



# Kia Toipoto

Closing Gender, Māori, Pacific and Ethnic Pay Gaps

**Public Service Action Plan**  
2021-24

## Guidance

**Eliminating all forms of bias and  
discrimination in recruitment processes**

MAY 2023



**Te Kawa Mataaho**  
Public Service Commission



**Manatū Wāhine**  
Ministry for Women



**Te Puni Kōkiri**  
MINISTRY OF MĀORI DEVELOPMENT

**Ministry for  
Ethnic  
Communities**  
Te Tari Mātāwaka

**Ministry for  
Pacific  
Peoples**  
Te Manatū mō ngā hui o te Moana-nui-ā-Kiwa



## Purpose

This guidance supports Aotearoa New Zealand Public Service agencies and Crown entities to meet the following Kia Toipoto milestones.

### ***Te whakakore i te katoa o ngā momo whakatoihara, haukume anō hoki | Eliminating all forms of bias and discrimination***

*By the end of 2023:*

- *entities have remuneration and HR systems, policies and practices designed to remove all forms of bias and discrimination*
- *agencies embed and monitor the impact of bias-free HR and remuneration policies and practices*
- *agencies/entities ensure leaders and employees learn about and demonstrate cultural competence.*

### ***Te whai kanohi i ngā taumata katoa | Leadership and Representation***

*By the end of 2024, the Public Service workforce and leadership are substantially more representative of society.*

A number of recommendations in this guidance are similar to those in other pieces of guidance we have published. This is because there are common approaches that help tackle bias in human resource practices across the employment life cycle. Links to our guidance on other aspects of human resources (HR) and remuneration practices include:

- [Career Progression, break and leave guidance](#)
- [Improving workforce and leadership representation guidance](#)
- [The Flexible-Work-by-Default guidance](#)
- [Pay gaps guidance and resources.](#)

Advice for small organisations on implementing Kia Toipoto is in our [guidance - Implementing Kia Toipoto in small organisations](#).

Agencies have been working to close gender pay gaps and increase diversity and inclusion for several years. Some Crown entities will also have a history of work in this area. As a result, you may already be familiar with, and have implemented, some of the practices recommended in this guidance.

This guidance is underpinned by the five [Gender Pay Principles](#), which recognise the employment cycle begins before an employee commences working.

For support and queries, please contact the Equal Pay Taskforce at [EqualPay@publicservice.govt.nz](mailto:EqualPay@publicservice.govt.nz)



## Contents

Introduction.....	4
Purpose and application .....	4
Recruiting a diverse workforce .....	7
Addressing bias and discrimination .....	7
Recruitment process .....	8
Recommended recruitment steps.....	9
Step 1: Assess your current state .....	10
Step 2: Prepare your job scope and specification/description.....	11
Step 3: Prepare your job advertisement.....	12
Step 4: Reach your candidates.....	13
Step 5: Identify your selection and interview panel.....	13
Step 6: Shortlist your candidates.....	14
Step 7: Interview your candidates.....	15
Step 8: Salary offer.....	16
Step 9: Monitor your recruitment outcomes.....	16
Additional things to consider.....	17
Appendix 1: Recruiting a diverse workforce.....	19
Appendix 2: Case studies.....	20
Appendix 3: Diverse media outlets for advertising jobs.....	26
Appendix 4: Additional resources.....	27
Appendix 5: Glossary.....	28



## Introduction

### Kia Toipoto

[Kia Toipoto](#) is a plan of action, with milestones for agencies and entities to achieve from its release in 2021 to 2024. It builds on the successful Public Service Gender Pay Gap Action Plan 2018-20 but goes further, with specific actions to address the workplace drivers of gender, Māori, Pacific, and ethnic pay gaps. Kia Toipoto reflects the Gender Pay Principles, the legislative requirements of the Public Service Act 2020, the Human Rights Act 1993, the Equal Pay Act 1972, and the Government Workforce Policy Statement 2021.

This guidance is part of a suite of guidance to support agencies and entities to achieve the goals of Kia Toipoto:

- making substantial progress toward closing gender, Māori, Pacific and ethnic pay gaps
- accelerating progress for wāhine Māori, Pacific women, and women from ethnic communities
- creating fairer workplaces for all, including disabled people and members of Rainbow communities.

Eliminating all forms of bias from recruitment processes and practices ensures a fair, diverse, and inclusive workforce that is representative of the public it serves. Doing this will also support you to achieve your wider diversity, equity and inclusion goals.



### Purpose and application

This guidance supports Aotearoa New Zealand Public Service agencies and Crown entities (entities) to eliminate all forms of bias and discrimination in recruitment processes in line with the following two Kia Toipoto milestones.

- **Te whakakore i te katoa o ngā momo whakatoihara, haukume anō hoki | Eliminating all forms of bias and discrimination**

By the end of 2023:

- entities have remuneration and human resource (HR) systems, policies and practices designed to remove all forms of bias and discrimination in recruitment processes and practices
- agencies embed and monitor the impact of bias-free HR and remuneration policies and practices.

- **Te whai kanohi i ngā taumata katoa | Leadership and Representation**

By the end of 2024, the Public Service workforce and leadership overall will be substantially more representative of society.

HR/people practitioners and managers are advised to use this guidance, alongside unions and employees, when developing a strategy to ensure that recruitment processes and practices are free from all forms of bias and discrimination. Agencies and entities should consider how this guidance applies to all employment arrangements (including contractors) in accordance with the [Gender Pay Principles](#).

When agencies/entities create bias-free and inclusive recruitment processes they recognise the value of reflecting the diversity of Aotearoa New Zealand's population and the added value that diverse perspectives bring to quality decision-making.



## Public Service as an exemplar employer

The New Zealand Government seeks to establish the Public Service as an exemplar to other employers in the public sector and beyond. This means:

- promoting ways of working that enable inclusion, attraction, and retention of Māori, Pacific, and ethnic groups in the Public Service including people with disabilities and members of rainbow communities
- ensuring the workforce, and its leadership, are representative of and understand the communities they serve
- proactively working to eliminate all forms of discrimination and bias in workplaces, including in workplace systems, policies, practices and behaviour.

The Government's [Māori Employment Action Plan](#) uses 'building pathways into inclusive, sustainable and productive mahi for Māori' as its guiding principle which aligns with the Kia Toipoto milestones and commitments to Māori. By implementing this guidance, you will not only meet the recommendations for the Māori Employment Action Plan but you will also align with various [Employment Action Plans](#) which seek to improve labour market outcomes for women, youth, disabled people, Māori, Pacific peoples, older workers, former refugees, recent migrants, and ethnic communities. Furthermore, this guidance will help you meet the Government's expectations to be a good employer and create a public service in which everyone can reach their full potential. See section 73 of the [Public Service Act 2020](#) for more information on what makes a good employer.

