

# Steadfast Recruitment Review



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## Definitions

|                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
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| <b>Accessibility</b><br>Get Skilled<br>Access                                                                   | Making a product, service, information or environment available to as many people as possible                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Disability</b><br>United Nations<br>Convention on<br>the Rights of<br>Persons with<br>Disabilities<br>(CRPD) | <p>Any limitation, restriction or impairment, which restricts everyday activities.</p> <p>“The interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full potential and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others”</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Discrimination</b><br>Human Rights<br>Commission                                                             | <p>Direct Discrimination - Discrimination happens when a person, or a group of people, is treated less favorably than another person or group because of their background or certain personal characteristics. It is also discrimination when an unreasonable rule or policy applies to everyone but has the effect of disadvantaging some people because of a personal characteristic they share.</p> <p>Indirect Discrimination - Discrimination can be against the law if it is based on a person's: age, disability, or race, including colour, national or ethnic origin or immigrant status, sex, pregnancy, marital or relationship status, family responsibilities or breastfeeding, sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status.</p> |

|                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Diversity</b><br>Diversity Council<br>Australia                                            | <p>Diversity refers to the mix of people in an organisation – that is, all the differences between people in how they identify in relations to their:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Social identity<br/>e.g., Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background, age, caring responsibilities, cultural background, disability status, gender, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status, and socio-economic background.</li> <li>2. Professional identity<br/>e.g., profession, education, work experiences, organisational level, functional area, division/ department, and location.</li> </ol> |
| <b>Inclusion</b><br>Global diversity<br>practice                                              | <p>Inclusion is an organisational effort and practices in which different groups or individuals having different backgrounds are culturally and socially accepted and welcomed, and equally treated.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Inclusive Culture</b><br>Get Skilled<br>Access                                             | <p>Have a sense of belonging, feeling respected, valued for who you are and the ability to add value, with a supporting energy and commitment from others so that you can be at your best. Inclusive cultures give everyone the same opportunity to contribute and thrive. Accessibility and universal design is inherent in everything they do. There is an absence of bias, prejudice and inequality.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Universal design</b><br>The Centre for<br>Excellence in<br>Universal Design<br>(CEUD) 2007 | <p>The design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

## **Executive Summary**

At present, 4.5 million Australians or 20% of the population, have either a physical or non-physical disability, 90% of those disabilities are non-visible, and 2.1 million people are of working age (15-64 years). The unemployment rate for people with disability is more than double the rate of people without disability and one of the reasons for this is the barriers faced in mainstream recruitment practices. Common barriers are inaccessible systems and processes, a lack of knowledge and experience and non-inclusive cultures and mindsets that encompass misconceptions and unconscious bias, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours.

A key priority of this Recruitment Review is to provide expert advice and actions on where there are opportunities to remove existing barriers and provide people with disability equal access to employment opportunities at Steadfast. The review provides insights on the accessibility and inclusion of current recruitment practices and identify key areas of opportunity to increase equitable access for people with disability throughout the process. The recommendations outlined provides Steadfast with an understanding of support for and the accessibility and inclusive needs of people with disability when accessing mainstream recruitment channels, with the goal of improved employment outcomes for people with disability.

Steadfast's strategic priority is centred on building a culture that supports and enables staff to achieve their purpose, vision and strategy in an ethical and responsible manner. Steadfast recognises that diversity is key to achieving successful organisational outcomes and attracting, retaining and motivating the best people. It is clear that the Steadfast team are passionate and committed to providing inclusive hiring practices and employment pathways for people with disability. The following recruitment review will support Steadfast's ongoing commitment to diversity, inclusion and equity.

## **Methodology**

The Recruitment Review was designed to assess the current processes and systems within existing recruitment practices, including job advertisements, digital applications, communications, screening and interview processes, policies and procedures, documentation and recruiter disability confidence.

