An inclusive approach to consumer insights



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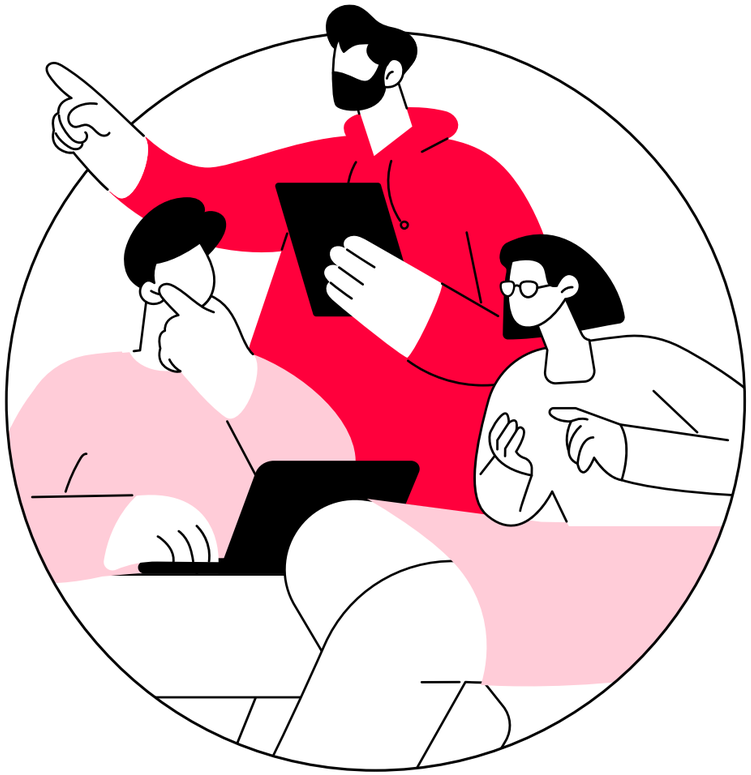


Introduction

In today's world, brands cannot afford to overlook the make-up of the audiences they serve. Marketers need a clear understanding of what consumers want and expect. Insights often play a critical role in ensuring cultural relevance, avoiding missteps, and shaping marketing communications that truly represent and connect with a wide spectrum of consumer voices. This voluntary guide explores how insights and the insights practice can become catalysts for organisations in supporting efforts to make marketing more inclusive and reflective of real-world audiences.

The guide was developed with input from professionals across different backgrounds, geographies and lived experiences, with the aim of capturing a range of diverse and complementary perspectives.

Why inclusive marketing matters for growth

Inclusive marketing can help drive business success and build brands that stand the test of time. Inclusive brands can foster greater loyalty, drive improved engagement, and differentiate themselves in a crowded market. Brands that embrace inclusivity are not just reflecting societal expectations – they are investing in their own long-term growth.

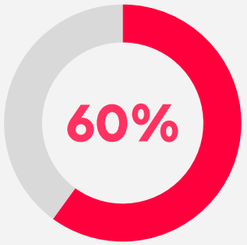
Brands with more inclusive advertising practices sell more...

3.46% **higher shorter-term sales** and **16.26%** **higher long-term sales**

and have higher brand equity (**8.3%** more meaningful, **12.1%** more different, and **9.4%** higher salience)

Source: Unstereotype Alliance research: Inclusion = Income: The Business Case for Inclusive Advertising (2024)

Ads with inclusion at their core win more...



In 2024, **60%** of Cannes Lions Grand Prix Winners had inclusion as a core element of their campaigns.

Source: Effie UK & Creative Equals report: Could Inclusion Drive Marketing Effectiveness? The Business Case for Inclusive Marketing (2024)

The role of insights in driving inclusion

The insights function is central to helping brands see, hear, and understand the full range of consumer perspectives. These perspectives span multiple dimensions of diversity – including but not limited to ethnicity, race, gender identity, age, disability, sexuality, culture, and socioeconomic background. Understanding how these aspects intersect and ensuring accessibility and cultural competence throughout the research process, may be vital.

This process goes beyond numbers – it's about capturing the nuanced experiences and needs that different consumer groups bring to the table. Inclusive insights play an important role not only for inclusive marketing, but also for strategic brand building, product innovation and organisational growth. From shaping messaging and creative execution to informing early-stage product development, insights play a critical role across the end-to-end marketing process. They enable businesses to build brands that are not only progressive but are also sustainable by appealing to a broader audience in an authentic way.

About this guide

This voluntary guide is primarily for insights professionals but extends to all teams involved in the journey of bringing insights to life within the business: from marketers and product developers to procurement and media teams. The goal is for cross-functional partners to work together in activating these insights to foster inclusive marketing.

Scope and limitations

This document provides an overview, focusing on primary research and its application to drive inclusion. It is not a comprehensive training resource or analytics manual, but rather a foundation teams can consider when building their own approaches, understanding that we all bring our own perspectives and limitations to the work we do.

Bias is a part of human nature, and while we can't eliminate it, we can become aware of it and strive to minimise its impact on our work. This voluntary guide serves as a litmus test, encouraging insights practitioners and their cross-functional partners to recognise and question their biases. It provides actionable recommendations that leaders could consider as they seek to take control of their own prejudices, making conscious decisions that lead to more inclusive and representative insights.

A call to action for client-side insights leaders

To create real change, we need leaders willing to champion these principles within their organisations. This voluntary guide is a starting point, but the next steps require action and commitment. We invite every insights leader to consider applying the learnings from this voluntary guide thoughtfully and actively within their own teams. By doing so, we can collectively drive the change needed to create more inclusive, impactful brands.

Let's lead the way forward – embracing insights that celebrate everyone's uniqueness and build strong brands that resonate with us all.

Note: The observations included in this document are not binding in any way whatsoever and WFA members should always take business decisions on an individual basis.



Areas to explore

The guide seeks to explore five key areas:



The role of insights

Understanding the role of the insights function within the organisation and its value in fostering inclusion.

The case for inclusive insights

Designing inclusive insights may be a fundamental business imperative to unlock growth and innovation.

Planning inclusive insights

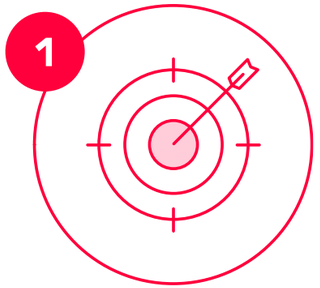
Considerations for planning and commissioning research with an inclusive lens, ensuring that diverse perspectives are integrated from the outset.

Executing inclusive insights

Suggested best practices for executing and interpreting inclusive research.

Measuring success

Assessing the effectiveness of inclusive practices in driving brand growth.



The role of insights

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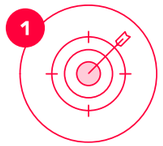
Inclusive insights are foundational for better marketing. Nuanced and intersectional identities are not new. However, consumers now have higher expectations of brands understanding them. Deeper understanding of identities and culture can only be achieved by designing inclusive insights learning plans up front.

The fruits of upfront design will enable brands to be at the forefront of inclusive and better marketing.

Susan Akkad
WFA Global Inclusive Marketing Ambassador and Senior VP, Local and Cultural Innovation, The Estée Lauder Companies





The role of insights

Insights are often the cornerstone of impactful marketing strategies and transformative activations. At their best, insights do more than confirm existing beliefs; they challenge assumptions, highlight opportunities for disruption and provide critical guidance in risk management. Used strategically, insights serve as catalysts for transformational change.

The expanding role of insights

Traditionally, insights were shaped through familiar methodologies, often relying on similar recruitment processes and narrow respondent profiles. In this context, insights sometimes reinforced existing strategies rather than challenging them, potentially limiting both innovation and inclusion.

With a growing industry focus on the power of inclusion to drive business growth, the insights function is now playing a more critical role in driving Learning & Development (L&D) across marketing and beyond. The challenge may be to question established practices and adopt the right tools and mindset to ensure a broader, more representative perspective – one that includes not just different demographics but also the intersections between them.

The question to ask is whether we are truly reflecting the voices and experiences of all groups. Are we attentive to the needs of minority voices – especially those who sit at the intersection of multiple identities (e.g. age, race, gender, disability, or socioeconomic status)?

However, a key industry challenge remains: in some countries, data collection restrictions make it prohibitively difficult to capture certain demographics, ultimately limiting the impact of the voices we seek to amplify. This underscores the need for alternative, accessible and locally compliant approaches to gathering insights in a way that fosters true representation and inclusion.

