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**INCLUSIVITY AND THE
ROLE OF THE BUILD
ENVIRONMENT**

WHITEPAPER

PREFACE

This white paper is about the role of inclusivity in the built environment and our approach to making buildings, spaces, and facilities more suitable for all the people who use them.

After two years of research, we see that the built environment has a profound impact on how people feel. Research shows that an environment that facilitates multiple needs and gives employees options about where to work so it best suits them at that moment increases job satisfaction and productivity. Therefore a good work environment meets personal needs in the field of concentration, creativity, social gathering, and interaction. In practice, however, an increasingly large group of employees has much less freedom of choice than you might think or want. There is much room for improvement here.

With this white paper, we want to introduce you to the concept of inclusion, offer new insights, and provide tools for dialogue in the workplace. We know that the topic of inclusiveness is sometimes sensitive. Our mission is to bring organizations along in their search for supported solutions. Enter Here does not take a position, but provides a good and inclusive process that gives concrete tools to take action.

Happy reading,

Daan Schipper and Marco Sotthewes

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01 INCLUSION EXPLAINED

Our society is becoming increasingly diverse in age, gender, ethnicity, beliefs, physical and mental condition, and family composition, as well as in opportunities and dreams for the future. The last part of this sentence contains the essence of inclusion: as many equal opportunities as possible for all.

WHAT IS INCLUSION?

A commonly used definition of inclusion is, “The practice or policy of providing equal access to opportunities and resources to people who would otherwise be excluded or marginalized, such as people with physical or mental disabilities or who belong to other minority groups. “In addition, you often hear inclusion along with other terms, which we briefly list.

→ DIVERSITY

Diversity means that many individuals are different from each other. These differences can occur on a variety of topics. So you can also be similar on some themes, but feel completely different at the same time. If you work for the same company, that is a common denominator, but you can otherwise be different on many fronts.

→ EQUALITY

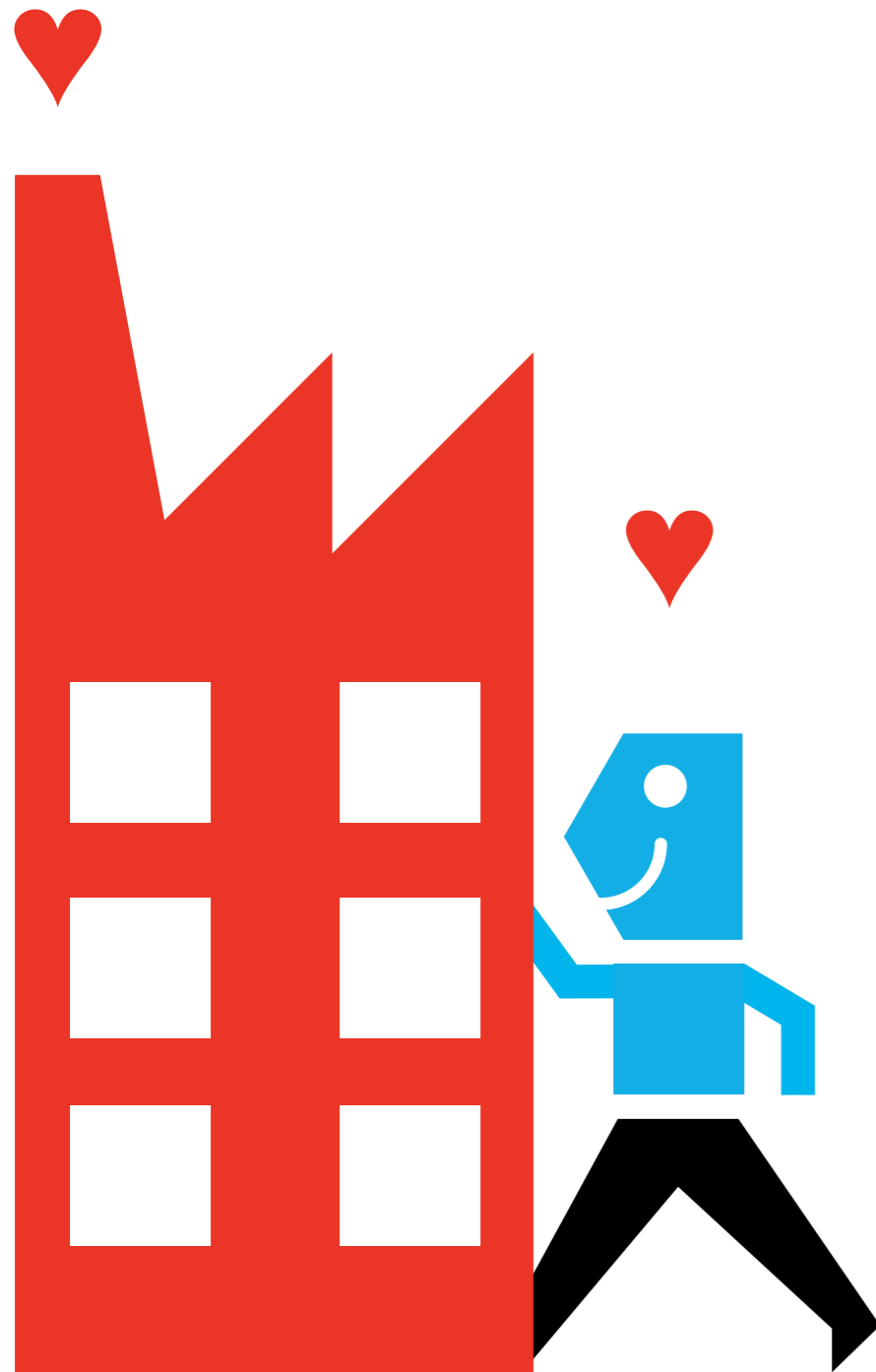
It means that everyone can participate fully and have access to equal opportunities. Each person is unique, but everyone’s contribution is of equal or equally great value.

