

# Module 5

## Inclusive by Design: Leading with Diversity for Green Digital Innovation



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# Welcome to Module 5

## Inclusive by Design: Leading with Diversity for Green Digital Innovation

In today's interconnected world, businesses are no longer judged solely on financial performance—they are expected to deliver positive social and environmental outcomes. Entrepreneurs who embed inclusion, equity, and social impact into their core strategy are not only driving meaningful change but also gaining competitive advantage in markets that value responsibility and transparency.

This module empowers learners to lead with purpose, design inclusive and socially responsible business models, and harness diversity as a catalyst for innovation and resilience. Participants will explore global frameworks like the Triple Bottom Line (TBL), SDGs, ESG, and the EU Green Deal, learning how to align their ventures with societal needs while remaining profitable and future-fit.

By integrating business value creation, a green responsibility mindset, and digital empowerment, this module shows how purpose-driven entrepreneurship can transform global challenges, such as inequality, climate change, and social exclusion, into opportunities for sustainable growth.



# Module 5 Overview

By integrating business value creation, a green responsibility mindset, and digital empowerment, this module shows how purpose-driven entrepreneurship can transform global challenges, such as inequality, climate change, and social exclusion, into opportunities for sustainable growth.

01

## The power and value of inclusive entrepreneurship

Why inclusion isn't just ethical—it's strategic.

02

## Inclusive leadership and cultural change management

Moving beyond tokenism to embed equity in business culture.

03

## Entrepreneurship for social impact

Designing ventures that address societal challenges (e.g., poverty, education, health, inequality).

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# Module 1 Interactive Learning Elements



**54** Slides



**05** Exercises



**01** Videos



**02** Case Studies



**02** Digital Tools



**01** Toolkits & Guides



**04** Articles & Reports

# Learning Outcomes

By the end of this module, learners will be able to:

**Business Skills:** Design inclusive, ethical, and purpose-driven business models aligned with SDGs, TBL, and ESG principles.

**Green Skills:** Apply systems thinking to address interconnected environmental and social challenges.

**Digital Skills:** Use digital platforms to map, track, and communicate social and environmental impact.



# Section 01

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**Aim:** Develop inclusive leadership skills and understand how diversity enables creativity, resilience, and sustainable innovation.

Leading  
Inclusively:  
Diversity as a  
Driver of  
Innovation



# Competences Developed in Section 1

01

## Business Skills

Mobilising Others, Ethical Value Creation, Ethical Leadership, Inspiring Leadership (e.g., ability to shape a DEI policy that drives innovation and market relevance, equitable entrepreneurial direction that integrates diverse perspectives)

02

## Green Skills

Social Responsibility, Empathy, Collaborative Action, Systems Thinking (e.g., understand how inclusion intersects with social, business operations environmental systems)

03

## Digital Skills

Digital Communication, Community Engagement and Employee Engagement Platforms, Problem-Solving, Evaluating Digital Content (e.g., Using HR tech for inclusive hiring practices and tracking diversity metrics)





# Part 1

The power and value of inclusive entrepreneurship

# Why inclusion isn't just ethical—it's strategic

Inclusion isn't just "the right thing to do"—it's a business accelerator. Organizations that embed it into their strategy outperform competitors, innovate faster, and build resilient, future-ready teams.



# Diverse Perspectives Fuel Innovation

Teams with varied backgrounds, experiences, and cognitive styles generate more creative solutions.

Inclusive workplaces foster psychological safety, encouraging employees to share bold ideas without fear of exclusion.



# Better Decision-Making

Diverse groups reduce "groupthink" and consider a wider range of risks and opportunities.

Research (e.g., CloverPop) shows inclusive teams make better business decisions 87% of the time.



# Competitive Talent Advantage

Inclusive companies attract top talent, especially Millennials and Gen Z, who prioritize diversity in employers.

Retention improves when employees feel valued and empowered.



# Enhanced Financial Performance

McKinsey found companies in the top quartile for gender/ethnic diversity are 25–36% more likely to outperform peers on profitability.

Inclusion mitigates reputational risks and aligns with ESG (Environmental, Social, Governance) investor expectations.



# Future-Proofing the Organization

Global markets and demographics are shifting; inclusive cultures adapt faster to change.

Companies lagging in inclusion risk losing relevance in an increasingly diverse world.