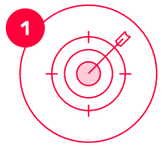
Using insights to navigate uncertainty

To remain relevant and effective at a time of global uncertainty (economic and technological as well as climate change), the insights function must “Look Up” – to identify emerging trends and areas for transformation – and “Look Out“, embracing the complexity of human diversity. That may require insights professionals to adopt an intersectional lens — recognising that lived experiences are shaped by the overlapping influence of race, gender, class, ability and other identity markers. Inclusive methodologies that encompass all demographics and having a keen awareness of bias will enable insights teams to deliver for their businesses.

By understanding and addressing the nuanced lives of people from all walks of life, insights teams can unlock powerful, actionable perspectives. Researching across broader audiences enables businesses to build richer, more meaningful connections with their customers, transcending traditional, mainstream perspectives. These, in turn, are a foundational building block for long-term growth.

The ethical imperative of inclusive insights

Pursuing inclusion in insights isn’t just beneficial for business. By advancing research practices that reflect all voices, we make strides towards a more humane, fair, and equitable world where everyone’s rights and perspectives are acknowledged. Inclusive insights require more than diverse sample sizes or updated methodologies – they demand ethical responsibility. When engaging with vulnerable or marginalised populations, care must be taken to ensure respectful, informed, and safe participation. This includes safeguarding participants’ dignity, autonomy, and emotional wellbeing throughout the research journey. Ethical inclusion is not just a best practice – it is a fundamental condition for building trust with growth audiences and delivering truly human-centred insights.



How to foster inclusion

Here are some actionable steps and growth opportunities for client-side insights leaders to consider as they seek to foster inclusion and drive meaningful change:

From ‘consumer insights’ to ‘human insights’

Consumers are individuals first; consumption is only a small part of their lives. It’s essential to see beyond transactional interactions and step into their shoes to understand their broader human needs. How can your brand address those needs across diverse communities? This empathetic approach opens new frontiers for insights by striving to serve everyone inclusively. Empathy isn’t one-size-fits-all; it requires understanding cultural, behavioural, attitudinal, and even physiological factors that may vary across groups and markets.

Some WFA members have even begun to refer to the “human insights” function as opposed to “consumer insights,” as a small step toward empathy.

Educate yourself, pause and review

There is a wealth of pioneering thought leadership on inclusive research practice (see **Resources** section). Regularly take a step back to critically evaluate your approach: are you meeting high standards of inclusion? Challenge yourself to raise the bar.

Learn from the people and communities you wish to represent

The most authentic insights come from the voices of the communities themselves. Reach out to associations and advocates who work closely with minority and intersectional groups. True inclusion starts with understanding and valuing the lived experiences of those you aim to serve.

Questions to consider:

- Is there any bias in research used to gather insight? Does it capture representative perspectives or just broad generalisations?
- How are consumer ‘pen portraits’ or mood boards depicted/visualised?
- Have you managed to capture nuance and avoid generalisation?
- What are the perceptions of your brand within representative targets?
- What do you know about the cultural tensions and audience in each active market?
- Are stereotyping concerns tested with the affected group?
- Have you engaged experts who can help advise on how specific audiences might positively or negatively interpret your intentions?

For example, Procter & Gamble aims to grow brands and grow markets, which requires an inclusive lens to reach all their consumers. Oral-B designed for and with people with disabilities to raise the bar on superior innovation and communication for all consumers, driving category growth. P&G worked alongside NGO partners and oral health professionals to set a new standard of care approach in dental practices across the EU for disabled patients, via the Oral-B Big Rethink programme.

How to foster inclusion (continued)

Leverage your peers' insights to think outside the box

Repeating past methods inherently supports the status quo. To truly drive innovation, think bigger, bolder, and better. Consider: what innovations have other industries introduced to foster inclusion? A great way to do this is by learning from the wisdom of your peers.

Learn from research experts

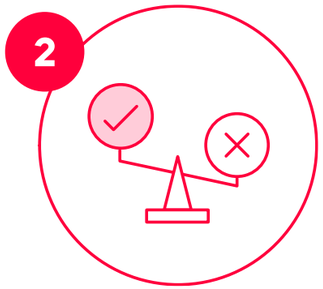
Many research agencies and consultants are already paving the way toward inclusive insights. You may want to seek out such experts, collaborate with them and invest time in understanding the methodologies that underpin inclusive research. While you may already understand the "why" of inclusion, these partnerships can illuminate the "how" by providing tested strategies and tools that help your brand bring inclusion to life in impactful ways.

For example, Primark launched a full range of adaptive clothing in January 2025 – 49 of their best-selling lines across men's and women's fashion, carefully adapted for the disabled community. Prelaunch work included consulting with experts, assessing and adapting stores where needed, conducting focus groups, and training their comms team in inclusive design principles – accessible text, image & video descriptions, etc. Primark held a launch event for the disabled community and conducted a full marketing takeover across all channels.

Recognise the diversity of insights

Inclusion requires understanding that different types of insights contribute different elements to the comprehensive view of your audience. Attitudinal insights reveal underlying values and beliefs, behavioural insights showcase interactions and purchasing habits, cultural insights reflect traditions and customs, and physiological insights address physical diversity (such as hair type or skin tone, for example). You could tailor your approach based on the types of insights most relevant to your brand and category. By doing so, your research will capture the full spectrum of human diversity, creating strategies that authentically resonate across varied consumer experiences.





The case for an inclusive approach to insights

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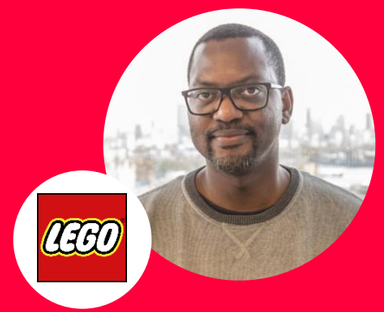
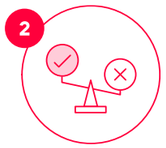
I firmly believe that everyone has the opportunity to feel seen and heard by the brands they love and engage with. As a person who can facilitate this connection, I can’t stand by and not make the most of the chance to ‘walk the walk’. Ultimately, everybody wins in this scenario.

Ashley Anzie
Director, Marketing Insights Excellence, Global Insights
The LEGO Group





The case for an inclusive approach insights

By embracing inclusion, businesses can potentially drive both competitive impact and positive societal outcomes. An inclusive approach to insights helps the organisation respond to those societal expectations and can turn into a strategic advantage for the business.

There are four tangible reasons why an inclusive approach to insights can be essential for the business:

It can provide an enhanced understanding of modern society

In today's increasingly diverse and fragmented world, a nuanced understanding of society ensures that our products and experiences resonate authentically with all communities. By reflecting the full spectrum of modern life, we can maintain relevance, drive desirability and generate demand, brands can stand apart from competitors.

It can help uncover untapped opportunities

A deep understanding of diverse individuals and communities often reveals unmet needs and untapped opportunities. This involves actively identifying and addressing biases and recognising barriers that can hinder connection, such as physiological differences and accessibility concerns.

In categories such as beauty and personal care, for example, it's often essential to consider variations in hair type, skin conditions, and other physical characteristics that reflect the diversity of consumers, including those in the disability community. By addressing these unique needs, brands can foster stronger, more meaningful connections with underserved groups, unlocking new opportunities for growth.

For example, Estée Lauder utilised cultural insights for their campaign 'Game Day, Your Way' – there are 84 million female sports fans in the US, and 57% of US women casually watch football – to inform their objective of driving brand relevance. Through a series of season-specific activations such as college football and the NFL and NBA, the company was able to accelerate ownership of the beauty conversation with female sports fans and drive double-digit growth, outpacing the category by the end of year two.

It helps build culturally relevant and responsible brands

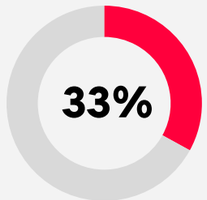
Engaging in culturally relevant conversations thoughtfully and responsibly boosts perceptions that your brand is playing a positive role in society. A commitment to inclusion can foster a positive impact that resonates across all audiences, reinforcing trust and respect.

Inclusion is expected by all consumers

It's essential to recognise that inclusivity is not only about representing minority groups; industry research shows that it is also an expectation that every audience has, to feel valued and seen in the brand's offerings. The goal should be that inclusive considerations are woven into all aspects of brand engagement and representation.

