

The Inclusion Marathon



The Inclusion Marathon

*On Diversity and Equity in the Dutch Workplace
(an extensive summary)*

*Kauthar Bouchallikht
Zoë Papaikonomou*

*English Translation:
Elodie Kona*

Amsterdam University Press

A translated summary of: *De inclusiemarathon: Over diversiteit en gelijkwaardigheid op de werkvloer*. Amsterdam University Press 2021

© Kauthar Bouchallikht & Zoë Papaikononou / Amsterdam University Press 2021

Translation: Elodie Kona

Cover illustration: Merel Corduener

Author's photo: Tengbeh Kamara

Cover design: Coördesign, Leiden

Lay-out: Crius Group, Hulshout

ISBN 978 90 4855 839 1

e-ISBN 978 90 4855 840 7 (ePub)

NUR 740

© K. Bouchallikht & Z. Papaikononou / Amsterdam University Press B.V.,
Amsterdam 2023

All rights reserved. Without limiting the rights under copyright reserved above, no part of this book may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise) without the written permission of both the copyright owner and the author of the book.

Table of Contents

Preface	7
Introduction	9
Definitions	19
Society	29
The Organization	37
The Manager	53
The Diversity Practitioner	61
Knowledge is Power	71
Tips for Employees	79
Biographies of interviewees	83
Acknowledgements	89
Notes	93
References	97
Recommended literature for more depth	101
Author's Biographies	107



Preface

The workplace of today is an extraordinarily complex institution. Since the birth of management theory, organizational science has had to evolve with the demands of labor movements, the cultural needs of expanding into new global markets and the changing demographics of the workforce. However, it failed to reflect how all of these shifts are connected. The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) industry, born initially out of the U.S. civil rights movement, grew to account for these changes little by little over time. But in its current state, it can feel daunting, overwhelming, and even disjointed for those looking to enter the field or shift to doing DEI work within their organizations.

And although *The Inclusion Marathon* was written for the Netherlands, its lessons, insights and tools are applicable around the world. The authors have contextualized DEI as both a workplace necessity and catalyst for societal change, through an understanding of both the legacy of Dutch colonial and imperial history and its often-esoteric present-day effects. It is a book that should be in the library of anyone who is interested in not just DEI, but organizational dynamics and social change.

At a time when we're all struggling to make sense of all of these growing complexities, the authors maximize the use of the greatest tool that has yet to be leveraged fully in DEI work: the power of the collective. Kauthar and Zoë meticulously interviewed 41 practitioners and researchers to get their views, insights and methods for effective DEI work and, with dedication and intention, included the most powerful and groundbreaking insights in their book. The care that the authors took in including thoughts and concepts that may push readers outside of their comfort zone is a virtual masterclass in objective and collective writing.

Those of us working, living and breathing DEI know in our bones that we are interconnected—as humans, as practitioners, as learners and as nations. We are influenced and impacted

by each other in a million little (and big) ways. So, as you go through this book, you'll also find a million little and big ways in which the concepts, practices and harms created by a lack of a DEI lens are mirrored in many cultures. The *look and feel* of the microaggressions, inequity and injustice might differ, for example, but they are still there. The book might speak of the Dutch constitution, but companies not applying the constitution in practice – and even the fact that the constitution was written when only a certain group held power – those truths go beyond the Netherlands. DEI work is exceptionally complex because every organization and nation has their own cultures and contexts, so a multinational likely cannot apply the same *exact* approaches to DEI in their offices in Singapore as they do in Germany, for example. What Kauthar and Zoë have done, however, is take that complexity and create a dynamic start-build-sustain format that can be applied across cultures and contexts.

This extensive summary of the Inclusion Marathon is a must-read for all who are interested in understanding the differences and similarities that countries around the world, like the Netherlands, are grappling with to understand and deconstruct their own identity-based power dynamics. It is a brave interrogation of Dutch image of self—a bold and necessary step in the quest for a better future. They give us real, evidence-based hope that change on a global scale is possible and that the currents of oppression are shifting, so long as we continue the real work and not succumb to the self-serving temptations of profit-driven, performative DEI.

Shiva Roofeh & Farzin Farzad
DEI experts focused on organizational justice