

# The National Equity and Diversity Officers' Forum 2009

Becoming an Agent for Positive Change and Developing the Skills  
to Make Your Organisation More Equitable, Diverse and Inclusive

Liquid Learning is delighted to present the National Equity and Diversity Officers' Forum featuring a compelling blend of case studies and expert commentaries. Delegates will gain invaluable tools and solutions for the current diversity challenges they are facing within their organisations.

## FEATURED SPEAKERS



**Graeme Innes (AM)** Race Discrimination Commissioner and Disability  
Discrimination Commissioner  
**Australian Human Rights Commission**



**Nareen Young** Chief Executive Officer  
**Diversity Council Australia**



**Chrissie Tucker** Manager, Diversity  
**Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC)**



**Cheryl Thomas** National Indigenous Employment Manager  
**Australia Post**



**Keryl Neville** Chief Executive Officer  
**LEAD Employment Network**



**Julia Haraksin** Manager, Diversity Services  
**Attorney General's Department, NSW**



**Dr Loretta Poerio** Diversity and Strategic Recruitment People Strategy,  
People and Ministerial  
**Centrelink**



**Inge Saris** Manager, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit  
**The Australian National University (ANU)**



**Heather Price** Chief Executive Officer  
**Diversity Consulting**



**Connie Plesko** Senior Consultant, Workplace Strategy and Planning  
**Department of Transport and Main Roads, QLD**



**Julie Smith** Director  
**Juzun Smith Consulting**



**Mark Lazaroo** Innovations and Membership Consultant  
**Australian Employment Network on Disability**



**Michael Palermo** Acting Director of Equal Opportunity in Public  
Employment  
**Office of Equal Employment Opportunity, WA**



**Marian Cronin** Diversity Manager  
**Mercy Health**

**Juliet Andrews** Member  
**Equal Employment Opportunity Network of Australasia (EEONA)**

## EVENT PARTNER



## MEDIA PARTNER

**APO AustralianPolicyOnline**

## SUPPORTERS



25 & 26 August 2009  
Rydges Capital Hill, Canberra

## EXPLORE

- Strategies to Successfully Embed and Sustain Diversity within an Organisation's Core Structure
- Leveraging Management Support and Engaging the Workplace
- Creating Innovative Strategies to Bridge Diversity Gaps
- Recruiting and Retaining Diverse Employees

## PLUS WORKSHOPS

Two Separately Bookable, Half-Day  
Workshops on 27 August 2009

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# Day One 25 August 2009

## 8.30 - 8.55 Registration and Morning Coffee

## 8.55 - 9.00 Official Welcome and Opening Remarks from the Chair

## 9.00 - 9.40 OPENING KEYNOTE

### Building a Business Case

The first step to becoming a change agent within an organisation, is building a business case. In these uncertain economic times management are more likely to scrutinise every dollar – so assessing the gains for including equity and diversity, and the losses from disbanding these strategies is crucial. Nareen Young, Chief Executive Officer of the Diversity Council will explore:

- Assessing diversity within the economic climate
- Challenging the 'cost' belief of diversity implementation
- Matching to your business environment

**Nareen Young** Chief Executive Officer  
**Diversity Council Australia**

## 9.40 - 9.50 Questions and Discussion

## 9.50 - 10.30 CASE STUDY

### Sustaining Diversity and Managing the Future

No matter which way you look at it, management support is essential for a successful workplace diversity program. In this session, the Manager, Diversity from the ABC, Chrissie Tucker will explore some strategies she used to harness and sustain leadership commitment and the importance of future planning.

- Change starts with management support – embedding leadership commitment
- Re-assessing initiatives and planning for the future
- Managing multiple diversity strategies: challenges and solutions

**Chrissie Tucker** Manager, Diversity  
**Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC)**

## 10.30 - 10.40 Questions and Discussion

## 10.40 - 11.00 Morning Tea

## 11.00 - 11.40 EXPERT COMMENTARY

### Embedding an Inclusive Culture - Is there a Silver Bullet?

Globalisation and demographic changes have elevated the importance of embedding an inclusive culture to a strategic priority worldwide. We now know that the way diversity is managed affects the attraction and retention of diverse talent, organisational performance and service delivery – so what can we learn from the experience of others that illustrates how to drive a successful diversity initiative? Heather Price, CEO of the international organisation, Diversity Consulting, uses compelling case studies and industry expertise to demonstrate:

- What we are aiming for
- Critical success criteria to inform your diversity strategy
- Best practice locally and globally

