

**EEI**

# **Global Approaches to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

Case Studies from Electric Companies



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# Introduction

In recent years, global events including the COVID-19 pandemic, protests in 2020, and increased extreme weather events have highlighted racial, social, economic, and environmental injustices. To address these socioeconomic disparities, many companies have outlined their actions to identify and rectify institutional biases and increase Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DE&I) within their organizations. Electric companies worldwide also have shown the tangible actions they are taking to create more diverse, equitable, and inclusive environments.

DE&I encompasses the policies, programs, initiatives, and actions that companies are taking to promote representation and participation in the workplace. Diversity acknowledges the various characteristics that create our individual identity, perspectives, and values. Equity aims to remove the barriers some groups may face in order to provide equal access to opportunity across an organization. Inclusion focuses on creating a welcoming environment that allows all employees to participate and feel included.

Globally, electric companies are ramping up their DE&I efforts and driving change in the energy sector. Electric companies are creating and implementing holistic approaches to DE&I, recognizing the value that diversity can bring to their workforce, customers, and stakeholders, including how different perspectives can increase innovation for the clean energy transition. Through these initiatives, electric companies also are seeking to identify and address DE&I gaps to create more valuable workplaces for employees.

This casebook highlights the DE&I approaches of EEI's international members, with examples from ten global electric companies. EEI's international members share how they are leading in the DE&I space through an exploration of their overall strategies, initiatives to connect with the local communities they serve, and actions to create inclusive workplaces. EEI International Programs will continue to add to this volume of case studies as we receive more examples of the wide-ranging DE&I initiatives being pursued by our members around the world.

**ABOUT ATCO**

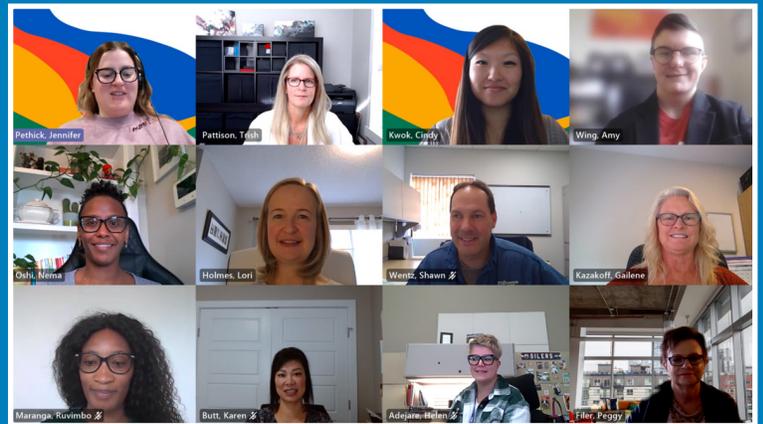
With approximately 6,200 employees and assets of CA\$22 billion, ATCO is a diversified global corporation with investments in the essential services, including electricity and natural gas transmission and distribution and international electricity operations; energy infrastructure; structures and logistics; retail energy; transportation; and commercial real estate.

**DE&I Initiatives at the Electricity Division**

ATCO’s approach to diversity starts at the company’s values of integrity, agility, caring, and collaboration. As a key element of the company’s sustainability policy, ATCO starts by listening to employees to remove barriers and recognizes the need for progress within the organization to continue to find ways to create a more inclusive environment. Its Inclusive and Respectful Workforce Policy supports a diverse workforce and encourages drawing from diverse backgrounds to make more informed decisions.



Orange shirt day with Indigenous Relations team.



People with Disabilities subcommittee under WIDE.

With the recent creation of a new Global Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council at the corporate level, ATCO is seeing the long-standing grassroots committee efforts of the Utilities Workplace Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity Team (WIDE) come together to create alignment in training, communication, and understanding of the DE&I actions taking place across business units in ATCO.

In the electricity business, the new WIDE subcommittees (People with Disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, LGBTQ2+, Women and Visible Minorities and their allies) started a number of important conversations, initiatives, and actions that are advancing progress in the DE&I space and positively impacting retention at ATCO.