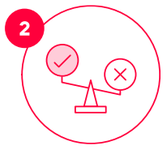


7 in 10 consumers say diversity and inclusion perceptions influence their purchase decisions sometimes, often or all the time.*



33% say it's "often or all the time" and high for people in key emerging markets and demographics, for people with thinking and learning differences, 25–34-year-olds, GenZ, Millennials, those with Mental Health Conditions, LGBTQ+ and under-privileged race/ethnic groups.*

Source: Kantar Brand Inclusion Index (2024)



How to adopt inclusive practices

By adopting inclusive practices and engaging directly with communities and experts, brands have an opportunity to ensure their insights practice not only resonates with diverse audiences but also drives impactful, lasting change for the business.

To embrace an inclusive approach to insights, here are some steps that brands might want to explore implementing right away:

Acknowledge your position of authority and responsibility

As insights leaders you hold a unique position of authority that shapes how consumers are understood within the organisation. It's crucial to "own the voice of the consumer" by representing their diverse perspectives accurately and responsibly. This accountability goes beyond just data analysis; it involves a commitment to representation of all consumer voices.

Reflect on potential biases

Continuously question your own perspectives to ensure personal biases or preconceived ideas don't influence the insights you generate. This includes taking a critical look at the design of your research methodologies to identify and address potential blind spots. By embracing this self-reflection, you can set a foundation for unbiased, inclusive insights that resonate across diverse consumer segments.

Ask the right questions

As researchers, it's easy to fall into patterns of asking the same questions and accepting familiar answers. Challenge this approach by asking new questions that reveal deeper, more nuanced insights, particularly in relation to underrepresented communities.

Draw inspiration from other industries

Look beyond your industry to find examples of inclusive practices that drive innovation. For instance, Microsoft's Inclusive Design approach centres on designing products for people with disabilities, which has led to breakthroughs benefitting a broader audience. In addition, Microsoft's second use case – the Xbox Adaptive Controller – is a powerful example of designing with inclusion at the core. By exploring and learning from other industries, you can incorporate similar inclusive principles that add value to your brand and impact your consumers' lives positively.

Build a business case for inclusive insights

Start building a compelling business case for inclusive insights with inclusive practices at the foundation. Position inclusive insights as a strategic growth opportunity and a competitive differentiator, supported by data (see **Resources** section) that demonstrates the positive impact of inclusion on business performance. Engage key stakeholders, including the CMO and finance team, to secure support and sponsorship. By aligning inclusion goals with financial and brand objectives, you can create a framework that gains organisational buy-in and drives long-term change.

Ensure shared understanding of inclusive language within your organisation

To support collaboration across teams, it's important to establish a shared understanding of inclusive language and practices. While terminology may vary across regions and evolve over time, using respectful and thoughtful language helps reduce misunderstandings and reinforces a collective commitment to inclusion. Staying open to feedback and cultural nuance ensures that inclusive insights remain relevant, empathetic and aligned with local contexts.

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Inclusive insights planning

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Brands above all need to have empathy and ask how can they help. With this lens, brands will not only be inclusive but stay relevant and drive growth. Applying this into the insights process, asking the right questions, including the right consumers that are representative of society and listening deeply to understand is key.

Elaine Tam
Head of Planning & Insights,
APAC Innovation
Diageo





Inclusive insights planning

Inclusion in research means ensuring that every voice is heard, valued and respected. By considering the perspectives of all consumer segments, brands can communicate effectively with their diverse audiences and create products and experiences that resonate universally. Inclusive research is often a significant driver of business success and innovation; without it, brands may risk misrepresenting and alienating key consumer groups. When done well, inclusive research can help unlock untapped market potential, strengthen brand trust and ensure long-term relevance and resilience.

To achieve this, brands can consider how they actively recognise and address the needs of all types of consumers – those who are ethnically diverse, differently-abled, or bring various perspectives, including those related to social issues, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion or other lived experiences. This must also include an awareness of intersectionality – the ways in which these identities overlap – and how these intersecting experiences influence the way people engage with categories, messaging, and brands.

Inclusive research planning should ideally be approached with a global mindset, accounting for regional, legal and cultural differences. What's inclusive in one context may not be in another, and research design must remain adaptable.

When planning and designing inclusive research, brands should keep the following considerations at the forefront:

Define clear inclusion objectives

At the outset, establish specific inclusion objectives for your research. What diverse perspectives do you aim to capture? Are there particular underrepresented groups or voices that your brand has previously overlooked? Clear objectives will help guide the research design and ensure the outcomes align with your broader brand purpose and social responsibility goals. Build these objectives into your internal stakeholder alignment process and include them in briefs and KPIs to ensure accountability.

Broaden the scope of your research design

Ensure that your research design achieves greater reach and representation across the widest range of consumers possible. This means not only refining sampling methods, recruitment channels and survey designs to avoid unintentionally excluding any demographic but also thinking beyond traditional surveys. Since not all consumer cohorts can typically be found in conventional panels, consider integrating ethnographic research and other immersive methodologies to capture deeper, more authentic insights into consumer behaviours and experiences. For example, the LEGO Group launched an inclusive research framework to ensure they engage with and represent diverse consumers in their research design (see **Case studies** section).

Address unconscious bias within your team

Encourage your insights team to reflect on, and address, any unconscious biases that may affect their approach to research design and execution. A culture of self-awareness and openness to continuous learning is essential to prevent these biases from influencing findings.

Providing concrete examples of potential biases can help lead to action. For instance, researchers often come from highly educated backgrounds or live in urban areas, which may unintentionally shape the way they frame questions or interpret responses. Being aware of this can help ensure research is designed in a way that truly resonates with and represents a broader range of consumer experiences.

Where possible, include researchers or advisors from marginalised communities in leadership roles throughout the research process – not just as participants or consultants. Representation in decision-making is essential to authenticity.

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Identify inclusive research partners

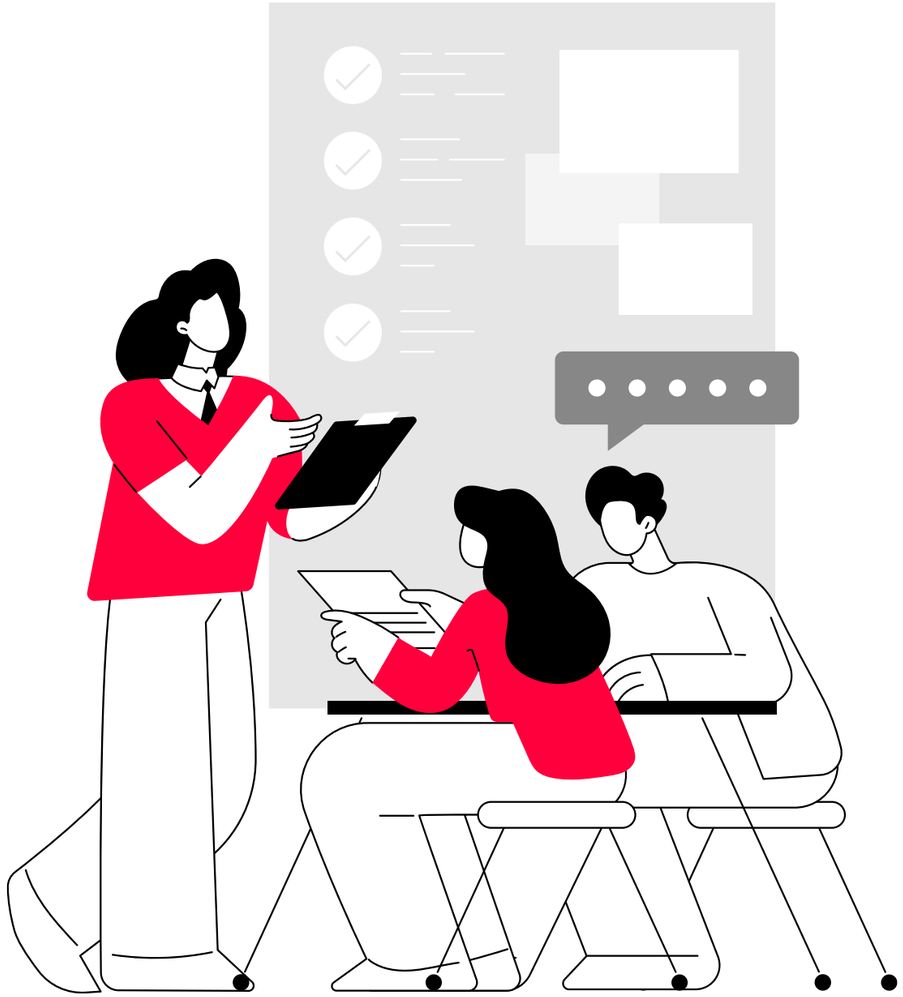
When choosing a research partner, you may choose to prioritise those who demonstrate a commitment to inclusion in their methodologies and practices. Consider partners with experience in reaching diverse groups, have an understanding of cultural sensitivities, and processes designed to ensure that all consumer voices are heard. Evaluate their leadership diversity and whether inclusion is embedded in their research values, team composition, and approach to innovation.

