



NATIONAL DAY FOR
STAFF NETWORKS

ALLYSHIP AND CROSS NETWORK COLLABORATION

Staff Networks can deliver on allyship and cross-network collaboration when they move beyond representing only their own membership and start working as part of a wider organisational ecosystem. The strongest networks create both identity-based support and shared accountability for inclusion.



OUR GOAL: Move from representation to shared influence, shared learning, and shared accountability for inclusion.



RESPECT



INCLUSION



COLLABORATION



IMPACT

1

DEFINE WHAT ALLYSHIP MEANS IN YOUR ORGANISATION



Co-create an allyship framework that is behavioural and measurable.

- What does an ally do here?
- How should allies speak up in meetings, recruitment panels, project teams, or decision-making spaces?
- What behaviours support inclusion, and what behaviours undermine it?

EXAMPLES OF ALLY BEHAVIOURS



Challenging biased language



Amplifying underrepresented voices



Sharing opportunities and sponsorship



Making inclusion part of planning

This helps move allyship from intention to action.

2

OPEN NETWORK MEMBERSHIP TO ALLIES

Many networks create different levels of membership:



Community members with lived experience



Ally members who want to learn and actively support



Executive sponsors who influence leadership decisions



This broadens ownership of inclusion instead of placing responsibility only on underrepresented groups.

For example, a disability network may engage managers as allies to improve workplace adjustments, or a gender equity network may involve male allies in sponsorship discussions.

3

CREATE SHARED CAMPAIGNS ACROSS NETWORKS



Focus on common organisational priorities, not separate events.

- ✓ Joint campaigns on inclusive leadership
- ✓ Shared awareness events during key dates like International Women's Day or Pride Month
- ✓ Combined workshops on psychological safety, wellbeing, or career progression
- ✓ Organisation-wide allyship pledges

This prevents networks from competing for attention or resources.



4

USE AN INTERSECTIONAL APPROACH

Recognise overlapping identities and co-create spaces for richer understanding.



- Women of colour leadership experiences
- LGBTQ+ employees with disabilities
- Working parents from minority ethnic backgrounds



Co-host listening sessions or storytelling panels that reflect real employee experiences. This often produces richer insight for leadership.

5

SHARE GOVERNANCE, NOT JUST EVENTS



Establish structures that give networks collective influence.

- ✓ A cross-network council
- ✓ Shared annual objectives
- ✓ Joint budget planning
- ✓ Common measures of impact
- ✓ Coordinated feedback to leadership



This gives networks collective influence over organisational priorities.

6

BUILD ALLYSHIP INTO LEADERSHIP ACCOUNTABILITY

Work together to influence leadership behaviours.



- ✓ Providing allyship training for managers
- ✓ Feeding employee insight into leadership development
- ✓ Recognising inclusive leaders publicly
- ✓ Challenging performative allyship when actions do not match commitments



This helps allyship become part of organisational culture, not just campaign language.

7

CREATE SAFE SPACES AND BRAVE CONVERSATIONS



Protect authenticity while building understanding across the organisation.

- ✓ Closed peer-support sessions
- ✓ Open ally learning sessions
- ✓ Cross-network panel discussions
- ✓ Senior leader listening forums



A balanced model ensures both safety for members and learning opportunities for allies and leaders.

WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE



Employees outside the network actively participate



Networks advocate for each other's priorities, not only their own



Shared recommendations reach senior leadership



Organisational policy changes can be traced back to network insight



Inclusion becomes a collective responsibility rather than a minority burden



INCLUSION IS STRONGER TOGETHER. When we ally, collaborate and hold each other accountable, we build a fairer, more inclusive organisation for everyone.





NATIONAL DAY FOR
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ENGAGE LEADERS. DRIVE CHANGE. DELIVER IMPACT.

Staff Networks can engage senior leaders most effectively when the relationship is built around strategic value, accountability, and mutual learning—not just event attendance or symbolic sponsorship.

1 CONNECT NETWORK PRIORITIES TO ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGY



Link network insight to business goals to show strategic value.

- Talent attraction and retention
- Employee engagement
- Innovation and service improvement
- Customer insight
- Risk and reputation
- Leadership culture

STRONGER MESSAGE:

"Our members' lived experience highlights barriers affecting retention and progression, which links directly to our workforce strategy."

2 MOVE BEYOND SYMBOLIC SPONSORSHIP



Executive sponsors should have a clearly defined role:

- Advocate for recommendations at executive level
- Remove organisational barriers
- Open access to decision spaces
- Challenge exclusionary behaviours
- Support resource allocation

Sponsors turn insight into action—not just attend events.