# Why diverse teams outperform in innovation and resilience

Diversity isn't just about fairness—it's a **competitive multiplier**. Teams that embrace differences are more agile, innovative, and resilient because they:

**Avoid blind spots**

**Spark disruptive ideas**

**Adapt faster to change**



# 1. Cognitive Diversity Drives Better Problem-Solving



**01.** Different backgrounds (cultural, educational, professional) lead to varied ways of thinking



**02.** A study in Harvard Business Review found that cognitively diverse teams solve problems faster than homogenous ones.



**03.** When faced with challenges, diverse teams consider multiple angles, reducing blind spots



## 2. Enhanced Creativity & Innovation



**01.** Exposure to different viewpoints sparks "creative friction," leading to breakthrough ideas.



**02.** Research from Forrester shows diverse teams are 75% more likely to capture new markets with innovative products.



**03.** Example: IBM's diverse AI ethics team identified biases in algorithms that a homogenous group might have missed.



### 3. Stronger Decision-Making



**01.** Diverse teams debate more thoroughly, avoiding "echo chambers."



**02.** A CloverPop study showed inclusive teams make better decisions 87% of the time and deliver 60% better results.



**03.** Example: NASA's post-Columbia disaster reforms emphasized dissent and diversity to prevent groupthink.



## 4. Psychological Safety & Engagement



**01.** Inclusive cultures foster trust, encouraging risk-taking and learning from failure.



**02.** Google's Project Aristotle found psychological safety—more prevalent in diverse teams—was the #1 predictor of high performance.



**03.** Employees in inclusive environments are 3.5x more likely to contribute their full innovative potential (Deloitte).





# Part 2

## Inclusive leadership and cultural change management

# What it takes to be an inclusive leader?

It isn't just about checking diversity boxes—it's about fostering a culture where every voice is heard, valued, and empowered to drive success.



# 1. Self-Awareness & Humility

## Check your biases

Recognize unconscious biases (e.g., affinity bias, confirmation bias) through tools like Harvard's Implicit Association Test (IAT).

## Seek feedback

Regularly ask, "How can I create a more inclusive environment?"—and act on it.

## Admit mistakes

Model vulnerability by acknowledging missteps (e.g., mispronouncing a name) and correcting them.



## 2. Courage to Challenge Inequity

### Call out exclusionary behavior

(e.g., microaggressions, interrupting) in real time—politely but firmly.

### Advocate for equity

Sponsor high-potential talent from underrepresented groups for promotions.

### Disrupt “culture fit” hiring

Prioritize culture add over conformity



### 3. Psychological Safety

#### Ban “punishment by silence”

Ensure no one is ignored or sidelined for speaking up.

#### Reward dissent

Thank people who challenge the status quo (e.g., “I appreciate you pushing us to think differently.”).

#### Normalize failure

Encourage risk-taking by sharing your own failures.



## 4. Allyship & Advocacy

### Sponsor ERGs (Employee Resource Groups)

Allocate budget and executive airtime to their initiatives.

### Share credit publicly

Highlight team members' contributions in leadership meetings.

### Leverage privilege

Use your influence to open doors (e.g., recommending a woman of color for a high-visibility project).



List of tools, platforms, and strategies to enable inclusive teams, employee engagement, and ownership, including communication platforms, ERGs (Employee Resource Groups), and participatory decision-making frameworks:



## Communication & Collaboration Tools for Inclusion



### Slack

Use #ERG channels (e.g., #WomenInTech, #NeurodiversityNetwork) for affinity groups. Integrate Donut (bot) for randomized virtual coffee chats to break silos.



### Microsoft Teams

Live captions & translation for multilingual teams. Praise Tool to publicly recognize colleagues' contributions.



### Mural

Digital whiteboards with anonymous sticky notes to crowdsource ideas equitably.



### Loom

Video messages with closed captions for flexible, inclusive communication



### Notion

Shared wikis with template libraries (e.g., inclusive language guides).

# Participatory Decision-Making Tools



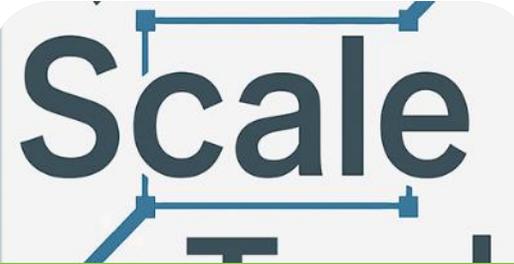
## Polly

Anonymous surveys to gauge team sentiment (e.g., “How inclusive was this project?”).