**Heather Price** Chief Executive Officer  
**Diversity Consulting**

## 11.40 - 11.50 Questions and Discussion

## 11.50 - 12.30 CASE STUDY

### Making Your Organisation Disability Friendly

In March 2007, LEAD Employment Network was created, based on a person centered planning model. CEO Keryl Neville was integral in designing LEAD's organisational structure which focuses on their people so it can respond holistically to plan, develop and implement person centered services for people who have a disability. In this session, Keryl Neville, an employment support specialist and the CEO of LEAD will explore how to start on the road to creating a disability friendly workplace. Topics will include information on:

- Harnessing workplace programs
- Using expert help
- Gaining support in the workplace for disability inclusion

**Keryl Neville** Chief Executive Officer  
**LEAD Employment Network**

## 12.30 - 12.40 Questions and Discussion

## 12.40 - 1.40 Networking Lunch

## 1.40 - 2.20 CASE STUDY

### Australia Post's Approach to Indigenous Employment - Creating Opportunities, Raising Awareness and Promoting Indigenous Culture

Australia Post is recognised nation-wide as a leader in diversity and employment strategies. Creating job opportunities for Indigenous people is a 20 year program for Australia Post, and their experiences to date have indicated positive results. This session will highlight Australia Post's strategies in engaging Indigenous Australians through effective employment and retention opportunities across Australia. Discuss:

- How to building community awareness of employment opportunities (Australia Post examples)
- Our Indigenous Employment Consultants' role in recruitment and retention
- Engaging with our indigenous employees

**Cheryl Thomas** National Indigenous Employment Manager  
**Australia Post**

## 2.20 - 2.30 Questions and Discussion

## 2.30 - 3.10 CASE STUDY

### Retaining and Supporting Women in Higher Level Employment

In Australia women remain under-represented in many areas of upper-level employment. This is particularly the case in the education sector, with fewer women reaching the most senior academic and executive levels. In this session, Inge Saris and Sue Sadauskas from the Diversity and Inclusion Unit at the Australian National University will discuss the career barriers facing women in higher education and measures to address these. The session will cover:

- Women in leadership programs
- Mentoring programs for women

PLUS WORKSHOPS!

TWO Post-Forum workshops on 27 August 2009

EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT

Receive \$200 off registration if you register and pay by 17 July 2009

- Networking programs for women
- Strategies to attract and retain women in senior academic roles

**Inge Saris** Manager, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit

**Sue Sadauskas** Senior Consultant, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Unit

**The Australian National University (ANU)**

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## 3.10 - 3.20 Questions and Discussion

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## 3.20 - 3.40 Afternoon Tea

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## 3.40 - 4.20 CASE STUDY

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### Diversity Best Practice - Identifying Your Organisation's Metrics Gap

In 2008 EEONA surveyed best practice organisations on the drivers of their diversity agendas, key strategies/initiatives and gaps. Whilst EEONA found evidence that diversity management has become more "business as usual", it also found a significant metrics gap. This gap led to a lack of focus on those areas for which data were not collected (e.g. religion, sexual orientation) and a lack of managerial accountability for outcomes. Juliet will discuss:

- Key findings from the research
- Remedial strategies to get the most from a commitment to diversity
- How to reduce the metrics gap in your organisation

**Juliet Andrews** Member

**Equal Employment Opportunity Network of Australasia (EEONA)**

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## 4.20 - 4.30 Questions and Discussion

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## 4.30 - 5.10 CASE STUDY

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### Knowing your Business – to Deliver Diversity Dividends

Mercy Health's diversity programs have been developed based on good business sense. Looking at problems creatively and applying strategies tailored to the individuality of the company has shown results. Mercy Health has become a leader in innovative diversity programs, currently sitting on a 98% retention rate in their workforce. This session will explore:

- When leadership makes a difference
- Addressing individual workplace problems and finding successful solutions

**Marian Cronin** Diversity Manager  
**Mercy Health**

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## 5.10 - 5.20 Questions and Discussion

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## 5.20 Concluding Remarks from the Chair

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## 5.20 - 6.30 Networking Drinks

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## 8.30 - 8.55 Morning Coffee

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## 8.55 - 9.00 Opening Remarks from the Chair

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## 9.00 - 9.40 EXPERT KEYNOTE COMMENTARY

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### Recognising Ability in All of Your Employees

The sad reality is, there is still discrimination within the workplace. The problems are varied and complex, from management being reluctant to hire people with an existing disability, to the difficulties facing those with a disability applying to jobs. Graeme Innes from the Australian Human Rights Commission discusses some tactical measures of minimising DDA complaints and the benefits of workplace adjustment. Explore:

- Interacting with discrimination laws
- Reasonable adjustment and its business benefits
- Success stories – how you could make a difference

**Graeme Innes** Australian Human Rights Commissioner and Disability Discrimination Commissioner

**Australian Human Rights Commission**

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## 9.40 - 9.50 Questions and Discussion

