



How to build an inclusive  
volunteering brand, from the inside out.

# Acknowledgement of Country



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WAMA committee DEI lead







Growing inclusive and thriving  
volunteer communities

Success stories from our  
project-based grants program



2022/23

# VMA Communications Content Pack 2

## Diversity and inclusion in volunteering

January 2023



**LEGEND**

Content pack 1 messages	Light Green
Content pack 2 messages	Light Blue
Content pack 3 messages	Light Yellow
Content pack 4 messages	Light Purple
Content pack 5 messages	Light Pink

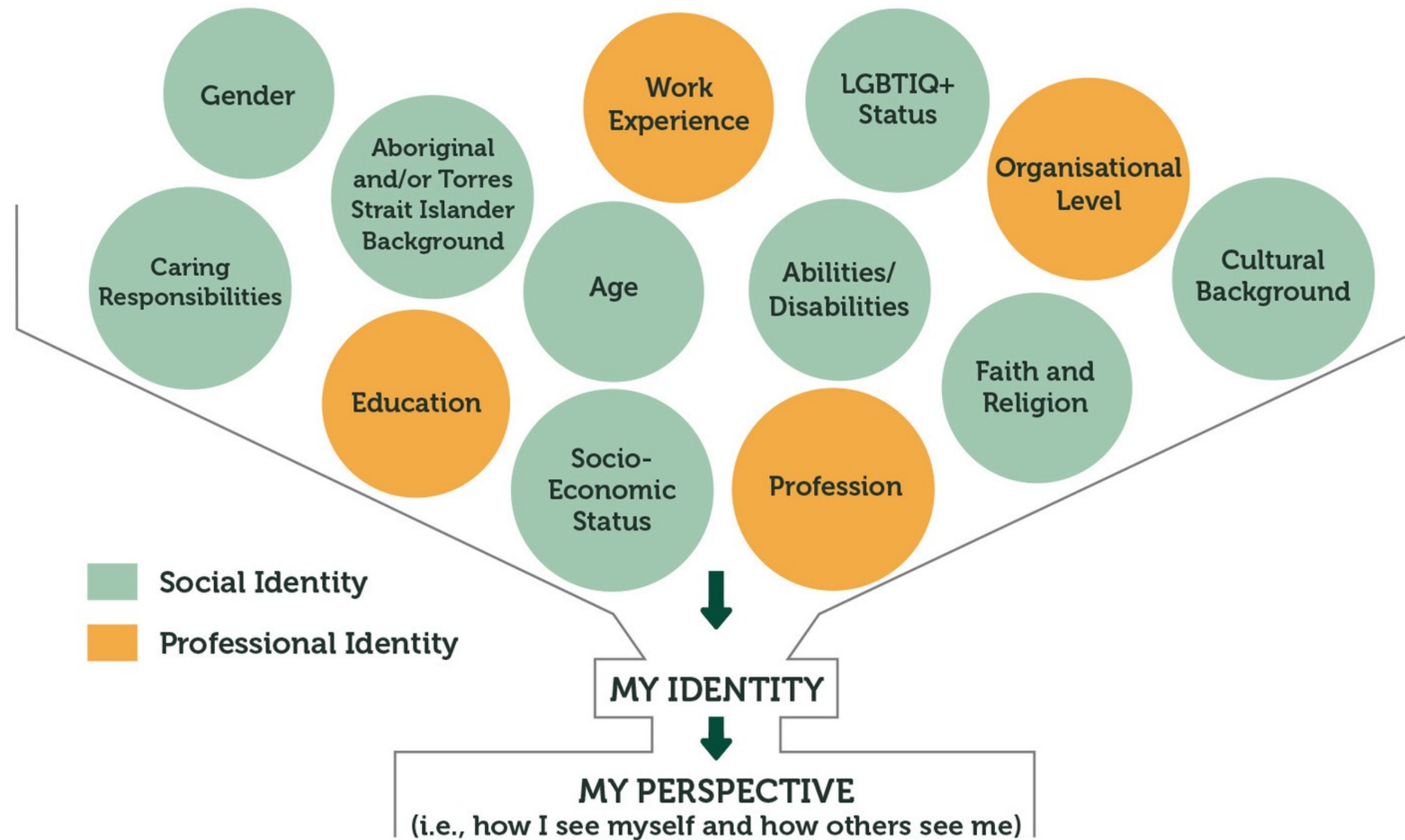
### 2023 VMA key message rollout



## Content pack inclusions

- Usage guidelines
- Inclusive stock images
- Distribution & frequency
- Key messages
- Example copy
  - Website
  - E-news
  - Social media





Graphic credit:  
Diversity Council Australia (<https://www.dca.org.au/>)

# DEI is about belonging

"If I have to be like you, I fit in.  
If I get to be me, I belong."