Establish inclusive criteria for procurement

Design your procurement processes to ensure that competitive tenders are not evaluated solely on price. Establish additional criteria that align with your brand's inclusion goals, such as the partner's track record in inclusive research, cultural competency, adaptability, ethical standards and the robustness of their methodologies. By including these factors, you can make more balanced and impactful decisions that support long-term inclusion goals. WFA has a voluntary guide to supplier diversity that might offer relevant insights.

Allocate sufficient budget and time for inclusion

Inclusive research often requires more time and resources to ensure robust recruitment and diverse representation. Be prepared to allocate sufficient budget and timeline flexibility to cover additional costs, such as working with niche recruitment agencies or translating materials, to meet your inclusion objectives. Build budgets accordingly to reflect the added cost and value of reaching underrepresented populations – from translation to accessibility accommodations – and clearly articulate the business case for these investments. Inclusive insights are not an add-on; they are core to brand growth, customer relevance and long-term equity. Build a strong internal business case that links inclusive research to potential growth, risk mitigation, and reputational value.





Questions you may want to ask yourself

Without an explicit focus on inclusion, research designs often default to easily accessible consumers – frequently online panellists. Here are some questions insight teams can address when planning research:

Are we aware of our own biases, and are we actively working to prevent them from impacting the research design? Establishing a bias-awareness protocol or checklist can help ensure that all team members reflect on their potential biases before beginning the research process. WFA has developed a voluntary guide to bias in the creative process that might help.

Are we making any assumptions about participants' needs, experiences, or preferences? Consider developing participant profiles based on data rather than assumptions, ensuring that diverse backgrounds and experiences are accurately represented.

Embed diversity at all research stages

Will the project design ensure diversity throughout all stages – recruitment, design, analysis and reporting? This means setting specific targets for representation and developing strategies that actively reach out to diverse groups rather than relying solely on standard panels. Ensure flexible quotas align with legal frameworks in each market.

Consult experts with lived experience

Have we consulted individuals who have 'lived experience' relevant to the project? Engaging with community representatives or advocates can provide critical insights and help ensure the research is grounded in authentic understanding.

Design for cultural sensitivity and respect

Is the research designed to be culturally sensitive and respectful? Cultural sensitivity should be embedded in all aspects of the design, from the wording of questions to the interpretation of data, to ensure that all respondents feel respected and represented.

Define clear inclusion criteria for procurement

Are we selecting research partners based on inclusivity criteria as well as price? In procurement, prioritise partners who have demonstrated experience in inclusive research practices. Create a structured evaluation process that includes these criteria alongside cost considerations.

Incorporate inclusion into budgeting and timing

Have we allocated sufficient budget and time for inclusion-related needs? Inclusive research may require additional resources and time for accessibility accommodations, multiple language translations or specialised recruitment efforts. Ensure these costs are anticipated and built into the budget and timeline from the outset.

Develop an inclusive pitch for stakeholders

Are we communicating the value of inclusive research to key stakeholders, including finance and senior management? When pitching for buy-in, highlight both the social and business case for inclusion, including potential market growth, brand loyalty and risk mitigation.

Plan for accessible data collection tools

Are the data collection tools accessible to all participants? Make sure surveys, interviews and other data collection methods are adaptable to various needs, such as offering screen reader compatibility, language options and alternative formats (e.g. phone or paper).

Prepare for iterative feedback and refinement

Have we built in checkpoints to gather feedback and make adjustments throughout the process? Incorporate iterative feedback loops, allowing adjustments based on participant feedback, especially during pilot phases. This ensures the research remains inclusive and responsive to potential oversights.

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Inclusive insights execution

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When brands take the time to truly understand and connect with diverse communities, they’re not just meeting a moral responsibility, they’re opening the door to new opportunities with customers. We’ve seen firsthand how cultural and inclusive insights can help brands reach new audiences, deepen relationships with existing ones, and ultimately drive growth alongside brilliantly different creative ideas.

Rich Miles
CEO
The Diversity Standards Collective



4

Inclusive insights execution

Inclusion should ideally be embedded in every step of the research execution process. This means considering all aspects of inclusion and diversity while focusing on the elements that will best achieve your study's key objectives. Establishing clear goals and potential trade-offs from the planning phase – and aligning these with all stakeholders (internal teams, external clients, and suppliers) – ensures a shared commitment. Here are some key considerations:

Ensure representative and readable base sizes

Design your sampling approach to include readable base sizes for key cohorts (e.g. underrepresented or minority groups) that allow for meaningful insights when compared to the general population or standard averages. This ensures that subgroup insights are robust enough to inform decision-making, rather than being diluted in broader sample data. Prioritising sample robustness in these groups ensures their experiences can inform brand, product, and communication strategies more effectively – ultimately driving inclusion and business growth.

Emphasise ethical AI usage

AI offers unprecedented opportunities to elevate the insights function, especially in terms of research execution. Its ability to automate repetitive tasks such as data analysis and report generation can free up insights professionals to focus on more strategic activities such as foresight work and creative, inclusive problem-solving. AI adoption is still in its early stages within the insights functions; however, 94% of brand-side respondents in a recent WFA report recognised the potential for AI to drive efficiency as a key benefit, and 27% claim that "prompt engineering" will be an essential skill for insights professionals.

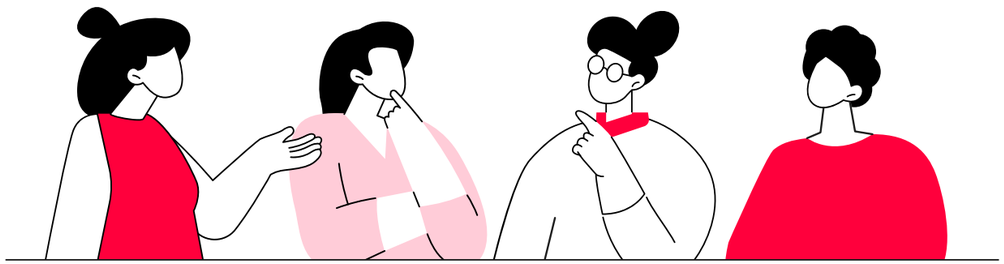
Develop a clear policy, with inclusion in mind, on when and how AI is used in research execution including data processing and analysis. WFA has an Inclusive AI Framework that might offer some insights.

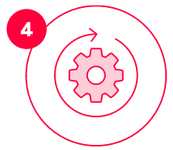
Review and adapt research methodologies

Every component of the research process should be critically reviewed and, where necessary, modified for inclusion. This includes adapting methodologies, diversifying sample sources and using inclusive language in all research tools (incentives, invitations, questionnaires, etc.).

Survey platforms and research environments should be accessible to a wide variety of participants, with considerations for those who may need accommodations. Additionally, research should provide options to opt out of sensitive questions, ensuring that participants feel comfortable and in control of their responses while maintaining the integrity of the study.

Consider employing a mix of methodologies (e.g. online and offline approaches) to accommodate various participant preferences and accessibility needs. For example, some groups may have limited access to digital platforms, so including offline methods helps reach these audiences. Method selection should also account for global variation in literacy, tech access, and comfort with formal research settings.





Test research materials with underrepresented communities

Before full deployment, you may want to test research materials, both within the organisation and externally, with members of underrepresented communities to identify any potential issues with comprehension, relevance, or accessibility. Engaging diverse voices at an early stage helps ensure that the materials resonate with a broad audience and prevents the risk of unintentionally excluding or alienating participants.

Beyond refining the materials, it is often also crucial to create an environment where participants feel safe, welcomed and valued throughout the process. This fosters genuine engagement and richer insights, ultimately leading to research that is more inclusive, effective, and reflective of the diverse populations it seeks to understand. An intersectional lens is critical here – individuals may experience multiple, overlapping identities that shape how they perceive research environments and engage with questions.

