



**AtkinsRéalis: leaders in equity,
diversity and inclusion**



Summary

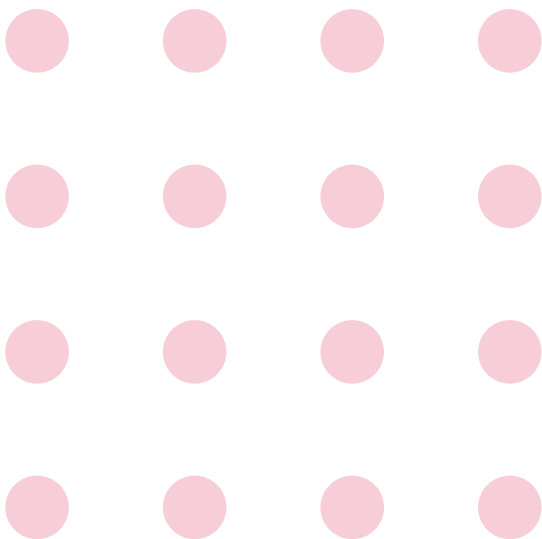
AtkinsRéalis: leaders in equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

AtkinsRéalis have taken significant steps to embed EDI best practice into everything they do. They've embedded equity, diversity and inclusion throughout their organisation and have continually improved their workplace culture by implementing the latest iteration of their EDI programme *Different Makes a Difference*.

This case study will look at the steps they have taken to ensure their EDI programme is robust and deliverable, whilst demonstrating ideas that other organisations can replicate to help progress their EDI work too.

Read this case study to learn more about:

- the importance of inclusion within the workplace and how everyone has a role to play.
- the significance of allyship and how it impacted the progression of AtkinsRéalis' EDI journey.
- how and why we should work and learn together as a sector, to create sustainable and measurable change.
- the impact of senior leadership showing up and playing an active role on progressing EDI within the workplace.



The impact of a robust EDI strategy

In recent years, many companies have shown an initial commitment to diversity and inclusion by implementing an organisational EDI strategy, to tackle a lack of diversity and help improve workplace culture. However, many organisations still experience a huge disconnect due to the lack of data being collected to measure outcomes and success, resulting in many strategies being ineffective and lacking in tangible deliverables.

Currently only one in five businesses measure the impact and perceived value of EDI in the workplace. It's therefore unsurprising that in the same study 39% of respondents reported that a strategic approach for EDI and belonging doesn't exist within their company.¹

Why is it important?

Commitment to EDI is a great place to start, but without a systematic approach with accountable analytics it's impossible to truly understand the impact you're having. Implementing an EDI strategy is a key component for any successful modern business and has huge impacts on all areas of the organisation.

These statistics highlight how important it is to get EDI right, so let's explore what good looks like and how to make an impact within your organisation.

57% of UK businesses regard EDI as a strategic priority when recruiting new staff.²

81% of employees who feel included in a diverse company culture are happy in their jobs.³

66% of employees and job seekers trust employers the most when it comes to understanding what diversity and inclusion really looks like at a company.⁴



¹ [Global Blueprint For Belonging And Diversity | Workday UK](#)

² [Equality, Diversity & Inclusion in the Workplace Report 2023 | Nigel Wright Group UK](#)

³ [Inclusive Cultures Have Healthier and Happier Workers | BCG](#)

⁴ [Recruiting a Diverse Workforce | Glassdoor for Employers](#)

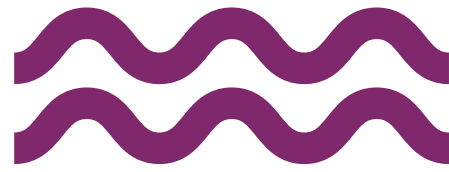
Introduction

About AtkinsRéalis

AtkinsRéalis is a world-class design, engineering and project management organisation with over 38,000 employees across the globe. They connect people, data and technology to transform the world's infrastructure and energy systems, operating across six continents to deliver a more vibrant and sustainable future.

They deliver major projects on the built and natural environments all around the world, using digitally enabled engineering to radically improve the way we are housed, connected, powered and protected. AtkinsRéalis work across a breadth of areas, from nuclear and power to infrastructure and transportation.

AtkinsRéalis understand the importance of inclusivity and recognise the diversity and differences within their people as one of their greatest strengths. Their goal is that together with their industry partners and clients, as well as their global team of consultants, designers, engineers and project managers, they can change the world.



Different Makes a Difference: making an impact with a robust EDI programme

In 2021 AtkinsRéalis created their first concrete action plan to shape the future of EDI within their organisation and better understand how to make real change. During this process they overhauled all of their policies and procedures to ensure that they were living and breathing inclusive best practice.