**Brené Brown**









**Why are you here today?**



# Reflection 1

Why does the work matter  
for your team and brand?



# Reflection 2

What does success look like  
for your team and brand?



# Today's challenge

- Reflect: Understand why inclusion matters
- Reset: Get on the same page with facts and figures
- Refocus: How to build an inclusive volunteering brand



# State of volunteering



**Formal volunteering**  
Dropped by 22%



**People with Disability**  
Make up close to 1 in 4  
volunteers



**Hours volunteering**  
Dropped by 35%



**First Nations & Migrants**  
More likely to volunteer  
informally



**2 out of 3 people**  
volunteer with only  
one organisation



**Age**  
People aged 40-54 more  
likely to volunteer.



Direction: Create inclusive  
volunteering cultures that  
reflect the diverse  
communities they serve.

Focus: First Nations people,  
recent migrants,  
People with Disability.

Volunteering has a powerful impact when it is accessible to all and reflects our diverse communities.





# Facts and figures



## WHAT IS DIVERSITY?

Diversity is the mix of people in your organisation.

Diversity refers to all the ways in which we differ (e.g., Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background, age, education, gender, profession).

## WHAT IS INCLUSION?

Inclusion is getting this mix to work.

Inclusion occurs when a diversity of people are respected, connected, progressing and contributing to organisational success.

Credit for graphic:

Diversity Council Australia (<https://www.dca.org.au/>)



## **Diversity**

A mix of people with varying identities, who are trusted and accountable for those they represent.

## **Equity**

Adjusting for systemic barriers and individual needs, so everyone has an equal chance to thrive.

## **Inclusion**

A felt environment where people – regardless of who they are – feel safe, welcome, understood, and appreciated, so they can be their true, authentic selves.

# Intersectionality

A person's overlapping identities (race, gender, ability, age, sexuality etc...) and lived experiences combine, overlap and intersect. This results in cumulative effects of discrimination.

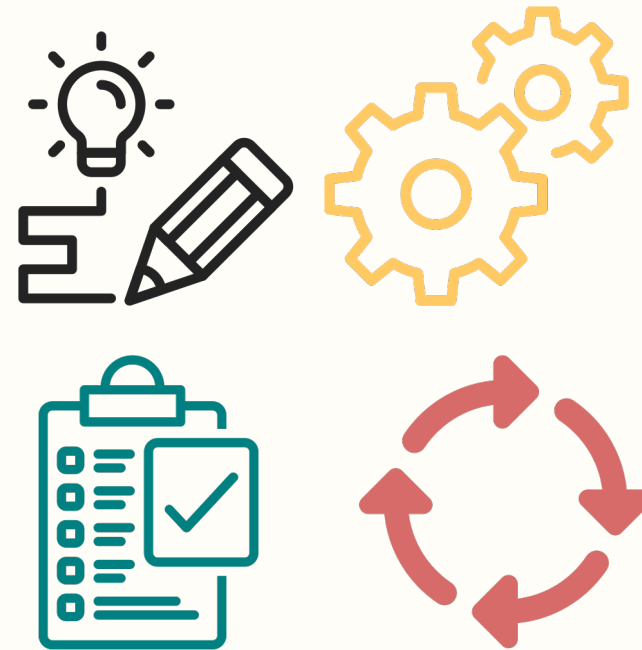


# In a perfect world...



## Diversity

Our intersectional identities: race & ethnicity, gender identity & sexual orientation, ability, age, class, family diversity



