

**THE
DIVERSITY
AGENDA.**

STRATEGY CONSULTATION REPORT. 2022.

ENGAGEMENT ON
THE DIVERSITY AGENDA
2025 STRATEGY.



A NOTE FROM DIVERSITY AGENDA CHAIR, CEINWEN MCNEIL.

Over the past few months we have had the opportunity to meet with our Accord members and consult on our future direction.

Approximately 75% of our Accord signatories made time to attend meetings and hui, sharing their reflections and insights on how we could make things better for the people within our industries. We also connected with a number of external stakeholders and partners working in this area to give a well-rounded view to the strategy and worked with our industry led steering group throughout this process to ensure we captured the voices of our member firms, big and small.

It is my pleasure to share through the report with all of our Diversity Agenda. The key themes emerging are consistent with the broader dialogue across Aotearoa and reinforce our willingness to be brave in driving systemic change across our sector.

We are grateful to everyone who took the opportunity to share their experiences, knowledge, and perspectives as to our future direction. Your feedback has informed our Diversity Agenda strategy, and priorities over the next three years.

Your insights have challenged and encouraged us to be bold. To achieve our goal we need to continue to build awareness, empowerment and action to ensure our sectors are diverse, equitable and inclusive in Aotearoa.

Ngā mihi,
Ceinwen



INTRODUCTION EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.

Our goal is to help engineering and architecture firms become more diverse and inclusive through awareness, empowerment, and action. As we move forward to a new evolution of the Diversity Agenda and Accord, and new leadership, setting a strategy was identified as a key priority for the change programme to set us up for success as we continue to create positive change across our industries.

Last year Diversity Accord signatories endorsed the proposal to evolve the Diversity Agenda and Accord through a dedicated change programme and committed to provide funds to support the programme.

Alongside the Steering group, we are now putting this change plan into action and progressing with the development of our new strategy to 2025. This has started by drafting a strategy and consulting with our members on it.

In consultation the Diversity Agenda sought feedback on members experience being part of the Diversity Agenda and Accord and what we need to be focusing on to turn the dial for our professions. The feedback enables us to:

- 01** Get to know our members and their diversity & inclusion journey and focus areas
- 02** Understand the different maturity levels of our members and what they need to progress their diversity & inclusion programmes
- 03** Take everyone on the journey valuing knowledge and expertise
- 04** Learn who is doing what so we can leverage each other's knowledge to help others further behind in their journey
- 05** Take the feedback we're hearing from consultation and incorporate it into our Diversity Agenda 2025 strategy

PROFILE OF ACCORD SIGNATORIES WHO PARTICIPATED:

- ▶ A total of 40 Accord signatories participated in consultation
 - ▶ Of the 40 Accord signatories who participated 28 were from Engineering firms and 12 from Architecture practices, they included a variety of small, medium, and large firms
 - ▶ A list of organisations who participated in this consultation have been provided at Appendix A
 - ▶ We received 35 personal reflection forms from the 1 June Accord summit at Parliament – key themes are captured in this report (see Appendix B)
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A SNAPSHOT OF WHAT WE HEARD.

To help create a meaningful and impactful strategy together, we asked our Accord signatories to share their experiences being Diversity Agenda members and Accord signatories, what they think the biggest challenges are and what we should do about it.

We are grateful to the 40 Diversity Agenda signatories who participated in the consultation and who contributed to this report by sharing their thoughts, knowledge, and expertise with us. Additionally, thank you to the 35 who documented their personal reflections at the Annual Diversity Accord Summit at Parliament on 1 June 2022.

This report is a summary of what we heard during our engagement and brings together the key themes from a range of meetings, focus groups and personal reflections from the summit. A combination of methods was used to analyse and summarise this information, but we have tried to use the words and voices of the Accord signatories we spoke with as much as possible.

There were a number of key themes that emerged throughout the engagement. These themes have been summarised below.



ACTION IS NEEDED AND IT'S NEEDED NOW

The majority of our Accord signatories have gained value being part of the Diversity Agenda to date, with people getting the most value out of connecting with peers, learning what other firms are doing and keeping diversity and inclusion front of mind within their firms.

There was a portion of our Accord signatories who expressed concerns over the lack of action they have seen and felt we needed to be making faster progress – no matter how small.

Whilst people can't fault the good intent, we have some big challenges to tackle. People want to see a strategy with tangible actions that show we're moving beyond talking to action.



