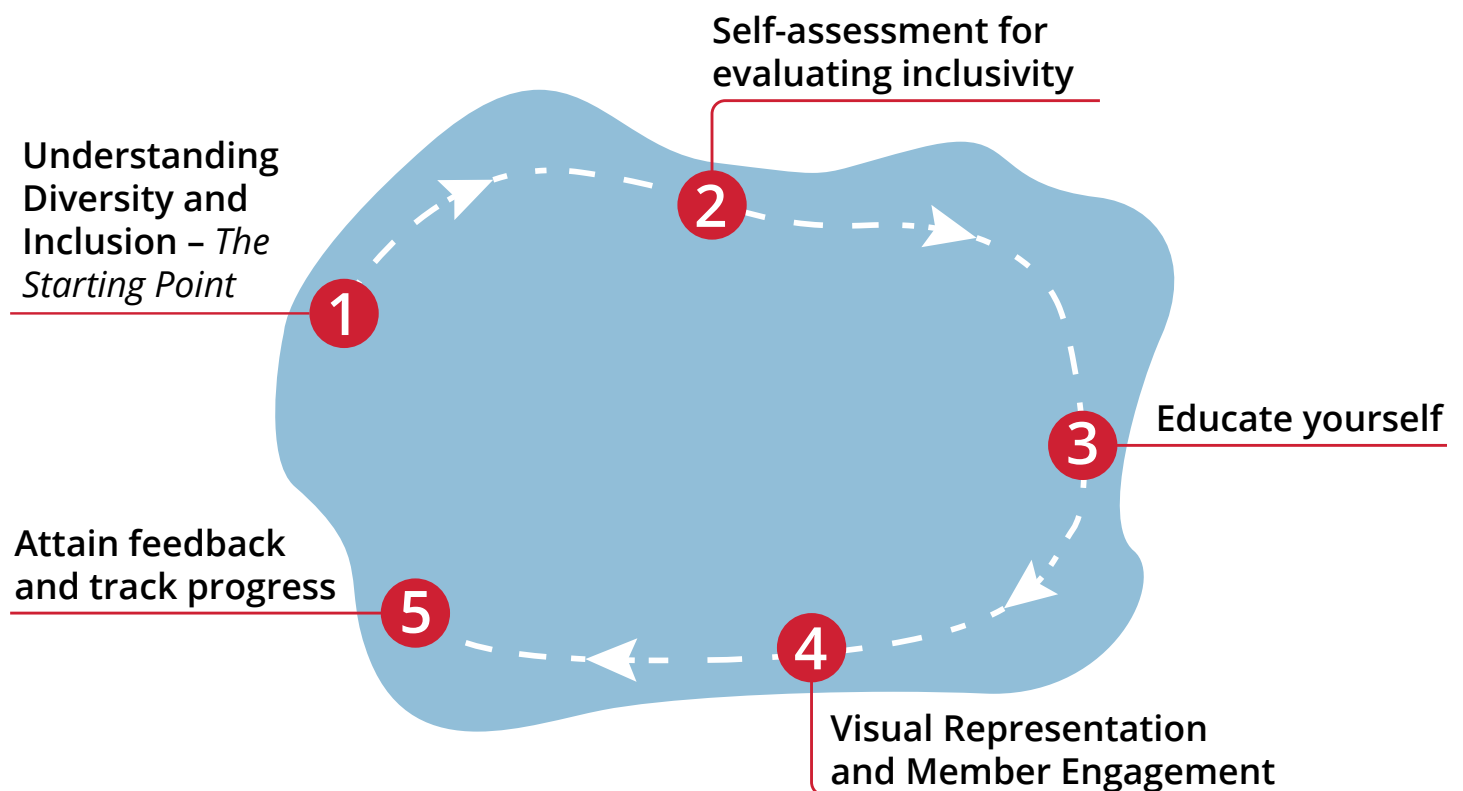


Plotting The Course

Creating an inclusive sailing club or facility is vital to ensuring that the sport remains accessible and enjoyable for all. Inclusivity not only fosters diversity within the sailing community but also reduces barriers that have historically excluded individuals based on factors like race, gender, socioeconomic status, or physical ability.

