



Inclusion and Diversity Framework

FY24-FY26

Table of Contents

Acknowledgement of Country	3
Foreword	3
Development of the framework	4
About Bionics Institute.....	4
Our vision	4
Our mission	4
Our values.....	4
What does inclusion and diversity mean?	4
Why diversity matters to us	5
Our commitment to inclusion and diversity.....	5
Our plan	5
The three key focus areas of our Inclusion and Diversity Framework	6
Operational Plan FY24-FY26	7

Acknowledgement of Country

The Bionics Institute acknowledges the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the land of Naarm, and we pay respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge First Peoples as our oldest continuing culture and our first scientists, and we recognise their continuing connection to Country.

Foreword

On behalf of the Bionics Institute, we take pleasure in introducing our Inclusion and Diversity Framework for FY24-FY26. This framework builds upon our existing achievements to date in support of Inclusion and Diversity; and demonstrates our genuine commitment to continue to create a safe and inclusive organisation that reflects the rich diversity and perspectives of the community we service.

Our framework is built around three key focus areas - inclusive culture, unique talent, and different perspectives. These focus areas act as the foundation for a more accessible and collaborative style of engagement and leadership across the Institute. We must cultivate a culture within the Institute that respects, values and embraces the contributions of people from diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives to enable us to better deliver innovative medical devices and therapies to transform lives.

This two-year framework sets out practical actions to support us in addressing systematic barriers that disadvantage marginalised groups. It also builds the competency of our Institute to support a safe and inclusive environment for employees, students, collaborators, and participants.

We recognise we have a significant and dynamic role to play in leading inclusion and diversity. The implementation of this framework will embed inclusive approaches, practices and policies into all aspects of the work of the Institute, making inclusion and diversity part of our everyday activities. This plan is a call to action for our organisation to pave the way for inclusiveness. We encourage you all to contribute to making Bionics Institute a safe and inclusive place to work and to design, conduct, and participate in research.

The Institute's Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Working Group (EDI-WG) will play an important role in monitoring and facilitating the implementation of the operational plan. The endorsement received from our Executive Team demonstrates willingness to implement meaningful change.

We hope that the plan will encourage all our employees and collaborators to work together to achieve our aims as we recognise that each of us has a significant role to play to make our vision of an inclusive culture a reality.



Robert Klupacs
Chief Executive Officer, Bionics Institute

Development of the framework

The Inclusion and Diversity Framework FY24-26 has been developed with collaboration and consultation with our Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Working Group, the Clinical Research Support team, the Human Resources team, the Institute's Leadership team, and the People & Culture Subcommittee of our Board of Directors. We would like to acknowledge and thank the efforts, commitments, and contributions of all who have assisted in the development of this document.

About Bionics Institute

The Bionics Institute is an internationally recognised, independent medical research institute that solves medical challenges with technology. We lead the world in the research and development of innovative medical devices and therapies to improve human health.

Our world-class scientists, engineers and clinicians work together to create and develop medical devices and transform the lives of people around the world. Our research focuses on developing new therapies and diagnostic tools in six main areas: Brain Research, Autoimmune & Chronic Conditions, Hearing & Vision Research, Bionic Limbs Research, Chronic Pain Research, and Incubator Research. Our research is supported by our excellent capability providers and is backed by a dedicated Board and professional research support team.

Our impact is underpinned by our business model that aims to translate our research into clinical applications, which in turn generates revenue that contributes to funding of further research and development.

Our vision: To lead the development and translation of innovative medical devices.

Our mission: To research and innovate cutting-edge medical devices to solve medical challenges and transform lives.

Our values: These inform our behaviour and guide our decision making.

Purposeful We use our inquisitive minds to achieve excellence.

Driven We courageously explore, innovate, and solve (and have fun doing it).

Community We thrive by bringing change through care, connection, and collaboration.

Integrity We act with honesty and accountability. Our actions speak for who we are.

What does inclusion and diversity mean?

Diversity is the characteristics and differences that make us unique and includes aspects of a person's culture¹, ethnicity, race, national origin, language, and life experiences - noting that this can overlap or intersect with other characteristics such as age, ability, gender, gender identity and sexuality. Diversity also applies to an individual's experience of a medical condition, and their individual response to interventions.

Inclusion celebrates and promotes individual differences, perspectives, views, and lived experiences. It is only through inclusion that an organisation can make the most out of its diversity.

Safe organisations encourage all employees, students, and collaborators to feel comfortable, supported, and respected, creating a space where they can be their authentic self, and

¹ The term 'Culture' refers to the shared language, beliefs, values, norms, and customs of a particular society and/or social group.

where everyone can be open-minded and flexible in their own attitudes towards people with lived experience that may be different to their own.

Why inclusion and diversity matters to us?

At the Bionics Institute, our people make us who we are. We want all our employees, students, and collaborators to feel included and valued, and to harness their differences to achieve the optimal outcome.

Diverse representation in clinical research populations is essential to ensure health equity and generalisable research findings. Truly effective clinical research design, conduct, communication, and translation can't happen without the involvement of those with lived experience of the condition being researched: "nothing about us, without us".

Our research transforms the lives of people across all walks of life, and we recognise the need to draw on the perspectives and experience of a diverse, engaged, and united team of researchers, scientists, clinicians and lived experience experts to ensure our technology is optimised for everyone.

