

Inclusive Sourcing Guide

Expand your reach. Strengthen your team. Align your hires with your mission.

What is Inclusive Hiring?

Inclusive hiring means intentionally expanding your recruitment strategies to attract, assess, and support individuals from underrepresented or overlooked communities including justice-impacted individuals, veterans, caregivers, and others based on their skills, potential, and values.

What are the benefits

Inclusive teams = new perspectives, stronger performance

- People from different backgrounds bring unique ideas, problem-solving approaches, and life experiences that help teams avoid blind spots.
- This leads to better decision-making, especially in customer-facing or innovation-driven roles.
- Teams with cognitive and cultural diversity tend to spot market opportunities others miss.

Higher Performance & Profitability

- Companies with diverse teams are 36% more likely to outperform their peers in profitability (McKinsey & Co., 2020).
- Inclusive leadership teams are more likely to capture new markets, build trust with broader customer segments, and drive top-line growth.

Inclusive hiring drives innovation, reduces turnover, and opens new customer pipelines.

- Innovation thrives when teams include people who challenge norms and contribute different skill sets or lived experiences.
- Diverse and inclusive companies produce 19% higher innovation revenues than their less inclusive peers (Boston Consulting Group).

Reduces Turnover & Increases Retention

- Employees stay longer when they feel seen, valued, and represented.
- Fair-chance hires often show higher loyalty and longer tenure than traditional hires, especially when onboarded effectively.
- Inclusive workplaces reduce culture clash turnover by fostering belonging from day one.

Opens New Customer Pipelines

- Teams that reflect the communities they serve create stronger brand credibility and attract more loyal customers.
- This is especially critical for small businesses looking to grow through word-of-mouth, community trust, and local market share.

Why Inclusive Sourcing Matters

Hiring isn't just about filling seats—it's about shaping the soul of your business. Where and how you search determines who shows up. Inclusive sourcing helps you:

- Access overlooked, high-potential talent
- Align your workforce with your values
- Build a stronger, more diverse team from day one

Rethink the Funnel

If your pipeline is narrow, your possibilities are too.

Traditional Sourcing Challenges:

- Overreliance on major job boards
- Copy/paste job descriptions that filter out potential
- Limited outreach to networks that look just like you

Inclusive Sourcing Fixes:

- Skills-based job posts
- Clear and accessible language
- Sourcing partners beyond your current circles

Where to Source Differently

1. Fair Chance and Justice-Involved Talent

- Local reentry programs and CBOs
- Platforms like Honest Jobs, 70 Million Jobs

- State/federal workforce boards

2. Skills-Based Pathways

- Community colleges and pre-apprenticeship programs
- Bootcamps, certificate programs, and online learning platforms
- Workforce development orgs like Year Up, Per Scholas

3. Untapped Local Networks

- Faith-based orgs, community centers, and shelters
- Youth programs (foster care, opportunity youth)
- Nontraditional groups (caregivers, veterans, refugees)

Workforce Boards (State/Federal)

Workforce boards are publicly funded organizations that oversee employment and training services in local areas. They often manage job seeker services, employer connections, apprenticeships, and upskilling grants.

Examples



Reentry or Fair Chance Hiring Organizations

These orgs support justice-impacted individuals by offering training, mentorship, job placement, and employer connections.

Examples



Military/Veteran Transition Programs

Support service members transitioning into civilian careers with training, job placement, and employer partnerships.

Examples

Hiring Our Heroes

U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation



Youth Employment Initiatives

Programs supporting young adults (16–24) with job readiness, placement, and skills training.

Examples



Apprenticeship & Skills-First Platforms

Help companies hire based on demonstrated skills not degrees and offer paid, learn-while-you-work pathways.

Examples



Channel Type	Definition	Example Partner or Platform	Best For...
Traditional	Conventional recruiting platforms and job boards that rely on open market posting and applicant volume. Often the first stop for employers, but can miss untapped talent without inclusive language or outreach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indeed • Zip Recruiter • Local Chamber of Commerce job boards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General roles • High-volume posting • Early hires with clear tasks
Community Based	Local organizations, nonprofits, or workforce boards that have direct access to underrepresented talent pools. These partners often offer wraparound services, training, and direct referrals, especially for mission-aligned hiring.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workforce Boards (example: NCWorks, MassHire) • Goodwill Industries • Urban League • Local CBOs and churches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles requiring local/ community ties • First-time employers • Mission-aligned hiring
Digital	Online platforms or talent marketplaces that connect employers to skilled candidates, often focusing on emerging talent, niche skills, or values-aligned career seekers. These tools streamline access to specific groups like students, career changers, or remote-ready talent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LinkedIn • Stellarworx • Multiverse • Handshake • WayUp 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills-first hiring • Remote or hybrid roles • Specialized roles (tech, admin, etc.)
Fair Chance	Organizations and pipelines that serve justice-impacted individuals or returning citizens. These partners help employers adopt inclusive practices while offering pre-vetted, job-ready candidates who often show strong loyalty and performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) • Cara Collective • The LOHM • Hope for Prisoners • JFF's Fair Chance Employer Network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive hiring commitments • Community reinvestment • Building a values-based team

Sourcing Check-In Questions

Who is missing from my current hiring channels?

Do my job descriptions invite diverse candidates to apply?

Am I building relationships with orgs that serve my community?

Your Turn

List 3 inclusive sourcing partners you can reach out to next week.

Identify 1 job post you can revise to reflect a skills-based approach.

Commit to tracking where you find your best hires—not just who they are.