## Related Public Service initiatives

Kia Toipoto sits alongside other work programmes to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion in the Public Service ([Papa Pounamu](#)), strengthen the public sector capability for [Māori Crown relationships](#), and [build positive and safe workplaces](#). Together these programmes of work are developing the Public Service of the future. Addressing bias and building cultural competence are Papa Pounamu priorities. More information and resources about bias and cultural competence can be found on [Addressing Bias](#) and [Cultural Competence](#).



**Kia Toipoto commitment:** Māori participate in action and monitoring and have career paths that empower them to achieve their career aspirations

The Public Sector is a large employer of Māori and should role model good employment practices, including recruitment practices and processes. Public Service data shows that Māori are well represented in the Public Service workforce overall but are over-represented in lower-paid roles and are still under-represented in leadership roles. This means a high number of Māori employees are undervalued and under-recognised.

Throughout our guidance you will see themes of valuing te ao Māori and other cultural skills and knowledge, transparency and engagement with employees and unions (including Māori employees and Māori union delegates).

This guidance will support your agency and/or entity to:

- enhance workplace practices and the mana of Māori and others
- work purposefully with good intentions to achieve equitable pay and work conditions for Māori
- include data and actions to achieve equitable outcomes for Māori in action plans
- celebrate tikanga, kawa and mātauranga Māori and taonga, such as te reo Māori.



---

*“The New Zealand employment system, from recruitment to retention, is shaped by Western frameworks. Māori are unable to practice tino rangatiratanga or exercise their mana from Te Tiriti in these systems.”*

*-Māori public servant<sup>1</sup>*

---

<sup>1</sup> Te Ara Mahi Māori - The Māori Employment Action Plan – Interim Report to the Minister for Social Development and Employment ([mbie.govt.nz](http://mbie.govt.nz))



### **Recruiting a diverse workforce**

Aotearoa New Zealand is growing and becoming more diverse. Like many developed nations, we are grappling with how to address complex issues resulting from rapid social and economic change. We are not immune from macro-trends influencing work and workforce globally. The Public Service workforce needs to reflect the diverse make-up of our society to better serve New Zealanders in a complex and fast-changing world. Recruiting employees from diverse backgrounds can create substantial benefits for both agencies and entities and the public that they serve [see Appendix 1 for more information].

### **Addressing bias and discrimination**

Fair and equitable pay is a fundamental human right. Everyone in Aotearoa New Zealand should have the same opportunities to achieve their career aspirations.

Gender and ethnic pay gaps are driven by factors like occupational segregation, under-representation in leadership, bias and discrimination. For instance, women, Māori, Pacific and ethnic public servants are over-represented in occupation groups that are lower paid.

This occupational segregation is even more pronounced for wāhine Māori, Pacific women, and ethnic women.

Primary caregivers are more likely to seek part-time work, which tends to be more readily available in lower-paid occupations and positions. This may limit access to better paying occupations and/or positions for primary caregivers who are most often women, wāhine Māori, Pacific women, and ethnic women. Stereotypical beliefs that view Pākehā men as natural leaders also limits women's opportunities (especially non-Pākehā women) for career development and progression.

Aotearoa New Zealand is home to diverse peoples from different cultures, with diverse abilities, and identities, and it is important that policies and practices recognise and value these differences.

---

*“There needs to be a change in the way we understand people’s strengths. It shouldn’t be ‘where you have worked’, but ‘what do you value and want to bring to the table.’”*

*-Hui participant (Te Ara Mahi Māori)<sup>2</sup>*

---

<sup>2</sup> Te Ara Mahi Māori – The Māori Employment Action Plan – Interim Report to the Minister for Social Development and Employment ([mbie.govt.nz](http://mbie.govt.nz))



## Recruitment process

Creating a diverse workforce that reflects the public we serve requires recruitment processes that: resonate with people from all cultures and backgrounds (including migrant, Rainbow, disabled and neurodiverse communities); are deliberately inclusive; and free from all forms of bias (including gender and ethnic biases).

Processes should:

- actively seek opportunities to attract and recruit diverse candidates from both outside your agency/entity and internally (see the [Kia Toipoto Career progression, pathways, breaks and leave guidance](#) for more information)
- ensure that the job description and advertisement focus on the skills, qualifications and experiences that are necessary for the role
- ensure that there is equal access where all potential candidates have a fair chance to compete for the role
- use the recommendations in this guidance to minimise the potential for individual and structural bias at each stage of the attraction and recruitment process.

Your ability to attract a diverse range of candidates is influenced by:

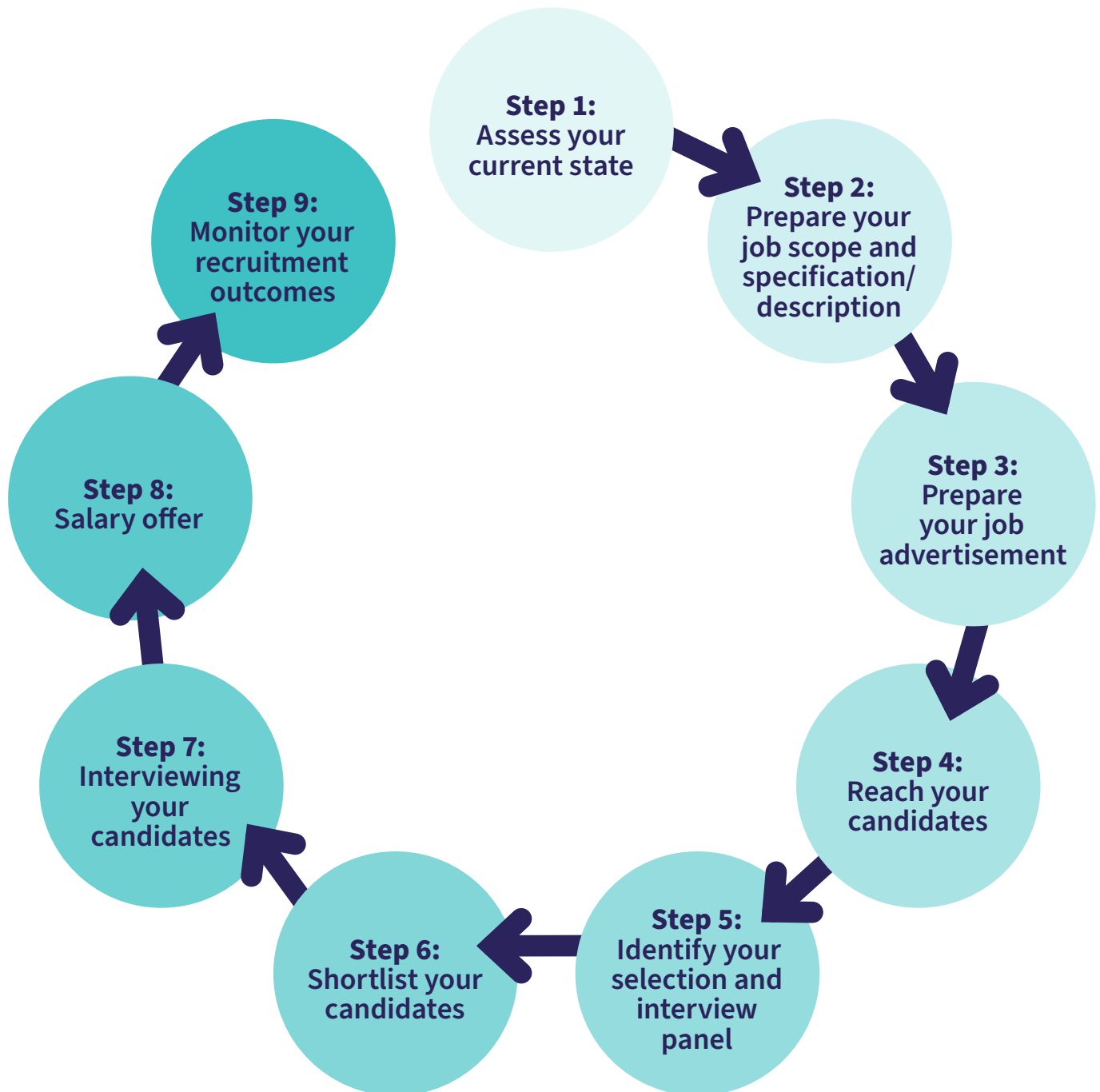
- your reputation as an equitable and inclusive employer
- your level of understanding of the importance and benefits of a diverse workforce
- where you advertise your jobs, how you describe the role and your workplace, and the channels and networks you use to attract candidates
- whether your public facing material and imagery reflects your commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). For instance, can women, Māori, Pacific and ethnic candidates (including candidates from migrant, Rainbow, disabled, and neurodiverse communities) see themselves working in your organisation?







