

Local Search Summit

2021 CONFERENCE

Diversity and Inclusion Guide

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Diversity and Inclusion in Digital Marketing

Thank you to our incredible panelists for taking the time to share their experiences, energy, and suggestions to help other marketers, business owners, and team members create a diverse and inclusive workplace.



Areej AbuAli

FOUNDER OF WOMEN IN TECH SEO
& HEAD OF SEO AT PAPIER

Areej is an SEO Consultant who focuses on all things technical and on-site SEO. She is the founder of the Women in Tech SEO community and has been in the industry for the past 8 years. She has spoken at SMX, BrightonSEO, LondonSEO and MozCon.

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 womenintechseo.com



Shani Gwin

FOUNDER & MANAGING PARTNER
OF GWIN COMMUNICATIONS

Shani has over 12 years of professional communications experience working for government, private and not-for-profit organizations. She is a sixth-generation Métis. She's a member of the Cunningham Clan on her mother's side and a descendant of the Michel First Nation and Ferguson Clan on her father's side. Shani is a proud Métis woman with a passion for elevating Indigenous voices, projects and issues.

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Rejoice Ojiaku

CO-FOUNDER OF B-DIGITALUK & SEO
MANAGER AT INCUBETA NMPI

Rejoice is the Co-Founder of B-DigitalUK as well as an SEO Manager at Incubeta NMPI, she has been working in SEO for almost 3 years and continues to grow her knowledge whilst tackling diversity and inclusion in the industry and she has also spoken at BrightonSEO. She continues to push for tangible change within organizations through education and awareness.

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What does Representation in Digital Marketing Mean to You?



Rejoice Ojiaku

“Representation to me is just normality. [W]here I go to work, what I do should be reflective of my actual day view, I want [an] actual life view. If we're working in a media company or advertising. The content we put out should be reflective of people's realities and not just the realities of white people, and if you ask everyone, it should represent the worldview of everybody. I see myself, I see people like me in every aspect, and it's just not seeing the one black person at work, it's also seeing multiple black people, multiple Asian people, and multiple people of different nationalities, different races, I should be able to see that wherever I go, including work. I think that's what representation is for a lot of people.”



Shani Gwin

“When I talk to a lot of our staff or our team, they always say, I didn't know I was supposed to be looking for me until I started working here. And that speaks out. That's just like, I don't even have real words for that. Because it's like, yeah, you are supposed to look for you. Because we are part of the society too. And we can do things just as great if not better. And so I really hope that people start looking at ways to sort of decolonize how they hire people and look beyond some certain AI and screening that they have, because there's some really, really incredible people waiting to be hired and contributing to the team.”



Areej AbuAli

“A lot of it comes down to, you know, diversity of thinking. [If] your leadership team all looks the same, digital marketing is such a creative industry, how are you going to have that creativity and diversity when it comes to making decisions when it comes to producing those campaigns and so forth? I guess for me representation is just being able to look up to people who are in roles that I would love to be in one day and be inspired and motivated that I could be there because there are people who look like me who've made it there.”

Ideas to Help Create an Inclusive Workplace

*“The difference between diversity and inclusion is **being invited** to the party, and **having a great time at the party**” – Azeem Ahmad, [Azeem Digital](#)*

1 CREATE AND BUILD POLICIES

Digital marketing is a very creative industry, channel your creativity to build a better work environment for all staff members.

Review your work hours and work week – the Monday to Friday 9–5 schedule doesn’t work for everyone, consider more flexibility in schedules.

“You have to be open to hearing the people that you’re bringing on that are from these communities, because they’re actually going to help build policies and guidelines that are going to improve keeping those people around. Because a lot of the systems in place, even a five day work week, who was that built for?” – [Shani Gwin](#)

Review holidays – not all employees’ holiday schedules will align with nationally celebrated holidays. Allow your employees the opportunity to take the days off that align with their traditions and celebrated holidays.

“Things like vacation and holidays, you know, there’s different groups of people that celebrate different holidays, and so flexibility, and being more accommodating to hearing the people that work for you and what they need. And then that, I think, will also help build into the creativity because they feel safe, where they work, they feel supported, where they work, they feel part of that workplace as well.” – [Shani Gwin](#)

Have updated employee handbooks, zero-tolerance policies, solutions for intervening in microaggressions, create a long term plan and commit to executing it. Start with a helping hand from the LifeLabs Learning - [DEI Playbook](#).

Ideas to Help Create an Inclusive Workplace

2 COMPLETE AN INTERNAL AUDIT

Start by reviewing your company internally. Where do you stand in terms of diversity and inclusion?