## Thought Exchange

Crowdsources and prioritizes ideas from all employees (not just loud voices).



## Idea Scale

Platform for employees to submit/pitch ideas, with upvoting and blind reviews.



## All Voices

Anonymous feedback tool to surface concerns (e.g., microaggressions).

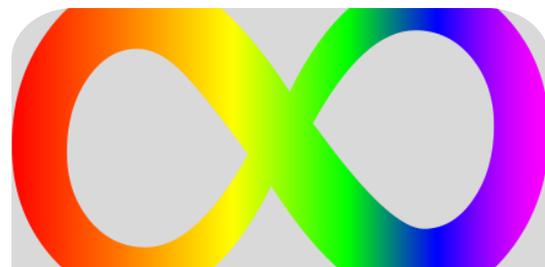


# Learning & Development for Inclusion



## Elpha

Online community + courses for women/non-binary professionals.



## Neurodiversity Hub

Training for managers to support autistic/ADHD employees.



JOURNEY TO DIVERSITY  
WORKPLACES

## Diversity Edu

Customizable DEI training with scenario-based quizzes.



## Bias Correct

Flags non-inclusive language in emails/docs in real time



# Recognition & Ownership Models



## Bonusly

Employees give micro-bonuses (with \$\$) to colleagues, fostering cross-team appreciation.



## 15Five

Weekly check-ins with “High Fives” for acknowledging inclusive behaviors.



## Carta

Tracks employee stock ownership (ESOPs), ensuring diverse teams build wealth.



## Profit Participation

Allocate a % of ERG-led initiatives' revenue back to their budgets (e.g., sales from ERG-designed products).

# Implementation Checklist

## Audit Needs :

Survey employees on barriers to inclusion (use TinyPulse).

## Pilot Tools :

Test 1–2 platforms (e.g., Miro + Polly) with a volunteer team.

## Measure Impact :

Track different metrics (ERG participation rates, ENPS, etc.)

## Iterate:

Adjust tools based on feedback (e.g., switch from Slack to Teams if remote workers prefer video).



# Resources

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## Resources and Exercises



## CASE STUDY

Too Good To Go is a **mission-driven tech company** combating food waste through its innovative app, which connects consumers with surplus food from restaurants, bakeries, and supermarkets at reduced prices. By leveraging digital innovation, the company addresses both environmental sustainability (**reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from wasted food**) and social inclusion (**making affordable food accessible to diverse communities**).



# CASE STUDY: TOO GOOD TO GO



**Challenges:** Reaching non-tech-savvy or offline populations remains a hurdle.

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**Opportunities:** Collaborating with EU governments to integrate food waste apps into social welfare programs.



# Case Study TOO GOOD TO GO: Reflect & Discuss

**Instructions:** Discuss the following prompts in small groups. Be prepared to share your conclusions with the class.

**Prompt A: The Digital Divide.** One of Too Good To Go's challenges is the "Digital Divide." Is an app the best way to solve the problem of food waste for everyone? How can the company ensure its high-tech solution doesn't exclude the very people who could benefit most from affordable food?

**Prompt B: The "Surprise" Element.** The "Surprise Bags" model is key to their business. What are the potential benefits and drawbacks of this model for (a) the consumer and (b) the restaurant/supermarket? Could this model be improved?

**Prompt C: Data for Good.** The case study mentions "Bias-Free Algorithms" and "Data Equity." Why is it important for a company like Too Good To Go to actively ensure its algorithms don't discriminate? Can you think of a way an algorithm on a food app might unintentionally exclude certain neighborhoods or people?



# CASE STUDY

VEJA is a pioneering French footwear brand that combines **eco-conscious design with radical social impact**. Known for its minimalist sneakers, VEJA redefines the fashion industry by prioritizing **transparency, fair trade, and inclusive employment practices**. The company's mission is to prove that **style, sustainability, and social justice can coexist**—one step at a time.



# CASE STUDY: VEJA



**Challenges:** Maintaining fair wages and eco-materials while meeting global demand.

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**Opportunities:** Launching a rental/subscription model for sneakers.



# Case Study VEJA: Discussion/Debate

**Instructions:** Discuss the following prompts in small groups. Be prepared to share your conclusions with the class.

**Prompt A: The Price of Ethics.** VEJA sneakers cost between €100–€150. Fast-fashion sneakers can cost as little as €20. Is VEJA's model truly "accessible"? Justify your reasoning. What could be done to make ethically produced goods more accessible to a wider audience?