## Recommended recruitment steps





## Step 1: Assess your current state

### Recommendations

Building representation of women, Māori, Pacific, and ethnic employees (including employees from migrant, Rainbow, disabled, and neurodiverse communities), requires deliberate steps to ensure you are recruiting for diversity.

**Firstly, assess your current state by asking:**

- What does your agency/entity look and feel like to diverse candidates? Is your agency/entity gender-balanced and representative of the different ethnic communities of Aotearoa? Are you currently a welcoming, inclusive, and diverse organisation?
- Would people from diverse backgrounds and cultures be able to see themselves as part of your agency/entity?
- As an agency/entity committed to delivering high quality services to our diverse population, what skills, experience and voices are not represented as strongly as they should be?

**To help you answer these questions, gather your data and information, both quantitative and qualitative:**

- Track diverse representation among candidates, short-lists, and new recruits - to help identify problem points in your process. For example, you may be attracting a respectable number of Pacific candidates, but they don't progress to the short-listing stages.
- Seek feedback from candidates, new recruits, panel members and managers about the recruitment experience to identify possible sources and reasons for bias and discrimination. Ensure investigations into potential bias and discrimination (including the process, results, and actions to address issues) are transparent and accessible to all employees, union delegates, and employee-led networks.

**Think about your recruitment process as a whole:**

- Due diligence is needed to ensure that any external recruitment agencies can demonstrate that their processes are inclusive and free from all forms of bias and align with this guidance.
- Ensure everyone who may be involved in the recruitment process has received training in bias and cultural competency.
- Check that recruitment processes are proportionate to the demands of each role. Too many steps and/or unnecessary requirements can discourage a diverse pool of potential candidates.
- Widen the channels you advertise vacancies to include a diverse range of cultural and community networks and platforms [see Appendix 3].

Set organisational goals with your employees, union delegates, and employee-led networks to identify and address the points where you have identified bias and discrimination. One strategy to reduce the impact of discrimination and enable commonly disadvantaged groups to achieve equal outcomes with other groups is to introduce special measures. [Special measures](#) are used to ensure equal outcomes rather than simply equal treatment. Positive actions to achieve equality (special measures) are permissible under the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 s19(2) and the Human Rights Act 1993 s73(1) under certain conditions and are intended to be temporary.



## Step 2: Prepare your job scope and specification/description

### Recommendations

Each vacancy is an opportunity for you to take a fresh look at your job scope and description and clarify what is (and isn't) required. It's the perfect time to reconsider your job scope to identify what skills and experiences you may be missing in the role, team, and agency/entity, and think about what you may need in the future.

- Base your job scope and description on the skills required for the role. Look beyond qualifications and/or length of time in paid work and consider experience outside of paid work. This is a more equitable approach to employment and will reduce economic and social barriers.<sup>3</sup> For example, a candidate may not have the paid work experience but has developed relevant skills from working in their local marae or church. We recommend referring to Te Orowaru, a bias-free work assessment tool, which has been designed for the Aotearoa context and is framed around the requirements of the Equal Pay Act 1972.<sup>4</sup> Te Orowaru focuses on skills, responsibilities and effort required by the work.
- Avoid fitting the job scope or description to a stereotype of who traditionally does this type of work, or who has held this role in the past.
- Note the added value that cultural knowledge/intelligence, language skills, and/or international experiences could bring to the role, team, and agency/entity.
- Consider what flexible options are possible for this role. Could candidates living in other parts of the country be employed? Have you considered whether the role may offer alternative employment arrangements (i.e. part-time and job sharing)? Letting people know flexible working is part of your agency/entity will attract a wider range of candidates. You can find more information in the [Flexible-by-default guidance](#).
- Involve employees, unions, and employee-led networks in reviewing processes for scoping jobs and developing job descriptions.<sup>5</sup> For example, have a small working group of diverse peoples review your current job scoping and descriptions and see whether it resonates with them. They can also pick up on any barriers that you might have missed (*see case studies in Appendix 2*).
- Remove unnecessary skills or requirements from the job description and job advertisement. For instance, think of removing a requirement for a driver's licence if the job does not involve driving. This is a barrier for those that do not drive, people living with disabilities and new migrants. Remove reference to non-essential qualifications, and instead refer to the skills and knowledge needed (e.g. "a sound knowledge of xyz gained through education, paid and/or unpaid work, mahi aroha, in local churches, marae, or other settings").
- Explicitly state that overseas experiences and qualifications are valid, unless the role requires a New Zealand qualification, such as a professional registration.
- Ensure that that the result of the work assessment informs the whole recruitment process, so that the job description, personal specification, advertisement, selection criteria etc are consistent.

<sup>3</sup> Apanui-Barr, Hinepounamu – Nau Mai Te Ānamata Tomorrow's Skills (April 2022)

<sup>4</sup> [Te Orowaru – Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission](#)

<sup>5</sup> To clarify, this is for the job scoping process and practice as a whole rather than individual job scoping and job descriptions.

## Step 3: Prepare your job advertisement

### Recommendations

Candidates need to be clear about the job tasks, deliverables and skills required, so that they can relate their experiences and skills to the requirements of the job.