## Equity

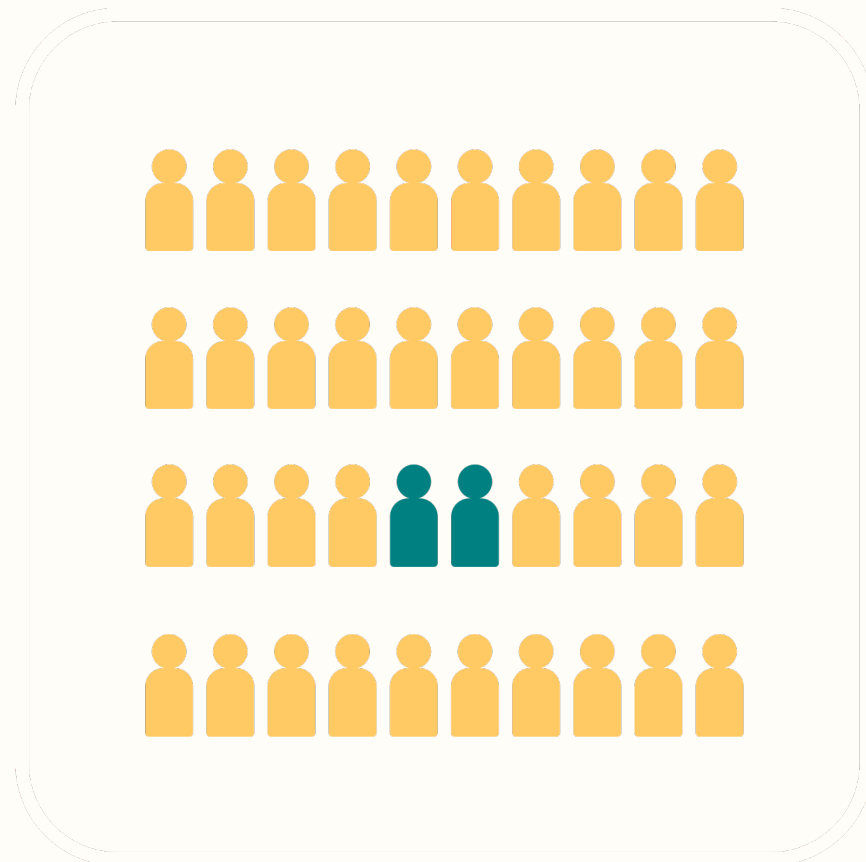
Systems, design, processes, procedures that make a space/product/service/team fair and accessible to all.



## Inclusion

A culture where all feel safe, welcome, valued and celebrated for who we are. Without equity, true inclusion can't exist.

# A more common picture



## Homogenous teams

When teams don't reflect our rich diversity, we make decisions from a default point of view.