TE TIRITI O WAITANGI SHOULD BE A CLEAR AND EMPOWERING DIMENSION OF THE STRATEGY

Our Accord signatories told us that the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti o Waitangi) should be a clear and empowering dimension of the Strategy. This includes creating programmes and solutions in partnership with Māori. People told us that recognising and giving practical commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi is essential to achieving our goals for tamariki and rangatahi Māori.

Whilst most of the Accord signatories we spoke with have a diverse range of programmes and initiatives underway and lead diverse workforces, there was a strong theme across the engagement on the significant lack of participation of Māori entering our professions. Institutional racism against Māori and unconscious bias in education was raised as a barrier to Māori not being largely represented in our professions.

The majority of our Accord signatories have begun their cultural journey to learn more about Tikanga and Te Reo and talked about the importance of truly honouring the Treaty and understanding Tikanga and wanting more support in authentically navigating meaningful collaboration with mana whenua.

People are looking to the Diversity Agenda for opportunities to grow and develop their knowledge and awareness further to help create inclusive workplaces.



WE NEED TO CONTINUE OUR IMPORTANT MAHI TO SUPPORT WOMEN

Women continue to be under-represented in technical and leadership roles and men are still largely dominant in executive positions. It was mentioned that because of their network's men win more work and women often end up in supporting roles.

Retention came up in several discussions, particularly regarding women leaving the workforce. We heard from one firm; they haven't managed to keep any women past registration. There is strong interest in building further understanding on why women are exiting the workforce and what we can do to build the right culture and business practices to retain women in our professions.

Women returning to work after parental leave was flagged as being challenging, having to navigate the changes in technology and processes, and working the hours was also described as a challenge for those with younger families.

The gender pay gap is still front of mind for our Accord signatories. Whilst closing the gender pay equity gap is much easier, there were concerns raised that the gender pay gap is a much harder battle and, in some cases, depending on the size of the firm or practice women earn more than men.



WE NEED TO GET CREATIVE TO BUILD OUR WORKFORCES FOR THE FUTURE

We heard a lot from our Accord signatories on the challenge of attracting and recruiting diverse talent, especially if it doesn't exist. There was concern over the talent pool for Māori being small and if we're poaching talent from another firm the number of Māori in our professions stays the same.

Several people talked about the need to start educating and influencing young people as early as primary school. There were concerns about bigger firms having more budget for scholarships and in turn getting access to diverse talent more easily. If we're working collectively to build a talent pipeline for the future together and sharing vs competing, we could really get somewhere.

In several discussions it was highlighted that there is a potential discontent in how Universities pre-select their candidates for degrees, taking in those with a strong focus on physics and maths as pre-qualifying subjects for engineering, which excludes a large number of people from our professions who would thrive.

We also heard concerns over the gap between what University teaches and what the industry wants and the opportunity to widen the talent pool as opposed to narrowing the skill sets by being more open minded in our hiring approaches and educating young people on what engineering and architecture really is.

It was mentioned there could be an opportunity to look at how we give back to the industry as part of the professional registration process and strong themes around working together on joint funded scholarships. There was also a discussion around people from Ex-service backgrounds being a great fit for the industry and for our profession to be thinking about values based hiring and transferable skills.

We were challenged with the question of do we really need a qualified engineer, or do we just need people with excellent people skills and high learning agility?

"If we're sharing vs competing, we could really get somewhere."



WE NEED A SIMPLE STRATEGY FOR FIRMS TO LOCALIZE

Feedback from Accord signatories is that there is a lot in the strategy. They'd like to see us committing to fewer things but doing those things well. This will build our credibility, increase confidence in the Diversity Agenda and Accord and help pave the way for the other initiatives we choose to focus on next.

The strategy will have the greatest impact if it is simple, easy to digest and members can localize it within their firms. If we're targeted in our approach, we'll have more buy in to our strategy and once we have some wins, it'll be easier to get traction on other initiatives.



HUMANS NEED TO BE AT THE HEART OF THE STRATEGY

We heard a lot from our Accord signatories about the importance of being authentic in how we approach initiatives. We have the opportunity to move the conversation in industry from being a Diversity and Inclusion programme to a focus on 'Humans'. We heard the importance of remembering why we're on this journey to change our professions – it's about being fair and showing people they are valued.

Belonging came up in several conversations as being an important driver for this work and looking at the needs of the whole person (intersectionality) was mentioned as imperative if we want to create inclusive cultures for everyone. Initiatives need to be part of who we are and what we do – not a box ticking exercise, we employ a whole person.