**Prompt B: Scaling vs. Values.** One of VEJA's challenges is "Scaling Ethically." Do you believe it is possible for a company to become very large and global while maintaining its core social and environmental values? Why or why? Use examples if you can.

**Prompt C: Combating Greenwashing.** VEJA faces "Greenwashing Competitors." How can consumers tell the difference between a genuinely sustainable brand like VEJA and a fast-fashion brand that is just using "sustainable" messaging for



# Exercises

## Exercise 1: Role-Play – Inclusive Leadership Dilemma

### Scenario:

You're a manager at a renewable energy startup. An Indigenous team member proposes a solar solution based on traditional land knowledge, but engineers dismiss it as "unscientific."

### Role-Play Steps:

1. Split into groups (manager, engineer, Indigenous team member, observer).
2. Debate the proposal using **active listening** and **amplification** techniques.
3. Observer grades the group on:
  1. Psychological safety
  2. Willingness to challenge biases
  3. Final decision's inclusivity



## Exercises

### Exercise 2: Design Thinking Challenge – Green Enterprise for Your Community

#### Prompt:

Design a **digital green enterprise** for a marginalized group in your region (e.g., migrant workers, rural women, disabled farmers).

#### Requirements:

1. Use **inclusive engagement** (e.g., co-creation workshops).
2. Propose a **mission-driven communication** tool (e.g., voice apps, community radio).
3. Explain how your solution ensures **triple-bottom-line sustainability** (people, planet, profit).

**Deliverable:** 5-minute pitch + 1-page business model canvas.



## Exercises

### Exercise 3: Debate - “Diversity Alone Doesn’t Drive Innovation”

#### Motion:

“Inclusion is more important than diversity for fostering innovation.”

#### Structure:

- Team A argues **diversity** (e.g., varied backgrounds) is the key driver.
- Team B argues **inclusion** (e.g., psychological safety) matters more.
- Use examples from Kheyti, Solar Sister, or corporate studies (e.g., Google’s Project Aristotle).



## Exercises

### Exercise 4: Reflective Essay – Personal Leadership Audit

**Prompt:**

Reflect on your own leadership (or a leader you've observed) using these questions:

1. When have you seen **exclusion** undermine a team's potential?
2. Which **2 inclusive leadership habits** (from our discussion) could you adopt to improve?
3. How might you measure your progress? (e.g., feedback surveys, meeting participation rates).

# Resources

## Books & Academic Papers:

*The Inclusion Imperative* – **Stephen Frost** (2014) – Explains the business case for inclusion with corporate examples.

*Rebel Ideas: The Power of Diverse Thinking* – **Matthew Syed** (2019) – Covers cognitive diversity in teams.

"*Why Diverse Teams Are Smarter*" – **Harvard Business Review** (Rock & Grant, 2016) – [Link](#)

"*The Diversity Bonus*" – **Scott Page** (Princeton UP, 2017) – Mathematical proof of diversity's value in problem-solving.

## Tools & Assessments:

**Harvard Implicit Association Test (IAT)** – Free bias self-assessment: [Link](#)

**Gartner's Inclusive Leadership Assessment** – Framework for measuring inclusive behaviors: [Report](#)



# Reports:

| Text   | Text   |
|--|--|
| <i>"Green and Inclusive: How Digital Tech is Driving Sustainability"</i> – <b>World Economic Forum</b> (2022) – <a href="#">Link</a> | <i>"Blockchain for Social Impact"</i> – <b>Stanford Social Innovation Review</b> (2023) – Covers Treadem's model: <a href="#">Link</a> |
| <i>"The Business Case for Inclusive Green Growth"</i> – <b>OECD</b> (2021) – <a href="#">Link</a>                                    | <i>"Designing for Inclusion"</i> – <b>IDEO.org</b> (Free toolkit for co-creation): <a href="#">Link</a>                                |
| <b>Sokowatch &amp; Kheyti</b> – Enterprise profiles on <i>Villgro</i> (social incubator): <a href="#">Link</a>                       | <i>"How to Communicate Climate Justice"</i> – <b>Climate Outreach</b> (2023) – <a href="#">Link</a>                                    |
| <i>"ICT for Green: How Digital Solutions Enable Sustainability"</i> – <b>UNEP</b> (2020) – <a href="#">Link</a>                      | <b>Solar Sister's Training Manuals</b> – Gender-inclusive clean energy guides: <a href="#">Link</a>                                    |