Before hoisting our sails to welcome equity-seeking groups, it's crucial to navigate the waters of internal reflection and preparation. A club or facility that fails to foster a culture of inclusivity risks leaving some sailors stranded on the shore, unable to show up at the helm. Embracing diversity not only enriches the sailing experience but also serves as a compass for personal growth and development, as members navigate new horizons, learning from each other's unique perspectives and expanding their horizons along the voyage.



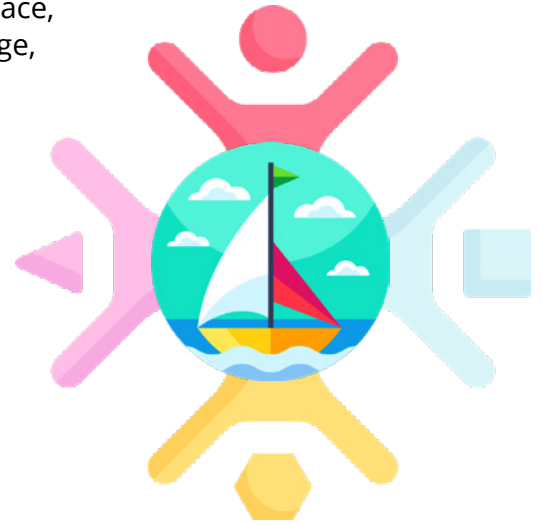
1 Understanding Diversity and Inclusion – *The Starting Point*

What is Diversity?

Diversity is a reality created by individuals and groups from a broad spectrum of demographic and philosophical differences, it is about understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing our individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies.

We can be **unintentionally** diverse which occurs when diversity arises **without** intentional efforts to foster inclusivity. Prioritizing actions and strategies aimed at promoting diversity and inclusion is crucial. Instead of relying on happenstance, we must proactively work towards creating a more inclusive environment.

To achieve **meaningful** diversity, we need to work to create a **safer** space.



What is Inclusion?

The dynamic state of operating in which diversity is leveraged to create a fair, healthy, and high-performing organization or community. An inclusive environment ensures equitable access to resources and opportunities for all. It also enables individuals and groups to feel safe, respected, engaged, motivated, and valued, for who they are and for their contributions toward organizational and societal goals.

Being inclusive means intentionally ensuring that all individuals feel valued and respected, regardless of their background or identity. It requires proactive efforts to dismantle barriers and create opportunities for participation and belonging for everyone.

A club can have diversity and not be inclusive (i.e. people don't feel welcomed or included)



Being more diverse benefits everyone!

Improved Community Engagement



A diverse sailing club is better positioned to engage with a broader cross-section of the community, including equity-seeking communities. This engagement fosters positive relationships, builds trust, and strengthens the club's reputation as an inclusive and welcoming organization.

Expanded Membership Base



By actively seeking individuals from diverse backgrounds, demographics, and interests, we can grow membership numbers over time. Data from Statistics Canada indicates that 31.5% of the population identifies as Indigenous or a person of colour. This widening of the membership base not only boosts revenue and resources for the club but also fosters a deeper sense of belonging and camaraderie among all members.

Enhanced Learning Environment



Interacting with people from different backgrounds exposes members to new ideas, approaches, and techniques. This exposure creates a dynamic learning environment where new and current sailors can broaden their knowledge and skills through cross-cultural exchange.

Increased Creativity and Innovation



Diversity sparks creativity by encouraging the exploration of different viewpoints and solutions to better understand the needs and of your whole community. In a diverse sailing club, members are more likely to come up with innovative strategies for improving club operations, organizing events, and enhancing the overall sailing experience.

Better Decision Making



By embracing diversity, sailing clubs can make more informed decisions that reflect the needs and preferences of all members, leading to more equitable and inclusive outcomes. Diverse teams are known to make better decisions because they consider a wider range of perspectives and viewpoints.

2 Self-Assessment for Evaluating Inclusivity

Identify areas for improvement in club policies and practices

Before setting sail towards greater diversity and inclusivity, it's crucial to tidy up our own deck first. Assessing our current practices and policies through a lens of inclusivity is essential. Sometimes, the ways we have done things are unintentionally excluding some participants from joining our Clubs and programs. Identify areas for improvement in club policies and practices

A self-assessment checklist for evaluating inclusivity in a sailing club should cover various aspects of club operations, policies, and culture.

