

Chic Geek Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commitment

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1. *Chic Geek Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commitment*

Chic Geek exists to build gender diversity in technology. We support women to have ownership over their career trajectory because this will have a bold and beneficial impact on the future and the tech that defines it.

We are brave, relentless in our curiosity, focused on peer elevation, candid and connected while purposely conscious about putting community first. That's why diversity, equity, and inclusion isn't just a policy for us; it's a practice that we strive for in everything we do. It's a commitment to you, to us and to everyone we connect with.

Chic Geek is proactively committed to:

- Creating connection-centric and community-focused environments where everyone feels safe, heard and valued. We strive to create digital and physical spaces of belonging with room for diverse life experiences, attributes and contributions are valued. So come on in, we'll put the kettle on. Chic Geek is your space to thrive.
- Seeking out and consciously confronting inequality and disadvantage, both in our internal environment and the world in which we operate. Chic Geek aims to build and retain a diverse community — made up of staff, volunteers, board members, contractors, and partners, reflect the societies in which we operate and who are committed to furthering our organizational mission.

There's room for everyone at our table and we want you to be comfortable here. Through these commitments, Chic Geek aims to prevent behaviours that might lead to unfair discrimination, less favourable treatment, or harassment, in our role as an employer or elsewhere in our operations.

These commitments are created in line with the legislative requirements outlined in the Alberta Human Rights Act and the Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Act. While fully compliant with this legislation, we view it as a bare minimum for our behaviour and operations. More information on this legislation is outlined in **Section 7**. As a dynamic organization, Chic Geek is constantly moving, morphing and improving. This DEI practice is a starting point and it will change and continue improving as we grow.

We acknowledge that DEI work is a growing spectrum of work and culture; please note DEI should also include Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB). To provide feedback or suggestions, please email our founder and Executive Director directly: kylie@thechicgeek.ca

2. *Scope of this Commitment*

Chic Geek is a community first organization. This document outlines our commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, including workplace harassment, violence, and discrimination. It applies to all aspects of employment and operations of our organization; including conduct and behaviour, terms and conditions of employment, as well as recruitment, selection, and promotion processes.

These expectations of behaviour apply to all employees, volunteers, board members, contractors, suppliers or other individuals or groups associated with Chic Geek, while engaged in activities relating to the workplace.

In this context, ‘workplace’ is defined broadly and includes, but is not limited to, the actual work site (i.e. offices), work related social functions, work-related assignments, conferences, training sessions and travel, and other work-related events.

Definitions of terms referred to in this document can be found in **Section 7**.

3. *Implementation*

This document has been created with thoughtfulness and careful intent. It's not just another dusty procedure manual that sits on the shelf, unopened and unused. It's fully supported by Chic Geek's Executive Director and Board of Directors. We're strong believers in idea execution and believe the true value of a DEI commitment is in the way it comes to life in our everyday operations. This DEI Practice is a working log of the ways we will translate this commitment into action.

The first step to bring it to life is to share it. This helps make our intention clear and keeps us accountable to our community. The DEI Practice will be shared in the following ways:

- **Internally** - i.e. to all staff, volunteers, and contractors - so that they are aware of their roles and responsibilities under this policy. For any new hires, this document will be circulated at the time of making an offer of engagement and will be visited as part of the induction and orientation process.
- **Externally** - i.e. to partners and other external stakeholders - so that they are aware of our commitment to treating them fairly, and of their obligation to act in accordance with both the relevant legislation and in line with this policy.

- **To other All and users of our services, and those who take part in our activities** - who will be informed that Chic Geek upholds a Diversity Equity and Inclusion Commitment, which is made available on our website.

At Chic Geek, we don't celebrate perfection. We celebrate progress. We'll be adding to this list and growing our actions in this commitment. The deets around who's responsible for what are outlined in **Section 5**.

4. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Commitments

4.1. Living by our Values: Conduct and Behaviour

Chic Geek creates an inclusive, open-communication space by operating on its four core values. These values shape our conduct and behaviour, creating a culture of inclusivity and belonging! We expect staff, volunteers, directors, corporate partners, community members and service providers to share our values.

BRAVE EXPLORATION: We step outside of our comfort zones and take bold risks. We refuse to let fear stand in our way and we don't shy away from tough conversations. We are resourceful and exploratory in our approach.