- Are you using plain English and avoiding colloquial terms and acronyms?
- Are you using [gender-neutral language](#)?
- Does the description in the advertisement accurately reflect what the job entails? One factor that contributes to people leaving a job prematurely is that the role is different to what was advertised<sup>6</sup> or understood at the interview.
- Keep the description as brief as possible and avoid overstating the level of skills needed, as this is likely to disproportionately deter women and people from many ethnic groups. Starting from the minimum skills needed for the job will attract the widest range of candidates.

#### Include in your job advertising that you:

- are committed to diverse, equitable and inclusive workplaces. Link to your Kia Toipoto pay gaps action plan as evidence of this commitment
- have flexible work options
- value skills, transferable skills, lived experiences, experiences from both paid and unpaid work (including caring, voluntary, community, and mahi aroha)
- welcome work experiences both internationally and/or within New Zealand
- are interested in those who are willing to gain those experiences and/or skills that you are looking for if they do not already have these
- include the salary range for the role. If there are additional pay benefits, also make this clear during the recruitment process.<sup>7</sup>

#### Think about whether there are additional ways of attracting diverse candidates to your agency/entity, such as:

- a video showcasing the values and purpose of your agency/entity. Many candidates are attracted by opportunities to serve and give back to their communities. Short videos can showcase how your organisation may offer these opportunities and demonstrate your agency/entity is a diverse, inclusive and welcoming place to work.

<sup>6</sup> The Office of Ethnic Affairs (2011). [A Foot in the door: Opening the door to ethnic diversity.](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Kia Toipoto Guidance: Ensuring bias does not influence starting salaries](#)



## Step 4: Reach your candidates

### Recommendations

Finding the right candidate for the job also depends on how widely you cast your net. You need to think of ways of reaching potential candidates besides the traditional paths.

#### You may want to consider:

- using a range of ethnic media [*Appendix 3*] in addition to mainstream media and job advertising outlets (such as Seek, Jobs.govt.nz and your agency/entity's website)
- targeting the newsletters and journals of professional networks
- connecting with community groups, agency/entity cultural networks and your own employees, employee-led networks, and union networks
- ensuring that any recruitment agencies you use understand you are looking for a diverse group of candidates and can deliver on this.

The right candidate may already exist in a different role within your agency/entity. This may be an opportunity for them to progress their career, so it's important to look both internally and externally when advertising the role. Ensure you have transparent internal recruitment policies and processes in place (see the [Career progression, breaks, and leave guidance](#)).

## Step 5: Identify your selection and interview panel

### Recommendations

This panel will be the 'face' of your organisation when you meet the candidates, so it is important to set the scene that you are an organisation that values and fosters diversity and inclusion.

#### Ensure that your selection and interview panel is:

- as diverse as possible (genders, cultures, able-diverse, Rainbow etc)
- trained in bias awareness and cultural competency and understand what a fair and equitable recruitment process looks like
- familiar with the requirements of the job being advertised and understand the skills needed for the role and the selection criteria.



## Step 6: Shortlist your candidates

### Recommendations

To ensure that bias and discrimination does not occur in this part of the recruitment process, **ensure that you:**

- base your shortlisting on the skills identified in your job assessment and description
- conduct shortlisting with reference to your organisation's gender, ethnic and diversity goals
- conduct shortlisting with reference to the selection criteria you have determined (the criteria need to be clear to all those involved, and you need to be able to provide feedback about why a candidate was not shortlisted)
- ensure everyone involved in shortlisting is aware of how bias can lead to assumptions about an applicant
- value skills and experiences that are equivalent to qualifications
- treat skills and competencies acquired through caring, voluntary, community work, unpaid work, and mahi aroha in the same way as those gained through paid work
- ensure that you treat overseas/international qualifications and work experience the same way as New Zealand qualifications/experience
- avoid negative assumptions about periods of leave and/or multiple fixed term employment (*see [Career progression, pathways, breaks and leave guidance](#) for more information*)
- ensure that shortlisting decisions are made by the recruitment panel
- monitor the outcomes of your shortlisting process. Does your shortlisting process result in a diverse, ethnic-balanced and/or a gender-balanced shortlist?



## Step 7: Interview your candidates

### Recommendations

To ensure all forms of bias and discrimination is eliminated from this part of the process, you need an inclusive and consistent approach to interviewing.

**These are some following examples.**

- Include some of the same people who conducted the shortlisting on the interview panel. If this is not possible, ensure that everyone involved in this process are clear of the criteria to help ensure consistency.
- Establish the cultural and physical access needs of candidates and ensure these are met. For example, offer all candidates the opportunity to bring kaiawhina/support person(s) to the interview. Be mindful of the time for interviews (for example, our Muslim whānau have specific prayer times during the day). Offer a range of interview times.
- Give candidates the option of interviewing either in person or virtually. Flexibility will support a wide range of candidates.
- Ensure the interviews are structured. Ask candidates the same questions based on the criteria relevant to the job description and person specifications.
- Depending on the skills you are wanting to assess, consider whether to provide candidates with some or all interview questions in advance, or with information on the interview process and competencies that will be asked about. Be clear that candidates should draw on their experience and skills acquired in paid work, unpaid work, caring and/or study. Doing this can make job interviews more accessible for diverse applicants, providing time for all candidates to consider how their unpaid work experience relates to the skills required of the role. This is particularly helpful for people less experienced with job interviews, less comfortable about advocating for themselves and for neurodiverse people.<sup>8</sup> Ask yourself, are you trying to assess how well the candidates performs in interviews or uncover how well their skills align with the skills required for the role?
- Actively encourage interviewees to share skills acquired outside paid work. For example, you could ask the candidate to give an example of when they had shown leadership skills from other experiences, like leading a church or community group. Having an all-inclusive approach to your interview questions will ensure you have captured the relevant skills and experiences you are looking for in a candidate.
- Discuss your organisation's commitment to a range of flexible work options with the candidate.
- Use robust panel decision-making processes. For example, use an approach that will help avoid 'groupthink'. It is important to ensure that every member of the group develops their own opinion independently.
- Moderate or review selection decisions for ethnic and gender bias.

In terms of setting the scene, try conducting the interview outside of the office space (for example, this could mean going out into the community, marae, churches, and halls). An alternative option could involve changing the seating arrangements in an interview by using round tables instead to create more of a kōrero or talanoa environment (see *Case Studies in Appendix 2 for more information*). This would further showcase that your organisation is committed to diversity and inclusion from the start of the employment cycle.

<sup>8</sup> Hammond, David (2022). [Neurodiversity: Untapped Talent – a guide for public sector recruitment](#).



## Step 8: Salary offer

### Recommendations

Transparency is critical in this step.

#### Ensure proposed salary offers:

- are justifiable in line with your organisation’s bias-free salary criteria
- are consistent with starting salaries for equivalent roles across the organisation and in line with similarly skilled and experienced colleagues
- reflect the full value of skills gained through caring, voluntary and community work, and mahi aroha
- reflect the full value of cultural expertise, Māori Crown relations skills, knowledge of te ao Māori, and/or te reo Māori, Pacific language and cultural skills, and other ethnic people’s culture and languages
- are not unfairly influenced by factors not related to the job requirements requirements (e.g. candidate’s previous or current salary, flexible work requirements, parenting and caring responsibilities, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, and disability)
- are transparent, by providing the candidate with:
  - the salary rate or range for the role in the job advertisement
  - the criteria the salary offer is based on
  - a copy of the Collective Employment Agreement (for roles covered by a collective agreement).