Emphasise inclusive data collection locations and formats

Select data collection locations and formats that accommodate different needs. This may include offering virtual participation options, in-person sessions in accessible spaces, or alternative formats (e.g. phone interviews) to reach participants who may struggle to access certain formats. In global research, adapt formats to align with regional infrastructure and cultural norms, ensuring accessibility is not defined by digital-first assumptions.

Engage stakeholders in the inclusive process

Regularly communicate with internal and external stakeholders throughout the execution phase to ensure ongoing alignment with inclusion goals. Transparency in progress and challenges helps maintain buy-in and adapt the approach if needed. This is particularly important when working across regions, where cultural nuances, sensitivities or legal restrictions may shift the research landscape mid-project. A recent WFA report provides insights on key considerations for a successful insights function.

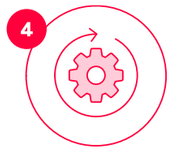
Priorities ethical and respectful participant engagement

Engage participants respectfully, ensuring that they feel valued throughout the process. This includes clear communication on the purpose of the research, informed consent and an understanding that their insights are genuinely valued by the brand. Ethical engagement fosters trust and increases the likelihood of honest, high-quality feedback.

Allow for self-identification and flexible quotas

Empower participants to self-identify in ways that feel authentic by offering an open-ended option instead of stereotypes and category. This allows respondents to define themselves in their own terms, especially when it comes to culturally sensitive topics such as gender identity or sexual orientation.

With AI making text analysis easier, open-ended responses can now provide valuable insights while ensuring all participants feel respected and represented. When considering setting quotas, you may choose to maintain flexibility to include minority groups relevant to your research focus, while balancing practicality and study objectives. This should ideally always be done in compliance with local legal and cultural requirements.



Use clear, inclusive and empathetic language

Avoid complex wording, technical terms or marketing jargon that may confuse or exclude respondents. Ensure questions are easy to understand, align with local accessibility standards and use unbiased language to create a comfortable and respectful experience. For example, instead of asking ”How old are you?”, which may feel ageist, a more neutral phrasing could be ”What is your age?”. Thoughtful wording helps prevent misinterpretation or discomfort, leading to more accurate and meaningful responses.

Design research questions with inclusive language that is respectful and relevant to all groups. Avoid language that may reinforce stereotypes and ensure that translations are available for participants who speak different languages. Inclusive phrasing helps to create an environment where participants feel valued and represented.

Keep surveys concise

Long surveys can cause participant fatigue, leading to lower response quality or drop-offs. This is especially important for respondents with disabilities, such as visual impairments, who may require significantly more time to complete surveys.

For example, Kantar research found that visually impaired respondents needed 46% more time to complete a survey, with grid questions taking three times longer. To ensure accessibility and maintain engagement, keep surveys concise and avoid complex question formats.

Ensure accessibility in survey design

Online research tools should be accessible to participants with physical disabilities, neurodiverse needs and varying levels of digital literacy. This may involve using screen-reader-compatible surveys, easy-to-navigate interfaces, and alternative formats for those who require them.

Make surveys visually accessible by using larger fonts, high contrast, and simple layouts. Avoid complex visuals, and ensure all images include Alt Text for screen readers. Additionally, use colour combinations that are distinguishable for colour-blind respondents and follow universal design principles to make participation easy for everyone.

Interpret results with inclusion in mind

Analysis of results should actively seek to elevate diverse voices and prevent unconscious bias. This includes examining data separately by demographic segments to identify distinct patterns and avoiding the assumption that the ”average” represents all groups equally. By using segment-specific analysis, insights teams can highlight unique perspectives and experiences that may be overlooked in a general analysis.

Aim to build a diverse analytics and insights team that brings varied perspectives to the interpretation process, ensuring that conclusions respect and accurately represent all participant groups. Global and intersectional perspectives should guide interpretation, as experiences of marginalisation often cut across multiple dimensions of identity and vary by region.

5

Measuring success

“

Generating inclusive insights can feel all involving and endless. Measure the ROI – Return on Inclusion – for the clarity that matters. Focus on the insights that truly move the needle: the ones that cut through the meaningless ‘average’, illuminate your brand’s inclusion gaps, and unlock the clarity that accelerates growth and strengthens business outcomes.

Valeria Piaggio
Global Head, Inclusive Growth,
Sustainable Transformation Practice
Kantar



5

Measuring success

Measuring success in inclusive research presents unique challenges, particularly for global businesses. While it's relatively straightforward to measure campaign content and outcomes, it is difficult to assess the underlying insights and inclusion embedded in the creative process. Ensuring the impact of inclusive insights is fully understood often requires a nuanced approach, with carefully chosen KPIs that go beyond surface-level metrics.

Choosing the right KPIs is essential to capture both the reach and the effectiveness of inclusion in research. Relevant KPIs should ideally connect the impact of insights directly to broader business goals, showing how inclusive research influences brand perception, audience engagement and even internal functions such as HR.

By selecting KPIs that reflect both the insight and its execution from an inclusion perspective, businesses can create a holistic view of success that encompasses every part of the organisation.

To ensure inclusive insights are effectively cascaded throughout the business, organisations may want to design their KPIs to:

1

Demonstrate alignment between insights and the goals of various stakeholders, including marketing, media, product development and HR, ensuring that inclusion is embedded across functions.

2

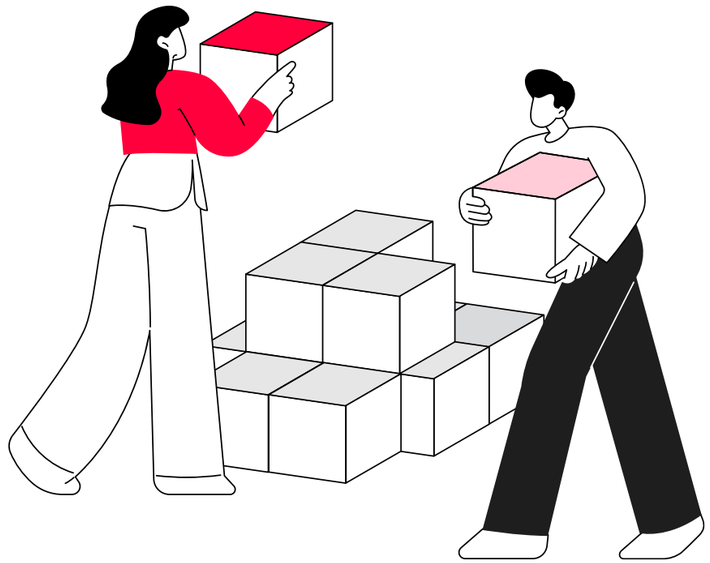
Link inclusive insights to concrete outcomes, tracking how well these insights are integrated into strategies and decision-making processes.

3

Capture the ROI of inclusive research, by measuring the financial and reputational impact on the brand, helping to justify continued investment in inclusive efforts.

In addition to selecting the right KPIs, companies can consider tools that enable measurement from both an insights and inclusion perspective. Data analytics platforms, sentiment tracking and cross-functional dashboards can help businesses monitor the reach and resonance of inclusive research over time.

Embedding these metrics into existing reporting structures and business cycles ensures that inclusion remains a visible, prioritised part of the company's strategic direction.



5

Inclusive research KPIs

Here are a few examples of inclusive research KPIs you may want to consider:

- **Consumer sentiment:**
  Measures reflecting brand inclusivity perceptions, such as “This brand represents me” or “This brand shares my values.”
- **Brand health:**
  Metrics like brand funnel performance (e.g. awareness, consideration) and image attributes among diverse audiences.
- **Category penetration:**
  Indicators of reach within specific consumer segments, including underserved or minority groups.
- **Supplier diversity:**
  Metrics that track diversity among agency and supplier partnerships, such as the representation of diverse employees in partner organisations.
- **Market share in diverse segments:**
  Track growth in market share within underrepresented or diverse consumer segments to see if inclusive insights are expanding the brand’s reach.
- **New customer acquisition:**
  Measure new customers from targeted diverse groups to show how inclusion attracts new audiences.
- **Customer Lifetime Value (CLV) among diverse audiences:**
  Track CLV for diverse customer groups to assess if inclusive strategies drive loyalty and long-term value.
- **Retention rate by demographic group:**
  Monitor retention rates across diverse groups to evaluate if inclusion efforts lead to repeat business.
- **Net Promoter Score (NPS) among diverse audiences:**
  Measure NPS among different demographic segments to see how inclusion affects brand loyalty and advocacy.
- **Campaign reach in targeted segments:**
  Monitor campaign reach within diverse demographic groups to assess if inclusive messaging is effective.
- **Complaints related to inclusion:**
  Track complaints about inclusion issues to identify improvement areas.



