



Collaboration, Innovation and Resilience: Championing a Digital Generation

Brisbane, Australia 6–10 April

# Advancing Diversity and Inclusion in Australia's Geospatial Industry

## Insights from the 2024 Inclusion@Work Survey

Jun Wang, Stella Blake-Kelly and Mary-Ellen Feeney

SSSDLN Convenors

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## ABOUT US

- We are the **Space, Spatial and Surveying Diversity Leadership Network (SSSDLN)** who brings together over 180 leaders from business, government and education to provide **visible** advocacy for diversity and inclusion within the profession.
- We know that having varied perspectives helps **cultivate innovation** to solve complex problems in a changing world — and inclusion is how we **unleash the power of diversity**.
- We focus on **promoting actions** to support greater diversity and more inclusive workplaces to **grow the capabilities** of our sector for the future.



## DIVERSITY & INCLUSION



### WHAT IS DIVERSITY?

Diversity is the mix of people  
in your organisation.

Diversity refers to all the ways in which  
we differ (e.g., Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait  
Islander background, age, education,  
gender, profession).

### WHAT IS INCLUSION?

Inclusion is getting this mix to work.

Inclusion occurs when a diversity  
of people are respected, connected,  
progressing and contributing to  
organisational success.



## WHY D&I MATTERS



### A Driver of Innovation

D&I fosters a variety of perspectives, leading to more creative problem- solving.

Diverse companies earn **2.5 x** higher cash flow per employee. Inclusive teams are over **35%** more productive. Diverse teams make better decisions **87%** of the time.



### D&I and Productivity



### Thriving Professional Community

Inclusive organisations attract a wider talent pool, ensuring a steady flow of skilled professionals into the geospatial industry.

## THE STATISTICS ARE DIRE



**25%**

female  
representation



**17%**

workforce  
over 55 years



**Gender pay gaps  
in key roles** (e.g.  
women surveyors  
earn on average  
around \$27,000  
less than men)



**15–20%**

of surveying  
course  
participants  
are women



**ONLY 17%**

of private sector  
organisations  
with more than  
100 employees  
have a **gender  
equality or  
flexibility  
strategy**



**Limited evidence**  
of employees  
from non-Anglo  
and indigenous  
backgrounds, and  
employees with  
disability.

# INCLUSION@WORK INDEX



An action plan for boosting innovation and collaboration  
in the spatial sector through diversity and inclusion  
April 2019

## CALLS TO ACTION FOR THE SECTOR






1. Establish a baseline for measures we'd like to achieve and commit to an annual survey showing outcomes and impacts.
2. Commit to 50% gender balance and a mix of cultural or lived/identity diversity of experience (e.g. disability, LGBTI) on industry speaking panels. Individuals and industry peaks will pledge a commitment to only appearing on diverse panels.
3. Create a set of profiles for diverse representatives in the spatial sector who can perform keynote speaking engagements or serve on panels, to achieve more diverse role models.
4. Run an education campaign in schools and universities on the increasing diversity of people choosing careers in the spatial sectors.
5. Create industry-wide communications campaign for diversity and what we're doing to create an environment of inclusion across the sector.
6. To establish knowledge sharing and a roadmap forward, establish a Spatial Diversity and Inclusion Council.
7. Leverage the male champions of change program adopted by other sectors – encourage high-profile men in our profession to join the program, and be a visible champion of this work.

1. Establish a baseline for measures we'd like to achieve and commit to an annual survey showing outcomes and impacts

## What is measured?

1. Measure progress over time in creating diverse and inclusive workplaces
2. Benchmark results against the Australian workforce
3. Benchmark results against sub-sectors within their sector (e.g., business, government, and academia)
4. Benchmark results against similar industries.

