

# DIVERSIFYING YOUR CLUB



Diversifying your club is not just about including a mix of people. It's also about working well together.

Diversity refers to inclusion of people from many groups. It is a source of innovation, as well as one of Rotary's core values. Having members with different backgrounds and viewpoints gives your club a broader understanding of the community, its problems, and possible solutions. Strive to have a group of members who offer the club diverse skills, talents, and experiences. If your club includes different ethnicities, ages, and cultures, as well as a good gender balance, it will have greater capacity to serve your community and communities around the world. Equally important is creating a culture of inclusion, where these differences are respected, supported, and valued.

## OUTCOME

Conduct this diversity assessment and act on its results to:

- Raise your members' awareness of the diversity in your community
- Build member support for increasing diversity
- Diversify your club to better represent the working professionals in your community

## GETTING ORGANIZED

Dedicate time in a series of club meetings to conducting each step of your member diversity assessment. Choose a facilitator (the membership committee chair, a committee member, or the club president) who is comfortable talking about diversity and passionate about the need for greater diversity in your club. Or, consider inviting a diversity and inclusion leader to talk to your club. This activity should involve all club members so that they all have a stake in the process. Greater inclusion will increase awareness and support for future action.



Note: Each of the steps can take a week or longer. When planning your assessment, be sure to allow enough time.

## GETTING STARTED

Ready to start? Here's how.

### Step 1: Discuss the benefits of having a diverse membership

Discuss the benefits of diversity with your club. Recognize and celebrate past successes, if appropriate. For example, highlight a service project or other club accomplishment that has been achieved through having members with diverse professional skills. Discuss your club's representation of professional field or classification, gender, age, ethnicity, and culture, and set goals.

### Step 2: Collect information

Recap the diversity discussion from step 1 and reiterate the positive effects of having a more diverse membership.

Distribute the Member Diversity Worksheet. Split club members into four groups and instruct each group that they are to gather information from one of the following sources on their own time between this meeting and the next, completing what they can of the worksheet:

- **Group 1:** Get data on the demographics of the community from a local business association, such as the chamber of commerce
- **Group 2:** Gather information about the community's cultural and demographic composition from the local tourism bureau
- **Group 3:** Get socioeconomic statistics from local economic development experts or city government departments
- **Group 4:** Get the most recent census results, which may include information on the age, gender, and ethnic makeup of the area's residents and review them

### Step 3: Discuss the findings within the groups

The following week, ask groups to meet to discuss their assignments, share what they completed on their worksheets, and compile their findings. Then have each group choose a spokesperson who will present its findings to the club at a future meeting.

#### **Step 4: Report the results and discuss their implications**

Have each group spend about five minutes presenting its findings at a club meeting. Facilitate a discussion about the reports and their relevance.

Does your Rotary club's membership reflect:

- The ages of the professional population in the community?
- The gender composition of the working professionals in the community?
- The ethnic and cultural diversity of the community?

#### **Step 5: Develop a member diversity action plan**

Find strategies to reach out to specific groups that were found to be underrepresented in your club. Document your plan and assign tasks to those on the membership committee, or ask other club members to help. Monitor progress toward your diversity goals and continually update club members.

#### **Interested in doing other assessments?**

[Representing Your Community's Professions: A Classification Assessment](#)

[Finding New Club Members: A Prospective Member Exercise](#)

[Improving Your Member Retention: Retention Assessment and Analysis](#)

[Enhancing the Club Experience: Member Satisfaction Survey](#)

[Understanding Why Members Leave: Exit Survey](#)



# MEMBER DIVERSITY WORKSHEET

1. What sources did you consult in your search for data on your community's demographic composition?

2. What data did you find on:

Age:

Gender:

Ethnic background:

3. Does this data correspond to the current composition of working professionals in your community? Explain your evidence.

4. What fact or statistic did you find most interesting?

5. What surprised you most?

6. What surprised you least?

7. Are any demographic groups underrepresented in the club?

8. What can the club do to better represent working professionals in the community?

9. How can your findings be integrated into an action plan for membership development?