**Some actions the subcommittees have completed so far are:**

- › Changing titles to be gender-neutral.
- › Partnering with Inclusion Alberta to hire individuals with an intellectual disability.
  - › ATCO has hired two employees through this program and worked with Inclusion Alberta to understand the duties that would be applicable for a person with a developmental disability through the organization's Rotary Employment Partnership. Inclusion Alberta helped with interview preparation related to the position and trained employees and leaders who will work with the individuals.
- › Ongoing recognition and celebration of special days such as International Women's Day, PRIDE Month, National Indigenous Peoples Day, and Orange Shirt Day.
  - › This year on National Indigenous Peoples Day, ATCO announced the formation of a new Indigenous Advisory Board to enhance the company's work and engage with its partners, while helping to develop sustainable economic opportunities for both Indigenous communities and ATCO.
- › Implementing DE&I moments in town halls and meetings.
  - › At the start of every town hall, all teams are encouraged to share a DE&I moment. Additionally, before every meeting/townhall traditional land acknowledgments are made.
- › Gathering DE&I base metrics through the 2021 Engagement Survey.

ATCO also has carried out education and training programs specific to DE&I. The company has launched unconscious bias training across the organization and included the training at its global One ATCO conference. The company has also carried out Indigenous Awareness training and the University of Alberta Indigenous Relations training. Since 2016, ATCO has offered foundational Indigenous awareness to all employees online. In 2020, in addition to the online training, more than 900 employees completed Indigenous awareness training in Canada, Australia, and Mexico. ATCO also has semi-annual leadership workshops and ongoing mentoring and lunch & learn sessions.

With the launch of the new Global Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council, ATCO will continue to align and connect the work of its grassroots committees. Currently, the company is working on plans for the overall WIDE committee and subcommittees for 2022, expected to be completed by the end of this year. ATCO hopes to see the results of encouraging a more inclusive workforce and engaging employees in understanding the wide breadth of topics in the DE&I space.

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



**Amy Wing**

Workforce Development,  
Clerk 1

**Amy Wing** started at ATCO in February 2020 working in Workforce Development as Clerk 1 before transferring to Project Controls where she currently is continuing her role.

"In mid-2021, I became the lead of the Persons with Disabilities and Allies subcommittee of WIDE. Leading this subcommittee has been a wonderful experience and has afforded me the opportunity to bring my work life and my personal life together to help raise awareness around issues facing people with disabilities. By working in both the Workforce Development and the Project Controls departments, I have enhanced my current skillset and learned new skills that have allowed me to grow within my role.

This year, our biggest campaign focused on October's Disability Employment Awareness month, which allowed us to reinforce our commitment to DE&I through a series of employee lunch & learns. We had a great turnout! As I continue to lead this subcommittee into next year, I am excited for the many great initiatives to come that will help raise awareness about people with disabilities and ensuring that the workplace is a completely inclusive environment for all employees."

## ABOUT CAPITAL POWER

Capital Power is a growth-oriented North American wholesale power producer based in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. The company has a strategic focus on sustainable energy and builds, owns, and operates high-quality, utility-scale renewable and thermal generation facilities with more than 6,400 megawatts (MW) of power generation capacity across 26 facilities in North America. In addition, approximately 425MW of renewable generation capacity and 560MW of incremental natural gas combined cycle capacity is in advanced development. Capital Power utilizes its power generation facilities as hubs for innovation to continuously learn, adapt, and develop to reduce emissions, increase efficiency, expand renewables, and decarbonize power generation.

## Board Diversity Policy and ED&I Strategy

Capital Power is pursuing a sustainable energy future through an Equity, Diversity, Inclusion (ED&I) lens. The company recognizes that to ultimately decarbonize power generation and work to become net carbon neutral by 2050, innovators and experts must come from a variety of backgrounds in order to enhance the company's ability to think bigger, ask tougher questions, and tackle climate change. Capital Power is committed to making its ED&I journey a part of everyday operations at all levels of the company. To achieve this, the company has focused its strategy on diversifying its workforce through various initiatives related to gender and other factors.



Expanding the number of women in engineering and other STEM roles is a priority for Capital Power.



Capital Power supports women in STEM and in the energy industry – through its ED&I targets, collaborative partnerships, sponsorships, and initiatives, the company is committed to increasing the number of qualified women hired and improve gender balance.

Adopted in 2014 and amended most recently in 2021, Capital Power maintains a Board Diversity Policy that shows its commitment to diversity at all levels. The policy includes provisions such as ensuring that 50 percent of short-listed candidates for new director positions be women, giving extra weight to qualified women candidates, and considering qualified candidates who bring diversity beyond gender in the final nomination decisions. The selection process is overseen by the People, Culture, and Governance Committee which also is required to consider diversity as part of the performance review of the Board, its committees, and individual directors. The Board Diversity Policy established a goal of having at least 30 percent of the board and executive team be women, and both the Board and the executive team have currently exceeded these initial representation goals. Since 2014, women have increased from 9 percent to 44 percent of the company's Board of Directors. Women also currently make up 43 percent of the company's executive team.