Remove salary negotiation from the process, as negotiation disadvantages a wide range of candidates. You can find more information and guidance in the [Kia Toipoto Guidance Starting Salaries](#).

## Step 9: Monitor your recruitment outcomes

### Recommendations

Conduct regular reviews to ensure your diversity outcomes are achieved and that your processes are free from all forms of bias and discrimination. You should seek feedback from both successful and unsuccessful candidates, interviewers, and managers.

*“Pay has always been a sore point. I have never negotiated. It is my cultural norms, but I also don’t have it in me to negotiate a pay rise. Then I find out that another person doing the same role – who is less experienced than me, is getting paid way more than me – and that is really saddening.”*

*-Indian female public servant<sup>9</sup>*

<sup>9</sup> [Exploring-the-Ethnic-Pay-Gap-in-the-Public-Services-Voices-from-the-Rito-Report.pdf \(mpp.govt.nz\)](#)





## Additional things to consider

### ***Psychometric assessment***

Psychometric tests are structured and standardised measures designed to assess cognitive, behavioural or emotional functioning. These vary in the degree of formality between structured observations (such as questionnaires), to prescribed tasks which are administered under carefully controlled standardised conditions.

#### **Any assessment processes used by agencies and entities must:**

- adhere to, and be consistent with, Te Titiri o Waitangi, the Equal Pay Act 1972, the Human Rights Act 1993, the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990, the Public Service Act 2020 and the Privacy Act 2020
- be free from bias and discrimination.

Great care must be taken, particularly when the outcome of any assessment process has serious consequences (such as a candidate not being selected for a role).

#### **Agencies and entities should be able to demonstrate prior to use, that any psychometric tests:**

- are appropriate and relevant for the objectives of the assessment
- have been validated against a large population with similar characteristics (such as language or ethnicity) to those being tested. Agencies and entities should note that the New Zealand Psychologists Board states that there are few tests that have been developed and validated against New Zealand populations (see [Board Guidelines](#))
- will be used only as one of several sources of information for any given evaluation.
- will be used only with written and informed consent from the candidate prior to use (including the possible outcomes of the test results), confirming what might happen if people decide not to take part in the test, privacy considerations, and who has the right to receive the results
- will be administered by professionals who know how to use and interpret the tests and provide feedback (including providing information on how people can obtain support if they have a negative reaction to the assessment and feedback)
- are not more frequent or intrusive than necessary to gain the required information, as over-testing can lead to misleading results due to practice effects.

Agencies and entities should also be confident that psychologists (or others trained to use the tests) will operate in line with the New Zealand Psychologists Board's [Guidelines on Using Psychometric Tests](#).



## Merit

### **Section 72 of the Public Service Act 2020 requires people to be appointed on merit.**

Agencies/entities should ensure their definitions of merit are clearly framed around the requirements of the Equal Pay Act 1972 (focusing on skills, responsibilities and effort required by the work) and are well understood by everyone involved in the recruitment process. This is important because when we apply an untested or poorly defined concept of merit, we risk being drawn to people who think, look and act like us.

### **Recognition and providing feedback to candidates**

It's important to recognise the time and effort involved in applying for a role, even if candidates are not successful. This can involve a simple 'thank you' email on receipt of an application or a more tailored one later in the process.

Providing feedback to candidates as to why they did not get the role ensures that you have been robust in your assessments against the set of criteria that your organisation has developed. This also gives critical feedback for candidates for future job opportunities.

By doing this, you will continue to encourage people to apply for future roles within your organisation and the wider Public Service.

### **Onboarding**

The recruitment process does not end at the 'salary offer', but continues into onboarding processes, as candidates' impression of your organisation is formed in the first few months. Your induction should aim to go beyond support in the technical aspects of the roles, but ensure that your new recruit feels welcomed, included, supported and cared for. For instance, provide your new recruit with a buddy who has good relationship skills who can provide informal support and answer queries and questions.

Please refer to the *Summary of actions* table on page 17 of our [Guidance on improving workforce and leadership representation](#). The table contains short, medium, and long-term actions in response to common challenges related to recruitment processes and practices.

---

*“Our cultural knowledge and leadership strengths we have outside of the workplace are seen as transferable, and allow us to bring our full selves to work.”*

*-Pacific public servant*

---

## Appendix 1: Recruiting a diverse workforce

When you focus on having an inclusive and diverse workplace, your organisation will flourish in three key areas:<sup>10</sup>

### 1. *You're doing the right thing: Social licence*

- Social equity – when your organisation recruits from a diverse group of people (particularly wāhine, Māori, Pacific, Asian, and ethnic communities), you make it possible to design and deliver strategies that will effectively address and improve historical inequities.
- Co-production – the communities that you serve will be more likely to actively participate and collaborate with you because they feel represented.
- Social cohesion – your organisation brings traditionally under-represented groups to the decision-making table, which contributes to social harmony.

### 2. *Your diversity enhances your performance: Productivity*

- Motivation – your diverse and inclusive culture will increase morale and engagement for all your employees, benefitting productivity and lowering staff turnover.
- Innovation and creativity – your diverse team/workforce will bring different ways of thinking, working, stories and experiences.
- Team performance – your team's diverse views will lead to stronger and more effective problem-solving and decision-making.



### 3. *You use it as a tool to plan for success: Prospectivity*

- By managing diversity well and strategically developing your inclusive culture, your organisation has the tools to plan for opportunities and deliver on goals.

**There are two barriers that can interfere with aspirations to employing a diverse workforce:**

- **Individual bias:** assumptions we make about a person, particularly in the case of culture and gender diversity. These assumptions foster bias, prejudice, and discrimination which ultimately cloud judgements about the capabilities of candidates. Allowing this to happen, will impact on agencies and entities performance and their mahi towards improving the public service and the communities that they serve.
- **Structural bias in attraction and recruitment processes:** This can include unnecessary requirements in the job description such as specific qualifications or past paid work experience when equivalent skills and experience can be acquired in both paid and unpaid work.

<sup>10</sup> [Why Diversity - DiversityWorks \(diversityworks.org.nz\)](https://diversityworks.org.nz)



## Appendix 2: Case studies

### Case study 1: New Zealand Police recruitment diversity story

For several decades, New Zealand Police has aimed to increase the diversity of the Constabulary workforce and has seen incremental improvements over time. There have been two main barriers that have prevented workforce diversity from increasing more quickly. Firstly, turnover in the Constabulary workforce is traditionally low and acts as a break on the pace of change. Secondly, there are long-standing societal expectations of what a constable looks like, which means if Police doesn't actively encourage diverse applicants, then around 80 percent of those applying will be Pākehā, and 80 percent will be male.