3 BRING EVIDENCE, STORIES, AND SOLUTIONS



Combine data, lived experience, and practical recommendations.

- Workforce data
- Employee stories
- Practical solutions

EXAMPLE: *"Our engagement survey shows lower belonging scores in this group, and members have identified meeting culture and lack of sponsorship as contributing factors." Here are three actions we recommend."*

4 CREATE STRUCTURED OPPORTUNITIES FOR DIALOGUE



Build consistent touchpoints to strengthen trust and keep inclusion on the agenda.

- Quarterly sponsor meetings
- Executive listening sessions
- Leadership roundtables
- Annual impact reviews
- Board or committee updates

5 INVOLVE LEADERS IN LEARNING, NOT JUST SPEAKING



Invite leaders to listen, learn, and experience.

- Reverse mentoring programmes
- Lived experience panels
- Shadowing opportunities
- Listening circles
- Storytelling sessions

6 GIVE LEADERS SPECIFIC ACTIONS



Clear asks lead to stronger accountability.

- Sponsor high-potential talent
- Review recruitment or promotion practices
- Support accessibility improvements
- Champion inclusive leadership behaviours
- Commit resources or budget

7 RECOGNISE AND CHALLENGE CONSTRUCTIVELY



Build relationships while maintaining independence.

- Recognise inclusive leadership
- Share progress openly
- Challenge respectfully when commitments are not delivered

8 SHOW IMPACT



Communicate outcomes to demonstrate value and sustain engagement.

- What feedback was gathered
- What actions were taken
- What changed as a result
- What still needs attention



WHAT GOOD ENGAGEMENT LOOKS LIKE



Attend to listen, not just to speak



Act on network recommendations



Use influence to remove barriers



Include network insight in decision-making



Are held accountable for progress



Staff networks are strategic advisors bringing insight from lived experience into leadership decision-making—together, we create stronger organisations for all.

INFLUENCING THROUGH LIVED EXPERIENCE

Staff Networks can influence organisational strategy by turning lived experience into actionable organisational insight. Their value comes from the fact that members often experience workplace systems, policies, and culture in ways that senior leadership may not directly see.



1 SURFACING BLIND SPOTS IN POLICY AND CULTURE



People from different backgrounds notice barriers that standard reporting structures miss—such as recruitment practices, inaccessible systems, or promotion processes that favour certain communication styles.

Because staff networks are built around shared experiences, they can identify patterns rather than isolated incidents.

STRATEGIC IMPACT

This can shape organisational priorities in areas like:



2 PROVIDING EVIDENCE BEYOND DATA DASHBOARDS



Quantitative metrics show what is happening. Lived experience helps explain why.

EXAMPLE:

Lower progression rates may be linked to informal sponsorship, meeting culture, or lack of visible role models.

STRATEGIC IMPACT

Leaders can design interventions that address root causes instead of symptoms.



3 INFLUENCING CUSTOMER, SERVICE, OR PRODUCT STRATEGY



Employees' lived experiences often mirror those of customers, service users, or communities.

Staff networks highlight insights that shape more inclusive and relevant services and products.

STRATEGIC IMPACT

This can improve:



4 ACTING AS AN INTERNAL CONSULTATION BODY



Networks act as a trusted consultation group when organisations are changing policies, launching initiatives, or responding to social issues.

They can test:

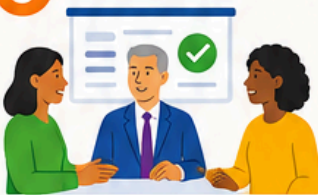
- Whether messaging feels authentic
- Whether policies create unintended consequences
- How decisions may be perceived by different employee groups

STRATEGIC IMPACT

This reduces reputational risk and improves implementation success.



5 BUILDING LEADERSHIP ACCOUNTABILITY



Structured access to leadership turns networks into strategic partners, not just social groups.

- Better challenge and constructive feedback
- Greater transparency on inclusion goals
- Pressure for measurable action rather than symbolic commitments

STRATEGIC IMPACT

Inclusion becomes embedded in organisational governance rather than a side initiative.



6 SUPPORTING INNOVATION AND CHANGE



People who navigate barriers often develop adaptive thinking and alternative perspectives. Including these voices leads to more creative solutions.

STRATEGIC IMPACT

Staff networks can influence:



WHAT MAKES THEIR INFLUENCE EFFECTIVE?

Staff networks usually have the most strategic influence when they have:



Without these conditions, networks can be listened to socially but excluded strategically.



In practice, lived experience influences strategy by helping organisations make better decisions about **people, culture, services, and long-term priorities**—grounded in realities that formal systems alone often miss.