

SPONSORSHIP

A workplace sponsorship program is designed to progress the career trajectory of select high-potential employees, to advance the organisation's diversity at the senior leadership level.

This strategy provides transformative benefits for the sponsor, sponsee, and organisation. By prioritising and aspiring to diversity at all levels, organisations can support internal talent, role-model inclusive behaviours, and leverage the advantages that workplace diversity affords.

HOW IT WORKS

Sponsorship is the pairing of two employees, an individual in a senior-level position (sponsor), and an individual in a more junior role, who has high potential (sponsee).

A sponsor acts as a career advocate for the sponsee, supporting them to grow their networks, find and expedite opportunities for promotion or career development, or enable their career advancement through other means.

Diversity Inclusion provides a comprehensive, end-to-end sponsorship solution that guides participants, and the organisation, through a robust and structured process of transformation.

With interactive, video-based material, the sponsorship program includes webinars, conversation templates, online health checks, evaluation measures and a range of other resources, to ensure the sponsor and sponsee are supported in their journey together. Moreover, sponsorship is a cost-effective way to increase workplace diversity in a relatively short period of time.



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WHY CHOOSE SPONSORSHIP?

By implementing a sponsorship strategy, the organisation can begin to promote and advance diverse talent, realising the benefits that emanate from increased diversity of thought, leadership, and decision-making at the senior ranks.

Sponsorship can be key at breaking down the often invisible, systematic barriers that certain groups face in their career progression (for example women working in a male-dominated workforce).

Global research* illustrates that sponsorship is one of the most effective ways to drive organisational diversity and inclusion. It's now widely recognised that diversity of thought, voice and experience within a workforce results in enhanced financial performance, innovation, decision-making effectiveness, collaboration, and employee satisfaction and engagement (just to name a few).

Sponsorship also develops individual employee skill sets, aptitudes, confidence, and self-awareness. This, in turn, has a further positive impact on organisational systems and culture, as well as output.

*Moss-Racusin, Toorn & Dovidio (2014) Scientific Diversity Interventions, Science Journal



"It has helped me see life through my sponsees' eyes. That enables you as a leader to improve your approach, prioritise people to help them advance, and being more open, understanding and appreciating the blockers that they face every day, and helping them to overcome those."

Sponsor, Arup





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WHO CAN BENEFIT?

Sponsorship is a win-win-win! There are compelling benefits for the sponsor, sponsee, and organisation. Key sponsorship benefits include:

- **Sponsors** can increase their influence, internal visibility, leadership reputation, and inclusive leadership behaviours.
- **Sponsees** can build their skills, confidence, self-awareness, networks, advancement opportunities, and career trajectory.
- **Organisations** can retain and advance diverse talent, increase inter and cross-departmental collaboration, and increase sponsor and sponsee job satisfaction and tenure. Moreover, organisations can create an inclusive, caring, and psychologically safe culture that prioritises diversity at all levels, and supports employees to contribute to their full potential.

Want to know more? Let's chat...

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"The Sponsorship program taught me about the importance of exposure for career progression. My sponsor gave me the confidence and motivation to speak with people who could influence my career opportunities and the future projects that I work on."
Sponsee, Arup

diversityinclusion.com.au



"Sponsorship is a critical part of career advancement and goes well beyond mentoring as it includes willingly advocating for someone, for example, to be part of a high-visibility project. Sponsorship has emerged as a leading practice initiative for achieving equitable career outcomes for everyone."

Peter Chamley, Chair,
Australasian Region, Arup