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“A really good way to start is actually collating and understanding that data and getting feedback off the back of it. I've been part of diversity, inclusion and equity committees, which I think are very important within a company, but something that they always get wrong is they don't actually kick start by understanding the data within the company. They don't make surveys and analyze and get an understanding behind. How do women feel versus men? How do non binary folks feel? Where does the challenge seem to be? What does our salary data look like? Are we even equally paying people or not? So, before we kind of jump into different initiatives, and raising awareness and celebration, providing training, one of the first things I would suggest is really taking the time to collate that data, analyze it, and understand [it], because that's going to serve as your benchmark.” — Areej AbuAli

Here's an [Inclusion Audit Tool from LifeLabs Learning](#) that can help inspire your own internal audit.

Ideas to Help Create an Inclusive Workplace

3 REVIEW YOUR HIRING PROCESS

What does your hiring process look like? There is plenty of research out there that shows the hiring process is impartial and unfair. Unconscious racism, ageism, and sexism play a role in who gets hired.

Consider what unconscious biases may be informing your hiring practices. [Evaluate your current hiring competency](#) and develop an actionable plan to improve diversity hiring outcomes.

Understand more about [What's in a name? Racial bias in hiring and how to work to change it](#), learn these [7 Practical Ways to Reduce Bias in Your Hiring Process](#), and dive deeper into [Unconscious Bias in Recruitment: How Can You Remove It](#).

Learn more about [Decolonizing and Reconciling Entrepreneurship](#).

- Invest in the [Decolonize First Workbook](#) – which guides readers through personal and systemic framings and actions to shift out of colonial defaults and into critical consciousness.
- Enroll in [Hiring for Decolonization, Diversity, and Inclusion in the Creative Industries](#)

Create a mentorship program and seek out interns to get them through the door. You can partner with local universities, high schools, and community programs.

Ideas to Help Create an Inclusive Workplace

4

TRAINING

Invest in professional development and training that will help you build a safer work environment and more inclusive organization.

Partner with a company like [Paradigm](#), a diversity consulting firm that offers an evidence-based approach to empower your workforce and is not a check-the-box DEI training program.

Make diversity a core part of your leadership team. McKinsey & Company research findings show that companies who are diversity leaders use a systematic approach and bold steps to strengthen inclusion and one of five actions include [placing their core-business leaders and managers at the heart of D&I efforts – beyond HR function or employees resource -group leaders](#).

Leadership diversity - Focus efforts on advancing diverse talent into executive, management, technical, and board roles; not only does this help create an authentic and resilient work environment, [it fosters new perspectives, enables representation, improves employee satisfaction, facilitates customer connection, and results in better business outcomes](#).

Provide your employees with time during work hours to listen, learn, and get the training they need.

Ideas to Help Create an Inclusive Workplace

5 LEAD THROUGH COMPASSION

How are you helping and caring for your employees? Be educated and aware of current issues. Lead with compassion and don't leave it up to someone who may not feel safe/seen or heard to come to you as a leader/manager for help.

“[In] every workforce, you have a well-being committee or team that is there for mental health and therefore, every other issue, but the issue of racial abuse, that one of your employees might face prior to [coming to] work, but how as a company do you cater to kind of support your staff in that way? And there's so many issues surrounding ethnic minorities, that if you are truly diverse - great, but you've got all these lovely, diverse people, but how are you looking after them? Are you taking into consideration their realities that could impact work? Are you thinking outside the box of understanding the truth and their journey in order to kind of cater and help them whether it's flexible working, because they have no prior engagements due to their religion, faith, or whatever it is. You really have to look at your company's well-being structure in all this, I think, to really support the idea of diversity and inclusion.” —[Rejoice Ojiaku](#)

“I think a lot of this part about supporting diverse folks on your team is really about just finding out what they need... The key message is, listen to your staff, find out what they need, engage with them. But also actually implement what they're telling you to do.” —[Shani Gwin](#)

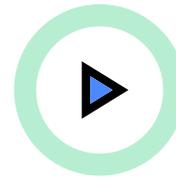
More Tools & Resources to Help You Take Action



LISTEN



1. [Evaluating Organizational Change by Diversity Accountability](#) with Azeem Ahmad
2. [Azeem Digital Asks - The All-Round Digital Marketing Podcast](#)
3. [Microaggressions Are A Big Deal: How To Talk Them Out And When To Walk Away](#) -Life Kit from NPR - Andrew
4. [Notice the Rage; notice the Silence](#) with Resmaa Menakem
5. [Race & Healing](#) - On Being Library