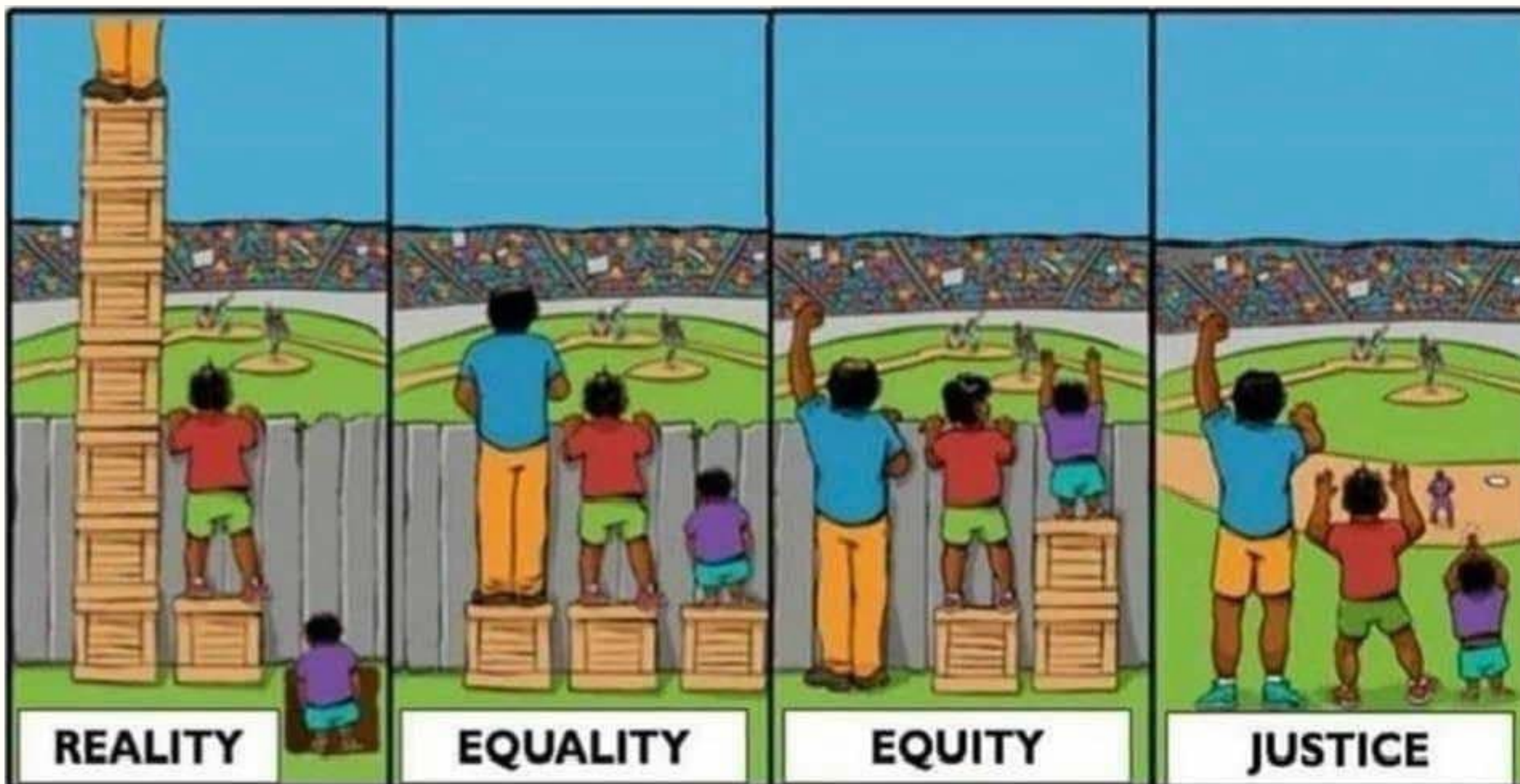
## Systemic barriers

Systems/processes are designed for a 'mainstream' group, creating more obstacles and barriers.



## Exclusion

The culture makes people feel they don't belong and need to 'fit in' rather than be their true authentic selves.



### REALITY

One gets **more than** is needed, while the other gets **less than** is needed. Thus, a huge disparity is created.

### EQUALITY

The assumption is that **everyone benefits from the same supports**. This is considered to be equal treatment.

### EQUITY

**Everyone gets the support they need**, which produces equity.

### JUSTICE

All 3 can see the game without supports or accommodations because **the cause(s) of the inequity was addressed**. The systemic barrier has been removed.



When we go into spaces designed with us in mind we, not only feel welcome, but are more likely to succeed.

# The numbers

Information source:

2021 Census (<https://www.abs.gov.au/>)

## 1 in 2

Australians who have one or both parents born overseas.

## 75%

National percentage of those who identify with an ancestry other than Australian.

## 200+

The number of languages we speak collectively, across the country.

## 1 in 5

Number of Australians who live with disability.

# Gen Zs and millennials

- Driving a more inclusive, connected cultural landscape
- Informed, savvy, and will call you out on socials
- 40% of national population
- 43% of national workforce

Information sources:

<https://mccrindle.com.au/insights/blogarchive/australias-population-map-and-generational-profile-update/>

<https://culturenext.byspotify.com/en-AU>

<https://www2.deloitte.com/au/en/pages/about-deloitte/articles/millennial-survey.html>



# Edelman research

- 13,000 people, 13 countries (including Australia)
- 67% will try a brand for the first time solely because they agree with its position on a controversial topic.
- 65% will not buy a brand when it stays silent on an issue they consider important.

# How we choose brands



**Boomers and Gen Xs:  
Price and value**



**Millennials and Gen Zs:  
Ethics and meaning**

Younger generations have more voice and choice. They expect brands to not only stand for something, but to follow through with meaningful action.