## 2021 INCLUSION@WORK INDEX - FINDINGS

-  **8.5x** less likely to leave the workplace
-  **7x** more likely to be very satisfied
-  **6x** more likely to be work effectively
-  **6x** more likely to provide excellent customer service
-  **5x** times more likely to innovate

**9 in 10** SSS employees  
**supported** their  
organisation taking action  
to create a workplace that  
is diverse and inclusive

**8 in 10** SSS employees  
reported that their  
workplace **was taking**  
**action to become diverse**  
**and inclusive**

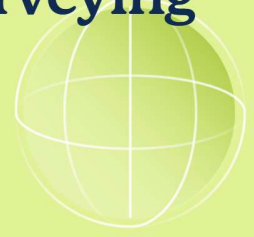
# 2024 INCLUSION@WORK INDEX

SSS Inclusion '24

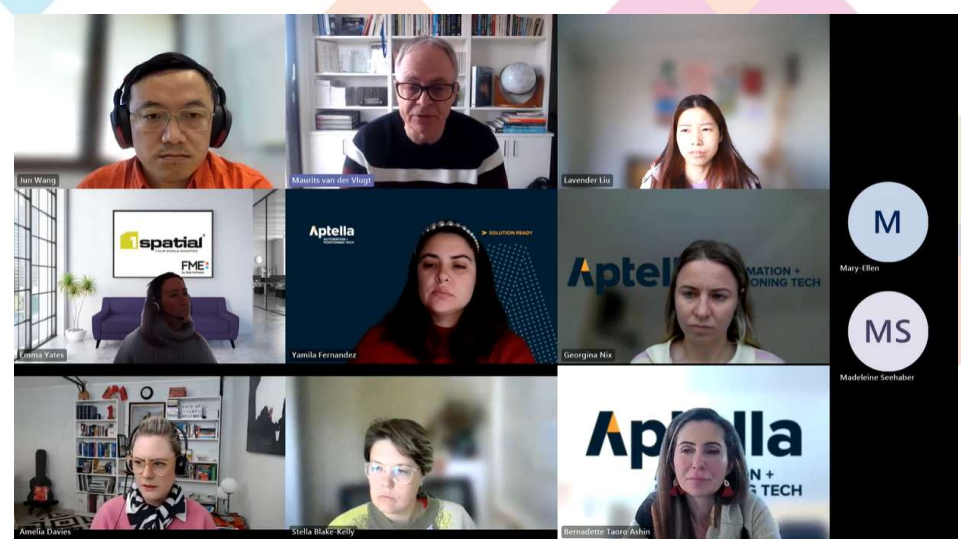
[Home](#) [About](#) [2024 Survey](#) [Get Involved](#)

## Space, Spatial and Surveying Workplace Inclusion Survey

Survey period has ended. Results to be released in November,  
sign up below to receive them directly.



1 – 30 September 2024



position The Australasian magazine of surveying, mapping & geo-information

December/January 2024-25 - No. 134

# RAPID

## REMOTE SURVEYS

Mapping for mineral exploration

inside >

Leaders Forum Industry experts on the changes coming in 2025

Resilient PMT Plans to develop and fortify Australia's capabilities

Under pressure Barometric leveling for acquiring elevation data

## 2024 Inclusive Employer Index Survey: A benchmark for progress and challenges

**GCA**

This September, the space, spatial and surveying (SSS) industry launched the second edition of the Inclusive Employer Index survey, building on insights from the inaugural 2021 survey. Led by the Space, Spatial & Surveying Diversity Leadership Network (SSS-DLN), this ongoing initiative aims to measure progress in diversity and inclusion (D&I) across the industry, and is supported by a partnership with the Diversity Council of Australia (DCA) and industry sponsors. For the first time, the survey gives insight into specific trends within SSS by providing data separately for each sector. Maintaining a sample size of approximately 1,000 respondents across Australia and New Zealand, the survey's longitudinal data allows the industry to monitor changes since the 2021 baseline. New this year, the survey provides data at a sector level for SSS, and also identifies the sources of discrimination and harassment, shedding light on the specific challenges employees face within the industry.

The survey shows the gender diversity of the SSS industry is:

- 94 distinct cultural backgrounds and 74 languages spoken.
- 45% of respondents were born overseas.
- 36% speak multiple languages.
- 19% identify as having a disability.
- 15% identify as LGBTQIA+.