**The method of review involved the following:**

**1. A desktop review of the following documentation:**

**Policies, Processes and Reports**

- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Respect Policy
- Steadfast Diversity Policy
- Workplace Health and Safety Policy
- Working From Home Policy

**Job Advertisements**

- Miramar Liability Underwriter (Southern)
- Draft Job Advertisement Template

**Recruitment, Selection & Onboarding Process**

- 1st Round Interview Guide – HR Officer
- 1st Round Interview Guide – Application Support Officer
- 2nd Round Interview Guide – Graduate Program
- 2nd Round Interview Guide – Underwriter Miramar
- Recruitment and Onboarding for Managers Process
- Steadfast Interview Guide – Cultural Fit
- Short Essay Question
- Onboarding email from HR
- STEEPLE generated onboarding email

**Contracts**

- Underwriting Agency Casual Employee Agreement
- Steadfast Claims Solution Employee Agreement

## **Website**

- Corporate Social Responsibility webpage
- About Us webpage
- Online job application process on LinkedIn

## **2. Facilitation of Focus Groups**

Facilitation of focus group by GSA was delivered during the month of October 2022, with participants from a cross-section of the Recruitment and Human Resources team and hiring managers.

Questions asked within these focus groups covered themes including:

- Attitudes and behaviours
- Systems and processes
- Symbols of inclusion

## **3. Report developed with recommendations identified throughout the Desktop Review and the Focus Groups**

## Global Diversity Equity & Inclusion Benchmark

The Global Diversity Equity & Inclusion Benchmark (GDEIB)<sup>1</sup> is an organisational standard of performance and helps organisations to measure and identify against global best practice.

GSA compared the recruitment review of Steadfast against the Global Diversity Equity & Inclusion Benchmark for the area of 'Attract and Retain', specifically focusing on the category of recruitment with a disability inclusion lens. The GDEIB benchmark is broken into five stages:

### Level 1: Inactive

No DEI work has begun; diversity, equity, and inclusion are not part of organizational goals.

### Level 2: Reactive

A compliance-only mindset; Actions are taken primarily to comply with relevant laws and social pressures. Doing the bare minimum.

### Level 3: Proactive

A clear awareness of the value of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI); starting to implement DEI systemically. This is what is required and expected of all organisations.

### Level 4: Progressive

Implementing DEI systemically and showing improved results and outcomes beyond what is required or expected.

### Level 5: Best Practice

Demonstrating current global best practices in DEI; exemplary.

Steadfast has been analysed against the GDEIB tool with a disability lens and is currently aligned with **Level 2: Reactive - A compliance mindset**; actions are taken primarily to comply with relevant laws and social pressures. Level 2 is where the

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<sup>1</sup> See appendix 1

foundations are laid for the progression of the following stages, to create sustainable improvement of disability inclusion across an organisation. This result was reflected by Steadfast employees stating:

*“I think we’ve been in a purely reactionary space...”*

*“When we looked at disability, everyone wants to do more but we don’t have the specialisation skills to know what to do...”*

*“Our focus has been far more in other areas of DE&I”*

*“We’ve got to the point now where we want to see more action”*

## Key Insights

Mainstream recruitment methods are typically not equally accessible and often don't provide an even opportunity for success for candidates with disability. The purpose of this review is to identify where there are areas of good practice and where there are opportunities for increasing the inclusivity of recruitment for people with disability. The key insights outlined in this report are grouped into six stages of the recruitment process. Stages included;

|                 |              |
|-----------------|--------------|
| Planning        | Sourcing     |
| Screening       | Interviewing |
| Decision making | Onboarding   |

Common barriers may fall into systems and processes and a lack of knowledge and experience. In addition, non-inclusive cultures and mindsets that encompass misconceptions and unconscious bias, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours that can be indirectly discriminatory towards people with disability are considered.

Steadfast is making progress by working with Get Skilled Access and focusing on increasing capability and disability inclusion for their recruitment pathways. Key recommendations included in the Steadfast recruitment review can be found below:

- Disability and inclusion training across all levels including management
- Create and implement a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP)
- Create and implement a Workplace Adjustment Policy and processes
- Adding an improved inclusion statement consistently on job advertisements and ensuring the location of the statement is appropriate
- Proactively target candidates with disability by partnering with specialist disability stakeholders and using accessible job platforms to increase talent pool
- Having role models with disability in a diverse range of jobs and across all levels, including leadership positions
- Performing regular reviews on the recruitment process including digital application platforms to ensure they are accessible and inclusive

- Increasing diversity representation on selection panels to include a staff member with disability where possible
- Celebrating diversity initiatives through employee and external channels and increasing celebration of disability
- Reviewing job design and the potential flexibility of roles each time they become available

Steadfast as an organisation is on the way to providing inclusive recruitment processes. While we acknowledge that the HR, Recruitment Team and hiring managers are not responsible for all steps, there is an opportunity for these groups to positively influence the wider workforce to move towards best practice. It is important to acknowledge the work attended so far by the HR, Recruitment Teams and hiring managers and the good intent of the organisation as demonstrated in the following quote:

*“It is something that there is a genuine care and there is a passion about, and I think that does definitely come across”.*

The following insights were designed to identify where there are areas of good practice and where there are opportunities to increase the inclusivity of recruitment for people with disability into the Steadfast workforce. The key areas for opportunity to increase inclusion will support Steadfast into continuing the momentum of moving toward best practice.