As part of its ED&I journey, Capital Power has a company-wide strategy for integrating and embedding diversity and inclusion across its culture and work environment. These efforts are guided by two employee surveys: one completed as part of a company-wide engagement survey, and one specific to diversity and inclusion. Part of this strategy requires hiring managers to consider a diverse pool of candidates for open positions at all levels as part of the hiring process. In 2020, as a component of the executive incentive plan and to further encourage diversity at all levels of the organization, an additional requirement was introduced for qualified, diverse candidates to be interviewed for open positions. In 2021, the company also introduced a commitment to increase the number of qualified women hires and improve gender balance at the organization.



Capital Power's workforce diversity targets and focus on inclusion are helping women kickstart, develop, and succeed in their energy careers.

Supplementing these efforts to improve gender diversity at Capital Power, the company's leadership team and Diversity and Inclusion Committee members participated in unconscious bias and inclusivity training, which was then rolled out to all employees in 2020. The objectives for the training were to help employees retrain themselves to disrupt their default thinking to ensure that unintentional stereotyping does not lead to missed opportunities, help employees learn to identify unconscious bias in themselves and others, and develop employees' inclusive leadership skills. The company also is strengthening in-house expertise by hiring new staff focused on furthering ED&I programs. Externally, Capital Power joined the global Equal by 30 campaign which advocates for equal pay, equal leadership, and equal opportunities for women in the clean energy sector by 2030.

For its efforts on gender diversity at the executive level, Capital Power has been recognized in the Women Lead Here annual survey by The Globe and Mail for two consecutive years and was included in the Bloomberg Gender-Equality Index. As part of powering a sustainable future, Capital Power is working to develop future leaders and strengthen the equity and diversity of its workforce with an eye on gender parity.

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



### Kate Chisholm

SVP of Planning, Stakeholder Relations, and Chief Sustainability Officer

As a member of the executive team since 2009, **Kate Chisholm** played an instrumental role in Capital Power's restructuring and the initial public offering that led to the company's creation. Chisholm leads Capital Power's strategic and sustainability planning and reporting, market forecasting and analytics, regulatory, government relations, internal audit, ethics and compliance, stakeholder engagement, community investment, and communications functions. Prior to her current role, Kate most recently served as Chief Legal and Sustainability Officer at Capital Power and has been responsible for legal matters affecting all of Capital Power's activities since its inception in 2009. Kate also has been a strong advocate in supporting Capital Power's ED&I journey, recognizing the need for and importance of measured and tracked commitments to impact change.

"A focus on equity, diversity and inclusion is imperative to ensure we have the very best people on our team," said Chisholm. "After all, you can't get the absolute A-team if you're only hunting from a portion of the talent pool, and you won't successfully harness the full power of your A-team if you aren't including them in decision making or offering them equal pay and equal access to opportunities."

## ABOUT CHUBU ELECTRIC POWER

Founded in 1951, Chubu Electric Power Group is a multi-energy services company that services the Chubu region of Japan. With more than 28,000 employees, the company handles power generation, transmission, distribution, and services to customers in its service territory. In 2019, the company integrated its thermal power generation businesses through JERA, a joint venture between the Group and Tokyo Electric Power Group. With a generation capacity of 9,167.3MW, its other power generation facilities include hydroelectric, nuclear, wind, solar, and biomass. In 2020, the company split its power transmission and distribution division and sales division into Chubu Electric Power Grid Co. and Chubu Electric Power Miraiz Co respectively. The Group also has operations globally in Europe, Africa, and Southeast Asia.

## Creating Better Workplaces for Employee Advancement

Since 2007, Chubu Electric Power has been working on expanding diversity within the organization with the goal of creating a workplace that is comfortable, of value, and rewarding where all personnel can fully realize their potential.

In recent years, Chubu has focused on increasing the number of women in management roles and aims to triple this number by FY2025. Chubu Electric believes that fostering diversity will lead to the development of a more inclusive company, and it is committed to developing the company by building a foundation where diverse human resources can play an active role.

