the fourth guide in the Lasting Leadership series, we recommend you consider equity and inclusion actively across all your Lasting Leadership activities:

- How could your succession planning processes support leadership equality and diversity?
- How could it be built into your lateral leadership plans?
- What does self-care look like through an equality lens?

SOCIETAL SHIFTS HAVE LED TO ORGANISATIONS BECOMING INCREASINGLY AWARE OF THE NEED NOT JUST TO BE NON-DISCRIMINATORY, BUT TO BE ACTIVELY ANTI-DISCRIMINATORY

Writing this guide has made me think deeply about my own experiences of equalities – and my right to talk about this topic. As a woman I have been asked to make the tea or been talked over at meetings. I have experienced the impacts of menopause. I thought long and hard about how much I didn't (and couldn't) know about the experiences of other people and groups. But as we say throughout the guide, silence and inaction is not an option.

We are all different. We all have our own experiences of inequity and prejudice. But most of all, we all have a responsibility to be part of the change that is so desperately needed. We believe this guide shows the importance and value of prioritising equality and diversity. We hope that it gives you ideas for what can be done in your organisation to start to rebalance the unequal access to power and opportunity.

As always, we'd love to hear from you if you have any suggestions for improvements or good practice to share. **graeme@thelastingdifference.com**.

SELECTED REFERENCES AND READING

PUBLICATIONS

The Lasting Difference: tools for organisational sustainability
(5th Edn), Wren & Greyhound, 2020

Other free guides to sustainable leadership, capacity and impact
from: **www.thelastingdifference.com/resources**

RECOMMENDED READING

Charity Risk Barometer 2020,
Ecclesiastical, 2020.

Diversity management that works: an evidence-based view,
Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development 2019

Gender, Leadership and Organization, Painter-Morland, M. in Values and Ethics for the 21st Century,
OpenMind BBVA, 2012

Path to Impact: Final Report,
ACOSVO and CO³, 2018

Scotland's top charity leaders: how diverse are they?,
The David Hume Institute, 2022

Wellbeing, Succession and Diversity in Scotland's Voluntary Sector Leadership,
ACOSVO, 2021

USEFUL WEBSITES

ACAS
www.acas.org.uk/improving-equality-diversity-and-inclusion

Carer Aware
www.carers.org/carer-aware-project

Charities Against Hate
charitiesagainsthate.com/

Charity regulators:
www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission
www.oscr.org.uk/

Charity So White
charitysowhite.org/

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
www.cipd.co.uk/search?q=diversity

Close the Gap
www.closethegap.org.uk/

Dyslexia for Employers
www.dyslexiascotland.org.uk/dyslexia-employers

Gender Matters Roadmap
gendermatters.engender.org.uk/

Equality Action Pledge
www.thepledge.scot/

Equality and Human Rights Commission
www.equalityhumanrights.com/en

Disability Confident
disabilityconfident.campaign.gov.uk

Getting on Board
www.gettingonboard.org/

LGBT Charter
www.lgbtyouth.org.uk/charter

Scottish Government One Scotland
onescotland.org/

Stonewall
**www.stonewall.org.uk/power-inclusive-workplaces**

ABOUT THE LASTING DIFFERENCE

We are the creative management consultancy behind the popular suite of Lasting Difference and Lasting Leadership resources. We provide a range of services to charities and other non-profit organisations, including:

The Lasting Difference

Workshops, elearning, conferences and consultancy, sustaining organisations with effective strategies for:

- Involvement
- Income generation
- Impact measurement
- Innovation and improvement.
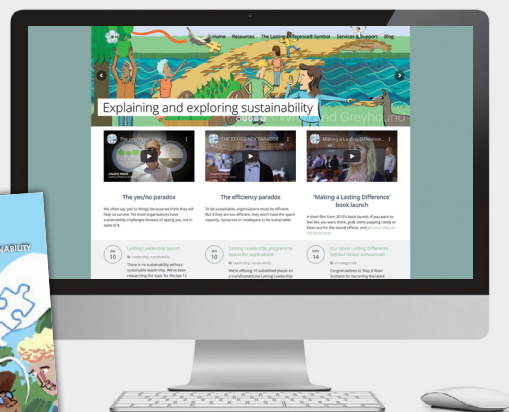
The Lasting Difference Toolkit® is available as a free download from **TheLastingDifference.com**

Advance Retreats®

Calm, engaging facilitation and away days for boards, leaders and teams.

The Lasting Difference Symbol

Awarded to organisations working towards Lasting Difference principles.

Making a Lasting Difference book

We wrote the book on charity sustainability.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Jen Curran

Jen has first-hand experience of the issues addressed here, as a deputy, then interim charity CEO and from her 20+ years' experience of non-profit leadership.

Graeme Reekie

Graeme is a carbon-based lifeform, just like everyone else. Let's get on with it.

MORE INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

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