However, despite best efforts, the survey again saw limited representation from Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander participants, highlighting an area for focused engagement.

**Inclusion Findings: Teams, managers and organisations**

In line with broader Australian workforce trends, the SSS sector observed a slight decline in team inclusivity, though not as sharp as in other industries. The number of employees in non-inclusive teams rose from 9% in 2021 to 11% in 2024, compared to a national increase from 12% to 19%. Team inclusivity in SSS is assessed across four key areas: respect, connection, contribution and progress.

Insights into team inclusivity based on demographics reveal variation in respondents who felt they were treated as a valued and respected team member:

- Women: 84.2% felt they were, with 9.5% feeling otherwise, compared to 30.6% of men feeling otherwise and 4.5% of non-binary respondents.

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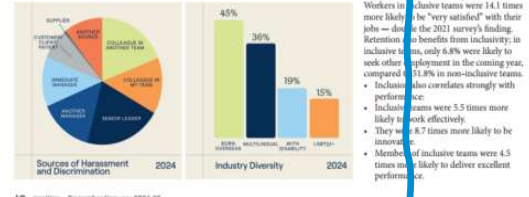
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Research Steering Committee Chair Stella Blake-Kelly, SSS-DLN Working Group Members Kate Kelly, Stella Blake-Kelly, and Mary-ellen Feeney (right).

These results demonstrate inclusion is not just an ethical ideal but a key driver of business success.

**Discrimination and harassment**

This year's survey provided a breakdown of the sources of discrimination and harassment within the SSS industry, revealing some interesting statistics. While Australia-wide rates of discrimination and harassment rose from 22% in 2021 to 36% in 2024, the SSS industry reported a decrease from 26% to 23.4%. However, instances of harassment observed by others increased from 20% in 2021 to 23.5% in 2024.

Senior leadership and management were identified as the largest source of these experiences accounting for 20.4%, with the second highest coming from colleagues at 14.2%. Nationally, senior leaders were the source for 7.4%, compared with 8.4% in SSS. This feedback highlights the need for stronger accountability and culture shift at the leadership level, a key area for targeted focus moving forward.

We see positives to celebrate but also some stark warnings, especially regarding discrimination and harassment. It's disheartening to note that the highest proportion of these experiences stemmed from senior leadership and management.

**What's next?**

The full report, with detailed actions for advancing inclusivity, will be available in early 2025. Stakeholders and interested parties are encouraged to view the preliminary report online at [www.sss-dln.com.au](http://www.sss-dln.com.au) and contact the SSS-DLN for involvement in the next steps.

The 2024 survey was a joint effort between peak-organisations and business leaders from Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand to work together on a common challenge. It is organised by the Space, Spatial and Surveying Diversity Leadership Network in partnership with the Diversity Council of Australia.

Survey partners and sponsors: 15 Spatial, ANZLIC, Apolita, Australian Space Diversity Alliance, Australian Spatial Analytics, Earth Observation Australia Inc, FrontierSI, Fugro, Geoscience Australia, Geospatial Council of Australia, ITC Technologies, Institution of Surveyors NSW, Land Solutions Australia Pty Ltd, LOCUS, Ocean Infinity, Snowy Hydro Limited, Space Industry Association of Australia, Spatial Vision.

## Review of AHSCS guidelines on GCA website

The Australian Hydrographic Surveyors Certification (AHSCS) core guidance manual, the Guidelines for Specialist Certification in Hydrographic Surveying, is currently under review.

The first phase of community consultation has been completed and GCA would like to thank those who were actively involved and provided feedback. The review team has taken this input, as well as the input from AHSCS Panel/Secretariat face-to-face workshops, to review the Guidelines line-by-line. Whilst all suggestions were considered, the AHSCS must remain compliant with the IHO's international standards for hydrographic surveys S-5A and S-5B.

Over the coming months we will consult the hydrographic community further on some of the more significant suggested changes to the Guidelines.