Ensuring impactful measurement

Effective measurement of inclusive insights often requires a streamlined approach to KPIs, balancing the need for meaningful data with practicality. Here are key steps advertisers can consider to ensure impactful measurement without overwhelming stakeholders:

1

Focus on a few core KPIs

Avoid KPI overload by selecting a handful of metrics that directly link to inclusion goals and business outcomes. Ensure these KPIs track both enabler metrics (processes that support inclusion) and end metrics (outcomes that reflect the impact of inclusion on brand performance).

2

Set realistic, time-based goals

Define time frames that account for both short-term actions and long-term shifts, recognising that certain inclusive initiatives require sustained efforts to show measurable change.

3

Align KPIs with business goals and accountability

Create explicit links between KPIs and broader business objectives. Assign accountability for each KPI to specific teams or roles, ensuring that metrics are actionable and progress is regularly reviewed.

4

Benchmark against other brands using inclusion as a growth lever

Establish what good looks like in inclusion-related areas to contextualise your progress and highlight areas for improvement. Benchmarking can reveal opportunities to differentiate the brand within the industry. Industry associations such as WFA can run voluntary surveys to uncover aggregated industry perspectives.

5

Integrate reporting into business cycles

Embed KPI tracking within existing reporting cycles and governance structures. Use critical business moments (e.g. quarterly reviews, annual planning) to highlight insights and demonstrate the impact of inclusive research to executive sponsors.



Case studies

The LEGO Group

Global Insights Inclusive Research Framework

In the Global Insights community at the LEGO Group, our commitment to inclusion is not just a goal but an integral part of our ethos. We recognise the necessity of holding ourselves accountable to inclusive research practices, ensuring that these principles are woven into the fabric of our work.

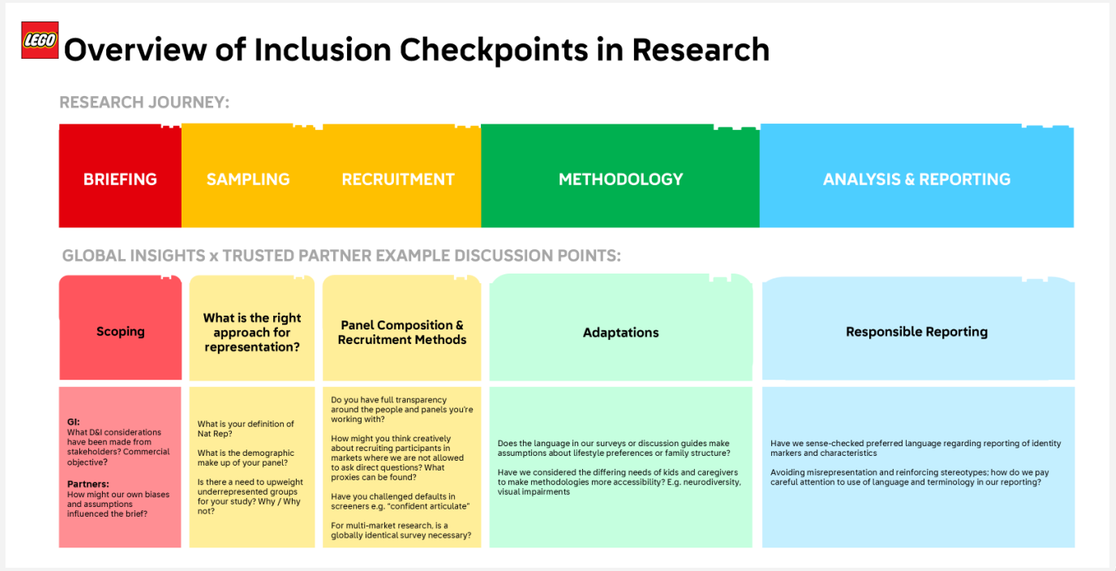
Our framework outlines key questions across both qualitative and quantitative studies, guiding us to engage with diverse perspectives and represent the voices of our consumer and shopper base. We firmly believe that all children are our role models, and it is our responsibility to reflect their lives and experiences in our research.

Implementing these inclusive practices requires a collaborative effort within our organisation, starting within Global Insights. The journey began with our Diversity & Inclusion Insights Manager, who laid out a comprehensive roadmap. This initiative mobilised the entire Global Insights community, fostering a collective commitment to shaping and crafting our research strategies.

As we look towards the future, we are excited about the potential impact of our work. While the outcomes of our efforts may take time to materialise –projected for 2026 and beyond – we are dedicated to creating meaningful change that will resonate across our research.

Find out more in this webinar here





The Diversity Standards Collective for Karo Healthcare

E45 – This Is Me, This Is My Space (UK)

E45 was on a mission to feature the underrepresented Trans+ community as part of their campaign 'This is Me, This Is My Space'. This campaign aims to represent this diverse community and showcase the universal challenges around skincare through the lived experiences of trans and non-binary women.

This ad showcased trans women being comfortable in their skin, progressively and inclusively, which is why it won the 2024 Channel4 Diversity Award, and Outvertising's Brand Award in 2025.

E45 and Karo partnered with The Diversity Standards Collective (DSC) to conduct several pieces of research to build a holistic understanding of the experiences of people in this community, their needs when it comes to skincare, and what authentic and progressive representation looks like.

E45 knew that to get this right, they needed to engage directly with the community, create safe spaces to share stories, and a platform to shape the ad as well as the supporting collateral.

Over 200 trans+ participants from the DSC's panel contributed, with hyper-targeted recruitment of diverse and intersectional focus-group participants and survey respondents ensuring the brand to hear voices from across the community.

Creative Trans+ professionals helped guide the creation of E45's ad through DSC moderated focus groups, drawing on both their industry expertise as advertising professionals and their own lived experiences. The client received feedback on language and potential watch-outs, guidance on normalising and variation of trans+ experiences, and nuance within portrayals of transitioning.

Additional trans+ consumer research supported the creation of educational content on skincare for those medically transitioning. **The campaign led to a 104% surge in ad awareness, significant uplifts in brand awareness, purchase intent, and sales, plus a 92% approval rating for their co-created leaflet.**

Beyond the measurable sales and marketing metrics, DSC's research provided Karo and E45 with the confidence they needed to proceed with their campaign and leaflet. By engaging directly and iteratively with the trans+ community throughout the project, they were assured that the messaging was appropriate, the story would resonate and the brand would avoid any community-driven backlash.



Brand perception:

- 104% increase in Ad Awareness in the first month
- 6.3% increase in Brand Awareness in the first month
- achieved the highest level of purchase intent all year

Website performance:

- 37.8% user uplift and 40.3% increase in sessions compared to the previous period
- accounted for 29% of overall pageviews
- 60% of sessions originated from organic search

Sales values (during the 6-week campaign period):

- One retailer reported +3.3% versus the previous period and +16.5% versus the year prior
- another retailer showed +11.1% versus the previous period and +20.9% versus the year prior
- 10.5% annual value sales growth, a 46% YoY volume sales increase on Amazon during the campaign, and a 0.5 percentage point market share rise in 2024

The Diversity Standards Collective for Virgin

Virgin Atlantic – See the World Differently (UK)

As Virgin Atlantic embarked on its 'See the World Differently' campaign, a critical challenge emerged: how to avoid inherited tourism tropes and portray rich, colourful, and realistic cultural interactions around the world.

The brand aimed to shift the spotlight from itself to the transformative power of its destinations, demanding creative execution that accurately portrayed cultural nuance. This meant ensuring authentic depictions of local people and places, alongside engaging, interesting and respectful interactions between locals and visitors.

The Diversity Standards Collective (DSC) was engaged at multiple points in the campaign's development. Their role was to provide essential cultural guidance at every stage so the team at Lucky General's could be confident in their direction, and action any feedback into the execution.

The DSC convened Professional Councils (focus groups) early in the process, at the concept and pre-production stages, and again later to validate changes and the latest production materials. Significant attention was given to the locations themselves, particularly for scenes set on a Caribbean beach and bus, and within a bustling Mumbai food market.