Budgets 2017 and 2018 funded Police to increase overall Constabulary numbers by 1,800, more than 20 percent. Senior management saw that this was a once-in-a-generation chance to make a significant difference to the diversity of the Police workforce.

Police set themselves the medium-term goal of increasing the diversity of gender and ethnicity of recruits over the growth period matching that of the New Zealand population. Whilst in the short term, these goals may not have been achievable, they encouraged a comprehensive review of all attraction and recruitment processes.

Police has used many approaches to increase the number of people from diverse communities who apply, such as:

- several dedicated recruitment campaigns prominently featuring existing staff from diverse communities
- messages and language specifically designed to attract underrepresented groups, including using te reo Māori
- placing advertisements in channels that reach diverse communities
- including messages designed to address barriers to applying that were identified by these communities.



Credit: New Zealand Police



Police also addressed a number of practical barriers identified by target populations, such as adding uniform items (e.g. a [hijab](#)) that allow the recruitment of candidates from a number of religious traditions and encouraging applicants to see physical requirements as something they can work towards.

Police have staff from many communities, a number of Employee-led Networks, and working relationships with iwi and other community groups. Using existing relationships is good way to start conversations with potential applicants and to encourage them to make the next steps.

Over the growth period, Police identified that within the demographic makeup of the organisation, there were groups that need specific targeting. For instance, tāne Māori were being recruited above their population level, but wāhine Māori were not. Police rolled out the [Puhikura campaign](#), developed by wāhine Māori for wāhine Māori. This campaign includes online advertising and specific events held in communities across the country.

The framework used for the Puhikura campaign was built on:

- Tikanga Māori – to ensure the mana of the wāhine who share their stories is protected.
- Motuhēhē | authenticity – talk authentically about the challenges and rewards experienced by wāhine Māori in the Police, so trust can be built and address real concerns/questions through real perspectives. Aim for genuine engagement from those interested in joining the NZ Police.
- Creating a better future — reflect on the past, acknowledge the present, and paint a picture of the future NZ Police want to see. Talking with those wāhine Māori in the NZ Police about their experiences with Police helped create an improved pathway for new recruits into more sustainable careers.

Not only has this campaign attracted interest from wāhine Māori, but it is also beneficial for recruitment from other groups as well. Most New Zealanders see an organisation making an effort to increase diversity as a good thing and it will make them more likely to apply even if they themselves are not from the target demographic group.

To ensure that applications translate into future constabulary employees, Police reviewed both its recruitment process and its attraction activities. Police collect diversity information at application, enabling a review of success rates of different groups at each stage of the recruitment process. This informs them if they need to amend or replace the recruitment tool with one that can be shown to be unbiased.

Taking this approach, Police can show that the chance of an applicant being selected is no longer affected by gender or ethnicity. Police will continue to monitor for potential bias in the process.

Since 2017, Police have been recruiting at levels never seen before even in the tight labour market, which has been achieved largely due to enlarging their potential pool of recruits to previously under-recruited groups.

The literal and figurative face of Police has changed forever. Since 2017, 60 percent of the growth of Constabulary staff has been women, and an even higher proportion has been ethnicities other than Pākehā. This change wouldn't have happened without very high levels of management commitment and hard work from the recruitment team and across Police. Ideally, successful diversity attraction will change society's view of what a constable looks like, though this change will be measured in decades not years. Police recognise the importance of continuing to put in the effort, even though they have already seen substantial success.



## Case study 2: DIA's 'Focusing on Pasifika kaimahi' recruitment story

The Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) began analysis of their gender pay gap in 2016 with a working group which involved the Public Service Association. This included understanding the diversity of their workforce. They identified that their Pacific people are clustered in lower-paying jobs and have a significantly lower average salary compared to other ethnic groups.

They started by discussing the barriers where DIA needed to support managers more to achieve greater diversity.

They identified problem areas and made the following changes to their recruitment:

- reviewed recruitment guides, adding information to areas where bias can happen to encourage managers to think about and mitigate bias through the recruitment process
- developed and ran unconscious bias workshops for managers (alongside implementing an e-learning unconscious bias module for all kaimahi)
- added external job sites that are more diverse to their list of job sites for managers to choose where to advertise their vacancies.

## Talanoa Session – Auckland Pacific ngā kaimahi

The Department of Internal Affairs (DIA) held their first face to face talanoa session with Auckland Pacific staff, and as a result some immediate changes were made to the recruitment processes, including:

- physical changes to the interview room/ environment (e.g. using a round instead of a square table – staff felt intimidated with the square table, whereas a round table gives the feeling of a talanoa, having a conversation rather than being ‘interviewed’)
- offering interview questions to candidates pre-interview
- option to start/finish the interview with karakia, prayer, or waiata
- for internal candidates who weren’t successful, offering them learning and training opportunities (e.g. shadowing and secondments).

Following the talanoa sessions with DIA Pacific employees, a feedback template was created to help managers give meaningful feedback to unsuccessful applicants. This includes, wherever possible, identifying potential development opportunities for internal applicants.

Managers are encouraged to share the interview questions with shortlisted applicants in advance of the interview. This encourages applicants to be better prepared. Managers have noted that where this has happened, the interview flows better, and candidates appear less nervous.





