



CECP Media Contact:

Katie Leasor

kleasor@cecp.co

CECP and Steelcase Study Finds Over Half of Leading Companies Dedicate Resources on Disability Inclusion in Workplace, Yet Few Disclose Disability Workplace Data

61% of surveyed companies indicate having an Employee Resource Group focused on disability inclusion, but only 3% disclose disability workforce data publicly

NEW YORK, October 2, 2023 – New [research](#) from Chief Executives for Corporate Purpose® (CECP), supported by Steelcase, Inc., about disability inclusion in the workplace finds leading companies are becoming proactive and moving beyond compliance to strategic integration and dedicated resources in their policies, practices, and culture around disability inclusion and workplace design.

The disability inclusion in the workplace report is for leaders in corporate social responsibility (CSR); diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI); and across functions and business units, to provide valuable data and actionable best practices spotlighting disability inclusion in the workplace, which is defined as where and when work happens.

The employment rate among people with a disability has reached a historic high. And while that fact is certainly noteworthy, several key differences in employment among people with and without a disability persist, for example, people with a disability are more than twice as likely to work part-time or be unemployed.

“Progress toward equity and disability inclusion requires coordinated efforts that address structures, relationships, and mindsets,” said Leah Battin, Senior Associate Manager, CECP. “The collaboration required to fight discrimination and foster inclusion is not possible without trusting, respectful relationships. Companies can establish, implement, and uphold strong structural foundations to foster deeper relationships, and potentially, transformative change.”

Leading companies are being transparent on progress and listening to their employees to learn what they need and designing and investing around that feedback.”

“We engage with community partners to learn from each other, grow together and uncover opportunities for impact throughout the world,” said Kim Dabbs, vice president of ESG and social innovation for Steelcase. “We’re thankful to partner with CECP on this research and share the progress made to help all people feel included in the workplace and also learn how we can continue to do better.



CECP research finds leading companies are removing barriers for persons with disabilities in their businesses by allocating additional resources and launching more inclusive considerations for the physical working environment and hybrid work models. Key findings of the report include:

- Mature companies take a holistic approach to disability inclusion:
 - An April 2023 CECP Pulse Survey that asked participants to describe their companies' maturity in disability inclusion in the workplace found **two-thirds describe their maturity as intermediate or advanced**, meaning inclusion is **proactively and holistically embedded in the company's culture, championed by senior leadership, and aligned with business priorities**.
 - The same study surveyed respondents about the primary ways that their company advances diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the workplace for people with disabilities. Sponsoring **employee resource groups (ERGs)** or business resource groups (BRGs) focused on people with disabilities is the leading method, the next mechanism is to engage workforce development organizations (WDOs) serving people with disabilities, whether through grantmaking or partnering for talent acquisition. Fewer companies cite disclosure of EEO-1 data on employees with disabilities as their primary mechanism.
- ERGs are mentioned often in a companies' public communications and reports, but few mention disability inclusion data:
 - In website and public reports of 218 CECP-affiliated companies, 61% indicate having an ERG focused on disability inclusion, slightly trailing veteran/military ERGs, which 63% of companies mention.
 - As more and more public companies share information about the percentage of women and people of color in roles at all levels of the organization and its board, **far fewer disclose disability workforce data; only 3% of CECP-affiliated companies do so**.
- Neurodiversity warrants more attention and accommodations:
 - Neurodiversity has gained traction and awareness among the public in recent years, but **only 2% of CECP-affiliated companies mention neurodiversity on their websites**. These companies are solely in the **health care, financial, and technology** industries, which may view neurodiversity as salient to their workforce, customers, and products.
- Inclusive design and environments benefit all:
 - Most companies included in the [2022 Disability Equality Index](#) require all U.S.-based locations to be accessible and usable by all people. **However, more than half (58%) of those in the index report that they are only starting to explore innovative inclusive design opportunities, while 33% still need to start. For example, those exploring inclusive design realize that it's not about equality (giving everyone the same thing), but rather equity to ensure everyone's individual needs are met.**
 - A CECP Pulse Survey in May 2023 found the primary elements of workplace design were **design of the office/built environment and providing or funding**



accommodations for remote work environments consistent with those provided on-site.

The insights from this report were drawn from CECP reviewed field research and resources pertaining to corporate disability inclusion in partnership with companies; CECP Pulse Surveys to its corporate coalition; employment data; annual surveys by disability inclusion coalitions and nonprofit organizations; and the websites and public reports of CECP-affiliated companies to determine the prevalence of employee resource groups (ERGs) and communication approaches related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).

CECP provides the tools, resources, and support to take inclusivity in the workplace to the next level. Building from our unrivaled benchmark, *[Giving in Numbers™](#)*, and supported by insights and best practices, CECP equips CEOs and leaders to advance their goals, measures, scorecards, and strategies to generate positive impact locally, nationally, and globally.

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About Chief Executives for Corporate Purpose (CECP)

Chief Executives for Corporate Purpose® (CECP) is a trusted advisor to companies on their corporate purpose journeys to build long-term sustainable value and tell their impact stories. Working with CEOs and leaders in corporate responsibility, sustainability, foundations, investor relations, finance, legal, and communications, CECP shares actionable insights with its CEO-led coalition.

Founded in 1999 by actor and philanthropist Paul Newman and other business leaders, CECP is a movement of more than 225 of the world's largest companies that represent \$7.7 trillion in revenues, \$37.4 billion in total community investment, 14 million employees, 22.5 million hours of employee engagement, and \$21 trillion in assets under management. CECP helps companies transform their strategy by providing research, benchmarking, strategy, communications, and convening in the areas of societal/community investment, employee engagement, environmental social governance/sustainable business, diversity equity inclusion, and telling the story. For more information, visit <http://cecp.co>.

About Steelcase

Established in 1912, Steelcase is a global design and thought leader in the world of work. We help people do their best work by creating places that work better. Along with more than 35 creative and technology partner brands, we design and manufacture innovative furnishings and solutions for the many places where work happens — including learning, health and work from home. Our solutions come to life through our community of expert Steelcase dealers in approximately 770 locations, as well as our online Steelcase store and other retail partners. Founded in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Steelcase is a publicly traded company with fiscal year 2023 revenue of \$3.2 billion. With our 12,000 global employees and dealer community, we come together for people and the planet — using our business to help the world work better.