To support the advancement of women employees, Chubu Electric Power has taken advantage of a range of opportunities to provide training for women and diversified training to target different groups by age, rank, child-rearing status, and other criteria to support their career development. Chubu Electric has focused on combining work-life balance with career development to create rewarding workplaces.

In order to support the career development of women, the company has undertaken:

- Expanding career options for women.
- Providing training to promote career growth during child-rearing periods.
- Offering job assignments and rotations that consider medium to long-term career development.
- Encouraging supervisors and employees to support men's participation in housework and child-rearing through encouraging the employee to take paternity leave.



### Career-Up Training for Personnel Returning from Childcare Leave

This training program is provided to help employees consider how to balance work and home together with their partner.



### Step-Up Training for Women Supervisors

This training is held to develop women leaders.

As part of the training and development opportunities offered to women, Chubu Electric has three notable training sessions.

- › The Role Model Forum is aimed at younger employees to envision their career path while listening to senior employees' experiences both in work and in life.
- › The Step-Up Training for Women Supervisors is a training held to develop leadership and management skills.
- › The Career-Up Training for Personnel Returning from Childcare Leave is a program provided to help employees consider how to balance work and home together with their partner.

Among these initiatives to promote diversity in the workforce, Chubu Electric also introduced a policy in April 2021 spanning all its businesses called the General Employer Action Plan. The plan's draft supports the integration of the Act to Promote Female Participation in the Workplace and the Act to Promote Measures to Provide Support for the Next Generation. The plan has outlined two main goals and different initiatives within each goal.

- › Goal 1: To more than triple the number of women managers throughout Chubu Electric Power Group and its business companies from FY2014 to FY2025. In order to implement this goal, the company is focused on:
  - Raising awareness among managers.
  - Providing career guidance for women employees (younger and senior staff).
  - Offering career and life-work balance support and training during child rearing.
  - Raising awareness among role models (women managers).
  - Encouraging male employees to take childcare leave.
- › Goal 2: To increase the percentage of male employees taking childcare leave to up to 30 percent or higher by FY2025. In order to implement this goal, the company is focused on:
  - Raising managers' awareness.
  - Publicizing to promote understanding of fathers taking parental leave, including the merits of fathers' involvement in childcare and relevant internal systems.
  - Hosting seminars for current and future fathers interested in taking parental leave.
  - Reassessing company internal systems that contribute to supporting work-childcare balance.

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



**Yukiko Morishita**

General Manager,  
Washington, D.C. Office

**Yukiko Morishita** has served as the General Manager at the Washington, D.C. Office for Chubu Electric Power Company for the past year. Chubu Electric has three overseas offices in Washington, D.C., London, and Doha. She is the eleventh general manager of the Washington D.C. office, and she is the first woman to be a manager of an overseas office. Yukiko's role consists of research on Climate Change and Energy Policy in the U.S. where she oversees six staff members. Their work is reported to the head office in Nagoya, Japan.

"One year has passed since I came to the U.S. Each day is stimulating in an era when climate change and electricity are the focus of attention. The movement at present in the U.S. is very strong and there are opportunities to learn. Looking back at my career that was heavily human resources and public relations based, I am learning and navigating the engineering world. As the first woman supervisor, my staff and I have built a great partnership through our daily interactions. In the U.S., I have seen many women in leadership positions and my work experience in the U.S. will be a treasuring story to tell our junior woman employees."

## ABOUT ENEL

Enel is a multinational power company and a leading integrated player in the global power and renewables markets. The Group is present in more than 30 countries worldwide, producing energy with around 89 gigawatts (GW) of installed capacity. Enel distributes electricity through a network of more than 2.2 million kilometers, and with nearly 75 million end users, the company is the first global network operator. Enel Green Power is the world's largest renewable private player, with around 50 GW of wind, solar, geothermal, and hydropower plants installed in Europe, the Americas, Africa, Asia, and Oceania. Enel X, Enel's global advanced energy services business line, is the worldwide demand response leader, with a total capacity of around 7.4 GW managed globally; the company has installed 137 MW of storage capacity as well as, in the electric mobility sector, about 232,000 EV charging points around the globe. For 20 years, Enel has been a renewable energy leader and innovator in the United States and Canada. Across these businesses, Enel North America provides a full spectrum of energy services to businesses, electric companies, municipalities, and other commercial energy users, as well as public and private electric vehicle charging.

