



Institutional policy for diversity and inclusion

Promising Practice

Implemented by: Instituto Profesional INACAP

Where: Chile

Status: Launched in March 2021

Summary: The policy promotes a culture of diversity and inclusion at INACAP and establishes institutional guidelines, procedures and initiatives that promote the management of diversity, encouraging the articulation and collaborative work between the Head Office in Santiago and the 28 campuses nationwide.

Overview

INACAP is a Chilean non-profit higher education institution with about

90,000 students at

28 campuses within the

16 regions of the country.

Its focus is Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), and it offers two- and four-year programmes in different areas of study.

Description

In 2019, INACAP began a new strategic planning process for the following five-year period, establishing its commitment to guarantee diversity and inclusion (D&I) at all levels, which is in line with the provisions of the TVET Strategy of the Chilean Ministry of Education. To guarantee D&I, in 2021 INACAP developed its Diversity and Inclusion Policy through a participative process that involved the entire educational community, along with an Action Plan for its implementation. In addition, the Diversity and Inclusion Committee was established, and integrated with key organizational representative departments.

Developing the diversity and inclusion policy

To develop the policy, the following activities were coordinated:

- Diagnosis of diversity and inclusion for staff;
- Study on the inclusion of students with disabilities;
- Review of institutional documents;
- Self-diagnosis for different departments;
- Interviews and focus groups with all internal stakeholders; and
- Awareness talks that reached over 1,100 participants.

Setting objectives and an action plan

The planning process set the following objectives and action plan for 2022:

- Launch an institutional D&I Policy to guide and strengthen a culture of diversity and inclusion at INACAP;
- Start developing access, permanence and academic support mechanisms that respect and welcome diversity;

- Implement human resources processes with an inclusive and diverse focus;
- Establish a periodic identification and measurement system for these groups at INACAP;
- Incorporate this theme and contents as part of the comprehensive training that students receive and as part of the induction and annual training received by staff;
- Prepare leaders in inclusive leadership and management of diverse teams; and
- Communicate the diversity and inclusion policy among the INACAP community.

Objectives

The objectives of the initiative, which targets INACAP students and staff, are to:

- Have an institutional D&I policy to promote the cultural change necessary to embrace diversity and inclusion;
- Create access, admission and academic support mechanisms, and strengthen the internal capacity to identify and address D&I among students and staff; and
- Develop short, medium and long-term plans to implement the policy and provide the required support for people belonging to special protection groups.

Incorporating an inclusive vision and approach enriches the institutional mission and vision, providing a new perspective and ways of addressing academic and corporate issues. It enhances processes, making them more efficient, comprehensive and adjusted to the needs of students and staff.

Aligning with the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the UNESCO Strategy for TVET 2022-2029

Diversity and inclusion are directly linked to the concept of social sustainability, since these promote opportunities for all, both in the present and in the future. Today, the legal approach with which disability is addressed requires providing a quality inclusive education. Nevertheless, social sustainability is beyond any legal requirement. Hence, INACAP is committed to providing a quality inclusive education, and setting in their sustainability policy the goal to contribute to the construction of a diverse and inclusive society at a local and national level. Consequently, the progress of D&I in INACAP is aligned to the objectives of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the UNESCO Strategy for TVET 2022-2029. INACAP is one of the institutions leading the implementation of D&I in Chile.

Outcomes and impact

The expected outcomes of the initiative are:

- Established institutional guidelines, instructions and procedures for D&I, academic regulations with an inclusive focus, and other actions that allow the implementation of the policy;
- Positive impact on the quality education students receive and on their employment opportunities;
- At least 50% of the INACAP community with general knowledge and awareness about D&I;
- At least 50% of the teachers and academic support staff members qualified in D&I to better fulfil their functions and contribute to strengthening the support required by students; and
- Strengthened internal capacities and linkages to create an inclusive and diverse culture with the required support in all areas.

The initiative has the following main impacts:

- Establish an institutional strategy that guides the management of D&I at INACAP;
- Generate the internal expertise and structures, both locally and nationally, to address D&I in TVET and at work; and
- Have an inclusive admission and access process for students and timely recognition of those who need support in their academic progression and emotional well-being.

Online training session for staff

Beneficios de la inclusión

1 Mayor innovación

2 Aumento de valor para los accionistas

3 Mejora de la productividad

4 Acceso al ecosistema de proveedores

5 Mejora en la participación de mercado

6 Mejora de la marca y visibilidad

Fuente: Accenture Research, 2020

14 de 43

Challenges

Lacking knowledge and understanding of diversity and inclusion

One of the challenges was the lack of institutional knowledge on diversity and inclusion and a long-term vision to measure the great nationwide impact that it implies for INACAP to embrace it. This was addressed by collecting existing good practices at a national level and creating instances to share them and encourage the connection between specific areas and the people required to strengthen them.

Inappropriate organizational structure

Another challenge was the absence of an organizational structure to address the initiative beyond the central level. This was tackled by defining new roles and responsibilities in existing areas and positions (i.e. Student Affairs, Human Resources, etc.) that filled specific functions to address D&I.

Resisting cultural change

Another challenge was resistance among some members of staff to open up to the required cultural change and new ways of working and building diverse teams. INACAP designed a training programme consisting of workshops and talks for all the community on different subjects related to diversity and inclusion.

Insights

This initiative has been a gradual and participative process involving all internal stakeholders with their different views and perspectives. Furthermore, the policy has been developed under the guidance of an expert entity, which also took into consideration INACAP's organizational culture.

Next steps

This initiative is part of INACAP's strategic plan for 2020-2025. Hence, this phase is just the start of a wider and longer-term plan which includes the development and transfer of the strategy to all employees and the consolidation of procedures at all levels of the organization that promote and strengthen a culture of diversity and inclusion.

Learn more

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