



ERG LEADERSHIP HANDBOOK



COMPANY	TIAA
OPPORTUNITY	Elevate D&I to the next level by creating a forum for collaboration across ERGs.
SOLUTION	Establish a think tank mechanism led and staffed by ERG members to capitalize on diverse perspectives to problem solve.
RESULTS	TIAA's Incubator has a base of 170 members with six discrete Incubators in operation, each simultaneously working on different projects.

When TIAA held its annual ERG Summit in 2015, the company's CEO, Roger Ferguson, commended the accomplishments of the company's eight ERGs. He also challenged the group to come up with new ways to infuse D&I into the business of the company. The leadership team of TIAA's military veterans ERG took up the challenge and conceptualized the idea for a D&I Incubator, essentially a think tank which would harness the diversity of TIAA's workforce to innovate and problem solve. The innovative startup had strong leadership support from the onset, gaining buy-in from the executive leadership team early on. Less than one year after conceptualization, the TIAA Incubator was up and running.

Today, when a business area within TIAA is faced with a challenge, they can formally engage the TIAA Incubator membership to problem-solve and develop solutions. Projects run the spectrum of scope and scale, from simple business problems to complex enterprise-wide, multi-year challenges. Because ERG members from diverse backgrounds with different perspectives and experiences lead and staff the Incubator, the likelihood of overcoming 'groupthink' to develop truly innovative solutions is high.

Solutions that have derived from the Incubator have consistently helped to differentiate TIAA

and provide the company with a competitive advantage in the marketplace. Today, senior leaders, TIAA's corporate strategy team, and managers throughout the organization regularly leverage the unit to develop new products and solve business challenges.

How it Works

A leadership council, including representation from each of TIAA's eight ERGs, spearheads and manages the TIAA Incubator. Initially, one member from each of the ERGs served on the leadership council, but as the Incubator gained momentum and matured, the council was expanded to include representation from other areas of the company: TIAA Bank, Nuveen and TIAA India. Additionally, a head of communications role was built out to better communicate with TIAA executives, champions, TIAA membership, and internal business partners. The leadership council is rounded out with five project managers to oversee team assignments and project activities.

Members of the leadership council spend approximately ten hours per quarter on Incubator projects and initiatives. This leadership team is refreshed annually, ensuring the group continues to tap into new perspectives. This also gives additional high-performing ERG members the unique opportunity to

develop leadership skills and experience.

The Incubator maintains a dedicated website, which is a wealth of knowledge on how the process works, which projects are in the works, and guidance for completing the necessary forms for submitting projects for consideration. Most projects are submitted to the Incubator from mid- to senior-level managers. Once a project is submitted, the leadership council conducts a discovery call with the submitting business unit to discuss the project and assess whether it is a good fit. If the decision is made to move forward, the leadership council will assign a team to work on the project.

The work of the Incubator is staffed by a cross-section of ERG members. In its first year of operation, 150 ERG members worked on five Incubator projects. This initial pool of members was selected on a first-come basis, with space reserved equally for each of the eight ERGs. In year three, the leadership council took a more intentional approach to staffing the Incubator. An invitation was sent to all TIAA employees - 650 employees responded and applied to join the team. Drawing from that pool, the leadership council intelligently constructed a diverse and robust membership team, taking into account factors including diversity, ERG affinity, skill sets, and tenure with TIAA.

Employees work on Incubator projects on a volunteer basis, contributing approximately four to eight hours per quarter, depending on the scope of the project. However, full-time responsibilities take priority, and members must obtain the approval of their manager.

Staffing of the Incubator is also refreshed annually to bring in new perspectives and provide opportunities for additional employees to get involved and make an impact. Although participation in the Incubator is not a formal part of the employee performance review process, managers often come to the leadership council for feedback on employees.

Core Principles

- Leverage diversity to solve business problems
- Serve as a catalyst for innovation across the enterprise - not a cost center
- Create a hub of diverse, innovative, and driven top-performing employees
- Empower employees and managers to innovate and problem-solve
- Increase visibility, exposure and collaboration between senior leaders and ERG
- Create a forum to expose managers to talent outside their business unit
- Demonstrate the capability of ERGs to drive real business results
- Break down silos and empower leadership to tap talent across the enterprise

The Incubator has proven to be a powerful talent-development tool and effective mechanism for developing the next generation of TIAA leadership. Participating in the Incubator provides ERG members with stretch assignments, opportunities to develop new skills sets, a forum to innovate and problem-solve, and increased visibility with senior leaders. ERG members serving on the Incubator's leadership council develop the experience and skills sets needed to be an effective leader, have exposure to senior executives outside their business areas, and are empowered to have an impact on the business and the future of the company.

The TIAA Incubator has a base of 170 members and currently is working through six unique projects from across the enterprise. The Incubator isn't the sole source of innovation in TIAA, but rather another catalyst exemplifying the organization's ongoing commitment to leverage diversity in new and unique ways to create better client experiences and empower the workforce.

Sample Incubator Projects

- Pilot tested a new on-line banking system to improve the system's interface and effectiveness before it went live.
- More than 100 Incubator members assessed the annual employee benefits package to ensure benefits were inclusive and met the different perspectives and lifestyles needs of TIAA's employee base.
- Helped develop and test employee training modules to increase employees' understanding of TIAA's most sophisticated products so they are better able to explain those products to customers.
- Provided input to development of a sophisticated IRA product before going to market to ensure the product was a good fit with different consumer groups.
- Created innovative solutions to drive efficiency and deliver better client experiences.