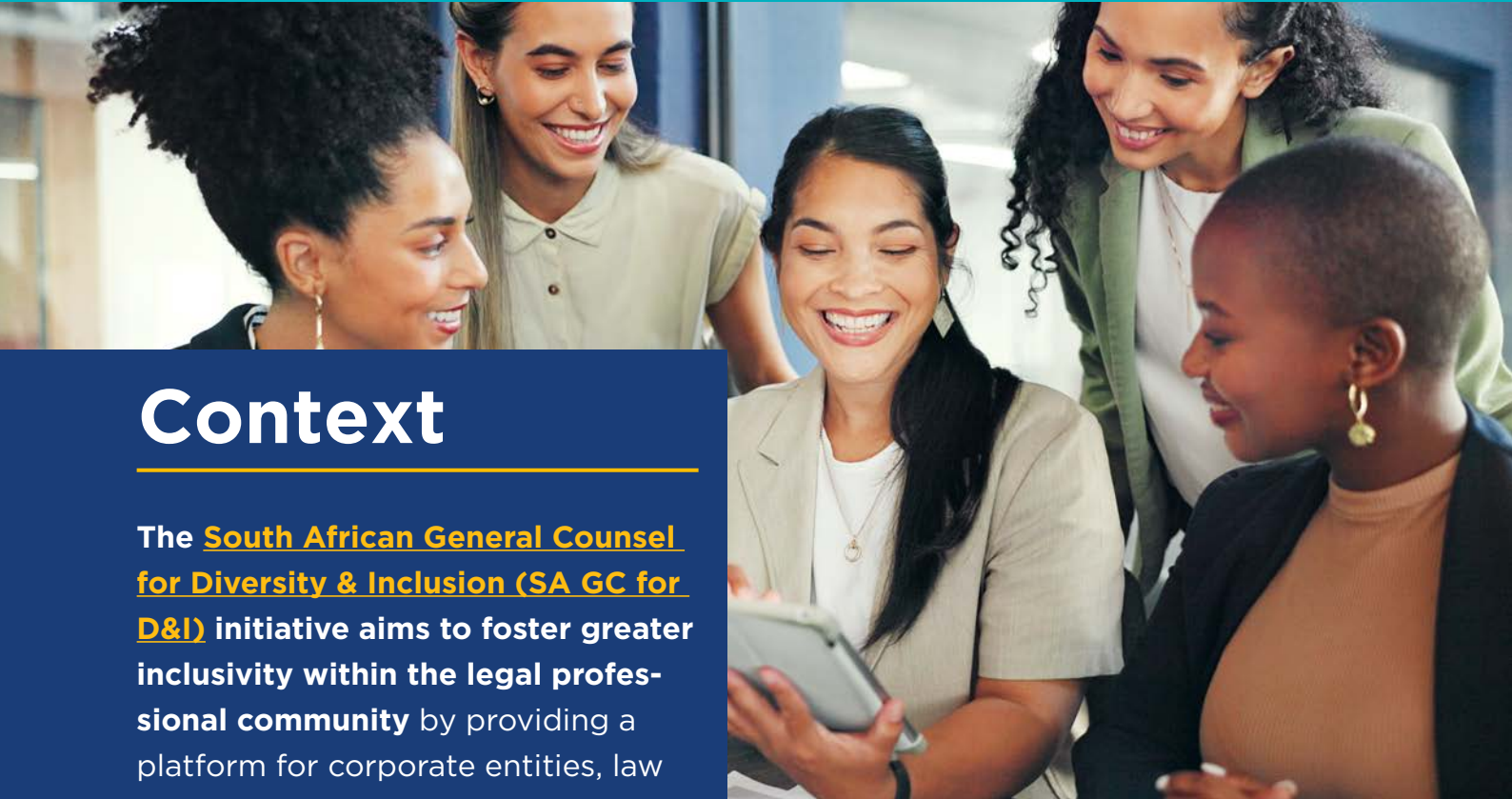


# Working group report:

## Measurement of DEI in the legal profession





## Context

The **South African General Counsel for Diversity & Inclusion (SA GC for D&I)** initiative aims to foster greater inclusivity within the legal professional community by providing a platform for corporate entities, law firms, groups of advocates, and other legal sector players to engage on critical diversity issues.

**A key aspect of the initiative is the creation of working groups** to facilitate comprehensive and multi-stakeholder conversations around critical themes linked to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) within the South African legal fraternity.

**These working groups discuss topics proposed and voted on by members and partners to the initiative.**

Each working group is tasked with using the discussions to create an output intended as a public good resource for those wanting to enhance DEI. This document is such an output and aims to encourage readers to share it with others in the South African legal fraternity who may benefit from its content.

**This particular document is the fruit of the collaborative efforts of the “Measurement of DEI in the legal profession” working group, which concluded its work in late 2024.**

The SA GC for D&I gratefully acknowledges the efforts of all of those who took part in these working group discussions and thanks their organisations for allowing them the time to do so.

**The discussions within the working groups adhere to the “Chatham House” rule, ensuring the anonymity of individual contributors to the dialogue.** For further information or to become part of the SA GC for D&I and its current or future working groups, visit [www.sagcdi.co.za](http://www.sagcdi.co.za).