**The most human company wins.**





# Humans of your brand

**Who are they? What do they care about?**

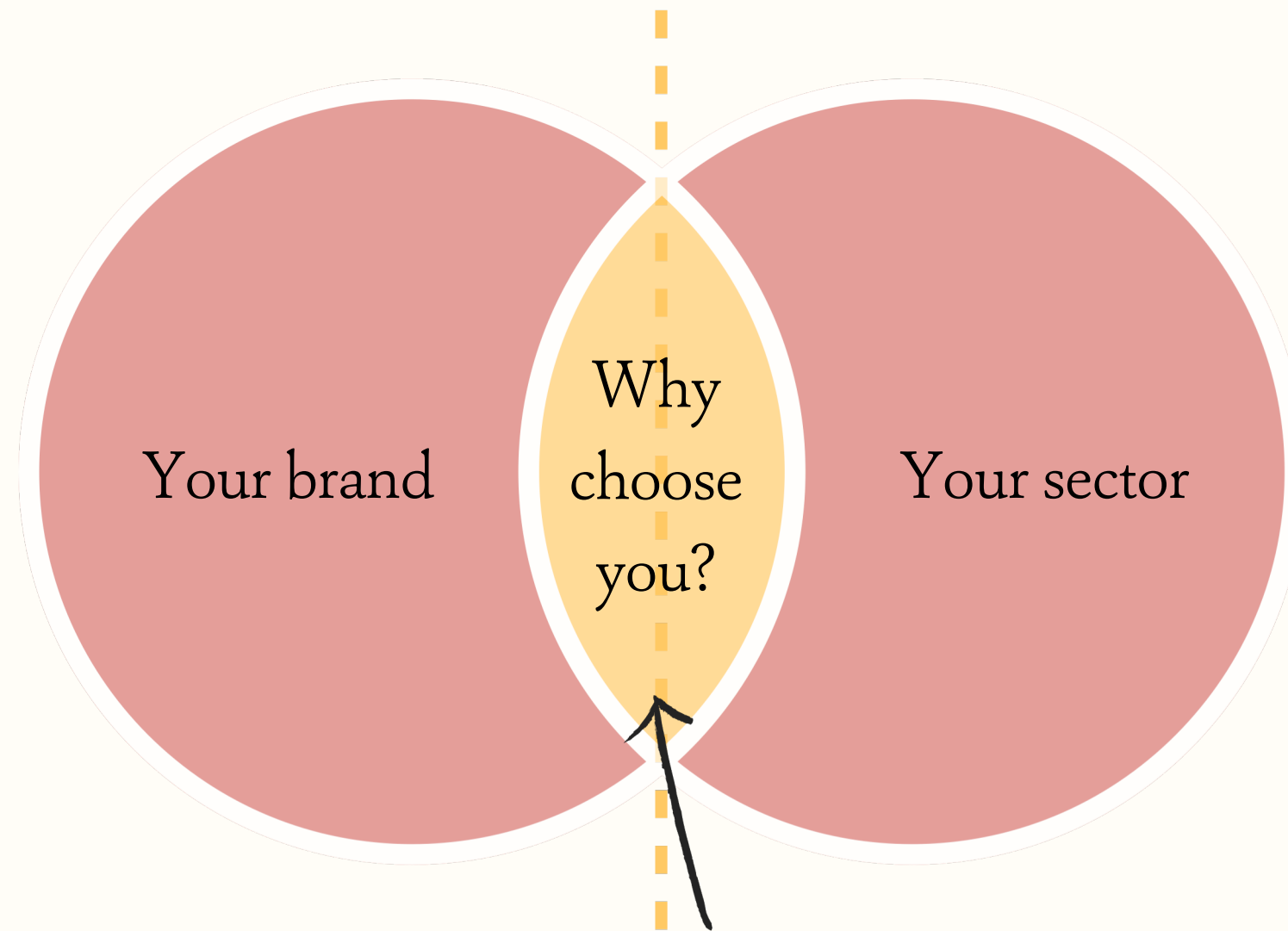
Leaders | Staff | Volunteers

# People and purpose

## Leaders & Staff



How does your brand's mission and values align with the values of leaders and staff?



## Volunteers



How does your brand help your volunteers to live out their values, passions and interests?