RELENTLESS CURIOSITY: We are inquisitive question askers, and we are always learning something new. Whether it's professionally or personally, we're constantly educating ourselves and evolving from our discoveries. We are lifelong students with a never-ending thirst for knowledge. The more we learn, the more we realize we don't know; and trust us, that's a good thing.

PEER ELEVATION: At Chic Geek, we believe that platforms are meant to be shared. We're always here with a helping hand, and we're not afraid to ask for one either. We are multigenerational and intergenerational in our approach because we believe that networks work best when we enthusiastically help each other get to the next level. We learn from our predecessors and vice versa. Need a boost over that obstacle? We've got you.

CANDID + CONNECTED RELATIONSHIPS: We create meaningful, intentional, and impactful relationships with other wonderful humans. We know that to do this requires a deep connection to self, and that fostering this connection creates space for self compassion, discovery and understanding. We promote honesty and integrity when

sharing our experiences and we don't sugarcoat our narratives. We aren't passive in our approach. Nothing is whitewashed in our world, we're the real deal. And you can take that to the bank, sister.

4.2. *Building our Team: Recruitment and Selection*

At Chic Geek, we strive to build diverse teams because it helps us build better products, find more innovative solutions and simply because it's the right thing to do. By implementing recruitment and selection practices that create a fair process, we actively seek to break through barriers to employment that may be experienced by job seekers.

We recruit and retain team members (staff, volunteers, board members) based on merit, competence, and alignment with Chic Geek's organizational mission, values and traits. We commit to the following practices in the recruitment and hiring process:

- All permanent positions at Chic Geek will be advertised both internally and externally.
- Recruitment marketing will refer to Chic Geek's commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and a copy of this policy will be made available to job applicants.
- Where possible, salary information will be included on job descriptions.
- Job descriptions for permanent roles will include a job description, outlining the key duties of the role, and a person specification containing the essential and desirable skills, competencies, attributes, experience, and education required.
- The format and questions for job interviews will be agreed before it takes place and will remain constant for all interviews for the position.
- Selection decisions will be made on the basis of objective criteria (i.e. the aforementioned skills, competencies, attributes, experience and education required for the role). Wherever possible, selection decisions will be made by more than one person.
- Chic Geek will take a proactive approach to accommodation in the recruitment and selection process. Prospective employees who are invited to interview will be asked ahead of time if they require reasonable adaptations to the interview process.
- We believe flexible work supports our lives better. Positions which are deemed suitable will be advertised as flexible working.

All those involved in the recruitment and selection process will be made aware of the DEI Practice.

4.3. *Supporting our People: Onboarding, Training and Development*

Chic Geek will provide or arrange orientation and training to all new employees and volunteers, to ensure that all newcomers to Chic Geek are fully onboarded with their duties and work environment and best positioned for success in their role. This orientation will be appropriate to the position and will include training on this policy.

We know there's not a one-size fits all parameter for onboarding. Everyone of us is a unique being! So we all need to show up, be present, participate and engage while listening and problem solving together. During onboarding we share our experiences, we adapt and we move forward and upwards. Onboarding should serve to exemplify that we are a safe space to feel heard and valued.

Training and orientation is not the only important aspect of onboarding at Chic Geek. We value Peer Elevation. That means we're here to lend a helping hand and we're not afraid to ask for one either. We are here to help you succeed and also open to learning from you. That is the core to development.

4.4. *Equal Pay: Compensation*

Chic Geek strongly supports equal pay and believes in the importance of equal pay for work of equal value. We are committed to equitable salaries throughout the organization, that recognise the value of the training, experience and education required by each role, and the scope of responsibility undertaken by each role.

We believe that monetary compensation is just one important piece of the puzzle for individuals. To feel truly compensated means to feel valued and heard and we approach salaries from a perspective of total compensation.

4.5. *Seen and Recognized: Approach to Performance and Promotions*

Chic Geek seeks to offer all staff and volunteers full opportunity to develop their potential. We recognize that, with a relatively small and flat organizational structure, opportunities for 'vertical' promotion are limited. Chic Geek therefore encourages staff to seek new challenges in areas where they feel they can make a positive contribution and will support all employees in developing their skills and experience, where this development is also in support of Chic Geek's organizational vision and mission.

Promotion decisions will be made on the basis of merit and competence.

Staff may request an informal performance review from the Executive Director to discuss their performance (on a frequency of no more than twice per year). Staff are also encouraged to give and request feedback from their colleagues at any time to aid their own learning and development. Feedback should be given with courage, compassion and kindness and align with the respectful and inclusive principles outlined in this policy. Feedback is core to how we operate because we don't celebrate perfectionism; we celebrate progress.