→ EXCLUSION

The existence of a homogeneous group based on a particular theme or characteristic, from which other groups or individuals are excluded. Inclusiveness is the opposite of this and always gives everyone equal space to freely form a heterogeneous group.

→ ACCESSIBILITY

The degree to which space, place, or facility can be used by each in their specific way.



FOR **WHOM** IS INCLUSION IMPORTANT?

The 2013 UN Convention on Disability ratified by the Netherlands in 2016 states that not a small group of people in our society belong to a minority for their entire lives, but a majority of people belong to a minority for part of their lives. Therefore, inclusiveness and accessibility are relevant to almost everyone. The UN Convention focuses primarily on people with physical disabilities. Yet when it was introduced, there were strong calls for this principle to be applied as diversely as possible. This includes including mental and chronic illnesses, as well as being mindful of other groups in society with enforced disadvantages, such as people from different cultural backgrounds.

WHAT IS AN **INCLUSIVE BUILD ENVIRONMENT**?

An inclusive environment meets the personal needs of as many people as possible. Inclusiveness is defined by accessibility and choice.

We all know of places or spaces that are accessible or usable by some and less so by others. How easy can someone with limited vision cross a busy square? How does someone in a wheelchair enter a town hall? Accessibility does not stop at a ramp and a disabled toilet. If you work on the eleventh floor and always have to take the wheelchair in the elevator to the first floor for the disabled toilet, that's a big barrier.

Not every environment provides opportunities for people to make the choices that suit them. Does the company restaurant offer options for someone who eats vegetarian or halal? Is the office also open after 5 p.m. and on Christian holidays? Times, when people are productive, are increasingly diverse. The physical environment requires diversity to increase the freedom of choice for people. If that freedom of choice is absent or limited, it quickly becomes counterproductive.

¹https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBV0004045/2016-07-14#Verdrag_2

02 FROM INCLUSION TO BETTER COMPANY RESULTS

We see an increasing amount of organizations that recognize the importance of inclusiveness but do not yet follow through on it. They find it complex, see it as a fad and, last but not least, it costs money. It is often under-reported that it also greatly benefits organizations. An inclusive work environment leads to greater work happiness - and therefore higher productivity, more innovation, and lower turnover.



INCLUSION LEADS TO GREATER **WORK HAPPINESS**

Work happiness is more than a soccer table and Friday afternoon drinks. Work happiness, argues Professor Guy van Liemt, is about the deep and lasting life satisfaction that people derive from their work. Three universal innate psychological basic needs largely determine how well we feel and how well we function. Fulfilling these basic needs is important for all people, regardless of whether we are aware of their importance or what work situation we are in. They are the basis for our continued psychological growth.

² The theory discibing these psychological basic needs is called *Basic Psychological Needs Theory (BPNT)*.



AUTONOMY

The need to be able to choose what you do for yourself, to be able to stand behind what you do, and to do what you find interesting or important.



COMPETENCY

The need to feel effective and capable and become better at the activities we engage in, in the life that is important to us.



CONNECTION

The need to feel connected to others, to belong somewhere, to feel that others care about you, and to be able to mean something to others.



“HAPPY EMPLOYEES PAY DIVIDENDS. NOT ONLY BECAUSE THEY ARE LESS LIKELY TO BE SICK OR LESS LIKELY TO SUFFER BURNOUT. BUT ALSO BECAUSE THEY TEND TO BE MORE PRODUCTIVE, MORE LOYAL, MORE CREATIVE, AND MORE ENGAGED. **WORK HAPPINESS** IS, IN SHORT, THE HOLY GRAIL FOR ORGANIZATIONS AND MANAGERS.”

