Responsible and ethical AI requires human vision

DE&I could be the lens

ey.ai unifying platform

With increased adoption and reliance on artificial intelligence (AI) in our work, come opportunities for growth, increased productivity and enhanced decision-making capabilities.

As we rely more on AI to complement human potential, it's important to EY people, clients and stakeholders that we use AI ethically and responsibly, using leading practices. Viewing AI through a diversity, equity and inclusiveness (DE&I) lens can help achieve that.

By including diverse perspectives, addressing inequities and teaming across differences, organizations can deliver on what matters most: driving greater innovation, productivity and revenue. It can also help deliver on something equally important: more personalized, equitable and inclusive career experiences with skills at the center. AI has the vast potential to enhance DE&I efforts in creating an inclusive environment for everyone.

Together, AI and DE&I can accelerate positive impact

DE&I is an important driver of business results. Studies show that diverse and inclusive teams produce more accurate results than homogenous teams, are more engaged and are 3.5 times more likely to contribute to their full innovative potential.[1,2]

DE&I in the workplace now matters more than ever. EY Belonging Barometer found that 74% of workers surveyed say their company's prioritization of DE&I influences where they choose to work.

AI is rapidly transforming business and raising the bar of what is possible. The ability of technology to predict data-based outcomes can help humans make better decisions when a DE&I lens is applied. As a result, there is an opportunity for leaders and businesses to amplify positive impact by harnessing AI and DE&I together.

How DE&I can enable responsible and ethical AI

DE&I can act as a standard bearer in decisions related to AI, and is uniquely positioned to:

- Enable inclusive participation, engagement and collaboration among stakeholders.
- Raise consciousness and awareness of implicit risks in decision-making.
- Introduce checks and balances so that AI outputs are intentionally subject to human judgment and oversight.
- Broaden perspectives for better questions and prompts.

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> AI-generated insights are not enough. They need a human DE&I lens to contextualize intelligence, cultural nuance and lived experiences. This can help deliver optimized judgment and decision-making for more equitable and ethical outcomes.
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> **Karyn Twaronite**
> EY Global Vice Chair, Diversity, Equity & Inclusiveness

Reciprocally, how AI can enable DE&I progress

AI can enhance processes and outcomes to help us build a better and more equitable working world.

- **Identifying and addressing inequities:** AI can show us patterns that may be in our blind spot, which can negatively impact certain groups or demographics. Greater visibility into these patterns can ultimately support more equitable performance evaluations, compensation, promotions, resource allocation and project assignments.
- **Using data to achieve greater equity:** AI can analyze data related to employee engagement, satisfaction and feedback to tailor more inclusive initiatives and measure effectiveness. This data can help customize DE&I actions based on specific needs and experiences.
- **Encouraging diverse and equitable participation at work:** AI can help improve workplace accessibility – for example, through speech recognition systems and image recognition tools. AI can also help attract and engage more diverse talent through multi-language learning and communications to reach and connect a wider audience across languages and geographies.

Questions to ask

- Could this AI recommendation be reinforcing a stereotype or status quo?
- Could using these AI outputs deepen existing inequities or help to challenge them?
- Has this AI recommendation been reviewed with a human and a DE&I lens?
- How can we apply AI to progress DE&I?

Understanding the inherent risks of AI

Almost two-thirds of CEOs surveyed in the EY CEO Outlook Pulse see AI as a "force for good." It's up to us, though, to balance opportunities with potential risks. These include:

- **Bias and discrimination:** Without careful design, testing, guardrails and continuous monitoring, AI can amplify and perpetuate existing biases since AI is typically trained on real-world data, which may often embody human biases.
- **Ethical and societal impact:** Fast-moving technology can outpace the ability to consider all possible outcomes, including societal impact. Instilling ethical values in AI doesn't come with a handbook, and the technology is only as good as the data it's trained on.
- **Widening gaps in inequitable access:** As with any technology, highly-skilled or educated workers are more likely to be trained to use AI, putting them at an advantage. This could exacerbate already growing gaps in opportunity and income.
- **Lack of transparency or understanding:** The lack of understanding of the data-sets being used, as well as the decision-making processes of algorithms, could lead to existing biases not only being intensified, but also being perpetuated on a large scale.

Getting practical: guidance for responsible AI use through a DE&I lens

Whether we're developers, buyers, implementers, or users of AI, there are four things we can consider:

1	2	3	4
Pair AI and human insights together for optimized judgment, especially in decisions that affect people. This should include **diverse inputs and participation** throughout the AI design and deployment to enable **more equitable and inclusive outputs**.	Build and train AI models on the **most diverse and representative data** available. This includes identifying **limitations of the datasets** that can perpetuate bias and inequities in order to build in enhanced self-regulation.	Enhance trust through greater **transparency** around how AI is being used and the **checks and balances** that are in place.	Align to **evolving AI DE&I policies and regulations.** It is important to recognize that potentially **inequitable outputs** generated by AI could be considered **regulatory or legal infringements**.

Your role and impact on AI and DE&I

Role	Your impact	How
All AI users	**You can help spot and voice potential biases and inequities. It's a shared responsibility.**	‣ Engage with the technology, be curious, ask questions and proactively provide feedback. ‣ Build your own inclusive teaming and leadership skills. For EY teams, this includes e-learning courses such as *Inclusive Leadership for All and Upstanding Interventions*. ‣ Incorporate all voices and perspectives when discussing AI usage and outputs in meetings. Introduce an All in Moment (AIM) team practice that will help everyone contribute (developed by EY teams and open for everyone to use).
Business leaders	**You can help maximize the impact as well as remove structural inequities for better business and people outcomes enabling greater confidence and trust.**	‣ Enable diverse and inclusive participation, engagement and collaboration among stakeholders when using AI solutions. ‣ Provide transparency on when and how AI is used. ‣ Provide mechanisms for diverse user groups to provide feedback on AI systems, including the ability to raise "red flags". ‣ Make certain that **all** employees are building critical inclusive behaviors as well as AI skills, so that future career opportunities and selection are more equitable.
Talent and HR	**You can help influence the processes that make decision-making authority either more or less equitable.**	‣ Confirm AI-enabled decision-making is balanced with real human experience, cultural context, judgment and oversight. ‣ Verify that AI algorithms rely on true requirements and not preferences or traditions, that can perpetuate sameness and stereotypes. For example, if making a selection aided by AI (hiring, appointments and others), ask: "Is this recommendation made by AI addressing or deepening existing inequities?".
Procurement teams	**You can help verify that the AI technologies adopted by your organization properly reflect DE&I considerations.**	‣ Embed DE&I in vendor selection criteria for AI technologies. ‣ Ask vendors for transparency on DE&I considerations, such as diversity of development teams, user groups, data sets, feedback mechanisms and others. ‣ Understand who is liable if issues arise out of biased decisions.
AI developers	**You can help influence how AI is designed, tested, and built to uphold ethical and inclusive outputs.**	‣ Require, early and often, representative data sets and input from individuals from diverse backgrounds and abilities. ‣ Embed equity checks and balances into AI algorithms to produce more inclusive results (e.g., prompt AI to account for different identity dimensions in the output).

For more information, visit EY.ai and EY Global DE&I.