

ROADS REVIEW

THIS MONTH, WE ASKED THE INDUSTRY LEADERS: HOW CAN THE ROADS AND INFRASTRUCTURE INDUSTRY ENCOURAGE MORE DIVERSITY?



CHRIS MELHAM, CEO, CIVIL CONTRACTORS FEDERATION – NATIONAL

The Civil Contractors Federation (CCF) continues to play a lead role in workplace diversity through the development and implementation of a range of programs and services in collaboration with its members and government. These include initiatives focusing on leadership, mentoring, networking, and information, all of which reflect CCF's commitment to best practice, diversity, and inclusion. CCF will continue to work with industry and government to develop and implement practical, relevant, and valuable initiatives to help ensure civil construction continues to embrace diversity. The current voluntary approach is an effective mechanism to drive diversity improvements in our industry, not mandates by governments prescribing diversity targets.



SARAH BACHMANN, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, NATIONAL PRECAST CONCRETE ASSOCIATION AUSTRALIA

Diversity and inclusion are two critical requirements that span across all aspects of business. Never more relevant as Australia heads into the post-COVID19 infrastructure-led recovery, diversity and inclusion – when properly harnessed – can bring very real value. Underpinning the ability to practice diversity and inclusion in the infrastructure space is how organisations harness diversity. Innovation in diversity means redefining power and the engagement of leaders who themselves model diversity. Leading by example should pave the way as diversity of discussion is fostered and as cultures are cultivated that focus on learning, creativity, equity, dignity, and flexibility.



JON DAVIES, CEO, AUSTRALIAN CONSTRUCTORS ASSOCIATION

To increase diversity, we need to first solve the challenges that are preventing the construction industry from being an employer of choice. To do this, the Australian Constructors Association, together with the governments of NSW and Victoria, is developing a new industry Culture Standard. The Culture Standard is a framework for clients and contractors to work together to ensure workers are provided adequate time to rest and pursue life activities outside of work. It will also help ensure the occupational health and mental wellbeing of workers is prioritised so the industry can attract and retain a more diverse range of workers. Once finalised, governments will be called upon to incorporate the Culture Standard into their procurement requirements. For more information, visit: www.cultureinconstruction.com.au.



JONATHAN JONES, HEAD OF EDUCATION, INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC WORKS ENGINEERING AUSTRALASIA (IPWEA)

Establishing a pipeline of diverse talent should be a priority for the roads and infrastructure industry. An effective way of attracting diverse talent is through the establishment of scholarships and study grants that supports skill and capacity building within the industry. Scholarships can be targeted at the development of a range of skill sets and at all career-levels. In 2021, IPWEA partnered with a key industry player to launch the IPWEA LOGiT Indigenous Scholarship, with the intent of supporting current and aspiring Indigenous Asset Management professionals to build their capability and enhance their career trajectory and contribution.



LISE SPERLING, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR NSW AND ACT, AUSTRALIAN FLEXIBLE PAVEMENT ASSOCIATION (AFPA)

Workplace diversity and inclusion is not automatic, and there is no quick fix. It requires proactive leadership, accountable commitments, cultural change, and measurable outcomes-based initiatives that promote and support an equitable workforce. From inclusive recruitment processes and celebrating accomplishments and cultural holidays, to ensuring pay equity and fostering open and safe communication, the industry can drive the continuous process of inclusion. AfPA embraces a continual improvement culture encouraging diversity and inclusion. AfPA's National Diversity and Inclusion Committee is inviting discussion on the barriers on behalf of the flexible pavements industry. We are proud that our members are implementing their own policies and openly sharing their learnings as a leading employment industry of choice that embraces all.



DEEPAK MADAN, CHIEF MARKETING AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, SRIPATH ASIA-PAC

At Sripath, we view diversity as an integral part of our organisation's DNA. We belong to a global group of companies, which includes: Sripath Technologies, USA; Bitpath, India; Sripath Innovations, UK; and Sripath Asia-Pac, Australia. Our team members and the experts we engage hail from a diverse set of backgrounds, cultures, religions, ethnicity, and preferences. One of our core competencies is to foster this diversity and channel our expertise and talent to nurture an organisation that is innovative, customer-centric, and forward thinking. Each of our businesses benefits from our diverse perspectives and our collective insight into the global bitumen industry. This allows us to deliver innovative products, outstanding customer service and excellent technical support to our customers. We are proud of the multi-talented team of experts that are so vital to our business.

If you or someone at your organisation is an industry leader and would like to be a part of this monthly column in 2021, please get in touch with Editor, Tara Hamid: tara.hamid@primecreative.com.au