The key suggested improvements to date include:

1. Refine the Guidelines so that they are easier to follow, and easier to present on the GCA website.
2. Refine Annex F - Hydrographic Surveyors Certification, Roles, Responsibilities and Definitions to better reflect the responsibilities of contemporary CP105 L1 and CP105 L2.
3. Introduce guidance around the currency of claimed experience, i.e. that 75% of the 'Logbook of Practical Experience' should be within the last years preceding their application.
4. Refine the definition of sea-time.
5. Move away from the terminology of 'Allied Discipline' and replace with 'qualification' that meets the learning outcomes of S-5A or S-5B.
6. Broaden the definition of education to include short courses that meet 55 learning outcomes.
7. Introduce Recognition of Prior Learning for certain S-5A and S-5B learning outcomes.

The new Guidelines will be published on the GCA website in the new year at the same address as the current Guidelines: <https://geospatialcouncil.org.au/approved-hydrographic-certification/>



AHSCS past and present panel members, chair and secretariat.

## Survey Sample

### Participants:

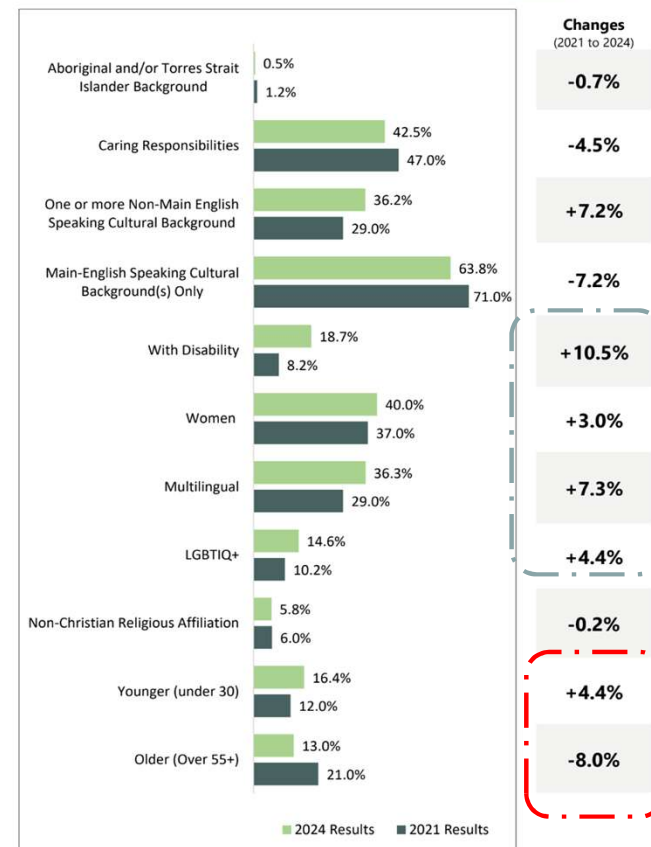
- sample of approx. 1,000

### Sector Type Participation:

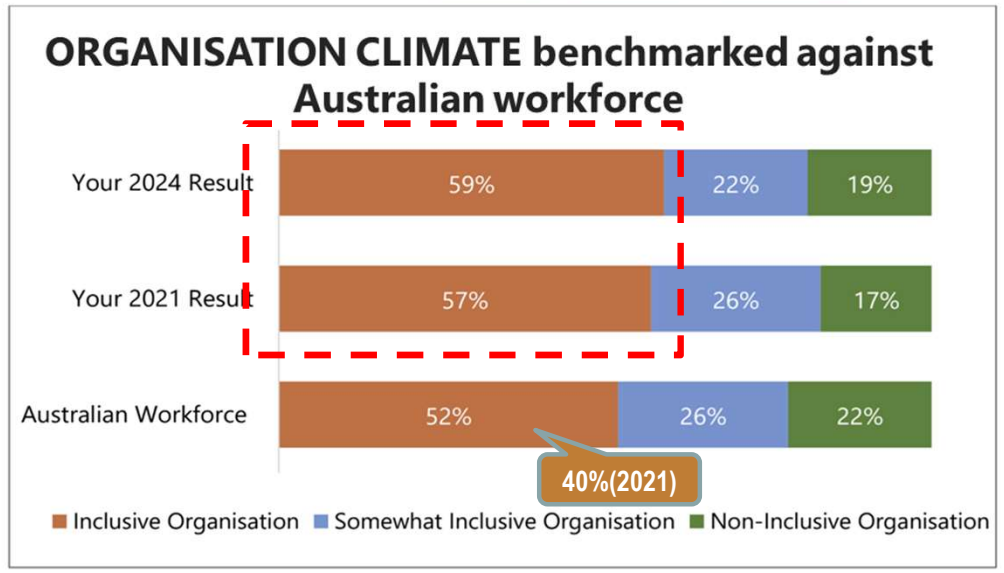
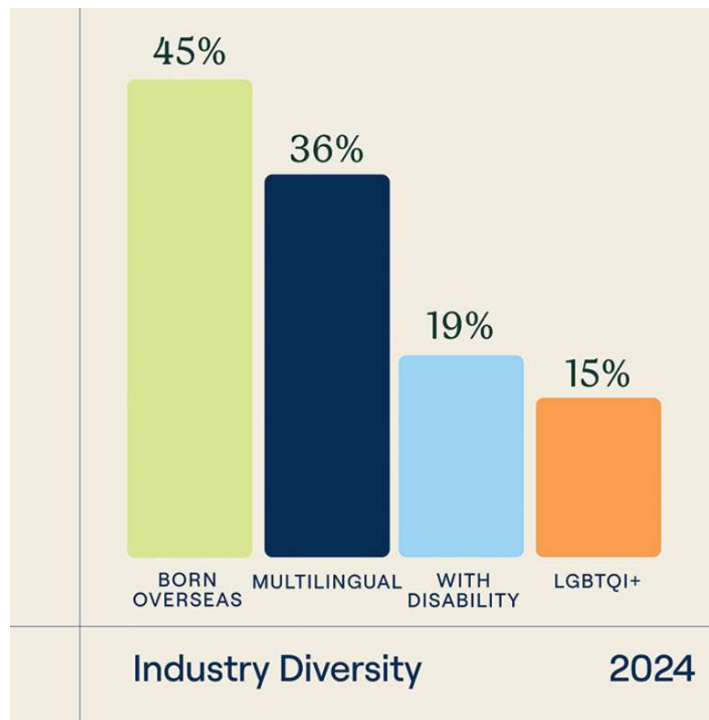
- 47.8% from Spatial
- 32.5% from Surveying
- 19.7% from Space

### Employer Type Participation:

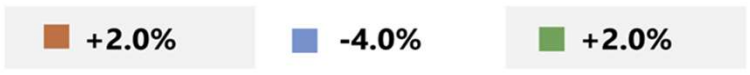
- 62.5% from Business (40.3%, 2021)
- 29.1% from Government (54.0%, 2021)
- 8.4% from Academia (5.7%, 2021)



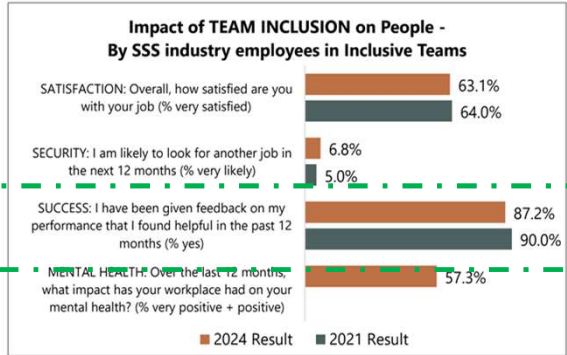
## Encouraging Inclusion Index in the Industry



Changes  
(2021 to 2024)



## Key Takeaways



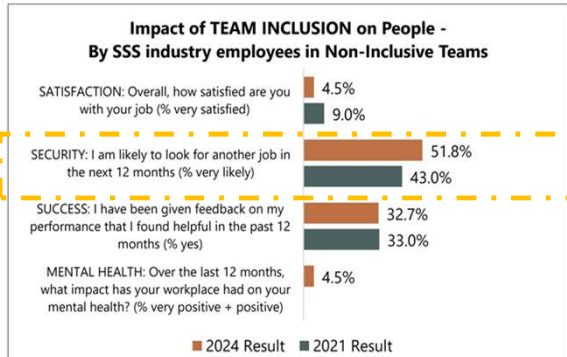
Changes  
(2021 to 2024)

