

Researchers Call for Better DEI Support for Project Professionals

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A new report by the [Association for Project Management \(APM\)](#) highlights the need for improved Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) practices in the project profession. The research explores the early-career experiences of racially diverse project professionals in the UK and Australia.

The report, titled “Improving the Early-Career Experiences of Racially Diverse Project Professionals,” was conducted by Dr. Christina Scott-Young, Dr. Jessica Borg, and Dr. Naomi Borg. The researchers found concerning levels of discrimination experienced by racially diverse project professionals in both the construction and business sectors.

The authors said: “Reflecting on these high figures, we would do well to be mindful of the negative impacts that racial discrimination can have on an individual. We found it concerning that discrimination was so prevalent towards early career diverse project management professionals. We hope that our research helps highlight this issue and, in turn, helps encourage action towards creating a more inclusive project management community.”

While many organizations have DEI policies in place, the report found that they are not always effectively enforced. The researchers emphasize the importance of creating a supportive environment where individuals feel comfortable reporting discrimination and taking appropriate action.

The report identifies several recommendations for employers, universities, and professional bodies:

- **Offer better onboarding, managerial and peer support, and mentoring.**

- **Audit the effectiveness of diversity and inclusion policies.**
- **Implement further diversity and inclusion measures or training when indicated.**
- **Listen directly to the voices of diverse employees about their specific needs.**

The report also highlights the positive experiences of some racially diverse project professionals and the importance of creating a supportive and inclusive work environment.

Case Study: MIGSO-PCUBED's DEI Initiatives

MIGSO-PCUBED, a values-driven project management consultancy, is a prime example of an organization that has taken proactive steps to promote DEI. Their initiatives include:

- **Affinity groups** for employees to share experiences and support one another.
- **Reverse monitoring** to gain insights from diverse employees.
- **Safe spaces** for open dialogue and discussion of sensitive issues.
- **Inclusion events** to celebrate diversity and create a sense of belonging.
- **Allyship programs** to educate employees about the concept of allyship and promote equity and inclusion.

Mark Sorrell, Head of Public Sector for MP UK, said: "We recognise that achieving true equity at work is a long-term endeavour that relies on continued engagement and sustained effort at all levels. Our successes to date have served to galvanise a determined and committed community who will advocate for the minority and drive change to everyone's advantage."

Recommendations for the Future

While some findings from their report may be concerning, Dr Christina Scott-Young, Dr Jessica Borg, and Dr Naomi Borg stressed the importance of looking at the positive as well as the negative:

"Our research tells a story not only of discrimination but also of inclusion. It is from looking at the duality and the complexity of these experiences that we can start to better understand how best to support a racially diverse project management workforce. Almost half of the participants had experienced racial discrimination at work, while there just over 50% who did not.

"We are encouraged by APM's funding of research in the space. We hope to see research continue on this topic as we strive together to achieve a more equitable, socially sustainable and diverse community in the project management profession."

Download [*Improving the Early-Career Experiences of Racially Diverse Project Professionals*](#)