DSC consultants provided insights into casting, location choices, script elements, and narrative flow. This deep dive into cultural specificities ensured that the campaign's portrayal of local people and their environments was not only accurate but also genuinely respectful, fostering authentic interactions between visitors and locals.

Ultimately, the DSC's cultural guidance and testing helped Virgin Atlantic reflect the true vibrancy, diversity and modernity of its featured destinations. Their input validated the country narratives, provided critical cultural feedback on all creative elements and served as a launchpad for a full 360 UK campaign.

The result was a campaign that resonated deeply with audiences, placing it within the top 11% of 'feel good factor' ads in the UK in 2025 – a testament to the power of culturally nuanced storytelling.



The Walt Disney Company

Disney Extraimaginário (Latin America)

Disney Extraimaginário is a case of co-creation, inclusive creativity and expanding access to the creative economy.

The inclusive insight

People with intellectual disabilities and neurodivergence are often excluded from mainstream creative industries – not due to a lack of talent, but a lack of access, support and visibility. Disney identified a gap in representation within product design and cultural storytelling – and saw an opportunity to break barriers.

Strategic approach

With a clear intention to make imagination more inclusive, Disney partnered with Estúdio QUE, a creative collective specialising in artists with cognitive disabilities. The goal: to co-create real consumer products ***with*** these artists — not ***for*** them.

This insight shifted the traditional design process into an empowering collaboration that celebrates creative expression in all its forms.

Creative execution

- Product development: Apparel and consumer goods featuring original art by neurodivergent creators and neurodivergent-friendly products
- Supportive collaboration: Each artist worked alongside mentors to guide their storytelling and design journey
- Inclusive visibility: Campaign rollout focused on normalising diverse talent in mass-market retail

Outcomes & inclusion KPIs

- First Disney Brazil initiative fully co-created with neurodivergent artists
- Internal employee engagement and DE&I visibility growth
- Authentic representation brought to stores and social media
- Sparked external conversations around inclusion in product design

Disney Extraimaginário reframes what creativity means — proving that imagination has no limits, and neither should opportunity.



The Estée Lauder Companies

Clinique – See Me (USA)

Clinique's marketing challenge was more than a business challenge; it was a cultural mission. A mission to make US Black and Latino consumers feel seen, heard, celebrated, and served by the beauty industry. A mission to rebalance beauty standards away from traditional euro-centric aspirations and toward a more diverse and cosmopolitan perspective.

The team's goal was to answer multiethnic consumers' calls not only to accurately represent her, but also to portray her highly nuanced beauty needs, desires and culture.

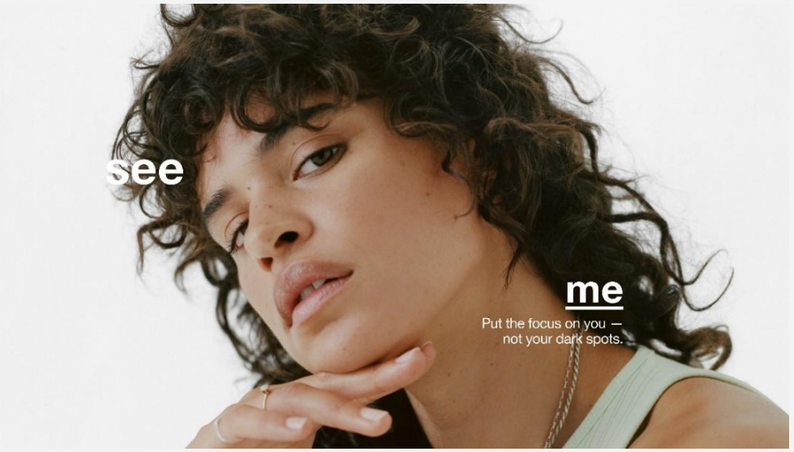
The first order of business was to zero in on one of her greatest skincare concerns – dark spots or hyperpigmentation. A review of the competitive landscape showed a fragmented, confusing assortment of brands that did not directly address her desire for gentle, efficacious treatment options developed specifically for darker skins.

To establish a deep understanding of how multi-ethnic consumers experience hyperpigmentation, they pursued non-traditional, qualitative research and initiated expert interviews, semiotic analyses, ethnographic diaries and in-depth interviews.

To prove Clinique's Even Better Clinical Interrupter's ("EBCI's") gentle efficacy, they conducted a robust sensory claims tests on 500+ multi-ethnic consumers covering all Fitzpatrick skin tones III-VI.

To validate and refine our understanding, they conducted quantitative concept testing and creative execution testing.

Working with a Latino-owned creative agency, they developed 'See Me'. This campaign drove impressive results across usage, sales, recall, Brand Favorability and click-through-rates.



All KPI's were met or exceeded, including:

- Retail sales increased by ~30% in the first 6 months post-launch
- Estimated Average Recall Lift rate was 25%, higher than the benchmark
- Usage rates among melanin-rich skins were materially higher for EBCI vis-à-vis the general population
- Video Completion Rate and Click-Through-Rate both exceeded benchmarks
- Facebook's ad recall was +10pts and Brand Favorability was +2 pts, both ahead of benchmarks
- Ongoing significant lifts in brand sentiment among Black and Latina consumers

Diageo x VMLY&R

Baileys – Delicious Descriptions (UK)

Baileys believes that treating is for everyone. But the social media feeds where we discover and indulge our love of treats are not accessible to all. For blind and partially sighted people, browsing social media can be a challenging experience. Alt text and image descriptions - designed to make visual content accessible - do little to convey the feeling a fully sighted person is left with. As a brand that populates treating culture with indulgent visuals of delicious treats, Baileys knew this had to change.

Partnering with agency VMLY&R, Baileys created Delicious Descriptions; image descriptions every bit as delicious as the images themselves. Delicious Descriptions transport listeners into the image presented on screen, creating parity between the experience of fully sighted, partially sighted and blind users.

Knowing there's 'nothing about us, without us', Baileys partnered with RNIB to develop the descriptions with input from the partially sighted and blind communities. RNIB offered expert consultation and technical guidance on the concept, and then testing example descriptions with partially sighted and blind Instagram users. The community's feedback was invaluable in shaping how the descriptions came to life.

The community feedback helped create a creative framework that guided the process of writing each description and was also crafted into a useful guide that released alongside the launch post. These guidelines help make sure each [Image Description] has its own fun feel whilst being genuinely useful to the community and will help others write their own Delicious Descriptions.

Delicious Descriptions was launched on World Accessibility Day with Lucy Edwards, a content creator, broadcaster and disability activist who is blind. On @BaileysOfficial Instagram, posts encouraged fully sighted users to listen to Delicious Description and understand why it is so important to create accessible posts. An accessibility guide gave simple instructions to anyone who wanted to use Delicious Descriptions themselves. All organic Instagram posts from @BaileysOfficial will include Delicious Descriptions in the future.

Alongside positive feedback from the Baileys community, the Lucy Edwards paid post had a VTR 5x industry benchmark, and the Instagram posts scored 3.5x Meta's Brand Affinity benchmark, showing the link between accessibility and brand impact. But most importantly of all, Delicious Descriptions are a positive step in helping make treating more accessible for all.



[Image Description] A layered and indulgent treat sits on a rustic table. It's a s'mores marshmallow dessert board.

Rich chocolate ganache ripples below a layer of melted and caramelised marshmallow that's been made oh, smore tasty by mixing in Baileys. The gooey wavy treat is surrounded by biscuits and brilliant red cherries and raspberries, ready to be dipped into the sea of tastiness. Dive in!

Down Syndrome International x Forsman & Bodenfors Singapore

Kami

One of the most powerful ways to create something for an audience is to partner with the audience and to create it together with them. This is especially true when the audience you want to create for is far too often marginalised, stereotyped and misunderstood.

This is how Forsman & Bodenfors created Kami, the world's first Virtual Influencer with Down Syndrome. For a community that feels unwelcomed in most digital and social spaces, building trust and a sense of safety through an authentic representation was crucial for Kami to succeed.

The insight team sourced and created a 'Kami Council' consisting of young women with Down Syndrome around the world. This was an important step as most digital influencers are of women, created by men for a mostly male audience.

Collaborative work sessions between the agency and the community unlocked insights, inspiration that directly impacted the campaign's content. How Kami looks, dresses thinks and expresses herself are directly taken from these insight sessions.

These young women were not just seen as research respondents but as true collaborators. As such, they were paid for their time and their creativity for participating in the creative process.