-0.9%

+1.8%

-2.8%

N/A  
(no data in 2021)

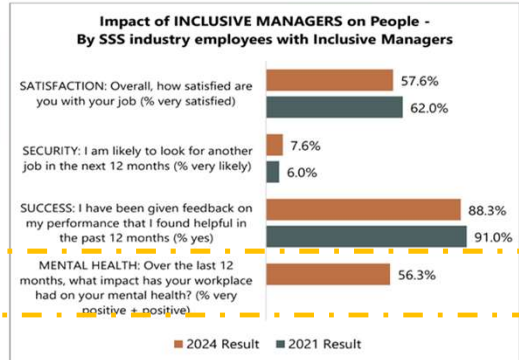


-4.5%

+8.8%

-0.3%

N/A  
(no data in 2021)



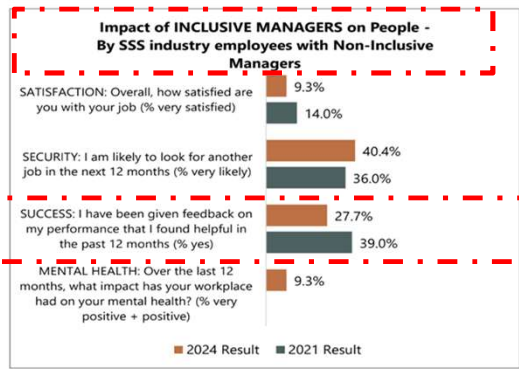
Changes  
(2021 to 2024)

-4.4%

+1.6%

-2.7%

N/A  
(no data in 2021)



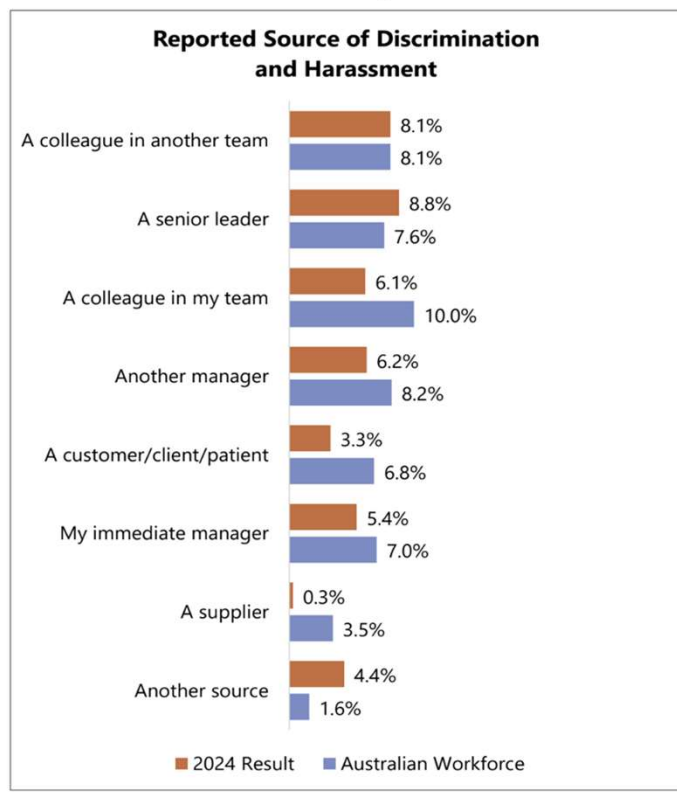
-4.7%

+4.4%

-11.3%

N/A  
(no data in 2021)

# Sources of Harassment & Discrimination



**Changes**  
(2021 to 2024)

N/A  
(no data in 2021)

N/A  
(no data in 2021)

N/A  
(no data in 2021)

N/A  
(no data in 2021)

N/A  
(no data in 2021)