## Disability Inclusion in the Workplace

Enel approaches its diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) strategy with the perspective that equal opportunities and inclusive environments are the best allies of innovation and sustainability. Among its approach to DE&I, disability is one of the company's priority areas. One of Enel's aims is to make energy available to everyone by developing the potential of the Group's most precious assets, the people it works with.

Enel has been recognized for its work in disability inclusion. In 2021, Enel North America ranked as a top scorer in the Disability Equality Index, the world's most comprehensive benchmarking tool for the Fortune 1000 to measure disability workplace inclusion. The index also was modernized in 2021 to further consider employee needs following the global pandemic. The distinction recognizes Enel's ongoing effort to champion its employees and understand that actionable steps to empower people with disabilities contributes to a higher level of innovation, increased customer base, and greater productivity.

While disability inclusion has been an ongoing priority for Enel, it was during the pandemic that the company recognized the need to provide increased support around digital and remote accessibility for employees with disabilities. Enel is working



Nester Charles, lead solar technician at Enel's Lily Solar and Storage project.



Jonathan Parras, solar technician at Enel's Lily Solar and Storage project.

to develop policies and initiatives that service employees with hearing loss and provide flexible work options to meet each employee's specific needs. Some of the measures Enel has put in place include:

- › Incorporating voice recognition and speech synthesis technologies to make communication easier among colleagues of all hearing abilities.
- › Installing smart sensors and proximity devices for machinery.
- › Increasing availability of audio descriptions for the blind and visually impaired.
- › Providing subtitles and sign language interpreting in the work environment.
- › Appointing internal "Digital Accessibility Agents" trained to support employees with disabilities troubleshoot specific accessibility challenges.
- › Designing activities for employees to foster professional development.
- › Implementing an employee-led return-to-work strategy to foster inclusion and support each employee's optimal working environment.

In addition to these actions, in 2018, Enel became the first electric company to introduce the Pedius app to employees and customers in Italy and a year later to customers in Peru and Spain. The app aims to facilitate communication with deaf colleagues and customers through speech to text recognition converting voice to text and text to voice. Enel is also evaluating the use of the Pedius app for deaf employees in all countries in which it operates. The Group also launched other initiatives aimed at the inclusion of its customers with disabilities, including bills in braille as well as accessible web sites and documents.

Enel also has approached disability inclusion through various other initiatives. In 2019, Enel joined the "Valuable 500" global movement that calls for the participation of 500 private companies aimed at unlocking the business, social, and economic value of people living with disabilities across the world. The company also extends its work in this area to business actions through the company's innovation and sustainability strategy. In January 2020, Enel X, the advanced energy services arm of Enel, introduced JuiceAbility, a charging device for electric wheelchair batteries that uses the same infrastructure available for the company electric vehicle chargers. In November 2020, through Enel's Value for Disability strategic plan, the company launched a global "Innovability Challenge" seeking tailored approaches to improve the way in which people living with disabilities can move around public or private buildings, contributing to sustainable development goals (SDGs) to transform the world: SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, SDG 10: Reduced Inequality, and SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities.

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



**Alexia Mallette**  
Talent Sourcing Partner

With nearly ten years' experience in the energy sector, **Alexia Mallette** has a strong customer and corporate sales background. She started her journey with Enel in September of 2017 as a Business Development Associate, supporting various products like demand response and energy storage. Alexia has the ability to take on new projects that are both challenging and critical to the company's growth, and during her time as a Business Development Associate, she co-founded the DE&I Community at Enel with Aaron Hersum. Passionate about diversity and how this corporate commitment can create both competitive and talent recruitment advantages, Alexia started the group to attract diverse candidates for Enel, as well as to create an inclusive environment for all employees. Through her work with the DE&I Community, Alexia transitioned from a Business Development Associate to join the Talent Acquisition team as a Talent Sourcing Partner. In her new role, she is now able to focus on sourcing and creating a pipeline of diverse talent for Enel. Alexia also is active within her community and organizes impactful annual back-to-school events like "Backpack Give Aways" for the local YMCA. She also serves as a mentor for local youth in the city where she grew up.

"I started at Enel in 2017 in a business development role, and during that time, I co-founded the Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Community. Through the DE&I Community I've worked to help colleagues embrace the philosophy that it's ok to 'be comfortable being uncomfortable' when learning and educating themselves on DE&I. Improving diversity as a part of talent recruitment has always been a passion of mine so starting this group in order to attract a wider range of candidates and contribute to an inclusive environment for all employees was a natural fit. Through this work, I ultimately was able to transition onto our talent acquisition team to further support DE&I efforts at the company. Diversifying the talent pipeline is an industry-wide need, and I'm proud to be a part of Enel's continued efforts to do so."