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## 9.50 - 10.30 CASE STUDY

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### Mainstreaming Diversity: A Centrelink Case Study

Workplace Diversity aims to promote full and equal participation of all staff and to foster an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. Centrelink is committed to creating a workplace culture where individual differences are recognised and valued. Currently, Centrelink is running a number of concurrent programs designed at integrating diversity principles into mainstream business. These programs include behavioural recruitment, coaching for diversity and Indigenous mentoring. This session will explore these practices, including aspects such as:

- The importance of HR understanding diversity principles in recruitment processes
- Programs that encourage and support diversity groups
- Dealing with the challenges associated with integrating diversity across a complex and widespread organisation

**Dr Loretta Poerio** Diversity and Strategic Recruitment People Strategy, People and Ministerial  
**Centrelink**

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## 10.30 - 10.40 Questions and Discussion

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## 10.40 - 11.00 Morning Tea

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## 11.00 - 11.40 CASE STUDY

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### Leveraging Awareness in the Public Sector

It is all too common for organisations to see Equity and Diversity Officers as people who are simply there to tick a policy box. This is particularly true in large and multi-faceted organisations. In this session, Connie Plesko will draw on her experience working on multicultural initiatives and will discuss the challenges in strategy

implementation. Explore:

- 'But, I'm not a racist' - educating on the importance of multicultural awareness
- Creating a culture of understanding to reduce discrimination
- Challenges in measuring effectiveness

**Connie Plesko** Senior Consultant, Workplace Strategy and Planning  
**Department of Main Roads and Transport, QLD**

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## 11.40 - 11.50 Questions and Discussion

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## 11.50 - 12.30 EXPERT COMMENTARY

### How to Sustain Diversity through Management Change

You have created a great strategy, and it seems to be yielding results – then the management changes. Maintaining support for diversity initiatives after management change is imperative if you want to sustain change in your organisation. Julia Haraksin, Manager, Diversity Services NSW Attorney General's Department was hired to implement the department's first disability action plan eleven years ago. She is currently developing the department's fifth Disability Strategic Plan and its second Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Communities' Access Plan. This session will also explore:

- Engaging managers and enlisting support
- Leveraging management and keeping diversity on the agenda
- How to measure your success and maintain change evolution

**Julia Haraksin** Manager, Diversity Services  
**Attorney General's Department, NSW**

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## 12.30 - 12.40 Questions and Discussion

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## 12.40 - 1.40 Networking Lunch

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## 1.40 - 2.20 CASE STUDY

### How to Retain Staff in Your Organisation - Focusing on Mentoring Practices

One of the key challenges facing Equity or Diversity Policy Implementers and Monitors in Public, Private Sector and Educational institutions is how to retain and support diversity within their organisations. Indigenous recruitment has been a focus in various forms since the mid 1980s, since then other key measures such as the Reconciliation Action Plan have emerged in corporate Australia. In general we are seeing a greater use of mentoring practices to uphold the principles of Equity and Diversity within the larger social fabric of Australian life. Julie will discuss:

- Mentoring practices – Goals, challenges and successes
- Leadership in the workplace
- How to manage strategies and create diversity sustainability

**Julie Smith** Director  
**Juzun Smith Consulting**

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## 2.20 - 2.30 Questions and Discussion

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## 2.30 - 3.10 CASE STUDY

### Building an Inclusive Workplace Culture

People with disability represent the second largest diversity group after women, with around 20% of the population experiencing some type of disability. Building an inclusive workplace culture that acknowledges and respects individual differences, including disability, will result in better retention and employee satisfaction. This session will explore:

- Managing disability in the workplace
- Challenging negative assumptions about disability, particularly mental illness
- Innovative solutions for inclusion
- Promoting mental health in the workplace & mental health first aid

**Mark Lazaroo** Innovations and Membership Consultant  
**Australian Employment Network on Disability**

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## 3.10 - 3.20 Questions and Discussion

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## 3.20 - 3.40 Afternoon Tea

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## 3.40 - 4.20 CASE STUDY

### Ensuring a Concrete and Cohesive Management Plan

EEO management plans are integral for good business planning. Michael Palermo, Acting Director from the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity, supports public-sector agencies to create unified and well developed diversity management plans. In this session Michael will explore ways to measure and report on diversity and how to re-develop and access your organisations diversity management plan. Explore:

- The importance and need for reporting
- Measurement tools and supporting self-disclosure
- Creating strategies from diversity gaps

**Michael Palermo** Acting Director of Equal Opportunity in Public Employment  
**Office of Equal Employment Opportunity, WA**

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## 4.20 - 4.30 Questions and Discussion

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## 4.30 Closing Remarks from the Chair and Close of Conference

## WHO WILL ATTEND

- Equity and Diversity Managers
- Workplace Relations Executives
- Executives of People and Strategy
- Executives of Learning and Organisation Development
- Human Resource Managers and Executives
- Directors of Equal Opportunity
- Change Management Consultants
- Disability Program Managers
- Employment Program Managers



# Workshops 27 August 2009

## 9.00 - 12.30 WORKSHOP A

### Up for the Diversity Challenge? Learning what's best...

Enjoy a complete change of pace in this unique and highly-engaging three-hour workshop exploring best practice in diversity and inclusion.