### ***Pacific career broker***

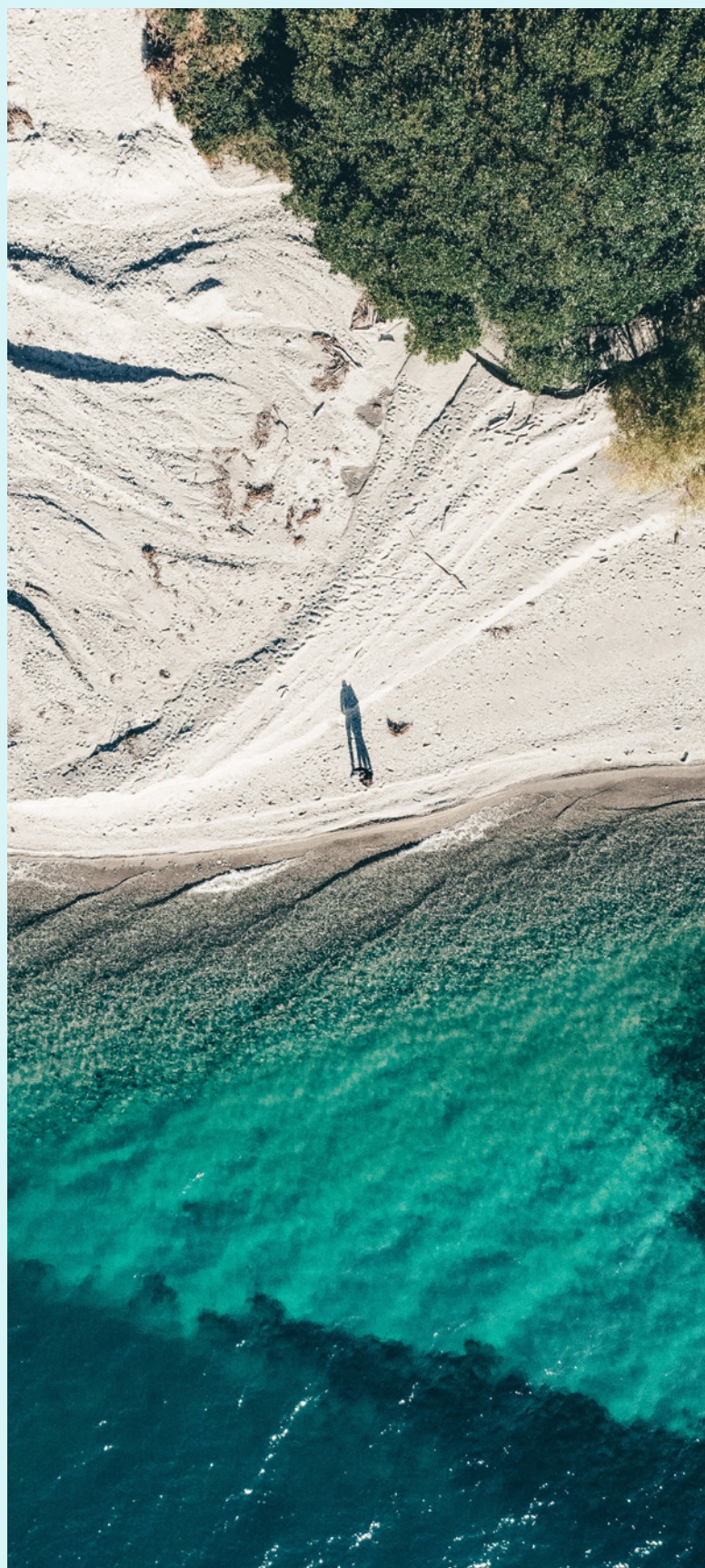
At the DIA Pacific fono in 2019 and through workshops, kaimahi discussed the factors that prevented Pacific kaimahi from being considered for and moving into different jobs.

In response to this fono, DIA created a Pacific Career Broker role, with the remit to:

- help encourage career development and progression to more senior positions and to build and develop the skills and confidence of Pacific staff
- provide support and guidance on exploring career and development opportunities, talent management and placement, alongside advice on effective CV writing and interview preparation
- provide advice to managers on improving and adapting their recruitment and interview practices to mitigate unconscious bias to ensure staff, regardless of gender, ethnicity, age or disability experience a fair and positive recruitment process.

This initiative has the support and sponsorship of a Deputy Chief Executive.

A particular highlight of the Career Broker role has been the increase in Pacific employees in the DIA technology area. In the 2021/22 financial year, DIA was successful in recruiting nine new Pacific employees into this group.





## Case Study 3: Stats NZ's recruitment story

### **Problem: Lack of diversity and inclusion in the recruitment process**

At Tatauranga Aotearoa | Stats NZ, a gap in consistency of service and recruitment expertise was exposed during an independent recruitment process conducted by hiring managers.

To address this, two full-time recruitment advisors were brought on board and Amaria Osman was appointed as the recruitment lead. The initial focus was to review the recruitment process, but it was clear that there was a lack of diversity and inclusiveness in the talent acquisition approach. The existing process resulted in limited diversity and ethnic representation across the individuals being hired. Demographic reporting showed that there was a need to improve diversity across all spectrums, including increasing the involvement of Māori in the Public Service and hiring more Māori to enhance te ao Māori and Māori data analysis capabilities.

To address the systematic barriers, Stats NZ sought outside help and engaged Diversity Works to complete a stocktake in 2021. The analysis revealed that there were systematic barriers in the recruitment process (such as existing bias in language and terminology) and the design of recruitment tools. To address these barriers, Stats NZ started an end-to-end process review and tracked outcomes. The recruitment team sought feedback from hiring managers and diversity and inclusion (D&I) advisors along the way to ensure that the changes being made were effective and aligned with the organisational goals.

### **Solution: Attracting candidates from diverse backgrounds by widening the search and improving content**

To attract a more diverse pool of applicants, Stats NZ needed to expand their reach beyond the traditional job advertisement sites, like Seek and jobs.govt. They started using more tailored platforms such as Kumara Vine, Mahi, Māori and Pacific Jobs, and Do Good Jobs. They also made these following changes.

#### **Updated job ad template**

The recruitment team reviewed their existing job ad template and found that it focused a lot on the organisation and demanded a list of 'must-haves'. To make job advertisements more inclusive, the template was redesigned to focus on the candidate and to encourage people from all backgrounds to apply. Candidates were encouraged to include non-work information, transferable skills and experience, community involvement, or anything else they consider relevant.

#### **Inclusive careers landing page**

To offer an inclusive experience from the start, Stats NZ updated its careers landing page. The updates included:

- kupu Māori and more inclusive terminology
- highlighting the work, culture, benefits, and networks supported by Stats NZ (including the Women's Network, Pacific People's Network, Rainbow Network, Pan-Asian Network, Neurodiversity Network, and the Diversity & Inclusion Group)
- [videos of Stats NZ employees and the work they do](#) (including a video in te reo Māori with subtitles about the Tatauranga Umanga Māori team).





### **Solution: Reducing bias in the selection process using several methods**

Relying solely on human judgement in the selection process can be problematic as it is susceptible to bias. Our experiences, beliefs, and emotions can all influence our judgement and decision-making, which can result in an unfair and unequal consideration of candidates. To help reduce the risk of bias, tools and processes provide a more objective and consistent approach, ensuring that all candidates are evaluated fairly and equitably. The following are three changes made to the candidate section phase of the recruitment process:

- **Video screening:** The recruitment team started offering video screening as an option in the recruitment process with clear and specific guidelines for hiring managers to reduce bias and discrimination. Video screening allowed the hiring manager to record a welcome video and explainer and offers a powerful and engaging option for candidates to see and hear directly from the hiring manager. As a result of engagement and feedback from candidates and new recruits, improvements are underway to ensure that it is accessible to all with a focus on supporting diverse and neurodiverse candidates by building a unique candidate experience. Candidates are also encouraged to reach out if, for any reason, they cannot complete the video screen. It's important to note that not all hiring managers use this tool and it is mostly used during bulk hiring.
- **Screening matrix:** To ensure consistency in the recruitment process, Stats NZ developed a screening matrix that outlines the minimum qualifications, experience, and skills required for each role, alongside organisational cultural alignment and cultural capability. This matrix helps the hiring manager to objectively assess and compare candidates based on standardised measures, reducing the risk of biases.

- **D&I workshops:** The recruitment team and hiring managers participated in diversity and inclusion (D&I) workshops to understand the importance of diversity and inclusiveness in the recruitment process and to identify and eliminate potential biases.