4.6. *Flexible Work: Working Schedules*

Part-time and fixed-term employees are treated the same as comparable full-time or permanent employees and enjoy no less favourable terms and conditions (on a pro-rata basis where appropriate) unless different treatment is justified.

We're a remote-first organization and requests for flexible working will be supported whenever possible. Requests for flexible working which are related to a protected ground should be made via the accommodation process, as outlined in Section 3.7, below.

While job descriptions may take on the need to create a reporting structure for efficiency; at Chic Geek we regard every member of the team as an equal part of our community. Strict hierarchies and status structures are not our jam, everyone has a seat at the table in our home and a voice worth listening to.

4.7. *You can Sit at Our Table: Workplace Accommodations Procedure*

Chic Geek commits to providing accommodation, for needs related to the protected grounds outlined in the Alberta Human Rights Act, for prospective and current staff, contractors, and volunteers.

Accommodation may take many forms, and what works for one individual may not work for another. Each situation will be individually assessed, and those requesting an accommodation should be prepared to discuss their specific requirements with the Executive Director. Further information that may be required as part of this process includes the protected ground with respect to which accommodation is being requested

- i) the reason why accommodation is required, including enough information to confirm the existence of a need for accommodation and
- ii) the specific needs related to the protected ground.

Every effort will be made to make reasonable accommodations unless to do so would cause undue hardship to Chic Geek.

4.8. *Collaboration with External Partners and Suppliers*

Chic Geek seeks to build relationships with organizations that are aligned with our internal values, and who are committed to furthering our organizational mission. When entering a relationship with external partners, Chic Geek will share a copy of both this policy and the Code of Conduct, with the expectation that all parties abide by the behaviours outlined in these documents.

When working with external suppliers, wherever possible Chic Geek will aim to identify small and minority owned businesses to obtain goods and services from unless doing so would cause undue hardship to Chic Geek. This is part of being conscious and thoughtful, and we do our best to always put our community first.

We are warm and personal with our partners, there's room for everyone at our table and we know you'll be comfortable here. Inclusivity is not only our practice, it's our proclamation.

5. *Community Code of Conduct*

Chic Geek exists to create a welcoming, supportive community where women working in technology can achieve thriving careers. Let's work together to make everyone feel welcome. In a nutshell, be respectful, inclusive and aware of your words and reactions. Be kind about what you say to others and work hard not to make anyone feel uncomfortable. Gentlemen geeks, allies and all gender identities are welcome here.

5.1. *Chic Geek Membership Expectations*

Members ("members" includes volunteers, sponsors, partner organizations, board members, and event attendees) of the Chic Geek community agree to uphold the code of conduct while participating in community activities including: events, meetings, social gatherings, seminars, and other Chic Geek endorsed projects.

Members are considered ambassadors of Chic Geek and are expected to conduct themselves in the highest regard and in a manner that will bring credit to the community.

Failure to comply with the aforementioned will be reviewable by the Executive Director and may result in the suspension or expulsion of Chic Geek activities and/or community.

5.2. Code of Conduct

Chic Geek community members are expected to:

1. Conduct themselves with honesty and integrity
2. Be courteous, encouraging and welcoming to all community members
3. Demonstrate consideration and respect for individuals
4. Adhere to all applicable policies and regulations of the Chic Geek community
5. Not violate any local, provincial, federal or other applicable laws
6. Verbal, physical, or other behaviour (including cyber-activities) constituting bullying, harassment, or abuse will not be tolerated

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEI) is commonly defined as a commitment to increasing:

Diversity (including race and ethnicity, gender and gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, language, culture, national origin, religious commitments, age, (dis)ability status and political perspective)

Equity, a commit to working actively to challenge and respond to biases, harassment and discrimination

Inclusion, tangible effort to make welcome and heard differing perspectives respectfully and make every individual feels a sense of Belonging.

We know that companies and organizations who embrace DEI have better results all around. Let's bridge the gap between theory and implementation and together, make DEI more accessible to earlier stage companies of all sizes.

Chic Geek strives to create a culture of feedback, where everyone feels like they have a space to share their perspectives, ideas and lived experiences. If an incident occurs in our community, please refer to Section 6 for reporting guidelines.