WATCH



1. [Allyship & Action Summit Series](#) from Nate Nichols, Steffi Behringer, Bennett Bennett, Aimee Brodbeck, and Leslie Collin
2. [Leadership Qualities that Enable Organizational Inclusivity](#) (webinar recording) – Harvard Business Publishing - Corporate Learning
3. [Living with a Non-Anglo Name](#) - CBC Podcast Playlist
4. [Why Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Matter in Marketing](#) - Evolve By LinkedIn Series
5. [Putting Racism on the Table](#)
6. [The Urgency of Intersectionality](#) by Kimberlé Crenshaw



LEARN



1. [Diversity in Advertising: "Workplaces Have Done the Bare Minimum"](#) with Rejoice Ojiaku and Wilhemina Davis
2. [Diversity and Inclusion in Marketing in 2021: Why has nothing changed?](#) By Azeem Ahmad
3. [Allyship at Work | How to Turn Intentions into Actions](#) by Dr. Waajida L. Small
4. [How to Create a Culture of Diversity and Inclusion Your Agency](#) by Esther Cohen
5. [Allyship in the Workplace: What Promoting Racial Equality and Inclusivity Really Requires](#) by Elaine Lipworth
6. [Advancing Equitable Diversity and Inclusion at Work](#) - Dr. Laura Morgan Roberts Books, Articles & Podcasts (Full Resource)
7. [Guide to Diversity and Inclusion in Modern Advertising](#) - Maryville University
8. [The Onus of Diversity Should Not Fall to Black Marketers](#) by Carolyn Lyden
9. [Cultural Diversity and Inclusion in the Marketing Sector](#) by Azeem Ahmad
10. [Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging](#) - An epic collection of the best resources on all things DEI by Amplify Talent
11. [Toward a Racially Just Workplace](#) (Harvard Business Review) by Laura Morgan Roberts and Anthony J. Mayo
12. [The Mix That Matters - Innovation Through Diversity](#) by Rocío Lorenzo, Nicole Voigt, Karin Schetelig, Annika Zawadzki, Isabelle Welpé, and Prisca Brosi
13. [Microaggressions at work: Recognizing & overcoming our biases](#) by Kelly Luc
14. [Examples of Workplace Microaggressions and How to Reduce Them](#) - Baker College
15. [Avoid These 3 Common Mistakes in Your Organization's Diversity & Inclusion Efforts](#) - Center for Creative Leadership
16. [20 Diversity in the Workplace Statistics to Know for 2021](#) by Nick Perry



COMMIT TO CHANGE



1. [Enroll in the Foundations of Diversity and Inclusion at Work TeachOut](#) offered by the University of Virginia. Changing the culture of an organization is challenging in the best of circumstances; today, it can seem impossible. Yet, it is more necessary and urgent than ever to address these issues thoughtfully and with effective practices that can produce real change. Six Darden professors have designed this teach-out to bring you the latest scholarship and best practices on diversity, equity and inclusion and organizational change.
2. [Take the Indigenous Awareness: For a Safe, Understanding, and Diverse Workplace course](#) and embrace diversity by learning about the culture, history, and contemporary roles of Indigenous peoples in Canada. This online course uses practical approaches and a base understanding of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities. Understand the changing nature of the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.
3. [Hire oneTILT to help make your organization more diverse and inclusive](#). One Tilt offer's customized learning workshops, executive coaching, equity audits, and professional learning communities for individuals. One Title aim's to promote inclusive management and accelerate a more diverse leadership pipeline.
4. Partner with organizations like [RE:WORK Training to attract diverse talent](#).
5. Do your [White Homework with Tori Williams Douglass](#), especially [Lesson Three: Antiracism in the Workplace](#) which digs into your industry and company, learning about the history of diversity and inclusion (or lack thereof) and the ways to make your workplace a positive environment for people of color and other marginalized identities.
6. [Take the Anti-racist Small Business Pledge & commit to building an equitable, anti-racist organization](#) & Get your copy of [The Anti-Racist Small Business Pledge](#)

“We, as small business owners, have resources, influence and power. Let’s use it to make real change that goes far beyond a single public statement or a single Facebook Live.” [Hello Seven](#)
7. [Enroll in Indigenous Canada a 12-lesson online course from the Faculty of Native Studies](#) at the University of Alberta, explores Indigenous histories and contemporary issues in Canada. From an Indigenous perspective, this course explores key issues facing Indigenous peoples today from a historical and critical perspective highlighting national and local Indigenous-settler relations.
8. [Take a course with Conscious Roots](#), a company globally recognized for their design and facilitation of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice-centered professional development.
9. [Take Harvard’s Implicit Association Test](#)
10. [Take the Allyship and Action Pledge](#)
11. Share your data and honor transparency by adding your organization to [DiversityReports.org](#)