# Highlights

## Overview of the “DEI Measurement” Working Group

The DEI Measurement Working Group was set up to discuss and explore ways to measure, track, and enhance DEI within the South African legal sector and within individual organisations. The group drew insights from diverse representatives across different partner organisations, engaging in discussions to identify challenges and opportunities related to DEI measurement and ways to develop actionable strategies and metrics that accurately reflect the DEI performance.

## Key topics related to DEI Measurement covered by the working group

The discussions in the working group sessions covered topics such as:

- How to define DEI;
- Understanding what DEI means in the workplace context;
- Core aspects of DEI that need to be measured;
- Practical DEI measurement strategies; and
- Measurement strategies for hard-to-measure concepts (e.g., belonging).

## What is this document about?

The working group found that South African organisations face significant challenges in measuring DEI efforts and outcomes, particularly in quantifying “soft” and “subjective” DEI concepts (e.g., inclusion and belonging) and aligning DEI measurement with local/international best practices and standards.

**To address these challenges, an easy-to-use measurement framework was jointly developed by the working group members and is presented in this output document.**

This framework serves as a guide for organisations to approach the measurement of DEI outcomes that range from the easily quantifiable aspects, such as diversity statistics, to

more nuanced and difficult-to-measure aspects, like inclusion and belonging. It also offers guidance on aligning with local/international standards.

## Who will find this document useful?

This document will be useful for a range of stakeholders. Transformation/DEI managers can use this framework to set and track DEI strategies effectively. Human Resources managers will find this document useful for aligning recruitment and retention with DEI goals. And senior leadership teams can use the document to understand the current state of DEI in their organisation and make informed decisions on DEI strategies and culture.

## DEI measurement is a cyclical process, and existing SA GC for D&I documents can help guide you



### Self assessment tool

This tool contains a self assessment questionnaire that helps your organisation gauge the current level of DEI implementation in your organisation based on global best practice. These questions will help identify the strengths in your current DEI strategy as well as highlight potential barriers and areas that may need further development.



**The initiative** has developed five reports to elaborate on important, and often neglected, aspects of DEI in the South African legal profession. The repository will continue to be updated and added to. **It currently includes:**

1. Gender Identity and Belonging in the Legal Sector
2. Racial Dynamics within the South African Legal Sector
3. Talent Management for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Outcomes
4. Moving Beyond Diversity for Inclusion and Equity
5. Neurodiversity in the Legal Sector



### Metrics and KPIs for Diversity and Inclusion

This document outlines categories of metrics and KPIs that may be helpful in augmenting and refining existing approaches to measuring diversity and inclusion. It also provides access to additional resources that may be of interest, such as a 'first draft' Excel tool for setting up DEI-relevant KPIs.



