

Inclusive Workplaces at VU Amsterdam

[Inclusieve Werkomgeving op de VU]

"Creating an inclusive workplace rooted in ethics of care where every voice matters, talents thrive, and dialogue drives innovation is our unwavering commitment."

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Strategy Memo
Diversity Office
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Welcome to this presentation

This presentation aims to inform you about the project Inclusive Workplaces at VU Amsterdam and includes a call for action.

Context

Vrije Universiteit (VU Amsterdam) prioritizes diversity and inclusion as part of its core identity, striving to create a workplace where all employees can thrive.

However, while VU Amsterdam is improving on hiring for diversity, retaining and promoting diversity within the organisation remains an issue.

Current inclusion initiatives are unknown, scattered, and lack coherence, while the demand for concrete inclusion interventions from faculty and departments grows.

The Project Inclusive Workplaces addresses these issues. It is a renewed strategy of the Diversity Office and is part of the Action Plan Colourful Staff [Actieplan Kleurrijke Staf].

Vision

The project's vision is to create an inclusive workplace at VU Amsterdam where respect and fairness flourish at every level.

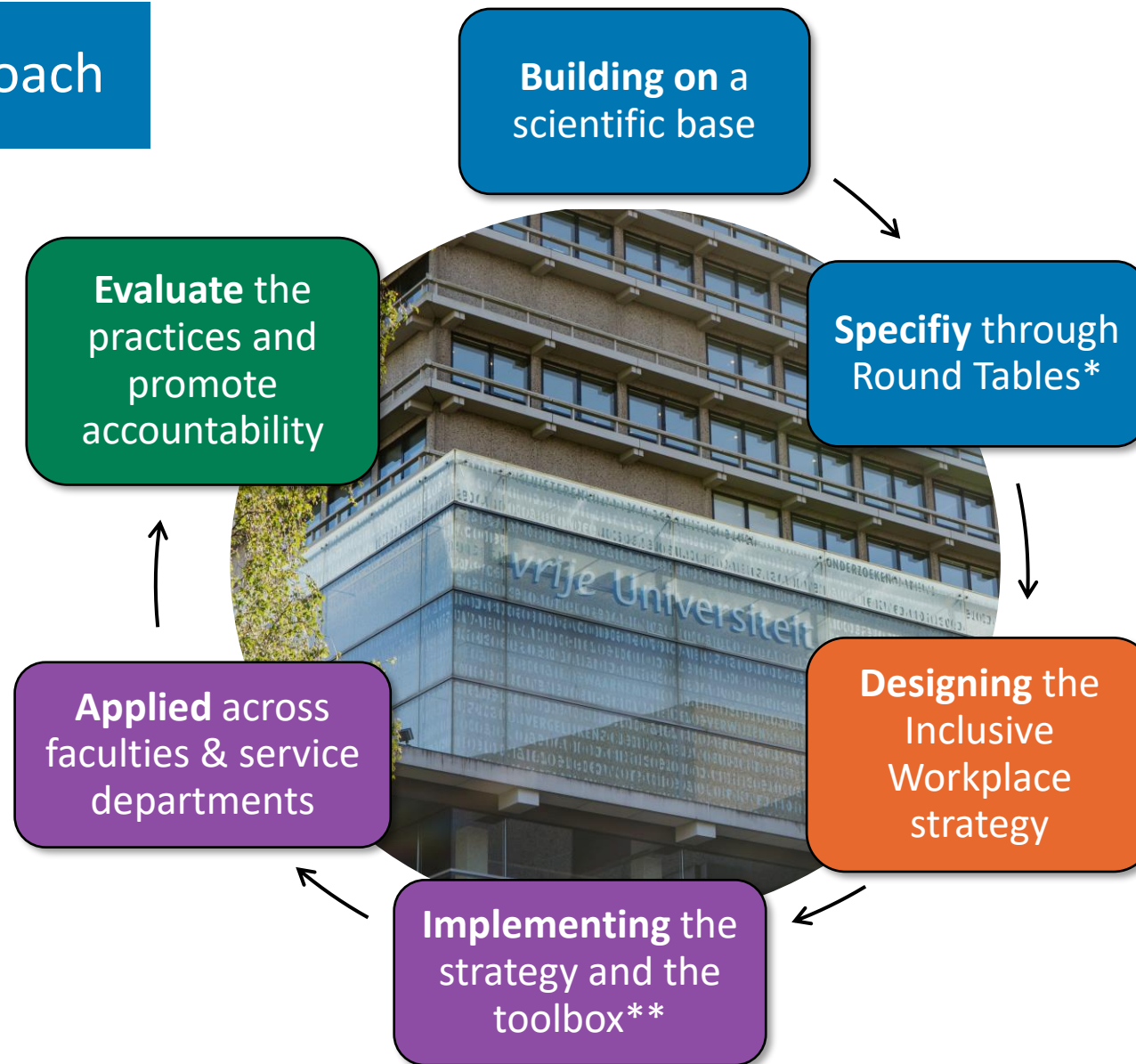
What are we working on



Project outline

	Activities What we are working on	Results what we achieve	Contributes to how it supports inclusion
1	Advancing VU's inclusion strategy: Create a comprehensive strategy for an inclusive workplace, tailored to the needs of faculties and departments.	• People inside and outside of VU know about the project • Large support among VU employees • HR activities are aligned with the strategy.	Growing awareness and shared understanding about the meaning and necessity to work towards inclusive workplaces.
2	Developing an accessible toolbox: A central collection of proven inclusion interventions, specifically tailored to VU employees' needs.	• Improved access to diversity and inclusion resources. • People in leadership roles and employees know, appreciate and use the toolbox	An increase in inclusive behavior and experienced inclusion at department level
3	Establishing monitoring and soft accountability mechanisms: Continuously measure and evaluate inclusion practices to ensure effectiveness.	• Interventions offered are implemented on a large scale within the VU • Observable long-term effects of the interventions	The use of provided tools and sustainable change towards inclusion

Project approach



*Goal of the Round tables:

- To align the strategy and initiatives coming from scientific research with the specific needs and preferences of the VU Amsterdam and specific the faculties and service departments.