Jannet Vaessen van Women Inc.

Some people experience less job happiness because the work environment does not sufficiently match their personal needs. In doing so, companies miss opportunities to get the most out of their human resources.

INCLUSION LEADS TO MORE **INNOVATION**

Inclusion creates more pluralism. These differences allow employees to look at problems and opportunities in new ways, keeping each other on their toes. This leads to better ideas and ultimately more innovation. The numbers also show this. Organizations that invest in gender equality and ethnic diversity realize up to 33% more profit. And boards with great diversity are more open to innovation

9%

of Dutch employees come to work inspired.³

78%

of Dutch employees believe that investing in job satisfaction is crucial to increase the productivity of employees.⁴

12%

more productivity among employees who are happy in their work.⁵

³ <http://denieuwedraai.nl/guy-van-liemt-over-het-rendement-van-geluk/>

⁴ <https://www.hrpraktijk.nl/topics/duurzame-inzetbaarheid/nieuws/werkgeluk-een-voorwaarde-gevolg-van-productiviteit>

⁵ <https://www.centraalbeheer.nl/zakelijk/blog/5-tips-voor-duurzaam-gelukkige-medewerkers#:~:text=Uit%20onderzoek%20is%20gebleken%20dat,dit%20afdoet%20aan%20de%20kwaliteit.>

03 THE ROLE OF FACILITY MANAGEMENT AND REAL ESTATE

“We are understaffed,” “the energy crisis is already costing money,” “half the office is empty because the others work from home”: there are plenty of reasons why inclusion is not yet finding its way into the boardroom. There is, in short, no room for “one more theme” which requires attention time, and money. The essence of inclusion and diversity is not that it has to fight for attention and priority, but rather that it is a common thread that you can weave through all the other pressing themes. The work environment does not become more expensive through inclusion,

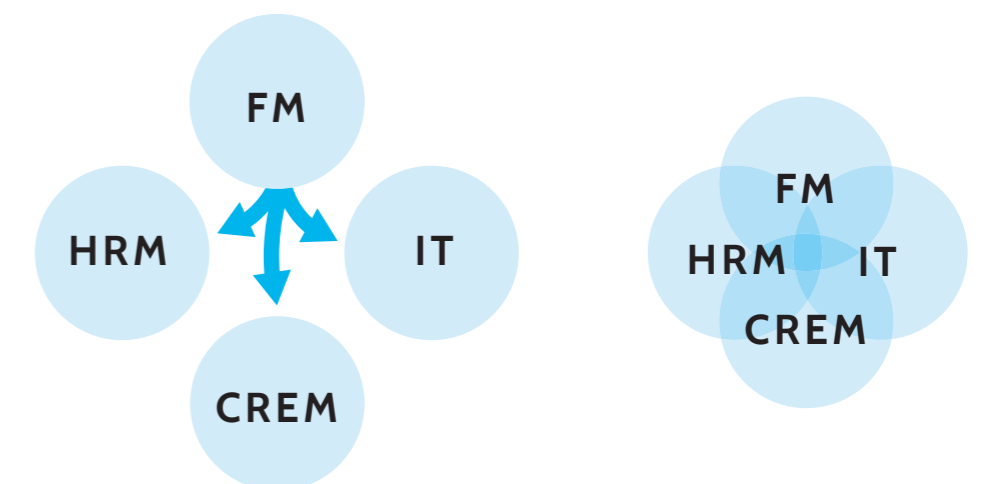
HOW OUR WORKENVIRONMENT IS CHANGING

How we work and what we ask of our work environment have changed greatly in recent decades. The corona pandemic accelerated innovation in the work environment. It is not the team, activities, or work domain that determines the environment and facilities, but the people themselves and their needs. This goes beyond the exemplary table tennis table as a meeting place. These can now be considered more of a gimmick. As is the idea that everyone feels a stronger bond with their team after a barbecue. One person likes to sit in a dynamic environment surrounded by colleagues, while another likes to find concentration in tranquility.

If recognizing and acknowledging someone else's ideal world were easy, many ideal environments would coexist by now. Instead, most offices look the same. Acknowledging that one-sidedness is the first step in shaping an inclusive work environment. Offering choices that people other than yourself appreciate becomes the big task facing all office managers. Inclusive work environments, we believe, are created by asking others what is needed. Have an eye for people who cannot always be captured in personas and profiles. Look beyond "the complaints" about office chairs, noise, and light in the workplace. Engage with people who are not being heard and listen to them.