The issue of excluding men was mentioned. We need to ensure we're not leaving behind white men who have worked for 30 years of their careers in the profession. We need to ensure they feel part of it and not guilty they're doing it wrong. People talked about their people wanting flexibility regardless of gender and we need to be mindful that some men with families want to be there for their kids too.

Some of the smaller firms we spoke with found flexibility to be a challenge and has had a negative impact on other employees not working flexibly – they've had to work overtime as a result. There was a request for more learning opportunities on how to lead diverse workforces and to highlight the challenges, as these are a reality for some of our smaller firms.

“Initiatives need to be part of who we are and what we do – not a box ticking exercise.”



PARTNERS ARE INTEGRAL TO THE SUCCESS OF THE STRATEGY

We heard a lot from our Accords signatories about the importance of connection to other support providers and initiatives, to ensure we're capitalizing on what is already available. There are a lot of organisations and initiatives trying to tackle similar challenges which can be confusing for our members, it's important we're all joined up - together we will be stronger.



WE NEED TO CONSIDER HOW WE CAN CONTRIBUTE TO BROADER OUTCOMES

Some of our Accord signatories told us we need to be considering the broader social, sustainable and community outcomes we can achieve through this important mahi. Our strategy needs to keep front of mind the opportunities and actions we can take to have a positive impact on broader outcomes for our people and Aotearoa.



WE NEED TO MEASURE OUR PROGRESS BUT IT'S NOT ALL ABOUT THE NUMBERS

Whilst most of our Accord signatories talked about the value of having success measures in place to track our progress, there was a concern over targets driving the wrong behaviors and smaller firms not being able to compete with larger firms.

There were concerns over the data feeling like a competition amongst the industry and detracting from the bigger goal to create positive change across our professions. Holding each other accountable in an authentic way will be beneficial for everyone involved.

There was a theme around not letting the numbers get in the way of storytelling and celebrating success against our achievements, regardless of how big or small.

“Holding each other accountable in an authentic way will be beneficial for everyone involved.”



WE NEED TO SUPPORT OUR MEMBERS, BIG AND SMALL.

The Accord signatories we spoke to want more opportunities to connect outside of the annual summit and more sharing of stories for learning.

Larger firms talked about the benefits of connecting our Diversity and Inclusion leads across firms to collaborate and work on joint initiatives to create genuine change together.

People from smaller firms talked about feeling isolated and not always feeling included given the differences in the size of their firms and the different challenges faced. They don't have the same big budgets and resources as the larger firms to implement things.

Majority of people from the firms we spoke with, regardless of size, told us they want access to practical tools such as industry-wide best practise, frameworks, and policies to help learn from what other firms are doing and build confidence to implement things faster.

"It's the practical stuff that will really make a difference."



NEXT STEPS.

Alongside the Diversity Agenda Steering group, we are reviewing the findings of the consultation together with the findings from the personal summit reflections forms collected at Parliament on 1 June 2022.

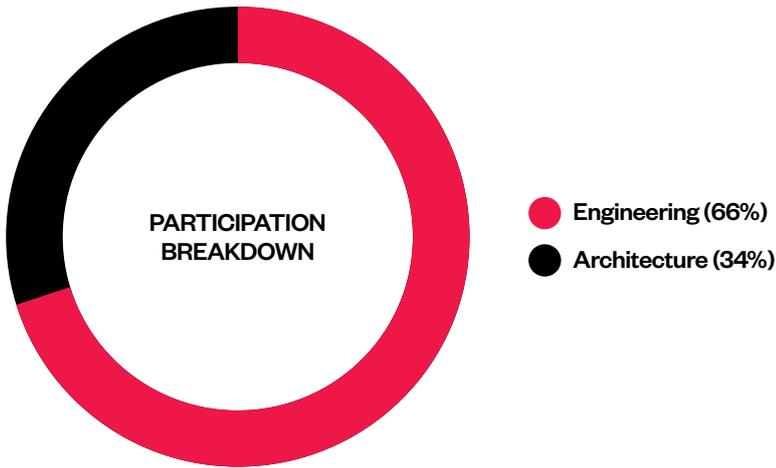
The Diversity Agenda is very grateful to all those who participated in this consultation. Overall, the responses were positive about:

- ▶ A targeted focus on developing our Māori talent pipeline and developing Māori cultural competence
 - ▶ Calling out women explicitly as a continued focus and not assuming this work falls under "under-represented groups" – continuing with this important work
 - ▶ Raising the profile of under-represented groups with a spotlight on LGBTQIA+ and Neurodiverse communities – creating opportunities to build awareness and learning
 - ▶ Identifying support partners doing similar work to avoid duplication and help us achieve our goals faster
 - ▶ Strengthening our relationships with education and tertiary providers to grow the pipeline
 - ▶ Having access to a set of tools and resources to help firms implement things without reinventing the wheel
 - ▶ Increasing opportunities to connect and learn from each-other
 - ▶ Growing the movement together to create positive change now and in the future
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APPENDIX A

BREAKDOWN OF ORGANISATIONS WHO PARTICIPATED

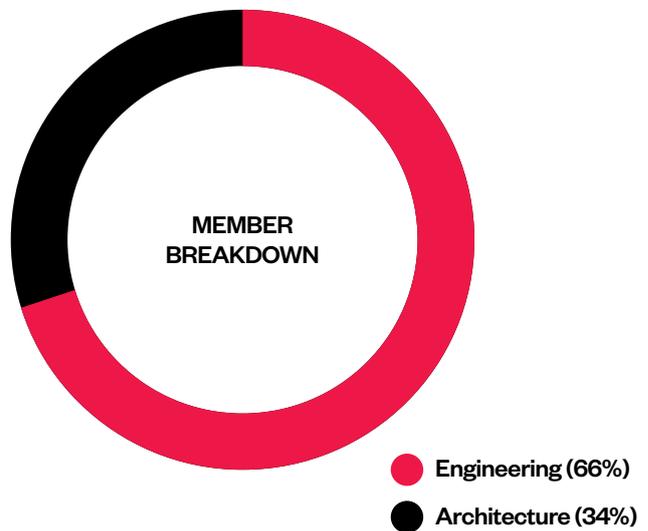


APPENDIX B

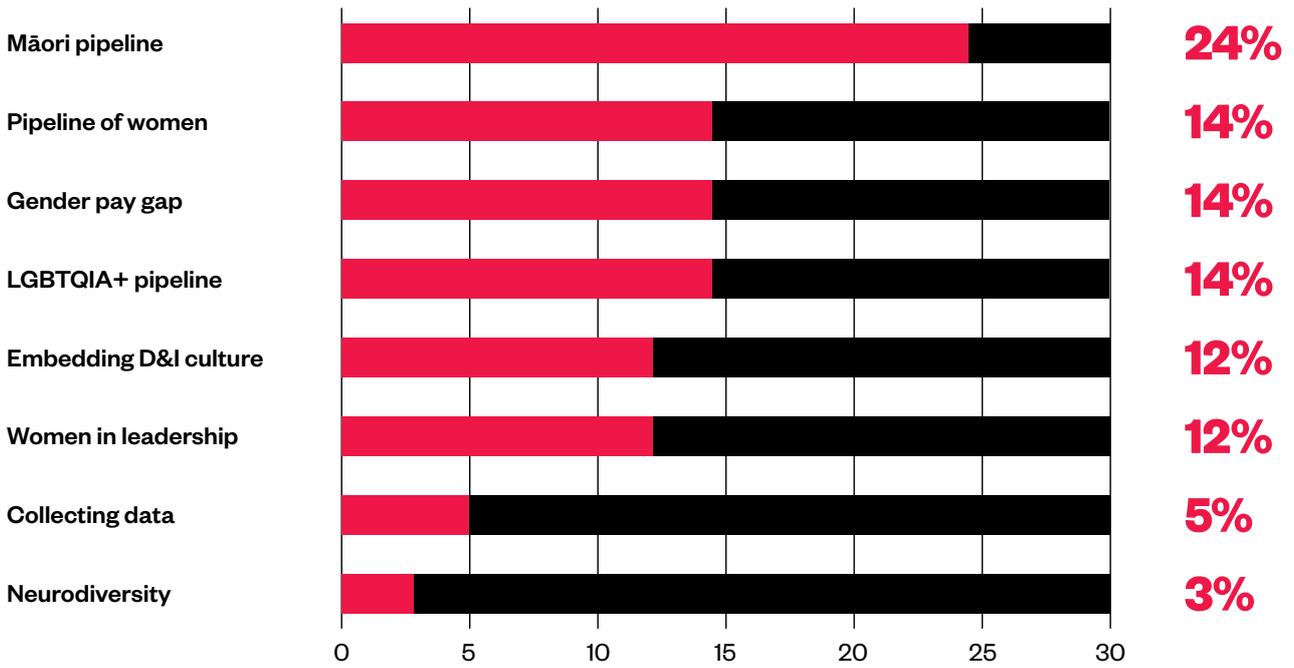
INSIGHTS FROM THE SUMMIT AT PARLIAMENT - 1 JUNE 2022

We asked our Accord signatories to complete a document with their reflections at the end of the CE Summit on 1 June in Parliament. The below is a collective summary of the biggest challenges our members have identified for their firms at the end of the summit and their priorities for the next 12 months, along with if they would like to share their firm's data publicly.

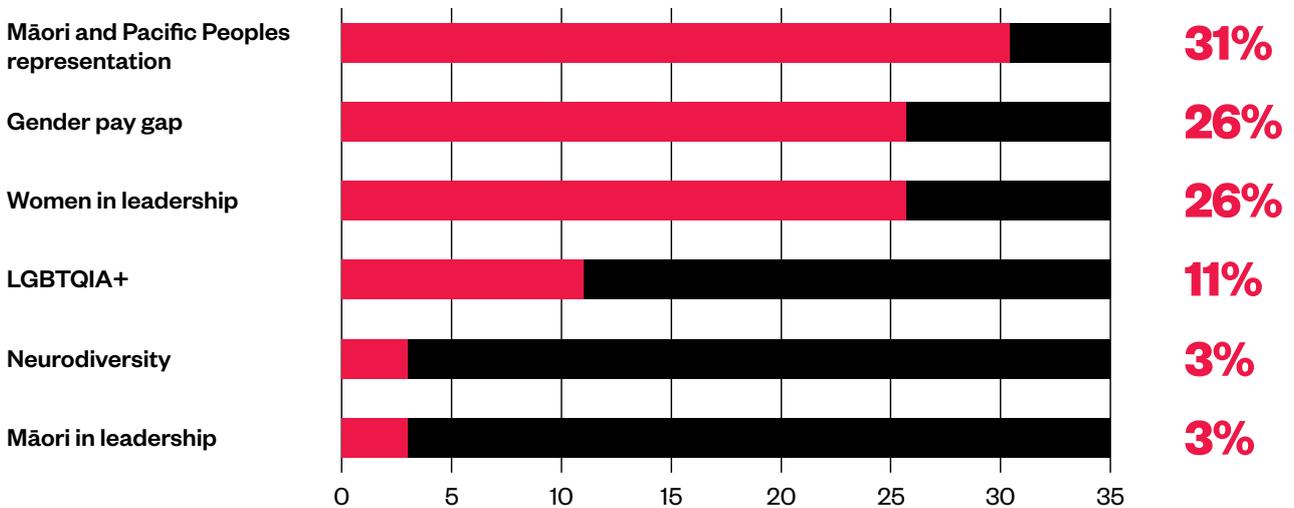
PARTICIPATION OF SUMMIT REFLECTION DOCUMENTS



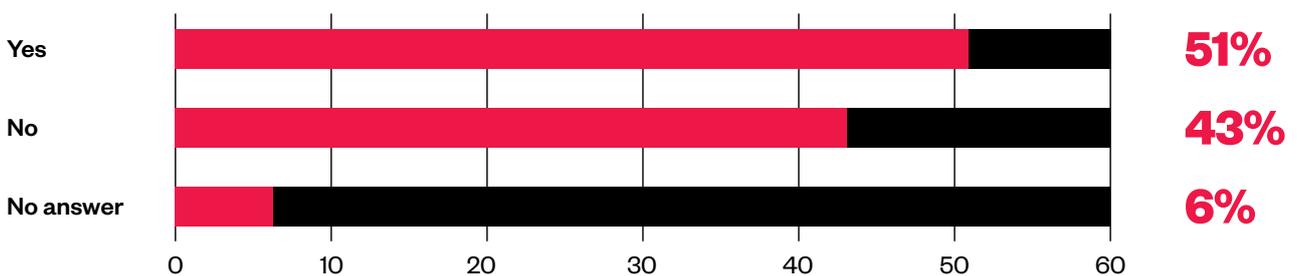
MEMBERS BIGGEST CHALLENGES



MEMBERS PRIORITY AREAS



DO MEMBERS WANT TO REPORT THEIR DATA EXTERNALLY?



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