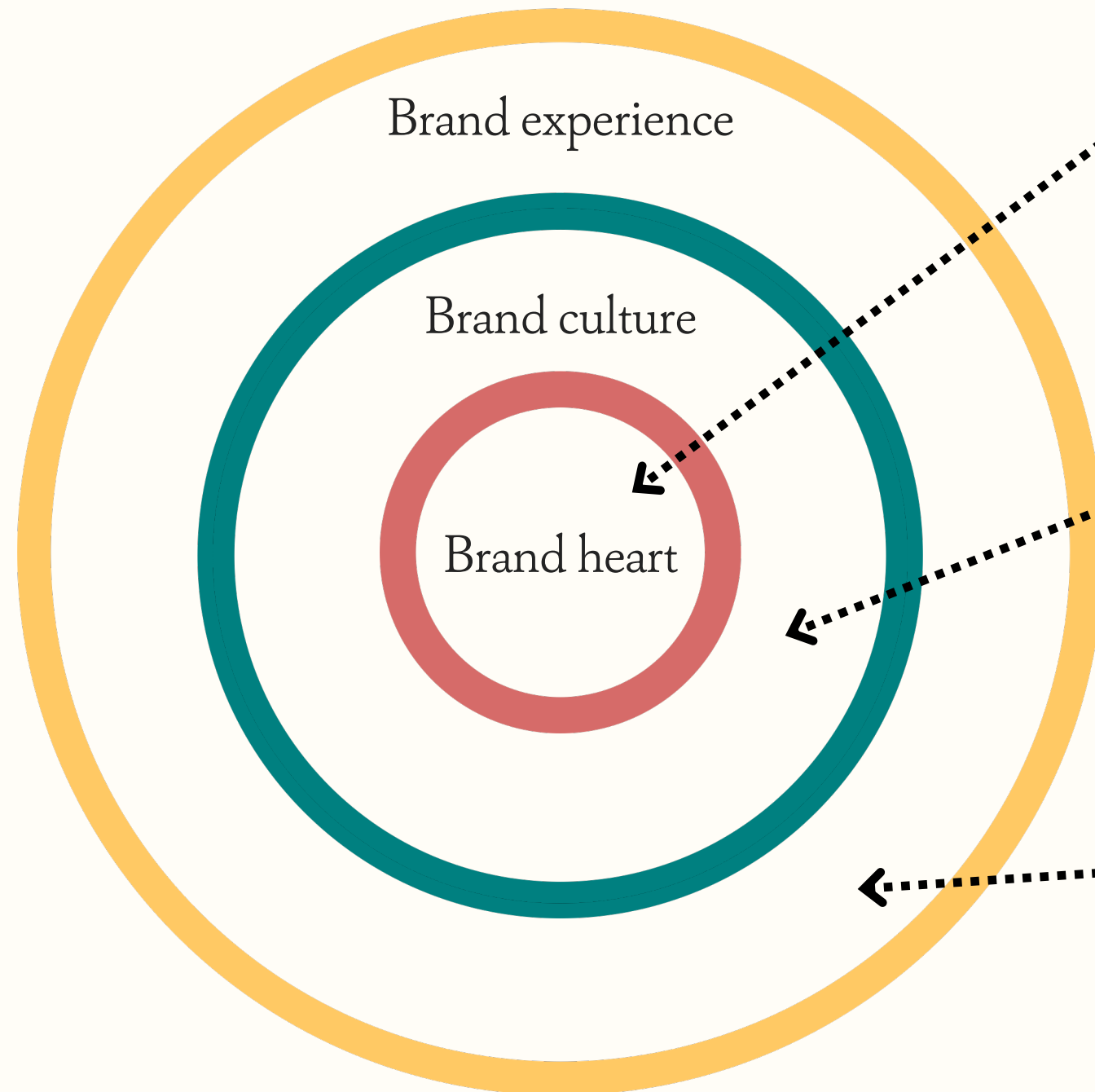
Embed inclusion in your brand positioning, capturing shared values

“Lasting purpose comes from a brand’s  
DNA — its core business extrapolated  
to its most human outcome.”

**- M.T. Fletcher, Ad Age**



# Inside out brand model



## **Brand heart**

As a leader, how can you drive inclusion as a core organisational value and embed it at the heart of your brand? Consider priorities at leadership, strategic and governance levels.