N/A  
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N/A  
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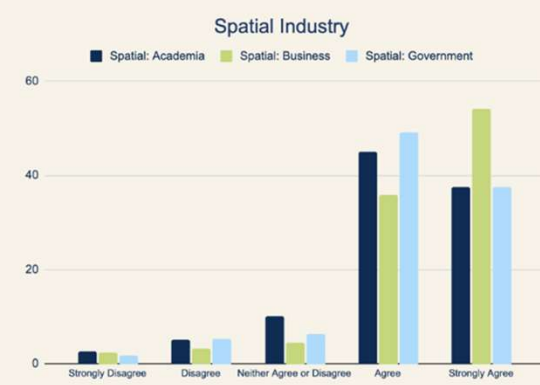
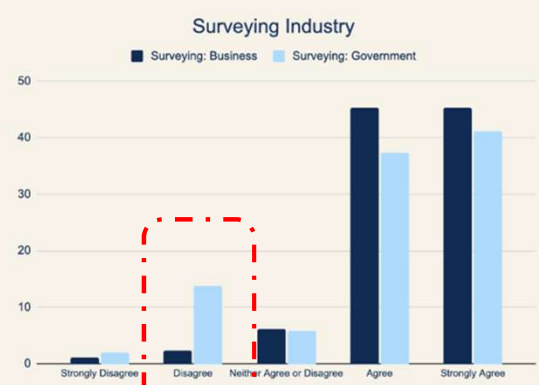
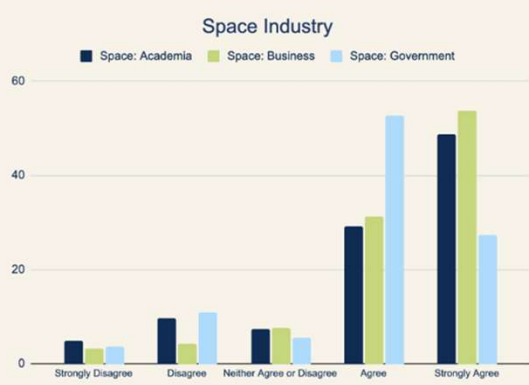
N/A  
(no data in 2021)



# Surveying Sector

Change the question to update the data below

Inclusion - 1. I am treated as a valued and respected team member




| Options                   | Total | Academia | Business | Government | Space | Surveying | Spatial | Space: Academia | Space: Business | Space: Government | Surveying: Business | Surveying: Government | Spatial: Academia | Spatial: Business | Spatial: Government |
|---------------------------|-------|----------|----------|------------|-------|-----------|---------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Strongly Disagree         | 2.2   | 3.7      | 2.0      | 2.2        | 3.7   | 1.3       | 2.2     | 4.9             | 3.2             | 3.6               | 1.1                 | 2.0                   | 2.5               | 2.4               | 1.7                 |
| Disagree                  | 4.8   | 7.4      | 3.0      | 7.9        | 7.4   | 4.2       | 4.1     | 9.8             | 4.3             | 10.9              | 2.3                 | 13.7                  | 5.0               | 3.3               | 5.2                 |
| Neither Agree or Disagree | 6.0   | 8.6      | 5.7      | 6.1        | 6.9   | 6.1       | 5.7     | 7.3             | 7.5             | 5.5               | 6.1                 | 5.9                   | 10.0              | 4.5               | 6.4                 |
| Agree                     | 41.5  | 37.0     | 39.2     | 47.7       | 37.0  | 43.9      | 41.6    | 29.3            | 31.2            | 52.7              | 45.2                | 37.3                  | 45.0              | 35.8              | 49.1                |
| Strongly Agree            | 45.5  | 43.2     | 50.2     | 36.2       | 45.0  | 44.6      | 46.4    | 48.8            | 53.8            | 27.3              | 45.2                | 41.2                  | 37.5              | 54.1              | 37.6                |

## INCLUSION@WORK INDEX - FINDINGS

2021

 **8.5x** less likely to leave the workplace **7x** more likely to be very satisfied **6x** more likely to be work effectively **6x** more likely to provide excellent customer service **5x** times more likely to innovate