### **Outcome: Increasing numbers of applicants and a more inclusive experience**

Since implementing the changes, Stats NZ has received positive feedback from candidates who appreciated the inclusive approach of the recruitment process. Not only that, the ads also performed better than the ones using the old template. The Seek click-to-application conversation rate for all ads posted improved from June 2020 to March 2022.

The changes have resulted in improved representation and an inclusive experience for candidates from diverse backgrounds, helping the organisation to build the workplace of the future. The recruitment team is committed to continuing its focus on D&I. This includes reporting from the applicant tracking system to identify trends and improvements, training and development for the People and Culture team, and active involvement in initiatives (such as Whāinga Amorangi and Papa Pounamu). Stats NZ also supports internships and graduate programmes, including Elevating Aotearoa's Future, Ethnic Communities, and TupuToa.





## Appendix 3: Diverse media outlets for advertising jobs

### Māori medium platforms:

- [Ahu Jobs](#)
- [Te Aka Kumara](#) – The Kumara Vine (Māori & Pasifika jobs)
- [Mahi Jobs](#) (Māori-focused employment opportunities).

### Ethnic medium platforms:

Region	Media Outlet Name	Media Type
Nationwide	New Zealand Chinese Herald	Digital (social media) and print (newspaper)
Nationwide	Sky Kiwi	Digital (web)
Waikato and nationwide	Waikato Weekly	Print (Waikato) and digital (nationwide)
Greater Waikato region	Waikato Chinese Voices	Radio
Christchurch	New Zealand Messenger	Print (newspaper)
South Island	New Zealand South Island Chinese Newspaper	Digital (web and app)
Auckland and nationwide	Mandarin Pages	Print (Auckland newspaper) and digital (nationwide web and WebChat)
Nationwide	Sri Lankan Community Newspaper	Print (newspaper) and digital (social media)
Nationwide	Voice of Aroha	Radio and digital (social media)
Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch	The Weekly Korea	Print (newspaper)
Auckland	Korea Catholic Radio	Radio
Nationwide	Happy World TV	Digital (social media and web)
Christchurch and nationwide	Korean Review	Print (Christchurch newspaper) and digital (nationwide web and email)
Nationwide	Indian Newslink	Digital (web)
Nationwide	Christian Life (Korean)	Print (newspaper)
Nationwide	Filipino News	Print (newspaper) and digital (web)
Nationwide	Migrant News	Digital (web)
Greater Waikato region	Barangay New Zealand Radio Show	Radio



## Appendix 4: Additional resources

### **Guidance and resources for measuring and closing pay gaps**

To access other relevant guidance (including Flexible work by default, Career progression, Improving workforce and leadership representation, and Implementing Kia Toipoto in small organisations), visit [Kia Toipoto](#).

### **Positive and safe workplaces**

Te Kawa Mataaho publishes [Model standards](#) for the Public Service on specific integrity areas, including ensuring positive and safe workplaces.

### **Identifying and measuring te ao Māori skills and knowledge**

[Te Orowaru](#) is a work assessment tool that enables te ao Māori skills and knowledge and other cultural skills and knowledge to be identified and measured appropriately, without reference to qualifications.

### **Māori Crown relations capability**

The [Māori Crown Relations Capability Framework](#), developed by Te Arawhiti, builds Māori Crown relations capability across the Public Service.

### **Disabled employees**

The [Lead programme](#), developed by the Ministry of Social Development, helps create an inclusive and welcoming environment for disabled people. It includes advice on assessing your ability to attract and retain disabled people, interviewing, reasonable accommodations and practical tips for people managers, as well as resources for leaders and HR professionals.

### **Employee-led Networks**

The Employee-led Network (ELN) [web page](#) helps public sector employees find networks and events and has resources to support employee-led networks.



### **Diversity and inclusion**

[Papa Pounamu](#) leads the Public Service programme to make progress on diversity and inclusion, with guidance on cultural competence and inclusive leadership, addressing bias, building relationships and Employee-led Networks.

### **Standards of Workforce Information for Agencies in the Public Service**

These [standards](#) are expected of workforce information collected and reported by all agencies in the Public Service.

### **Public Service workforce data**

Te Kawa Mataaho publishes annual [Public Service workforce data](#), including sectoral and agency pay gap data since 2000.

### **Public Service census**

[Te Taunaki](#), the first Public Service census, was conducted in 2021 to better understand the diversity of public servants, their experiences, views and motivations. Results are available by topic, by agency and for the Public Service overall.

### **Gender Pay Principles**

This guidance is underpinned by the [Gender Pay Principles](#).



## Appendix 5: Glossary

For clarity, the terms used in this guidance are defined here:

### **Bias**

The term 'bias' is used in this guidance to include both conscious and unconscious assumptions about an individual or group based on stereotypes. These stereotypes can relate to gender, ethnicity, disability and/or membership of a Rainbow community. These assumptions influence formal decisions (like recruitment, performance assessments and salary setting), and informal day-to-day decisions (like who is listened to in meetings and how feedback is provided).

### **Cultural competence**

Cultural competence means recognising our own worldview and understanding and valuing the cultural and social norms reflected in our diverse Public Service. Culture can broadly include – but is not limited to – ethnicity, nationality, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion and faith affiliation.

### **Mana**

Prestige, authority, control, power, influence, status, spiritual power, charisma. Mana is a supernatural force in a person, place or object.

### **Manaakitanga**

Hospitality, kindness, generosity and support – the process of showing respect, generosity and care for others.

### **Mātauranga Māori**

Māori knowledge – the body of knowledge originating from Māori ancestors, including the Māori world view, perspectives, creativity and cultural practices.

### **Talanoa**

Talanoa (“talk” or “discussion” have similar meaning across different Pacific groups, i.e., Tongan, Samoan, and Fijian), referring to a Pacific Island form of dialogue that brings people together to share opposing views without any predetermined expectations for agreement.

### **Tāngata Whaikaha**

Tāngata whaikaha describes a Māori person with a disability.

### **Tangata Whenua**

Local people, hosts and indigenous people – people born of the whenua, (i.e. of the land where the people's ancestors have lived, and where their placentas are buried).

### **Te ao Māori**

Māori world.

### **Te reo Māori**

Māori language.

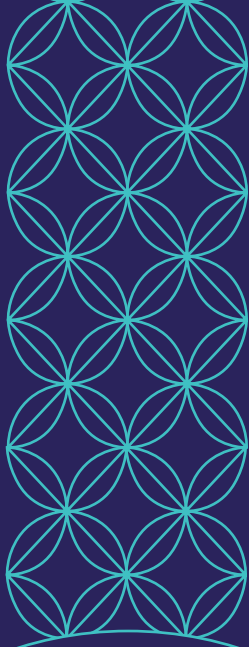
### **Tikanga Māori**

Correct procedure, custom, habit, lore, method, manner, rule, way, code, meaning, plan, practice, convention, protocol – the customary system of values and practices that have developed over time and are deeply embedded in the social context.

### **Tino Rangatiratanga**

Self-determination, sovereignty, autonomy, self-government, domination, rule, control and power.





Kia Toipoto