## **Brand culture**

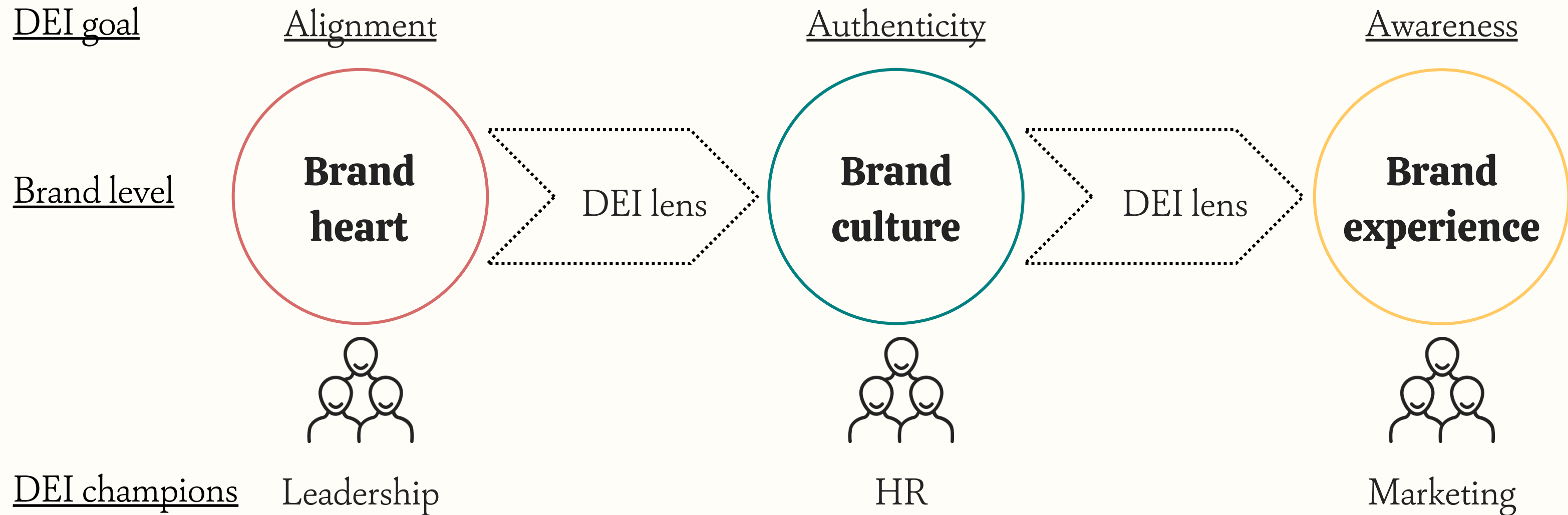
How can HR and team leads foster a more inclusive and psychologically safe volunteering culture? Focus on improving equity and inclusion when you recruit, engage, grow and inspire your team.

## **Brand experience**

How can marketing and frontline staff shift perceptions and create a welcoming experience through service delivery, community engagement, product design, marketing and communications?

# From another angle

Who are your DEI champions at each brand level? How can you connect the dots?



# 3 inclusive brand pillars

- Alignment: Start with your brand purpose
- Authenticity: Walk the talk. Be accountable, build trust
- Awareness: Connect over shared values



**Let's connect the dots**

Alignment... Authenticity... Awareness



# 1. Start with why

What is your brand purpose? Align inclusion efforts with your purpose and values.

## **2. Know your community**

Rediscover the community you serve. Who are they now and what do they care about? What are their barriers to volunteering?

# 3. Invite the right people to the table

Amplify and listen to diverse voices and perspectives. Nothing about them, without them.

# 4. Create shared meaning

How might you build a culture that celebrates your diverse community and what they care about?



# 5. Make a strategic commitment

Commit to a 'whole organisation' approach to inclusion and develop a strategic direction.

## 6. Set a fair budget

Like any other organisational priority, DEI needs a dedicated budget to be successful.

# 7. Everyone has a part to play

Your volunteer manager can't do it alone. Assign DEI champions, especially in leadership, HR and marketing.

# 8. Set realistic goals

Set achievable, impactful goals. Ask, “Does this help to build trust with our team and community?”



# 9. Stay accountable

How will you keep everyone accountable? What is the next step after you meet the first goal?

# 10. Involve volunteers

Create genuine and safe opportunities for volunteer voices to be heard in the process.

# 11. Lead by example

Be the change and champion inclusion through your own actions (not words).

# 12. Walk the talk

One-off attempts at inclusion don't work. Creating a genuine, inclusive culture is a long-term commitment.



# 13. Address barriers

Identify and address barriers to volunteering.

Audit systems, policies, processes and environments.

# 14. Be targeted and inclusive

Who is it for? Use targeted messages, inclusive language and accessible design that connects with your audience.

# 15. Celebrate small wins

Be pragmatic, celebrate the small wins with the whole team. Build trust with baby steps.

# 16. Representation matters

When we see ourselves represented, the message we receive is that we belong there too.

# 17. Take care with creative

Nothing undoes a brand image faster than good intentions communicated inappropriately. Set solid internal approval processes.



# 18. Measure, analyse, refocus

Develop a system to measure progress, analyse internal data and inform the setting of new targets.