## **Overarching Findings**

Steadfast value diversity and inclusion and this is evidenced by their initiatives in the promotion of gender equality through third party initiatives, the development of their Reconciliation Action Plan, participating in the Dive In Festival and partnering with Get Skilled Access to perform a Recruitment Review.

This report highlights opportunities for Steadfast to use as a tool to further embed accessibility and inclusion for people with disability. Recommendations identified throughout the recruitment review have been broken into the five GDEIB benchmark standards and can be found below.

## Planning and Sourcing

Considered planning is integral to the success of a recruitment process. Often, the decisions made during this stage will determine whether a person with disability will be able to participate fairly in the overall recruitment process. The sourcing stage of the recruitment process can often determine whether people with disability will feel attracted to a role and safe from discrimination. During this stage, it's important that Steadfast utilise the signs and symbols of inclusion that people with disability often look for when applying for roles. Recommendations to improve the disability inclusion practices at Steadfast during the planning and sourcing phases can be found below:

### Planning

- It was noted during the focus groups that considerations regarding the flexibility of a role was often based on a rigid and preconceived idea of who could and could not do the role:

*“We probably struggle with the more generic types of talking about flexibility when replacing a role, whether a role can be performed part-time or a job share etc.”*

To ensure the roles will attract people with disability, there is an opportunity each time a role becomes available, to review the role for its flexibility and job design, focusing on the must haves versus the nice to haves. It should be acknowledged that hiring managers may at first require guidance from HR around job design considerations. For example, does the role require a drivers license or would it be an option for the candidate to catch public transport, uber, taxi or use a personal driver? This was highlighted in a focus group where a participant stated:

*“Every single time someone exits the business it’s an opportunity to reassess the needs of that [role]”*

- There is an opportunity for Steadfast to specifically target candidates with disability when a role becomes available. This can be achieved by partnering with specialist disability stakeholders such as Specialist Stern, Jigsaw, Vision Australia and others to increase the employment of people with disability, allowing for role models with disability in a diverse range of jobs and across all levels, particularly leadership positions

## **Sourcing**

Most candidates review advertisements through the lens of ‘will I fit in with this organisation?’. People with disability review advertisements for signs and symbols of inclusion. Research shows that people with disability are less likely to consider themselves as potential candidates if job advertisements do not clearly identify that the organisation is encouraging applications from people with and without disability. Find recommendations below outlining how Steadfast can implement signs and symbols of inclusion in their job advertisements, application forums and on the Steadfast website.

### **Job Advertisements**

- There is an opportunity to expand the talent search and target people with disability by advertising roles on diversity and disability-focused career websites and publications, for example:
  - Disability Employment Australia
  - JobActive
  - The Field

Standard recruiting sites are often not accessible for people with disability, particularly for those who use screen reader technology.

- It is positive that there is an inclusion statement on Steadfast job advertisements. The current statement reads:

*“Steadfast is an equal opportunity employer, we encourage diversity, support charities and environmental initiatives. We encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, and people of all backgrounds to apply. If you need special support or access requirements to the recruitment process in order to equitably participate; or to successfully perform your role, we encourage you to advise us at the time of application. In order to prioritise the safety and wellbeing of our people, our recruitment process may be managed virtually”*

There is an opportunity to increase the impact and success of the statement with the following changes:

- Ensure the statement is included on all job advertisements
- Amend the positioning of the inclusion statement on all job advertisements to be at the top of the job advertisement or towards the beginning rather than at the end
- There is a further opportunity to adjust the wording of the statement to attract more diverse candidates and help them feel confident in Steadfast’s dedication to Diversity and Inclusion. Avoid the charity model of disability and focus on the social model of disability i.e., the person and their skills, recognising that diverse people bring many benefits to the business. Steadfast’s charity work is extremely positive but would be more effective in an About Us section of the job advertisement rather than the inclusion statement. Avoid terms such as special requirements as this can be linked to outdated terms such as special needs.
- If listing one diversity group, ensure to list all diversity groups for example Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, LGBTQIA+, gender, cultural background, disability, religion and age. An example of a successful inclusion statement can be found below:

*“XXXX supports applications from all members of our community and equitable access to our employment opportunities. We are open to discussing workplace flexibility in all our vacancies, to ensure we can attract the best candidates and accommodate individual needs, differences, disabilities and working arrangements, even in ways we have not thought of. Our merit based recruitment practices are founded on building diversity by*

*fostering an inclusive, flexible and equitable workplace”.*

- Ensure that Steadfast job advertisements includes a statement regarding adjustments to the recruitment process. For example, *“Let us know if you require any adjustments to the recruitment process so we can support you to present your best self”*
- When providing contact details in job advertisements ensure Steadfast include two different modes of communication, such as an email address and phone number, allowing greater access for a greater number of people with different access requirements and preferences
- In the vaccination statement located on all job advertisements, ensure Steadfast acknowledges medical exemptions regarding the COVID-19 vaccine. Some people with disability may not, due to medical reasons, be able to receive certain vaccinations

## Job Application

A user experience test was conducted by a Consultant who is blind and uses a screen reader on the job application process at Steadfast. The user was directed from the Steadfast Careers page to login to LinkedIn to view the roles available and to apply. The process was not easy and many barriers were faced as the platform was not entirely accessible to assistive technology. The user found it difficult to click into the job advertisement they were interested in, the buttons they needed to select would not work correctly with the screen reader. It is recommended that Steadfast implement their own application process on the steadfast website with a focus on ease of use and accessibility for all candidates.

- There is an opportunity to take a universal design approach and promote alternative application methods, such as a pre-recorded introduction video in the place of a standard cover letter. This will allow all people, including those with disability, to show their capability and articulate their skillset in their preferred method of communication
- Often, individuals with disability will not consider applying for a role with an organisation if they have found the initial contact has not been accessible. For all candidates to feel comfortable and confident in discussing their ability

to fulfil the role, the first experience must be inclusive. Given this, ensure there is a section on the job application form for candidates to request their adjustments via a direct contact number or email address. Consider stating *“Let us know if you require any adjustments to the recruitment process so we can support you to present your best self”*

- Ensure all elements of the application process are accessible. Information on the website, application platform, internal career pages and content must be accessible and adhere to the WCAG 2.1 guidelines. Examples of accessible content can be found below:
  - Creating easy to read documentation in both PDF and word formats (rich text format) such that they can be accessed by adaptive technology
  - Using a minimum 12- point font size on all written content
  - Using accessible fonts such as Arial, Veranda, Sans Serif
  - Ensuring images are accompanied by an alternative text description
  - Confirming videos are provided with synchronised captions and audio description
  - Providing a job advertisements digital accessibility checklist

## Website

- An organisations website is often the first point of contact for a potential candidate. The information, images and design of the website starts to form a person’s opinion of the organisation and their inclusivity.
- Steadfast’s About Us page provides plain English information on a visually appropriate background and was easy to navigate with a screen reader
- The invitation for candidates to contact Steadfast, regardless of role availabilities, is a successful sign of inclusion. There is an opportunity to provide an alternate method of communication in addition to the careers email such as a phone number. This enables people who have alternate access requirements or preferences to also be able to express their interest in a role at Steadfast. It is also recommended that any contact details provided are hyperlinked for ease of access with assistive technology

- The Careers page is successful and provides clear information about working at Steadfast and the range of business units encompassed within the organisation. A user experience test was conducted by a Consultant who is blind using Apple voice over screen reader technology. The page was easy to navigate and the user was able to access all of the information
- There is an opportunity to add a section on the Careers page regarding Steadfast's commitment to inclusive and diverse recruitment. The information should include a genuine personalised inclusion statement and can discuss what Steadfast are doing in each space to increase diversity in the workplace (Similar to the Corporate Social Responsibility page on the Steadfast website). In terms of disability inclusion, examples can include participation in the Dive In Festival, partnering with disability stakeholders for employment initiatives, links to Disability Inclusion Action Plans, diversity strategies etc. There is also an opportunity to have authentic images of diverse people including people with disability working at Steadfast as a visual representation of inclusion on the website and social media. Ensure when images are added they have alt. text – a description of the image which is embedded to ensure the image is accessible for screen reader users
- Story sharing can be utilised as a sign and symbol of inclusion. Consider including stories from Steadfast employees on the Careers page, including employees with disability
- The Corporate Social Responsibility webpage on the Steadfast website highlights Steadfast's values and culture of diversity and emphasises the organisation's Reconciliation Action Plan. There is an opportunity to develop and implement a Disability Inclusion Action Plan to strengthen the organisations commitment to people with disability, diversity and inclusion and provide tangible steps for employees at Steadfast to follow
- There is an opportunity to include disability specific information within the Corporate Social Responsibility page