Here's a list of items that could be reviewed include:

✓ Mission and Values

Assess if the organization's mission statement and values explicitly promote diversity, equity, and inclusion. Review whether they reflect the needs and aspirations of all community members, including underrepresented groups

✓ Membership Policies and Practices

Review membership criteria and application processes to ensure they are equitable and accessible to individuals from diverse backgrounds. Consider offering sliding-scale membership fees or scholarship programs to make membership more affordable for low-income individuals or families.

✓ Programming and Activities

Evaluate the diversity and inclusivity of existing programs and activities offered by the organization. Consider diversifying program offerings to appeal to a broader range of interests and backgrounds, and ensure that programs are accessible to individuals of all ages, abilities, and skill levels.

✓ Existing Community Engagement and Partnerships

Review existing community engagement efforts and partnerships to assess their impact on diversity and inclusion. Consider expanding partnerships with community organizations serving underrepresented populations and actively engaging with diverse community members in program planning and decision-making processes.

✓ Leadership and Governance

Evaluate the diversity of the organization's leadership team and governing board. Consider implementing policies or initiatives to promote diversity within leadership positions, such as adopting inclusive recruitment practices or establishing diversity quotas.

✓ Facilities and Accessibility

Conduct an accessibility audit of facilities to identify any physical barriers that may prevent individuals with disabilities from fully participating in programs or activities. Take steps to address these barriers, such as installing ramps, elevators, or accessible parking spaces.

✓ Communication and Outreach

Assess the organization's communication channels and messaging to ensure they are inclusive and accessible to all community members. Consider translating materials into multiple languages, providing alternative formats for individuals with visual impairments, and using inclusive language that reflects the diversity of the community.

Gathering Feedback from Existing Members and Community Groups

Through different options reach out to your existing members for suggestions and ideas on some things they would like to see in order for them to feel more welcomed and included.

- Surveys
- Focus groups
- Suggestion box
- Social media polls
- 1-On-1 interviews



Numerous community groups and non-profit organizations are already dedicated to supporting equity-seeking groups. Build your relationships and connections with them. Learn from these organizations as part of your club's journey towards being more inclusive. Community groups could include:

- Financial support organizations
- Ethnic and cultural organizations
- 2SLGBTQIA+ support organizations
- Your local Boys and Girls Club
- Refugee and immigrant support organizations

3 Educate Yourself

Educating staff and volunteers on cultural sensitivity is essential for building cultural competence within the sailing club. This involves providing training and resources to enhance understanding and respect for different cultural norms and practices. This includes learning to navigate: language barriers, nonverbal cues, and differing communication styles to ensure that all interactions are respectful and inclusive. By prioritizing cultural competence, the club can create a welcoming environment where individuals from diverse backgrounds feel valued and respected, ultimately enriching the sailing experience for everyone involved.



5 Visual Representation

Visual representation plays a crucial role in fostering inclusivity within sailing clubs.

This could include:

Providing signage and materials in multiple languages, clubs ensure that their messages are accessible to individuals from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Why: This simple yet effective measure not only demonstrates a commitment to inclusivity but also facilitates communication and engagement among club members and visitors who may speak different languages.

Representation in club imagery and promotional materials is essential for creating a welcoming environment.

Why: By featuring a diverse range of individuals in club materials, including advertising, websites, and social media, clubs signal their commitment to diversity and send a clear message that all are welcome to participate in sailing activities.



6 Member Engagement

Encouraging existing members to serve as ambassadors for inclusivity within the club can significantly contribute to a more inclusive environment.

Establishing mentorship or buddy systems further enhances inclusivity by providing support and guidance to all new members, helping them navigate the club's culture, activities, and resources with confidence. These initiatives not only facilitate the integration of new members but also strengthen bonds within the sailing community, ultimately contributing to a more inclusive and welcoming club environment for everyone.

Existing members can play a vital role in addressing barriers to participation, such as cost or transportation, by advocating for solutions that make sailing more accessible to all.



7 Attain Feedback and Track Progress

Establishing metrics for tracking progress towards inclusivity goals is essential for ensuring accountability and continuous improvement within sailing clubs.

This feedback-driven approach allows clubs to celebrate successes, such as reaching diversity milestones or implementing effective inclusivity initiatives, while also acknowledging areas for further growth. By setting specific, measurable goals related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, clubs can track their progress over time and make data-driven decisions to drive positive change.

Celebrating successes motivates members and reinforces the importance of inclusivity efforts, while acknowledging areas for further growth provides opportunities for reflection and refinement to ensure that the club remains committed to fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment for all.