## ABOUT ENGIE NORTH AMERICA

ENGIE North America Inc. offers a range of capabilities in the United States and Canada to help customers decarbonize, decentralize, and digitalize their operations. These include comprehensive services to help customers run their facilities more efficiently and optimize energy and other resource use and expense; clean power generation; energy storage; and retail energy supply that includes renewable, demand response, and on-bill financing options. Nearly 100% of the company's power generation portfolio is low carbon or renewable. Globally, ENGIE S.A. is a global reference in low-carbon energy and services, that relies on their key businesses (gas, renewable energy, services) to offer competitive solutions to customers. With 170,000 employees, customers, partners and stakeholders, the group is committed to accelerate the transition towards a carbon-neutral world, through reduced energy consumption and more environmentally friendly solutions.

## Clean Energy Industry Leaders Take a Stand Against Racism

The Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement significantly increased awareness of the issue of racial injustice throughout the globe, especially in the United States. Many companies were responding to the problem by taking a public stand against racism, but questions were often raised about what actions were taken to support that stand. As a key player in the renewable energy space, ENGIE North America recognized the social justice movement as an opportunity to take needed action to advance Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DE&I) in the clean energy sector.

In July of 2020, ENGIE North America led an unprecedented industry effort founded on the belief that environmental justice and long-term sustainability can only exist with the eradication of racism and social injustice. It took a leadership role in developing a coalition of organizations in the clean energy industry interested in taking a stand against systemic racism. Simultaneously, each of the participating companies also committed to their own internal initiatives, in turn sharing their organizational actions with the broader community. The focus expanded to drive actions for positive change, not only to take a stand against racism.

### The goals of the initiative included:

- > Eradicating racism throughout the energy sector and beyond.
- > Bringing to light the need for collaboration to drive true change.
- > Building a united front among industry leaders that will combat and prevent systemic racism for years to come.
- > Creating a safer and more sustainable future through racial equality.
- > Delivering on initiatives that will have both immediate and long-term impacts on ensuring racial equality.
- > Creating aspirational interest in getting other energy organizations to get involved in combating racism.

ENGIE North America recognized that only by acting together—as companies, as employees and as communities—can racial equality be achieved. The initial group rapidly grew to 17 organizations, and as more of the clean energy industry came together, the commitment grew in both size and action to 27 organizations. The initial coalition with individual missions soon transformed into a group of competitors who came together for a common mission: to share challenges, opportunities, and lessons around their respective DE&I journeys.



ENGIE DE&I event

As a result of these discussions, ENGIE North America contacted the participating clean energy companies to coordinate, draft and post the following statement on racial justice and equality to encourage additional participation within the industry:

*“As leaders in our energy industry, we take pride in our mission to make the world a better place to live. The responsible, safer and sustainable future we all strive towards can only exist with the eradication of racism. We recognize that only by acting together - as companies, as employees and as communities - will this be achieved. We acknowledge the need for more diversity in our sector. We commit to listen, learn and work as individual companies and together, as an industry, to take meaningful action for lasting change. Together, we stand united in solidarity for racial justice and equality, both today and for generations to come.”*

Because every company and employee base are unique, the specific initiatives taken by each to strengthen DE&I differ. At ENGIE North America, some of the key initiatives thus far have included:

- › Launching a DE&I Committee and hiring an external DE&I consultant.
- › Expanding, supporting, and funding Employee Resource Groups to include among others, a Black ENGIE Employee Network and an Asian and Pacific Islanders Network.
- › Accelerating a robust DE&I Learning Path focused on unconscious bias and inclusion. complemented with outside expert-led training sessions.
- › Advancing diversity in hiring practices.
- › Implementing charitable giving opportunities to organizations dedicated to DE&I.
- › Launching a Supplier Diversity Program to attract and encourage diverse suppliers in all areas of spending.

Alongside ENGIE North America, the companies that are part of the coalition have shared their initiatives on social media, and as momentum increased, began holding roundtables to discuss challenges, opportunities and lessons learned with each other. In between roundtable meetings, the companies continue to stay connected via a collaboration site to share best practices and contact lists. With ENGIE North America at the helm, the coalition continues to grow and learn from one another as they make changes to advance a more diverse, equitable and inclusive culture.