## Screening and Interviewing

The aim of screening is to identify eligible candidates with the skills and experience that meet the role requirements. Misconceptions and unconscious bias play a key role during the screening stage of recruitment. In order to remove unconscious bias, it is imperative that recruitment staff and hiring managers have adequate disability inclusion training where these biases can be challenged and myths can be busted. It can also assist staff to feel more confident discussing disability and adjustments with potential candidates. Recommendations to implement further signs of inclusion during the screening and interviewing stages can be found below:

### Screening

- It is important to ensure that the Recruitment and Onboarding Process identifies the need to provide two methods of contact to applicants such as a phone number and email address
- Ensure the Recruitment and Onboarding Process highlights the requirement for a statement regarding workplace adjustments and diversity inclusion. Additionally, ensure a workplace adjustments statement is included on the interview invitation, on the successful candidate's job offer and in onboarding communications, allowing for an accessible and inclusive recruitment process. Hiring managers should also be encouraged to discuss workplace adjustments and access needs during face-to-face onboarding
- Ensure the Process Overview document refers to relevant policies including the Recruitment and Selection Policy and the Interview Guides
- Ensure all hiring managers are aware of policies relevant to the hiring process as well as any guides, checklists, policies and procedures available for them to use
- It was highlighted during the focus groups that it is common practice for hiring managers to call potential candidates and discuss the role prior to providing an invitation to an interview. Hiring managers should be mindful that phone calls may not be accessible for a person with disability (such as a person who is deaf, hard of hearing or has limited verbal communication) and be flexible in their communication methods when needed

## Interviewing

- Be flexible with the interview process. Ensure that the candidate's interview invitation includes an opportunity to request adjustments. Interview adjustments may include an Auslan interpreter, an accessible interview room/location or providing interview questions in advance
- Communication matters. Candidates with disability may require you to adjust the way you communicate with them during an interview, for example;
  - If a candidate has a support worker or accessibility provider such as an Auslan interpreter, always communicate directly to the candidate
  - A candidate who is non-verbal may communicate using technology, be patient for their response
  - Avoid using idioms like *"take a chair"* as candidates with autism will often take the literal meaning and pick up the chair. Instead ask *"would you like to sit down?"*
  - If you would like to know what the best way to communicate with a candidate with disability, ask in a genuine way. They will be best placed to explain what they need
- Hiring managers should undergo disability inclusion training to increase their confidence regarding topics such as disability disclosure, flexible interview techniques, reasonable adjustments and how to support a person with disability onboard into the organisation
- Consider organising meetings between hiring managers to talk about their experiences and transfer knowledge regarding what support is available to employees who are conducting interviews. This will continue ongoing organisational change in the hiring process with candidates with disability
- The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Round Interview Guides provide thoughtful strategies to ensure the process is comfortable for the candidate. Greeting the candidate and easing them into the interview using relaxed conversation topics as well as explaining the interview process and structure are all signs and symbols of inclusion. Ensure hiring managers are aware of the Interview Guides to support them throughout the hiring process

- Remove unnecessary, complex language and implement plain English when asking interview questions
- When interviewing candidates, avoid idioms such as *“Describe a time when your time schedule was upset”* or *“this role will deal with multiple tight deadlines while running with day-to-day tasks”*, as this may cause confusion for candidates who are neurodiverse
- Consider adding a statement in the Interview Guide reminding hiring managers that they should be prepared to ask questions in a different way. For questions such as *“Can you describe a time when your time schedule was upset by unforeseen circumstances? What did you do? What was the outcome?”* This may need to be asked in a different way to be clear for the candidate. Consider *“Can you tell me about a time when you had your day planned but something happened so you had to change your plans at the last minute? What did you do? What was the outcome?”*
- Consider creating an Interview Adjustment Guide which could include a list of reasonable interview adjustments such as alternative formats, a support person, access to a walkthrough of the interview room etc. This guide should be created in collaboration with Steadfast staff with disability and hiring managers