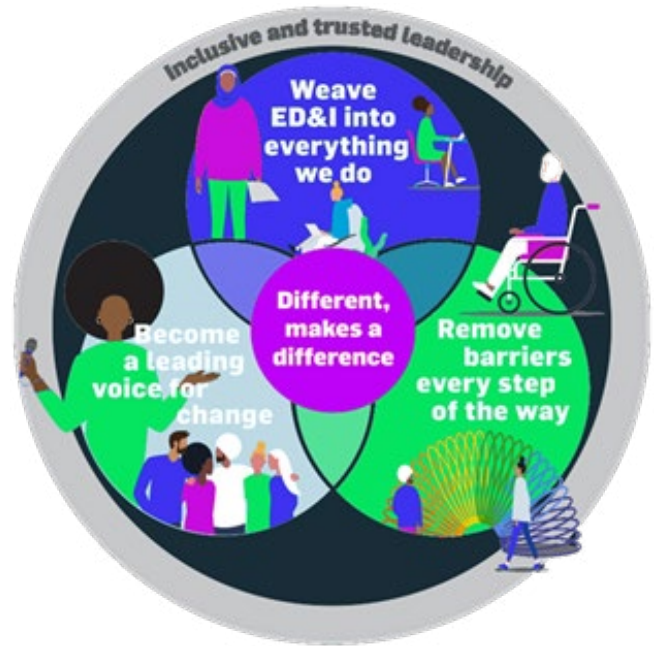
A great emphasis was placed on listening to their colleagues through surveys and focus groups, to provide a baseline of how colleagues felt about their culture of inclusion and how their experiences differed in the workplace.

From here, *Different Makes a Difference* was created; AtkinsRéalis' EDI programme which set out clear goals and targets to be achieved before 2023.

The programme focuses on three key pillars – becoming a voice for change, weaving EDI into everything they do and removing barriers every step of the way.

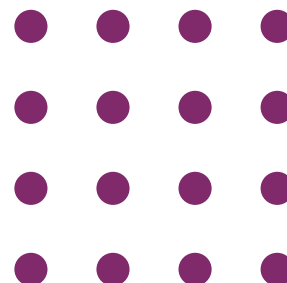
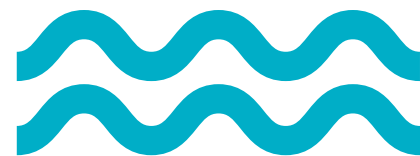
Following the success of the delivery of the *Different Makes a Difference* programme AtkinsRéalis have become the first engineering consultancy in the UK to be awarded the Clear Assured Platinum accreditation and the prestigious Menopause Friendly Accreditation.

These awards recognise the progress and impact AtkinsRéalis has made and strongly places them as a leading employer dedicated to inclusive workplace practices and policies.



In their assessment, AtkinsRéalis were credited for investing significant resources in supporting and educating employees about what it means to be an ally. They were celebrated for facilitating great conversations between under-represented groups and senior leadership, with a clear focus on sharing lived experiences and exploring how the company can continue to be more inclusive. They were recognised for being an organisation that includes diverse talent in every aspect of their operational performance and have leaders who proactively challenge themselves and their teams to be more inclusive.

Find out more about what they implemented throughout their strategy and the lessons learned along the way.



Embedding EDI in everything they do

Starting the conversation

Inclusion within an organisation cannot be achieved by one person, or even a small team. It takes everyone playing their part towards the collective goal - to ultimately implement change to shift the organisational culture.

Whilst building their EDI goals, AtkinsRéalis ensured all nine of their Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) were involved in the process from the start. They used real-life experiences and the voices of their people to help them truly understand what needed to change and how they could best support their employees. This ensured their goals would affect real and impactful change on their people, rather than work stemming from assumptions.

They continue to utilise these groups made up of passionate individuals to help progress their overarching EDI work. In their UK and Europe EDI priorities they are committed to their progress being informed by employee experiences and ensuring deliverables are properly evaluated by their people.

A pilot that paved the way

Like many STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) organisations, a large proportion of employees at AtkinsRéalis are white males who may struggle to see where they can get involved within diversity and inclusion conversations.

So, they launched the Transportation Allyship pilot, which brought together 25 senior leadership team members and engaged them in monthly meetings focused on the needs of their ERGs. All of the participants completed a pre-launch survey to give a self-assessment on their EDI awareness. This gave them a base-level they could compare to post-pilot results allowing them to measure progress and understand the success of the programme. Following the programme, they found that 91% of attendees introduced a new EDI initiative into their everyday work.