Experience the Diversity Challenge, Diversity Consulting's premier tool for driving diversity initiatives in Australia, the UK, US, New Zealand and across Asia. Working in group 'think tank' style, delve directly into diversity challenges impacting the Australian workplace; view Australia's scorecard on a wide range of diversity and inclusion issues; discuss your organisation's approach with others; and empower yourself with a fundamental understanding of how to make a measurable difference to your workplace.

Using a competitive and interactive methodology which is unlike any other learning experience, we will develop your knowledge, attitudes and skills to drive diversity in your organisation.

### Are you positioned to meet the Challenge?

This workshop will cover:

Key questions to consider when planning your organisation's approach to embedding inclusion

Imperatives for success: what have public sector organisations, locally and globally, identified as critical success criteria?

How to ensure diversity produces real dividends

Quick wins, long term goals and best practice ideas

**Expert Facilitator: Heather Price** Chief Executive Officer

### Diversity Consulting

In 2003, with 15 years of diversity consulting experience in Southern Africa, Heather opened the doors of Diversity Consulting in the Asia Pacific region (Head Office: Australia) specialising in the provision of a wide range of solutions to address diversity and equity. She has many publications to her name, has presented at international conferences in the USA, Italy and Singapore and is providing a consulting service, with her multidisciplinary team, on diversity and inclusion to numerous clients in both the public and private sector locally & globally.

## 12.30 - 1.30 NETWORKING LUNCH

## 1.30 - 5.00 WORKSHOP B

### Recruitment and Retention of Employees – Key Challenges of Diversity Implementation and Educating for Change

Any organisation who wishes to implement a diversity strategy will face some level of resistance. From leveraging support from management and engaging the workplace, to education there are a variety of ongoing obstacles which are bound up with changing an organisation – and more importantly changing people's views. This session will look into a range of tools available, key issues and experiences drawn from Julie Smith's experiences in consulting work, including UN work with Women in Melanesian Markets for Economic Sustainability and her advisory role at Monte Sant Angelo Mercy College. Participants will be encouraged to share ideas and experiences in how they have approached different challenges in planning and diversity implementation. This will include:

- Moving through change
- Change and Adaptation – for programs and people
- Cultural Dissonance – finding the connection
- Practicalities of implementation and project management
- Crucial Education
- Looking at Employee Risk
- Getting Leadership Buy-in
- Resistance Management

**Expert Facilitator: Julie Smith** Director

### Juzun Smith Consulting

Julie Forster-Smith, MA, DipEd has been consulting and developing diversity strategies for over 23 years. Mentoring practices – their goals, challenges and successes, the role of Coaching and Leadership in the workplace, management of diversity strategies and creating a sustainable change has been a lifelong learning and passion. As an Indigenous Curriculum Advisor, Academic Research and Community Development Practitioner and Educator Julie will share her national and international experience of working with indigenous peoples, advising to Public and Private Sector as well as Independent Schools and working with 'International Programs, Asia and Pacific Community Sectors' and the United Nations, UNIFEM, UNDP and ESCAP.

## ABOUT THE EVENT

Organisations across all sectors who wish to harness advantages of a diverse workforce are seeing that Equity and Diversity initiatives are crucial to business success. However, change does not come easily, and there are many planning and implementation challenges faced when embedding diversity within an organisation's culture. Preserving employee cohesion and furthering education, while at the same time engaging social change is crucial and requires consistent support, stability and cultural understanding. This event positions the equity and diversity practitioner at the centre of the change process and explores practical ways that these specialists can apply to make a positive impact and gain traction for their initiatives.

Renowned for interactivity and a tool kit approach to delivery, Liquid Learning forums provide ample opportunities for participants to network and partake in robust discussion through a combination of interactive sessions and social functions. Practical workshops will allow delegates to address and share critical issues, ideas and solutions for improving their equity and diversity strategies within a group environment, with the assistance of an expert facilitator. Participants will also benefit from hearing about the latest developments in new solutions available which they can draw on to make informed decisions about the best approach to diversity development in the current environment.

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