THE ROLE OF FACILITY MANAGEMENT IN IMPROVING INCLUSION

Within business, Facility Management is usually the hub around which all forms of hospitality are organized. We know from experience that FMs are mostly doers and go-getters. By default, they often determine for themselves what the future needs of the people they serve will be. In this regard, feasibility and affordability are important issues. We also see that the larger a company or institution is, the more likely FM is an independent business unit with a low degree of integrated planning with the other parts. Inclusion requires a high degree of integral working.



04 GETTING STARTED WITH INCLUSIVENESS

In the previous chapters, we explained that inclusiveness is an important and hot topic for all organizations. Working on inclusiveness is not something you do alone, but with the entire organization. But where and how do you start?

THE SEVEN BASIC SPATIAL CONDITIONS THAT MAKE AN OFFICE OR BUILDING INCLUSIVE

Enter Here defines seven basic spatial conditions that make an office or building inclusive



1
ACCESSIBLE
BUILDING

2
FRIENDLY
BUILDING

3
CONTEMPORARY
BUILDING

4
PLEASING TO
THE SENSES

5
PERSONAL
ADAPTABLE

6
BEING PRESENT
IS A CHOICE

7
CLEAR
EXPECTATIONS

THE STATUTORY LOWER LIMIT

The OHSA The Occupational Health and Safety Act requires companies to take measures to reduce safety risks to employees. The Occupational Health and Safety Act prescribes goals. How to achieve them is left to (market) parties.

The building code The Building Code is an AMvB (Order in Council) in which, according to the Housing Act, building regulations are included in the areas of safety, health, usability, and energy efficiency.

The Accessibility Handbook (formerly Commanded Access) is the standard work for accessible construction and design and contains everything about the ergonomics of urban design, buildings, and homes. You can think about movement space, lighting, air quality, and bridging height differences, among other things. The handbook also pays attention to the most important quality marks and certificates.

NEN 1814. This standard provides requirements for generally applicable measures that meet the accessibility needs of people with personal aids, such as a wheelchair or cane, but also a baby carriage or a suitcase. The standard intends to be applied to outdoor spaces, homes, and buildings.

Enter Here sees in WELL building and B-Corps the best qualifiers to make inclusion practically serviceable.

OWN COMMITMENT TO SUPPORTING WORKERS

ITS. The International Accessibility Symbol. A protected emblem for public buildings and other facilities that are reachable, accessible, and usable by people with disabilities without third-party assistance.

WELL Building. WELL is a performance-based system for measuring, certifying, and monitoring characteristics of the built environment that affect human health and well-being: air, water, food, light, movement, thermal comfort, sound, materials, spirit, and community.

BREEAM-NL is the certification method for a sustainable built environment. This method allows projects to be assessed for integral sustainability. The Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method is used in more than eighty countries worldwide.

LEED is the international sustainability label that rates structures worldwide on five environmental themes: sustainable location; efficient use of water, energy, and atmosphere; materials and resources; and indoor environmental quality.

B-Corps. Certified B Corps are companies that meet the highest standards of verified social and environmental performance, public transparency, and legal accountability to balance profit and purpose. B Corps accelerate a global culture shift to redefine success in business and build a more inclusive and sustainable economy.

WHAT CAN YOU DO NOW?

An important lesson we learned in recent years was that problem blindness always causes the underestimation of reports. Even among designated agencies and confidants, this form of professional deformation lurks. The ability to qualify another's problem depends largely on the empathy of the professional. We must assume good intentions on this subject, but also unintentional inability.

So our first piece of advice is: go ask them. Men cannot tell how women would feel comfortable. White people can't feel what people of color are going through, and straight people are limited in all kinds of assessments about the LGBTQIP2SAA community (not to mention matters of faith). So this goes far beyond just groups of people with physical or mental illnesses or disabilities.

Our second piece of advice follows this: the purpose of an advisory committee is not merely to advise, but to interview and allow an opinion to emerge internally. With that, every challenge has become a dialogue and we can think about real innovation.

WHOM DO WE ADDRESS?

To make inclusiveness a physical quality you look for the decision-makers, but also the implementers. You want to innovate with designers and ambassadors of different groups of employees. First and foremost, you want inclusiveness policies secured and felt at the heart of the company. That means management has included it in the central mission statement. Perhaps the organization has already started working on it and has gained experience in accepting this way of working together.



→ BOARD/BOD

Responsible for the long-term vision of innovation. Executives should thereby create time and space to listen to views and vulnerabilities.

→ HRM

Responsible for enticing people to come and stay with excellent working conditions. The Physical Environment is part of this. HRM has an agenda-setting role in this.

→ FM

Responsible for high service levels and all-encompassing hospitality. This requires a shift from thinking about profiles and activities to people and their real needs.

→ DEVELOPER

Responsible for high service levels and all-encompassing hospitality. This requires a shift from thinking about profiles and activities to people and their real needs.

→ ARCHITECT

Responsible for designing buildings that meet both minimum and partially maximum client requirements.

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