# Closing thoughts

# Unsafe versus uncomfortable

It's crucial to understand the difference between these two words.

One is a barrier to progress. The other is the path.

**A brand is not just a logo, a  
website, or our business cards.  
It's an experience.**



“When a flower doesn’t bloom,  
you fix the environment in  
which it grows, not the flower.”

– **Alexander Den Heijer**



"Great brands bring people together,  
and optimism always wins."

**M.J Fletcher**



## Contact

[www.brandable.ink](http://www.brandable.ink)

LinkedIn: @brandableagency

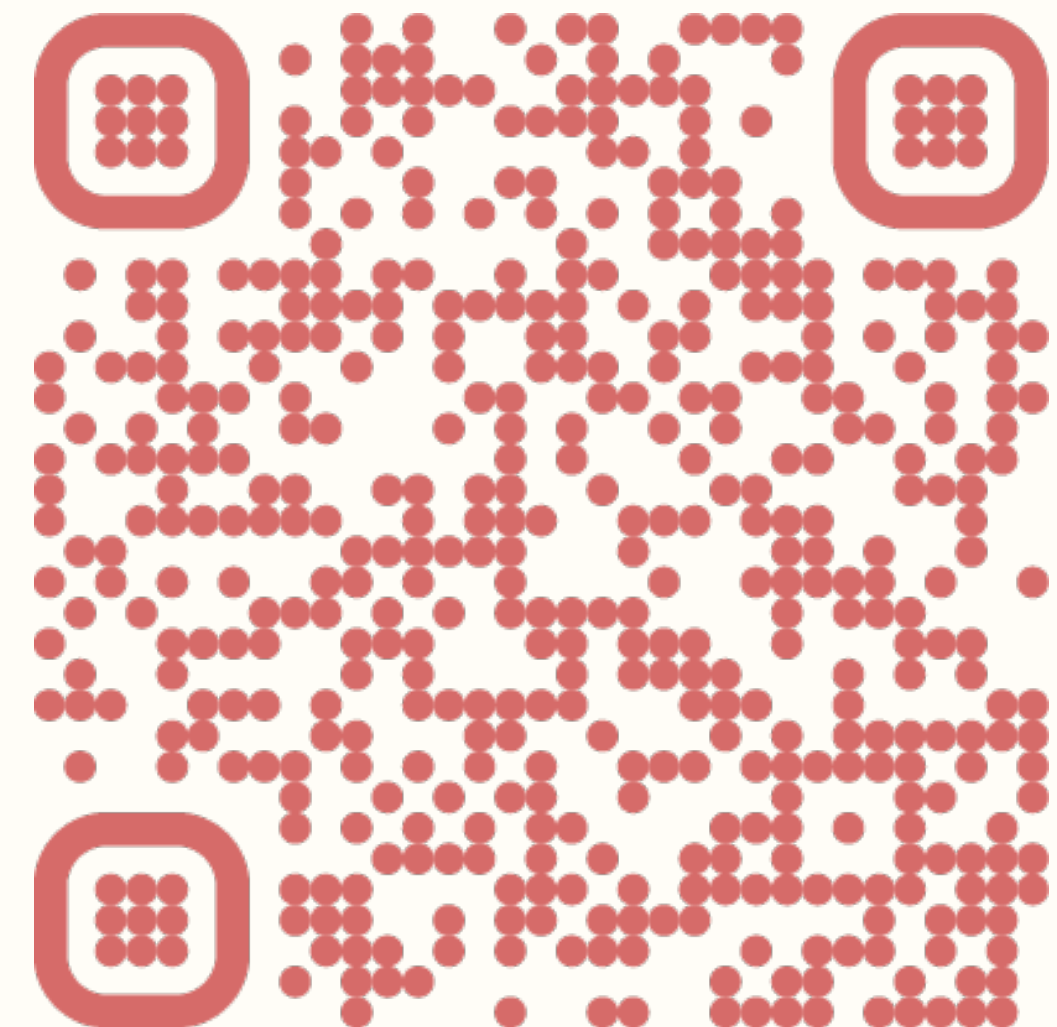
LinkedIn: @tesspalmyre

Instagram: @brandable\_agency

## Ready for a deep dive?

Scan for a copy of our DEI for brands ebook.

Or go to: [www.brandable.ink/DEIforbrands](http://www.brandable.ink/DEIforbrands)





# Thank you

[www.brandable.ink](http://www.brandable.ink)