Kami's creation is ultimately not just about getting likes it's about leaving a legacy. She is actively raising awareness and funds for Down Syndrome International and her virtual nature allows her to collaborate frequently and flexibly with organisations around the globe.

Meta has now adopted Kami's creation process as the best practice for all virtual influencers globally. This ensures that moving forward, the virtual influencers of the future will be more representative of the audiences they are created for.



Kantar

Brand Inclusion Index

As diversity goes mainstream globally, the inclusivity imperative is to **grow brands via inclusion**. Inclusive marketing is expansive marketing, yet many marketers are overlooking high-growth diverse populations that are critical for their brand growth. The Brand Inclusion Index (recipient of an ESOMAR 2025 Award for Outstanding Contribution to Consumer Insights) was created to address this need, giving a voice to those often left out of traditional research and helping close inclusion gaps. Through inclusive research practices, those voices came through loud and clear around the world.

"Don't leave us out, our skin colour doesn't determine who we are as individuals."
- BII verbatim from a 32-year-old Black LGBTQ+ American

The research planning involved **interrupting bias** and **de-centering hegemonic perspectives** by inviting research leaders from the 18 participating countries to identify local nuances, from who were the high growth yet under-served populations, to changing ways of self-identification to address legal constraints and social sensitivities.

The sample was designed to **ensure equity and representation**, assigning quotas and over-sampling to reach hard to find populations, as well as offering alternative local languages. In some cases, this posed challenges, such as reaching Indigenous populations in Canada, which demanded extending time in-field. In others, it offered the opportunity to better understand populations not addressed in most other research, such as people with thinking and learning differences, who were identified in the Brand Inclusion Index and turned out to be an important proportion of young respondents.

To **increase accessibility**, the team scripted two questionnaires: one text based, one gamified, and identified people with different needs at the start of the survey. Universal design principles for text, colours, spacing, and more.

Given the sensitive nature of the matter, which touched on experiences of discrimination, it was important to **demonstrate empathy and enable honesty**. This was achieved via the research invitation, survey priming, and close attention to self-identification questions and the response options provided. Respondent's demographic questions included an advanced LGBTQ+ methodology, as well as localized socio-economic, ethnicity, religion, political identification, and more.

Most importantly, to **give a voice to people who are often unheard**, the survey included several open-ended questions. The richness of those responses was analysed via Kantar using its state-of-the-art AI technology. More than 20,300 respondents discussed what they need from brands, described real brand experiences, and stating their reasons for voting for the most inclusive brands.

These inclusive research practices uncovered some hard truths, such as the weakness of positive representation in advertising, the responsibility of brands in ending discrimination while shopping, or the connection between bias and discrimination and consumer expectations for brands to be diverse and inclusive. This work also gave light to some very positive stories, like the fact that **the imperative is universal**: 75% of people across markets believe that it is important that the companies that they buy from promote diversity and inclusion in their own business and society as a whole.



"I'm nominating Google for the award because of its consistent and comprehensive efforts across various facets of diversity. From inclusive advertising campaigns to supportive workplace policies and advocacy for LGBTQ+ rights, it has demonstrated a genuine commitment to fostering diversity and inclusion.

- 23-year-old woman, Kenya

Key takeaways

This voluntary guide offers many suggestions for how to better embed inclusion throughout the process of designing, conducting and measuring the success of inclusive insights. In summary:

Insights planning



Inclusive research is a significant driver of business success and innovation; without it, brands run the risk of misrepresenting and alienating key consumer groups.

To achieve this, brands should actively recognise and address the needs of all types of consumers—those who are ethnically diverse, differently-abled, and bring various perspectives.

When planning and designing inclusive research, brands can keep the following considerations at the forefront:

- ✓ Define clear inclusion objectives
- ✓ Broaden the scope of your research design
- ✓ Address unconscious bias within your team
- ✓ Select inclusive research partners
- ✓ Establish inclusive criteria for procurement
- ✓ Allocate sufficient budget and time for inclusion

Insights execution



Standard research practices often deliver a "one-size-fits-all" solution that may overlook groups based on their ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental health needs, language barriers and so on.

To ensure research is truly inclusive in the way it is being conducted, here are some key elements to consider:

- ✓ Build representative samples across diverse groups
- ✓ Use a combination of methodologies
- ✓ Allow for self-identification and flexible quotas
- ✓ Craft inclusive survey questions
- ✓ Ensure accessibility in online research methods
- ✓ Interpret results with inclusion in mind

Measuring success



Measuring success in inclusive research presents unique challenges, especially for global businesses. While campaign content and outcomes are relatively easy to measure, assessing inclusion and insights within the creative process is far more complex. Fully understanding their impact requires nuanced KPIs that go beyond surface-level metrics.

To ensure that inclusive insights are effectively cascaded throughout the business, organisations may want to design their KPIs to:

- ✓ **Demonstrate alignment** between insights and the goals of various stakeholders, including marketing, media, product development, and HR, ensuring that inclusion is embedded across functions
- ✓ **Link inclusive insights to concrete outcomes**, tracking how well these insights are integrated into strategies and decision-making processes
- ✓ **Capture the ROI of inclusive research**, by measuring both the financial and reputational impact on the brand, helping to justify the continued investment in inclusive marketing efforts

In addition to selecting the right KPIs, companies can consider tools that enable measurement from both an insights and inclusion perspective.

Resources and acknowledgements

For further insight, we have compiled a selection of relevant articles, research, voluntary guides. While this list is by no means exhaustive, we hope it's a helpful starting point on your inclusive insights journey.

Effie UK & Creative Equals report: Could Inclusion Drive Marketing Effectiveness? The Business Case for Inclusive Marketing (2024)

ITV, System1 & DECA report: Feeling Seen: How diverse advertising unites us (2021)

Kantar: Brand Inclusion Index

Unstereotype Alliance research: Inclusion = Income: The Business Case for Inclusive Advertising (2024)

WFA guide: Potential Areas for Bias in the Creative Process

WFA guide: Inclusive Gen AI Marketing Framework

WFA guide: Inclusive Content Production

WFA guide: Supplier Diversity

WFA expert opinion article: 'Consumer insights needs an inclusive approach, too'

WFA expert opinion article: 'Inclusion is the future for brand growth'

WFA report: Elevating the Insights function with AI

WFA report: Organising the Insights function for maximum impact

WFA webinar: Consumer insights through an inclusion lens

A word of thanks to all individuals and organisations who have contributed to the development of this voluntary guide. Their expertise, insights and passion for this topic have been critical in shaping the content and ensuring its relevance.

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Corrine Moy, Council Member, ESOMAR

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About WFA's Insight Forum

WFA' Insight Forum is the global hub for client-side insights and analytics leaders, bringing together a community of over 700 professionals worldwide.

As a unique peer-to-peer platform for inspiration and knowledge exchange, it enables members to share experiences and strengthen their impact across the business. Through regular meetings, benchmarks, and knowledge exchange, the Forum helps elevate the insights function into a true strategic engine of business transformation.

More information at **wfanet.org/insight**

If you would like to engage with WFA's Insight Forum, please contact:



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About WFA's Inclusive Marketing Community

WFA's Inclusive Marketing Community is a global platform for senior marketers who share the common belief that more inclusive marketing communications can help drive topline growth.

The group provides a forum for best practice and insight exchange and creates frameworks for members on how to deliver on more inclusive marketing that can help drive measurable return on investment.

More information at **wfanet.org/inclusivemarketing**

If you would like to engage with WFA's Inclusive Marketing Community, please contact:



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WFA Competition law compliance policy

The purpose of the WFA is to represent the interests of advertisers and to act as a forum for legitimate contacts between members of the advertising industry. It is the policy of the WFA that it will not be used by any company, or individual, to further any anti-competitive or collusive conduct, or to engage in other activities that could violate any antitrust or competition law, regulation, rule or directives of any country or otherwise impair full and fair competition. The WFA carries out regular checks to make sure that this policy is being strictly adhered to.

As a condition of membership, members of the WFA acknowledge that their membership of the WFA is subject to competition law rules and they agree to comply fully with those laws. Members agree that they will not use the WFA directly or indirectly, (a) to reach or attempt to reach agreements or understandings with one or more of their competitors, (b) to obtain or attempt to obtain, or exchange or attempt to exchange, confidential or proprietary information regarding any other company other than in the context of a bona fide business or (c) to further any anti-competitive or collusive conduct, or (d) to engage in other activities that could violate any antitrust or competition law, regulation, rule or directives of any country or otherwise impair full and fair competition.