*“There’s still a long way to go on that journey of considering lesser knowns parts of flexibility”*

- When organising graduate interviews, be mindful that some people with disability may not be best suited to video interviews and that the video platform being used may not be accessible for assistive technology. Ensure flexibility is demonstrated where possible and graduate adjustments are considered for the interview process
- Graduates with disability may require adjustments to meet the requirements of the short essay question/behavioural assessment. Adjustments may include use of a screen reader, additional time, the option to type the answer rather than hand write, the option to use spellcheck, the option to verbally answer the question and more. Candidates should be offered the opportunity to request

adjustments well in advance of their assessment. When considering whether the adjustment is reasonable, identify the inherent requirements of the role and decide whether changing the mode of question completion will contravene them

- There is an opportunity to provide recruitment surveys for all candidates that have interviewed for a role at Steadfast, regardless of whether they were successful or not in attaining the role. This will help to identify areas that are successful within the recruitment process and areas for improvement. Within the survey, include questions regarding the inclusivity and accessibility of the recruitment process. Potential questions can include:
  - Did you experience any barriers in the application and hiring process?
  - What supports could Steadfast have provided during the recruitment process?
  - In your experience, what improvements can be made to application and hiring process at Steadfast?
  - What additional information/communications would have simplified your candidate experience?

Note that some candidates may not identify as having a disability but may have accessibility needs or general feedback to provide. Ensure survey options do not limit feedback from these participants.

## **Decision Making and Onboarding**

The decision-making process is often a point of reflection for both hiring managers and candidates. Each step of the recruitment process to this point will determine whether the candidate has the opportunity to be considered on a fair and equal basis. Additionally, it will determine whether the candidate feels that Steadfast is a safe and inclusive place to work. It's important when hiring managers are considering a candidate for a role, that they consider the person first and not their disability. If the candidate can meet the inherent requirements of the role, then Steadfast staff must ensure they are considered on the same basis as candidates without disability. When considering onboarding, it is important that hiring managers follow a consistent and universal approach to ensure every new starter is provided with the same opportunity for success. Recommendations to further improve

disability inclusion in the decision making and onboarding stages can be found below:

### Decision Making

- Through the focus groups it was identified that many Steadfast employees are enthusiastic and keen to expand on their knowledge of disability inclusion. It is strongly recommended that disability inclusion training and unconscious bias training is completed by members of the selection panel, hiring managers, leaders and the HR and Recruitment Team
- Ensure there is more than one person involved in decision making processes where possible

### Employment Offer

- It was noted on some Steadfast contracts that it states, *“employees must attend the office during standard hours of work except where required to perform their role, duties and obligations at other locations as reasonably required”*. This information contradicts the Working From Home Policy and may cause an unnecessary barrier for a person with disability who has been offered a role at Steadfast. It is recommended that this statement is reviewed to allow for the potential to work from home where appropriate (refer to the Steadfast Claims Solutions Employment Agreement and Other Agencies Casual Contract)
- Communications that are sent out with the contract should include information about the process to request workplace adjustments for the onboarding stage and beyond. Restate your inclusion statement and consider adding the following, *“Let us know if you require any adjustments to the onboarding stage and beyond so we can support you to present your best self to work from day one”*

### Onboarding

- It was identified in the focus groups that staff would benefit from an onboarding guideline/checklist. There is an opportunity to include disability inclusion reminders in this checklist to ensure practices are not missed

- Ensure new candidates are referred to relevant policies as soon as possible. Candidates may look to policies to identify workplace adjustment and access processes if not yet comfortable discussing this with their new Manager
- Discussions regarding workplace adjustments should continue throughout the onboarding stage. Ideally, adjustments should be identified and implemented in time for the new starters first day of work
- The onboarding and welcome emails are an opportunity to include information regarding workplace adjustments to ensure the new starter has the greatest opportunity for success from day one
- In the onboarding email, there is an opportunity to include additional information and features of the working location that can support new employees to feel comfortable and confident for day one. This may include clear and detailed information regarding accessibility parking, accessible entrances, accessible public transport options and where to meet in the morning
- It is imperative that the virtual onboarding training site meets the most recent WCAG standards, ensuring information is accessible for all people. This includes turning on captioning as standard practice and ensuring all digital communications are accessible using a screen reader. It is recommended that this training as well as all other relevant digital recruitment processes such as the HR Employee Self-Service Portal be reviewed for accessibility under the WCAG standards
- Ensure two modes of communication are provided on the STEEPLE onboarding email
- During the focus groups, it was identified that hiring managers would benefit from support regarding the implementation of reasonable adjustments in the organisation. It's therefore important that Steadfast continue working on creating systems and processes to ensure that all workplace adjustments identified in the recruitment process are integrated into a Workplace Adjustment Policy and are socialised throughout the organisation

