


8 WAYS INCLUDING EVERYONE BUILDS A STRONGER CUPE

Diversity and inclusion are the backbone of an anti-racist, united CUPE. A union that prioritizes diversity welcomes, respects and values the identities, backgrounds and experiences of current and potential members. An inclusive union treats workers equitably, listens to all members and creates a physically and psychologically safe environment. Inclusion in CUPE means ensuring that Indigenous, Black and racialized members are part of decision making.

There are many positive outcomes and lasting impacts of making sure Indigenous, Black and racialized workers are well represented on local executives and elsewhere in our union and workplaces. Diversity and inclusion also mean welcoming 2SLGBTQI+ people, women and people with disabilities, and recognizing members' different and intersecting identities.

Making inclusion a priority has significant benefits for CUPE members, our union and our communities. Here are 8 ways inclusion builds a stronger CUPE:

- 1. We reflect the members and communities we serve.** Indigenous, Black and racialized union leaders are effective advocates because they understand the experiences and needs of members like them. Members see the relevance of the union when they see themselves reflected in the leadership and are more likely to get involved. Workers with a range of cultural insights and lived experiences are better able to serve members of the community.
- 2. We walk the talk.** Local collective agreements, bylaws, and CUPE's Code of Conduct commit to inclusion and to fighting discrimination, racism, xenophobia, sexism, ableism, transphobia and homophobia. Building an inclusive union means we are putting our words into action.
- 3. We strengthen union solidarity.** When CUPE members unite to challenge discrimination and racism, we build our strength and courage to make other gains. We can't have solidarity and a strong union when some members are excluded. Our shared solidarity helps build a more connected, coordinated and powerful union.
- 4. We make better decisions.** When everyone's voice is heard, it leads to more creativity and better decision making. Learning from each other's diversity broadens our understanding and improves problem solving for bargaining, grievances and other workplace challenges.

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- 5. We benefit from healthier workplaces and happier workers.** Inclusion builds a culture in our union where members of all abilities and identities can participate and thrive. Members feel valued and have a stronger sense of belonging and commitment. This can motivate them to fight for equity and inclusion in their workplaces. Inclusive workplaces have increased staff retention, better worker engagement and higher job satisfaction and morale.
 - 6. We expand our pool of leaders and activists.** Promoting inclusion invites more people to participate in our union. This widens the range of leadership skills, expertise and lived experiences we can draw on. It helps share the work and reduce burnout, making our work more sustainable for everyone. When more members get involved, it expands the activism and diverse perspectives that strengthen and grow our locals and the entire union.
 - 7. We fight economic injustice.** Indigenous, Black and racialized workers are often stuck in precarious jobs despite their education, skills, and experience. There is no economic justice without racial justice. When we welcome and involve more Indigenous, Black and racialized members, we increase our strength at the bargaining table and our capacity to organize new members. This leads to better job security, pay equity, and better wages and benefits for Indigenous, Black and racialized members.
 - 8. We unite against hate and the far right.** Far-right politicians and organized hate groups fuel division and stir up fear with racist, anti-immigrant, anti-2SLGBTQI+ and sexist rhetoric and action - especially in times like an economic crisis. Unions have always led the fight against hate and the far right. Building a more inclusive and diverse union means working in solidarity with those most affected by hate and the far right. It also means creating space for workers who are Indigenous, Black, racialized, women, 2SLGBTQI+ and people with disabilities to lead the fight.

Diversity and inclusion have many benefits for our union, workplaces, communities and daily lives. When we increase the representation and participation of Indigenous, Black and racialized members in CUPE and courageously resist hate, we build greater solidarity and strengthen our union. Learn more in this Canadian Anti-Hate Network primer: antihate.school/ideologies_recruitment.

When Indigenous, Black and racialized members get together to connect, support each other, and organize, it strengthens our union.

Every member has a role to play in building an anti-racist CUPE. Check out the other tip sheets in this toolkit and learn more about how you can get involved in our union's Anti-Racism Strategy: cupe.ca/antiracism.