2024

 **7.6x** less likely to leave the workplace **14.1** more likely to be very satisfied **5.5x** more likely to be work effectively **4.5x** more likely to provide excellent customer service **8.7x** times more likely to innovate

## Case Study – Diversity & Inclusion & Innovation



## WHAT NEXT?

- **Check out the report:** The *Space, Spatial and Surveying Inclusion@Work* report will be launched early April/May 2024
- **Join us:** <https://sssdln.org/>
- **Take action:** Think about what you can do to create a more inclusive workplace where everyone can thrive

Mapping a new course  
to spatial leadership



Mentoring the next  
generation



Inspiring the next  
generation



**Space, Spatial & Surveying**  
**DIVERSITY LEADERSHIP NETWORK**

**Become a member**  
**Join the SSSDLN and in our profession.**

Membership is free and open to all professionals in Australia and New Zealand.

The Space, Spatial & Surveying Diversity Leaders Network is a community of leaders from business, government, academia and the public sector who are committed to diversity and inclusion within their organisations.

By becoming a member, you will pledge to be an advocate, be visible in your support for diversity and inclusion generally. Read the Accord here: [SSSDLN Accord](#)

As a member you'll receive:

- Invite to member-only workshops
- Invite to all SSSDLN events
- Periodic news delivered to you
- Opportunities to be involved
- Ability to nominate to be a SSSDLN Ambassador
- Access to the [SSSDLN Accord](#)

2024

Email\*


First Name

Last Name

**DIVER INCLU**  
Thinking differently

An action plan for boosting diversity in the spatial sector through April 2019

**Our vision, tangible steps, and markers of success**



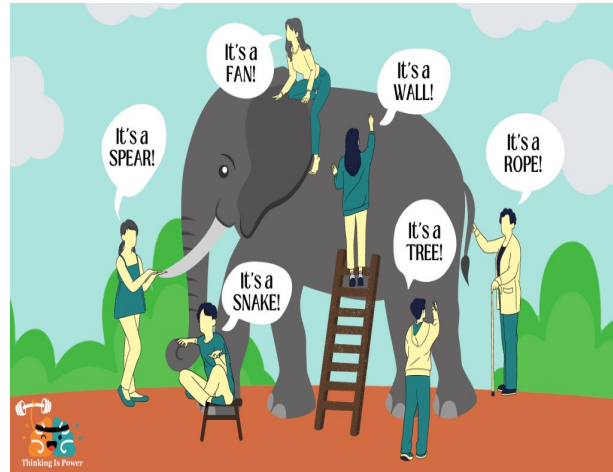
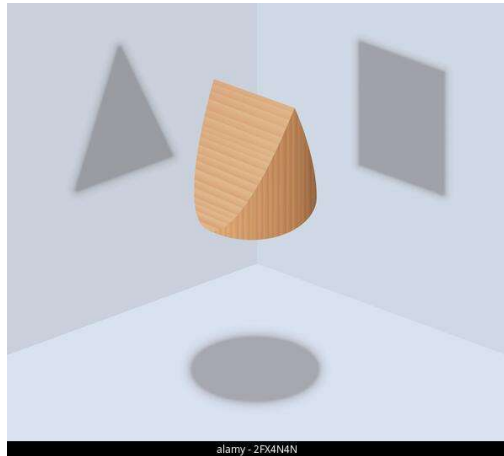
# DIVERSITY & INCLUSION:

Thinking differently about difference.

## Space, Spatial and Surveying

1 - 30 September

Workplace Inclusion Survey





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THE NATIONAL GEOSPATIAL CONFERENCE

Collaboration, Innovation and Resilience:  
Championing a Digital Generation



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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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## The most relevant SDGs related to the presentation and theme of this session

1st relevant  
SDG

**5** GENDER  
EQUALITY



2nd relevant  
SDG

**8** DECENT WORK AND  
ECONOMIC GROWTH



3rd relevant  
SDG

**10** REDUCED  
INEQUALITIES



**SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

International Federation of Surveyors supports the  
Sustainable Development Goals