# Building a measurement framework is a critical but challenging step - especially with subjective topics

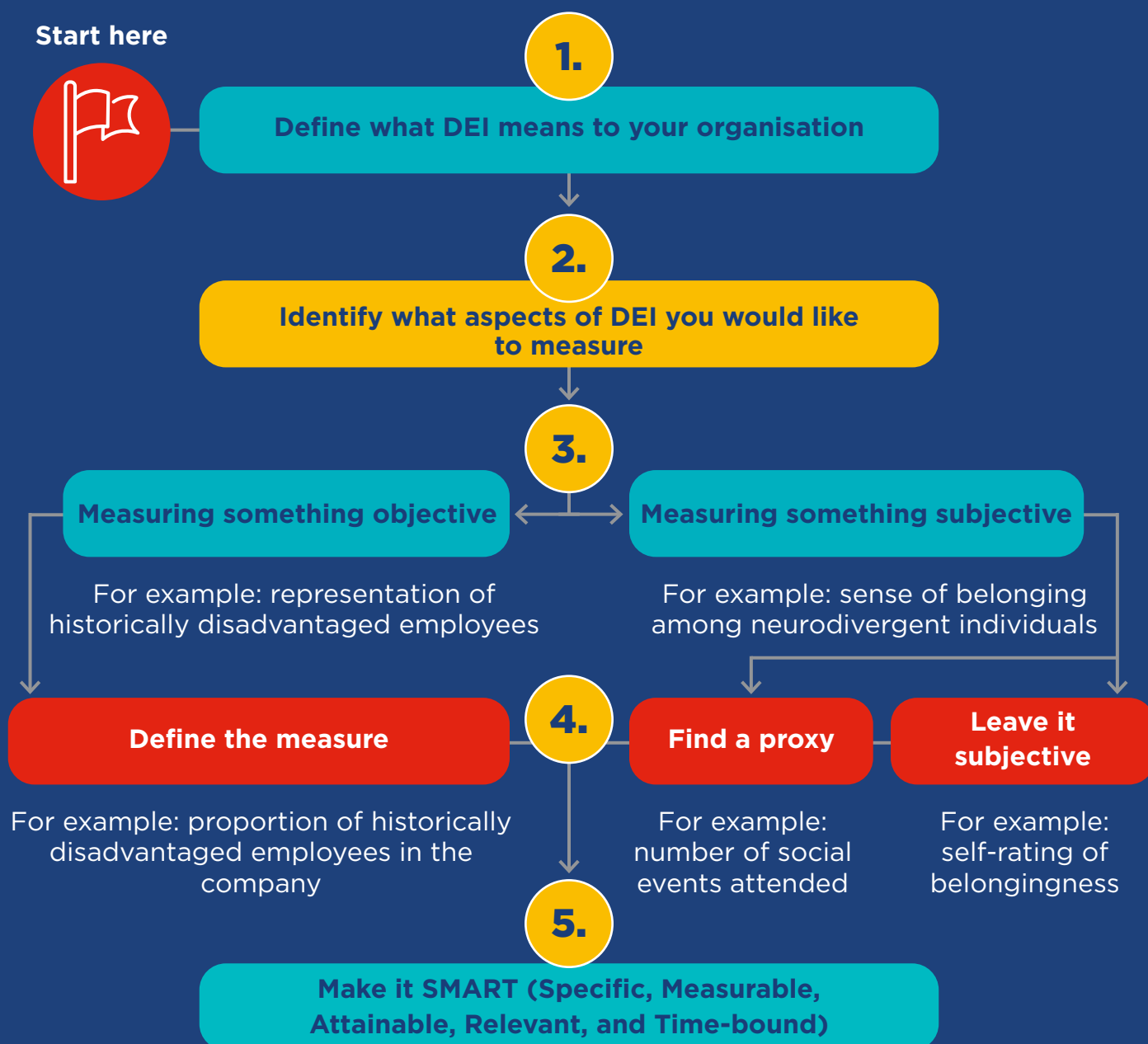


## How do you build a DEI measurement framework?



Your measurement strategy depends on what you are trying to measure. **Following the steps below will help you determine the best strategy to measure any particular aspect of DEI.**

Start here



See practical examples in the next few pages

## Example 1: Measuring a sense of belonging



### What did the working group say?

The working group discussed the challenges and approaches related to measuring a sense of belonging within organisations. They acknowledged that qualitative measures such as a sense of belonging are difficult to quantify, especially when compared to directly measurable elements like racial diversity and salary equity. However, the group emphasised the importance of such **qualitative measures** to understanding and advancing DEI within our organisations. **Some strategies** to collect information to gauge people's sense of belonging include one-on-one check-ins, group feedback sessions, and designating champions for feedback to the upper management.

1.

#### Define what DEI means to your organisation

Suppose that, of many things that DEI stands for, you want to ensure that people in your organisation feel a sense of belonging.

2.

#### Identify what aspects of DEI you would like to measure

Suppose the aim is to measure a sense of belonging.

3.

#### Measuring something subjective

Given its subjectivity, understanding the available options is important.

It is up to the organisation to choose which measure they would like to pursue

4.

#### Find a proxy

- 1) Number of social events attended
- 2) Absenteeism
- 3) Sick leave
- 4) Propensity to turn on camera during virtual meetings

These proxies do not directly illuminate on the nature of belonging but **provide indirect insights**

#### Leave it subjective

Rate your senses of belonging from 1 (little senses of belonging) to 5 (high level of senses of belonging) and track the subjective rating overtime.

These measures **directly show people's perception of belonging** but are not necessarily easily comparable to other indicators

## Example 2: Align common objective DEI measurements with standards



### What did the working group say

The working group discussed several commonly cited DEI measures such as diverse representation within an organisation, equal opportunities in recruitment and promotion, and salary equity. These aspects are often considered easier to measure than inclusion and belonging, as they can be quantified. However, **the challenge here lies in ensuring that these metrics are comparable across organisations and can be disclosed regularly to the public, regulators, and industry to track DEI performance.** Therefore, the group recognised that it is important **to align these measurements with international/ local standards.**

1.

#### Define what DEI means to your organisation

Suppose DEI means diverse demographic representation and salary equity in your organisation.

2.

#### Identify what aspects of DEI you would like to measure

As such, it will be important to measure demographic diversity in the organisation and pay equity.

3.

#### Measuring something objective

Given its quantifiable nature, an objective measurement is the preferred option.

4.

#### Define the measure<sup>1</sup>

**Find voluntary best practice standards**



GRI 3 provides guidance on organization's disclosure of diversity and equal opportunity at work

**GRI**



GRI 405 provides topic specific guidance on disclosure of diversity and equity

**Disclosure 405-1**  
Diversity of governance bodies and employees

E.g., % individuals within the organization's governance bodies in each of the following diversity categories: gender; age group; and other indicators of material diversity indicators

**Disclosure 405-2**  
Ratio of basic salary and remuneration of women to men

E.g., Ratio of the basic salary and remuneration of women to men for each employee category, by significant locations of operation.

**Consult regulation and review best practice from peers**

In addition to global standards, you could **seek guidance from national regulation** on how to define the particular measure.

You could also **review the disclosures of your peers** in the industry - especially those you consider to be high performing on DEI - to see how they have approached measurement.



**We would like to hear  
your feedback!**

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Get in touch with us at  
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