Our commitment to inclusion and diversity

To maintain our position as a world leading medical device research institute, we hire qualified people from different backgrounds and experience levels. We seek to cultivate a culture that values different experiences, capabilities, insights, and perspectives.

Our approach to hiring has never been about 'making up the numbers'. It's about finding the right people for the right roles and making sure our people have access to the resources and opportunities they need to reach their full potential. We believe in addressing the barriers to equality and creating a level playing field for all people.

By delivering an environment that sparks bright ideas, we can build the foundations of innovation that will deliver our mission to create medical devices and make a positive impact on the lives of people living with challenging medical conditions.

This Inclusion and Diversity Framework is our commitment to creating a culturally safe and inclusive workplace for everyone, by embracing the differences in skills, perspectives and experiences our employees and collaborators bring to the mission of the Institute.

Our operational plan

Our operational plan aims to embed diverse and inclusive practices, systems, and approaches into all aspects of our work. It is about creating and sustaining an environment that is respectful, fosters inclusiveness, promotes diversity, and embraces the individual differences, perspectives, and qualities of all our employees and those we work with.

It outlines how we will create and implement initiatives that embed inclusive practices in our day-to-day ways of working. Inclusion is especially imperative for hiring, attracting, and retaining a diverse and uniquely talented workforce, but it improves the employee experience across the entire employee lifecycle. This plan also highlights our awareness of the importance of diversity in the recruitment of research participants in order to ensure equity of access and comprehensive outcomes. It also focuses on the crucial role of lived experience experts in the design, conduct and dissemination of research, and how this can be embedded in our work at the Bionics Institute.

Our approach acknowledges that change takes time, commitment, and resourcing. We have committed to defined goals and practical actions in this two-year plan, using a phased delivery approach.

All Institute employees and collaborators have a role in delivering this operational plan. It is ultimately the commitment, actions, and behaviours of all our people that will determine how successful we are at creating an inclusive and safe culture.

This operational plan is an institutional priority under our Strategic Plan 2024-2026 and sits alongside the following organisational plans, policies, and initiatives, that support diversity and inclusion:

- Our vision and values
- Our Strategic Plan (2024-2026).
- Occupational Health and Safety policies and procedures
- Employee Wellbeing Survey (2023)
- Gender, Inclusion and Diversity Staff Survey (pending)
- Employee Engagement Survey (2022)
- Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Working Group (Terms of Reference).

The three key focus areas of our Inclusion and Diversity Framework:

1. *Creating an inclusive culture.*
We value the uniqueness of our people and collaborators and use this value to drive our innovative research.
2. *Attracting, growing, and retaining unique talent.*
We attract, develop, and retain diverse and talented individuals to maximise the development of innovative medical device solutions. We value our role of providing practical experience to undergraduate and postgraduate students from a diverse range of backgrounds.
3. *Encouraging an innovative approach to research that draws on different perspectives.*
We strive towards a diverse and inclusive culture and governance structure that supports consumer involvement and diverse participation in all our research.

Operational Plan FY24-26

Focus area 1 - Creating an inclusive culture:

Action	Responsible	Timeframe
1.1 Utilise the feedback from the Employee Engagement Survey to develop targeted action plans to enhance BI's inclusive culture	Head of HR & CEO	February 2024
1.2 Develop and implement a communications plan to raise awareness of the Inclusion and Diversity Framework and operational plan and other organisational initiatives that support and promote diversity and inclusion	Marketing and Communications & EDI-WG	April 2024
1.3 Refresh and embed Institute's values and behaviours in all our people processes	HR Team, COO & Strategic Project Manager (with Leadership Group support)	June 2024
1.4 Develop and roll out an employee experience survey on Inclusion & Diversity topics, including the collection of core diversity data, and analyse the results to identify trends and hot spots to inform further diversity strategies	EDI-WG	July 2024
1.5 Identify and develop learning modules that increase understanding and capability on diversity and inclusion matters	HR Team & EDI-WG	December 2024

Focus area 2 - Attracting, growing, and retaining unique talent:

Action	Responsible	Timeframe
2.1 Develop BI's workforce planning processes, with an embedded diversity lens, with a focus on retention and professional development strategies that promote inclusion.	HR Team, (with input EDI-WG and support from the Executive and Finance teams)	March 2024
2.2 1 Develop BI's Talent & Succession planning processes that ensure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – diversity criteria are considered in the identification of 'top talent', – targeted retention activities are applied equitably; and – potential successors from diverse backgrounds are developed for all key operational roles. 	Head of HR	April 2024 & reviewed bi-annually thereafter
2.3 Review BI's recruitment protocols with a diversity lens (both for potential employees and Masters and PhD students), including Key Selection Criteria and interview processes to embed inclusion and diversity.	HR Team, Research Operations (with input from EDI-WG)	September 2024
2.4 Report progress to PCC and agree further actions	Head of HR	October PCC

Focus area 3 - Encouraging an innovative approach to research that draws on different perspectives:

Action	Responsible	Timeframe
3.1 Develop the Institute's diversity objectives for clinical research.	Clinical Research Support Team, Executive Team	June 2024
3.2 Develop and gain endorsement of a Consumer and Community Involvement (CCI) plan that focuses on improved diversity in research which includes research development and participation.	Clinical Research Support Team, Research Governance Committee, and Executive Team	June 2025
3.3 Commence implementation of the Institute's CCI plan.	Clinical Research Support Team and Research Governance Committee	December 2025