## **Steadfast Policy Review**

Several policies and guidelines were provided for review. General recommendations can be found below:

- Develop and implement a stand-alone Workplace Adjustment Policy, separate to the Workplace Health and Safety Policy
- Consider where policies are located and whether they are easily accessed and can be viewed by people using assistive technologies (e.g., screen readers)
- Use plain English and avoid jargon, complex words or legislative language where possible
- Consider having a Word or HTML version of policies as accessibility issues can arise with some PDF formats when accessed by assistive technology
- Consider having Easy Read or Easy English versions of policies available to all staff

## **Recruitment and Selection Policy**

The Steadfast Recruitment and Selection Policy is a comprehensive policy that clearly defines each stage of the recruitment process. While there is a strong emphasis on equality and diversity, there is an opportunity to identify more specific actions to improve the accessibility and inclusion of people with disability during the recruitment process. In particular, there is a need to have a greater focus regarding reasonable workplace adjustments. Additional opportunities to improve the policy from a disability inclusion lens have been identified below:

- Ensure the policy is located where it is easy to find for all employees. If the policy is located online, ensure its location and the policy itself is accessible to screen reader technology
- Forums such as LinkedIn and Seek may not be fully accessible for people using screen reader technology. Provide alternative methods of applying as part of the policy. These include the opportunity to send an application in via an email address or posting advertisements on accessible job platforms such as The

## Field

- It is recommended that platforms identified within the policy (i.e., Steeple) are assessed to ensure they meet the most up to date WCAG standards, avoiding unintentional barriers for candidates with disability
- Consider a policy directive that all selection panel members must undertake unconscious bias, misconception and disability awareness training
- Where possible, ensure that the policy encourages the interview panel to be representative of people with disability
- There is an opportunity to add a direction in the policy stating that Steadfast will proactively seek to ensure that all candidates are asked about access requirements and offered reasonable adjustment to ensure they can participate in all stages of the recruitment process. Candidates should be asked about their adjustment needs at application, interview and onboarding phases. It should be noted that it generally takes three interactions with an organisation before a person feels comfortable disclosing their disability and/or adjustment requirements, therefore asking about adjustments at all phases of the recruitment process is key to creating the safety required for a candidate to ask for what they need
- Consider the development of a specific Workplace Adjustment Policy outlining Steadfast's commitment to making adjustments for candidates and employees and the process to follow. It is then recommended this policy is referred to in the Recruitment and Selection policy
- It is strongly recommended that the policy highlights the need for all advertisements to include a consistent equal opportunity/diversity and inclusion statement
- Ensure the formal letter of offer is accessible for people who are blind or have low vision. Accessible formats include digital versions such as Microsoft Word or Google Doc, large print or braille
- Ensure the policy highlights that the formal letter of offer should include a section regarding workplace adjustments
- Consider a policy directive that includes the provision of information regarding relevant policies, workplace adjustments and disability inclusion activity at

onboarding

- Consider a policy directive that ensures accessibility and disability inclusion at Steadfast is highlighted on the careers page and kept up to date. This allows all candidates to make an informed decision and provides an opportunity to highlight the benefits of working at Steadfast
- For all applicants to demonstrate their best self throughout the application process, consider a policy directive supporting multiple methods of application such as written resumes or a video application where appropriate for the role
- To ensure unconscious bias or barriers are not impacting the opportunities for people with disability at Steadfast, consider allowing all people with disability who meet the requirements of the role to attend an interview. If approved, consider the language and impacts of the 'Right person right role' paragraph within the policy
- Consider the inclusion of a requirement that Recruitment Agencies used must have experience with candidates with disability to ensure people with disability are provided equal and fair opportunity should a role be filled through a recruitment agency

## **Respect Policy**

The Respect Policy successfully identified the need to treat people equally, however, outdated language is present. It is recommended that outdated terms such as *"impairment"* is removed from all Steadfast policies to reflect the social model of disability.