# Competences Developed in Module 2

01

## Business Skills

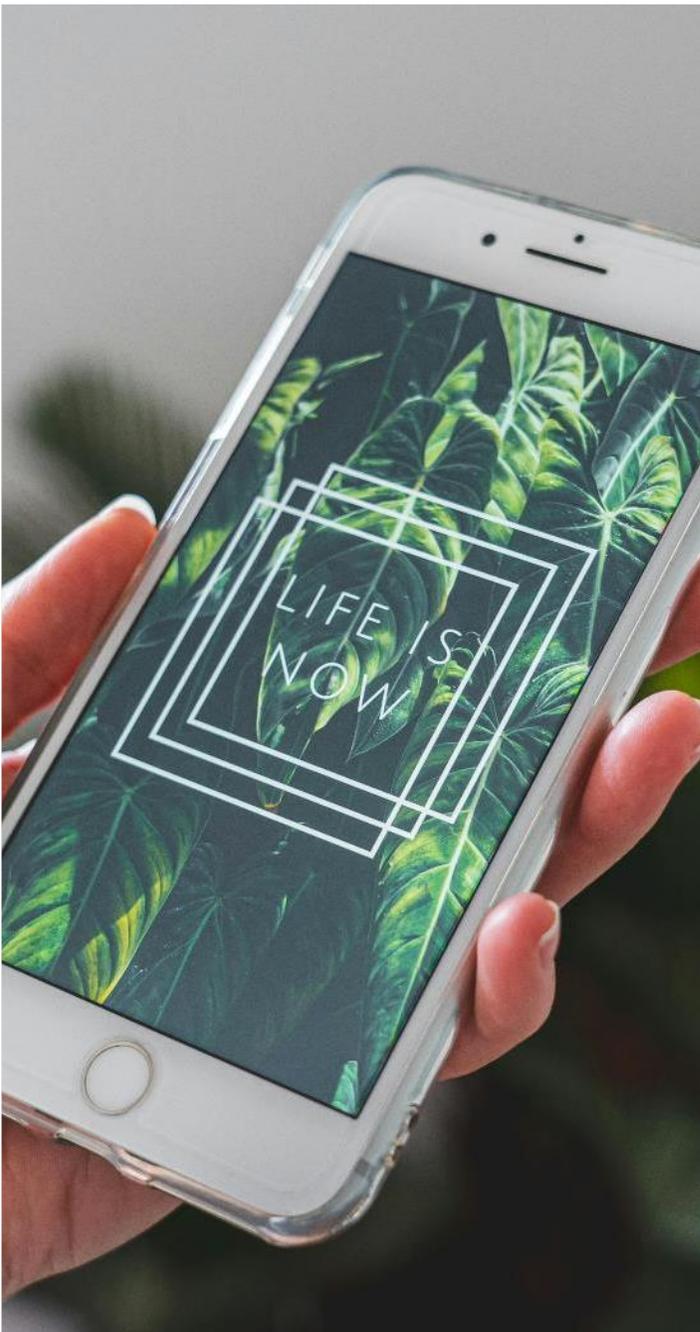
Creativity, Business Model Innovation, Sustainable Growth, Responsible Value Creation

02

## Green Skills

Social Equity, Regenerative Thinking, Sustainability Mindset, Adaptability





03

## Digital Skills

xPlatform Design, Digital Inclusion Tools, Problem-Solving with Digital Tools,





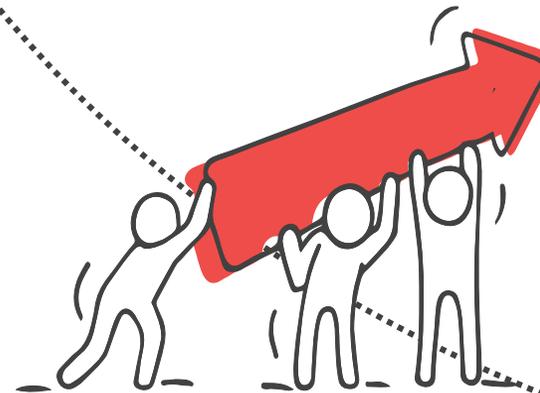
You have Completed...  
Module 5

**Section 1** Building Future-Fit Socially Conscious  
and Inclusive Business Models

## Module 6

**Section 1** Storytelling,  
Communication & Customer  
Engagement

**Section 2** Making Impact Visible:  
Data, Storytelling & Compliance



Next is...

# Thank you

Any questions?

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