Transforming the Language of Exclusion and Bias in Recruitment:

A Quick-Reference Guide

1.
Engage prospective candidates directly by using more informal language. This reduces power and social distance and is more likely to appeal to under-represented groups.

2.
Engage in informed and reflective use of pronouns, e.g., use 'we' for the organisation and 'you' to address the candidate, so prospective employees can mentally envisage themselves working for your organisation.

3.
Avoid labels and metaphorical phrases that subconsciously profile particular types of candidate, e.g., those that invoke gendered or racialised stereotypes, such as "a real hunter", "a master".

4.
Avoid simply including a single sentence of diversity & inclusion content at the very end of adverts. Instead, embed diversity and inclusion content at various points throughout your adverts to show a genuine organisational commitment.

5.
Statements of legal compliance
Definition: Statements that give legal obligations which need to be included according to a country's employment law.

Ensure that you use more than just a statement of legal compliance in your adverts.

Move statements of legal compliance higher in the advert text to highlight your organisation's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

6.
Statements of affiliation
Definition: Statements in job adverts that align the organisation to a diversity award, charter or similar.

Expand on your statements of affiliation. As well as including these statements, directly acknowledge that diversity leads to more productive, profitable and healthy workplace environments.

7.
Statements of expectation
Definition: Statements in your job adverts which shows an explicit commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion as a core part of the job role.

Make candidates aware of the expectation that being a trailblazer for diversity and inclusion in your workplace will be a key part of their role.

8.
Statements of encouragement
Definition: Statements in your job adverts which explicitly highlight diversity gaps in your workforce and encourage those candidates to apply.

Make sure you use statements of encouragement to specifically target the diversity gap that you are trying to fill and directly encourage these candidates to apply.

9.
When describing your organisation's culture, ensure you give an accurate representation of current practices and culture, along with where you strive to be in future.

10.
Use figurative language carefully and reflectively – avoid phrases such as "put the boot on the neck of the marketing world" to prevent indirectly perpetuating dominant sex-role stereotypes for individual roles.

11.
Be clear – avoid vague language. Give candidates the best chance of knowing exactly what you are looking for.

12.
Be realistic – avoid the use of hyperbole. Under-represented candidates are less likely to apply if job descriptions are over-exaggerated.