5.3. *Roles and Responsibilities*

CHIC GEEK'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS RESPONSIBILITY IS TO:

- Own and monitor the implementation of this commitment
- Act as DEI role models and champions
- Exemplify Chic Geek values and character

CHIC GEEK'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S RESPONSIBILITY IS TO:

- Take responsibility for delivery of this commitment, by creating and delivering initiatives that translate this document into positive action. This may include building specific actions into team and individual goals, which further these aims.
- Ensure that both internal staff and volunteers and external stakeholders are aware of their responsibilities as outlined in this section, and the applicable legislation.
- Provide strong leadership on inclusion, diversity, and equity, including being a role model and champion for inclusive behaviours.
- Set up effective systems to ensure that impact is continuously evaluated and improved.
- Provide staff training and development opportunities relating to equity, diversity, and inclusion, to build awareness and ensure compliance with this policy.
- Engage consciously with all stakeholders to exemplify Chic Geek values and set course for candid and connected relationships throughout the organization.
- Investigate and deal promptly with allegations of harassment or discrimination, in line with the process outlined in Section 6 of this policy.

CHIC GEEK'S STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO:

- Work in harmony and good faith with this commitment - i.e. treat others with dignity and respect, and without discrimination.
- Contribute to creating a respectful, inclusive, and open environment that values difference.
- Express opinions constructively with sensitivity and respect, and in line with this document and Chic Geek's Code of Conduct.
- Report allegations of harassment or discrimination that they experience or witness, in line with the process outlined in Section 6 of this document.
- Help identify discriminatory practices or procedures and bring these to the attention of the Executive Director.
- Attend staff training and development events where requested.
- Take an active mindset in committing to be warm and personal with all stakeholders. Community building and nurturing is always paramount in our minds.

CHIC GEEK PARTNERS AND EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO:

- Operate within the requirements of the applicable legislation, the terms of this DEI Practice, and Chic Geek's code of conduct.

6. Complaints - Reporting and Investigation Procedure

Chic Geek takes its responsibility seriously to investigate any allegation of discrimination or harassment, and to take appropriate action to stop these actions or behaviours. This document serves as a preventative measure, in its intent to raise awareness and compliance with expected behaviours. However, should an allegation be raised Chic Geek is committed to dealing with it in a fair, consistent, and expeditious way.

6.1. Reporting Procedures

- If staff, volunteers, or other parties, find examples of discrimination in Chic Geek policies and procedures, these should be brought to the attention of the Executive Director, who shall review the concern, and consult with the Board of Directors where appropriate, in order to come to a resolution.
- Where a minor breach of this commitment has occurred, and only where the subject feels comfortable to do so, Chic Geek encourages transparent dialogue and discussion between the parties concerned, in order to resolve the issue informally where possible.
- Should a more serious breach of this commitment occur (for example harassment, violence or acts of discrimination), and/or where the party concerned does not feel comfortable raising this directly, and/or where such attempts have been unsuccessful, the incident should be reported to the Executive Director. This report can either be verbal or in writing. The report should provide as much information as possible, such as: the names of people involved, witnesses, where the events occurred, when they occurred, and what behaviour and/or words led to the complaint. The report should also include any supporting documents, such as emails, handwritten notes, or photographs or other physical evidence.

Should the complaint relate to the Executive Director, this report should be made to the Chair of the Board of Directors.

6.2. Investigation Procedures

Chic Geek is a people first organization and we understand that every individual and situation is unique. If an issue arises, Chic Geek will ensure that an investigation appropriate in the circumstances is conducted when any incident or complaint has been reported under this reporting procedure. This investigation will be completed in a timely manner (within 90 days, barring any extenuating circumstances) and may include interviews with the alleged harasser/discriminator, who will be made aware of the allegations and given an opportunity to respond, and any witnesses.

The Executive Director will determine who will conduct the investigation. If the Executive Director is the respondent, the Chair of the Board of Directors will appoint someone to investigate the complaint. Depending on the allegations and the people involved, the investigation may be referred to an external investigator to conduct an impartial investigation.

We are non-judgmental and make no assumptions about what may constitute the need to take action. Our door is open and we're here to discuss implementation and challenges at any time.

6.3. Resolution Process

Should Chic Geek determine that a breach of this commitment has taken place, corrective action will be taken to prevent a recurrence.

Chic Geek will act to ensure that any improper conduct ceases immediately, and corrective action is taken to prevent a recurrence. Serious cases of deliberate harassment or discrimination may amount to gross misconduct resulting in dismissal without notice.