Senior leaders recognised that it is inclusive in nature and accessible to everyone, ultimately uniting the workforce in a shared mission to shape a better culture. This was supported by training, leadership carousel events on lived experience and webinars designed to educate and encourage everyone to reflect on their allyship journey.

Don't be afraid to fail

It can be overwhelming knowing where to start, and this is a huge barrier for organisations embarking on their EDI journey. In fact, RightTrack found in a poll that 55% of people cited being “too scared to talk about diversity and inclusion in the workplace for fear of saying the wrong thing”.⁵ But saying and doing nothing means no progression will ever be made; trying new things and having good intentions is the first step in the right direction.

AtkinsRéalis recognise the value in just giving it a go. Success is fantastic, but we often learn the most when things don't quite go to plan. Small-scale pilots can be a great way to test ideas and gather learnings before implementing something organisation-wide.

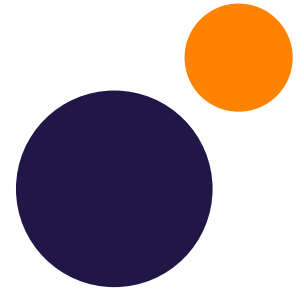
“One of the biggest lessons to learn in evolving an EDI program is that it's okay to get it wrong. Try something, fail fast and learn from it. Capitalise on the things that work well and are authentic to your organisation as these will always have the most positive impact”

– Rebecca Crowther, ED&I Lead UK&E
AtkinsRéalis

Senior leadership showing up

Senior leaders play an influential role within any organisation. It's key that senior leadership take a proactive role within your organisation's EDI work and set the example of what is expected from employees. This is exactly what AtkinsRéalis did. They made each member of their senior leadership team an ERG sponsor to empower them to be involved in the conversations, step out of their comfort zones and really understand first-hand how to make an impact with their people.

The senior leadership team have been involved in various groups to give them different perspectives and embed them fully with the workforce and EDI work taking place.



⁵ 55% of People are Too Scared to Talk About Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace for Fear of Saying the Wrong Thing | RightTrack

The impact

AtkinsRéalis have seen positive results across the organisation with EDI engagement continuing to improve at events and throughout communications. Their success can be seen in their annual engagement survey, with a five-point increase (to 89%) for the organisation truly valuing the diversity and inclusion of its employees, now 15 points above a benchmark for professional services.

Research shows⁶ that employees of organisations that feel a strong sense of belonging are 50% less likely to leave, 56% more likely to improve their performance, and 75% less likely to take a sick day.

“Allyship is about taking intentional, positive and conscious action. It is key to creating an inclusive culture as through allyship we can support underrepresented groups, amplify voices, ensure equal opportunity and allow everybody to be themselves. Wherever you are on your journey, every step counts! You can make a difference. Be open, interested and inquisitive, get comfortable with being uncomfortable. Then take any and every opportunity to take steps forward.”

– James Butler, Managing Director Programme Project Services
AtkinsRéalis

“Allyship has had a transformative impact on our culture. It is naturally inclusive, collaborative and authentic to our values at AtkinsRéalis. It has encouraged everyone in the business to get involved in our EDI program and in realising our commitment to create and maintain an inclusive culture where everyone belongs, can be their true self and can reach their full potential.”

– Rebecca Crowther, ED&I Lead UK&E
AtkinsRéalis

⁶ [The value of belonging at work | BetterUp](#)

The journey continues

– what's next?

Through the delivery and success of their programme *Different Makes a Difference*, AtkinsRéalis has demonstrated their commitment to EDI, firmly placing them as leaders not only in the STEM sector, but across global inclusion.

Of course, they're not done there!

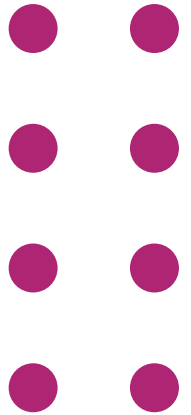
Their focus on allyship and leadership has been successful and helped them take huge strides in creating and maintaining an inclusive workplace culture. Moving forward, they plan to build on the progress they have made so far by focusing on inclusive communication, intersectionality and supply chain diversity. They recognise the importance of data to ensure measurability and aim to continue to improve disclosure rates.

AtkinsRéalis are also committed to making an external impact by increasing awareness of inclusive design, fostering diversity of thought in the industry, and proactively considering the needs of future generations. They understand the importance of sharing their EDI journey including their successes and learnings along the way and are actively working with other organisations to help build inclusive cultures throughout the sector.

Shifting the dial on gender parity in STEM is something that can't be achieved in solidarity and AtkinsRéalis is committed to helping others by sharing their best practices. They have so many more initiatives and lessons that they can share.

If you'd like to learn more about the work they've done, please reach out to Rebecca Crowther:

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About WISE

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