- To create broad support among services, faculties, and the 'DO network' of DEI scientist.

**The VU Toolbox:

- A centralized and accessible 'toolbox' that bundles practices concerning inclusive culture and inclusive leadership, including a monitoring plan and soft measures of accountability.

Benefits for employees

- Clear and centralized information on initiatives related to inclusion
- Easy access to tools and resources in the centralized toolbox
- Improved communication and collaboration in teams
- Inclusion in team decision-making
- Enhanced career opportunities
- Possibility to get involved and speak up in round tables
- Increasing inclusion awareness and engagement, e.g., by applying to become an “inclusion champion”

Possible challenges and project priorities

Challenges	Priorities
Possible lack of interest, resistance, and backlash: Addressing resistance to change, lack of engagement, and potential backlash from stakeholders.	• Bottom-up approach: Ensuring continuous conversation (e.g., in round tables) with VU staff. • Careful communication: Highlighting the benefits for all stakeholders and linking inclusion to VU's broader goals.
Maintaining coherence in a decentralized organization: Balancing the diverse cultures, needs, and structures of VU's faculties and departments.	• Strategic coherence and alignment: Developing a unified strategy while maintaining flexibility to address diverse needs.
Data collection for continuous monitoring: Gathering consistent and reliable data to evaluate initiatives.	• Soft accountability and collaboration on VU-wide data collection: Implement measures to ensure long-term monitoring and sustained progress without imposing rigid structures.
Implementing an actionable strategy in a complex environment: Ensuring actual usage of the tools.	• Include the target audience in the design process: Through round table discussions and ongoing feedback loops. • Collaborating with other initiatives: Identifying and using synergies with other VU projects and initiatives.

Call to action

To make **Inclusive Workplaces** at VU Amsterdam a success, we need:

1. Engaged department representatives to co-develop and champion interventions
2. Active participation in round tables to ensure relevance and impact
3. Support from leadership and HR to integrate recommendations into policy

Timeline



Our Team



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- Diversity Officer HR



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- Strategy and Impact Lead
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- Project & Strategy
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Thank you.

For questions or comments please contact [Lu Wie Hu-Peijster](#)