Staff affected by an incident of harassment or violence in the workplace will be offered support, which will include paid time off for treatment if required.

We are also committed to following up with those impacted in a timely manner to after resolution, to ensure they feel heard and valued in an ongoing manner. Creating a safe space even after resolution, for everyone to feel heard and valued.

7. Chic Geek's Legal Obligations

Chic Geek operates in the Province of Alberta, Canada. This document is developed and implemented in accordance with the provincial statutory requirements relating to equity, diversity and inclusion, and workplace harassment; specifically, the Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Act, and the Alberta Human Rights Act. While fully compliant with this legislation, we view this as a minimum standard for our behaviour and operations.

As it relates to creating and maintaining a respectful, inclusive, and open workplace environment, Chic Geek follows the provisions outlined in the Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Act. We take a zero-tolerance approach to workplace harassment, workplace violence and sexual violence. We understand our obligation as an employer to prevent these incidents, and to address them when they do occur. Our process for dealing with breaches of this policy is outlined in **Section 6**.

For the avoidance of doubt, Chic Geeks uses the following definition of these terms, as outlined by the legislation:

- Workplace Harassment - Harassment is defined as a single or repeated incident of objectionable or unwelcome conduct, comment, bullying, or action intended to intimidate, offend, degrade, or humiliate a particular person or group. It does not include any reasonable conduct of an employer or supervisor related to the normal management of workers or a work site. Differences of opinion or minor disagreements between coworkers are also not generally considered to be workplace harassment if steps are taken to resolve the conflict.
- Workplace Violence - Violence is defined as the threatened, attempted, or actual conduct of a person that causes or is likely to cause physical or psychological harm. It can include physical attack or aggression, threatening behaviour, verbal or written threats, domestic violence, or sexual violence.
- Sexual Violence - Sexual violence exists on a continuum from obscene name-calling to sexual assault and/or homicide. It includes online form of sexual violence, such as internet threats and harassment, and sexual exploitation.
- Domestic Violence - Domestic violence becomes a workplace hazard when it occurs or spills over into the workplace. It may put the targeted worker at risk and may pose a threat to coworkers. Employers must take reasonable precautions to protect affected workers if they are likely to be exposed to domestic violence at a work site.

As it relates to seeking to redress inequality and disadvantage, and the avoidance of discrimination in our operations, Chic Geek operates in line with the Alberta Human Rights Act, which prohibits discrimination based on the protected grounds of race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religious beliefs, gender, gender identity, gender expression, age, physical disability, mental disability, marital status, family status, source of income and sexual orientation.

Chic Geek is committed to adhering to the employer responsibilities outlined under this Act, including:

- Ensuring no discrimination in the workplace.
- Building an inclusive workplace by removing barriers that are based on protected grounds.
- Considering requests for accommodation for needs based on a protected ground.
- Promptly investigating any allegations of discrimination and taking appropriate action to stop the discrimination.

For the avoidance of doubt, Chic Geeks uses the following definitions of these terms, which are referred to throughout this document:

- Women(aN): Chic Geek uses women(an) spellings throughout our communication with our vibrant community. We respect and support ALL women, inclusive of trans and gender queer. Womxn, womyn and other spellings have intersectional and inclusive values and we support your preferred spelling as part of our community! We have identified women(an) spelling as those that encompass all, however we value the differing schools of thought amongst our community. We are reminded that gender identity is a vibrant, beautiful spectrum and Chic Geek welcomes all women and allies.
- Direct discrimination - treating someone less favourably or in a way that puts them at a disadvantage because of a protected characteristic. Harassment is a form of discrimination if it is based on a protected ground.
- Indirect Discrimination - where a provision, criterion or practice is applied to everyone, but adversely affects people with a particular protected ground more than others and is not justified.
- Diversity - ensuring the celebration of individual differences amongst the workforce.
- Inclusion - ensuring that everyone feels comfortable to be their whole selves at work and feels that their contribution is valued.
- Equality - ensuring that everyone has the same opportunities to fulfil their potential, free from discrimination.
- Equity - whereby the exercise of these human rights leads to outcomes which are fair and just.

Acknowledgements

The 2021 version of Chic Geek's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion was written with guidance and insight from Inclusion by Libra. Inclusion by Libra is a boutique, women-owned consulting firm, offering tailored diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging services to organizations across Canada. Learn more at inclusionbylibra.com