## **Diversity Policy**

The presence of a diversity policy is a successful symbol of inclusion. When listing groups at high risk of discrimination, ensure it captures as many groups as possible to avoid exclusion.

- Currently the Respect policy states, *"Steadfast aims to provide opportunities that allow individuals to reach their full potential, irrespective of an individual's ethnic or cultural background or gender"* and *"At Steadfast, diversity of gender and*

*background are two important criteria for our Board and Senior Executive positions". It is recommended that people with disability and other marginalised groups are included in these statements*

- It is recommended that Steadfast highlight the organisation's commitment to inclusion through the use of workplace adjustments. Additionally, it's important to emphasise that it is unlawful to discriminate against a person who may require reasonable workplace adjustments.

### **Workplace Health and Safety Policy**

The Workplace Health and Safety Policy provides clear direction about how to report a potential hazard. There is an opportunity to enhance accessibility by ensuring two methods of communication (such as phone and email) are available to staff who wish to identify possible hazards.

### **Working From Home Policy**

- When referring to working from home considerations, ensure a process has been provided regarding workplace adjustments.
- Whenever Steadfast is providing contact details in a policy, ensure two modes of communication are provided such as an email address and phone number.
- Some people with disability may be unable to attend all exercises within the policy. Consider adding a statement acknowledging this.

## Appendix

### The Global Diversity Equity & Inclusion Benchmarks

The Global Diversity Equity & Inclusion Benchmark<sup>2</sup> is an organisational standard of performance and helps organisations to measure and identify against global best practice. The recruitment review of Steadfast has been marked against the leading practice of Global Diversity Equity & Inclusion Benchmarks for the area of 'Attract and Retain', specifically focusing on the category of recruitment.

The GDEIB provides some thoughts on the stepping-stones to move organisations toward best practice, by setting organisation short and long-term goals to meet Global Diversity Equity and Inclusion standards.

The framework for recruitment 'best practice' is divided into five levels, which indicates the level of progress from 'level 1: Inactive' to 'level 5: Best practice'.

|                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Stage One: Inactive<br>No inclusion work has begun; the culture of inclusion is not part of the organisation's goals.       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There is no effort to recruit employees from underrepresented groups</li><li>• Other than a short statement that the organisation has an equal opportunity or similar policy, there is no mention of DEI in the organisations recruitment practices</li></ul> |
| Stage Two: Reactive<br>A compliance mindset; actions are taken primarily to comply with relevant laws and social pressures. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Recruitment is based primarily on representation to meet numerical goals or targets.</li><li>• Recruitment practices do not include sourcing diverse</li></ul>                                                                                                |

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<sup>2</sup> Source (The Global Diversity Equity & Inclusion Benchmarks: Standards for organisations around the world. Powered by the Centre for Global Inclusion 2021 Edition

|                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                              | <p>candidates from underrepresented groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviewers do not consider how people from different cultures and backgrounds may respond to interview questions and methods.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <p>Stage Three: Proactive</p> <p>A clear awareness of the value of inclusion in recruitment; starting to implement systemically.</p>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviewers conduct culturally competent interviews</li> <li>• Staff are hired for their competence and their ability to bring diverse perspectives to the work and not only because they are from an underrepresented identity group</li> <li>• The organisation's advertisements and/or diversity networks reach broad pools of diverse talent</li> <li>• External search firms are selected based in part on their expertise in diversity recruiting</li> </ul> |
| <p>Stage Four: Progressive</p> <p>Implementing an inclusive culture via recruitment systemically; showing improved results and outcomes.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organisation effectively recruits from representative labour markets</li> <li>• Recruitment includes advertising on DEI-focused websites and in a variety of other media</li> <li>• Recruitment and selection panels are diverse and knowledgeable about recruiting</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                  |

|                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                  | processes and in mitigating biases                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <p>Stage Five: Best Practice</p> <p>Demonstrating current best practices inclusion globally.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The organisations attraction and hiring processes result in measurable, transparent, and equitable recruitment.</li> <li>• The organisations reputation for quality DEI efforts enhances its ability to attract diverse and underrepresented employees.</li> <li>• When technological solutions are used for recruitment, the organisation implements practices to minimize or remove algorithmic bias</li> <li>• The organisation conducts regular evaluations of recruiting practices to ensure that candidates from different groups and identities are given equitable opportunities</li> <li>• There are clear measures of success throughout the recruitment process, such as the percentage of diverse and underrepresented applicants at each stage</li> </ul> |