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



**Lacey Sullivan**  
Sales Advisor, Business  
Development at ENGIE  
North America

**Lacey Sullivan** is a sales advisor for the ENGIE North America business development team. Her ENGIE career began as a marketing specialist, progressing into supporting deals and eventually into a full sales advisory role. Lacey supports ENGIE's national Energy Solutions team that helps public sector customers, such as school districts and cities, become more energy efficient while educating students and residents about the energy work. In addition to her main corporate role, she has been a leader of multiple employee resource groups since 2019 within specific projects, founding workstreams and eventually taking on the positions of Chair, Co-Chair, and leadership council member.

Lacey is extremely passionate about Diversity, Equity & Inclusion and has been an active member of several DE&I networks —particularly young professionals, Asian-American & Pacific Islander, and the women's network. She loves experiencing and learning more about cultural traditions and how culture interacts with careers in ways she never experienced herself. One of the aspects she most values is the ability to create authentic community spaces where colleagues can openly share struggles, as well navigate problems, or create new growth opportunities for people who otherwise wouldn't have had the chance to connect. Most specifically for her as a woman, being able to connect with other women in the presently male-dominated energy industry is both enjoyable and valuable from a professional development and mentoring angle. While anyone can mentor another person, she truly values communing women who understand or have experienced gendered dynamics in the workplace for themselves.

“I believe diversity brings strength. Recognizing and drawing the variety of backgrounds (cultural, ethnic, gender, education, socioeconomic, etc.) and facets of everyone's individuality only makes life better. In my experience, being recognized as the person you are, rather than trying to fit a predefined “traditional” mold, helps us work with each other more authentically and effectively.”

## ABOUT JEMENA

Jemena owns and operates a diverse portfolio of energy assets across northern Australia and Australia's east coast. With more than AUD\$11 billion worth of major infrastructure, Jemena serves more than 1.7 million Australians, bringing gas to more than 1.4 million homes and businesses in New South Wales, and electricity to more than 360,000 customers in Victoria. With more than a century's experience and expertise in the electric power industry and a strong portfolio of high-quality distribution and transmission assets, Jemena makes the most of opportunities for growth and innovation in its operations.

### Community Partnering: Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)

Jemena respects and values the diversity of the people, customers, clients, stakeholders, and communities it serves. The company is committed to finding ways to actively support and encourage a diverse workforce and inclusive workplace.

To reflect the diversity of its people, customers, and communities, Jemena approaches diversity and inclusion with the aim of developing the culture and behaviors necessary to build an inclusive workplace. The company's roadmap centers on three focus areas:

1. **Community Partnering:** To provide social and economic support across the communities in its operational areas.
2. **Inclusivity:** To continue to build an inclusive environment that embraces diversity and provides a place where people feel valued and can contribute.
3. **Flexibility and Equity:** To embed flexible working arrangements which recognize the diverse needs of the company's workforce where everyone is treated equitably.

Jemena's focus in these three areas is represented in the company's commitment to reconciliation in Australia and recognizing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land, and it pays respects to elders past, present, and emerging. The company's name, Jemena, has origins from the Wagiman people in the Northern Territory and carries the meaning of "to hear, to listen, to think," the core of how the company shapes its own culture and approach to build meaningful relationships.



Saltbush Enterprise to deliver a Workforce Mentoring Program: Pipeline to Success.



Cultural Heritage survey activities along the Northern Gas Pipeline (NGP) being undertaken by Traditional Owners.

In 2020, the company launched its first Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). The RAP forms a key part of its commitment to diversity and inclusion. At the beginning of 2020, a working group came together with representation from across Jemena's business and, under the guidance of an independent Indigenous consultant, developed the company's inaugural Reflect RAP.

Jemena's Reflect RAP builds on its history of partnering with Aboriginal communities through the development of major projects in the Northern Territory and Queensland, and the many positive and long-standing relationships built with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through supporting local communities and Indigenous employment. Some prior engagements reflecting the company's commitment include:

- › The Northern Gas Pipeline (NGP): A project for development of a new pipeline connecting the Northern Territory gas fields to the east coast market. Jemena started the 622km pipeline in November 2015 and worked closely with Aboriginal people through the planning, development, and construction. Cultural awareness training was also undertaken by more than 1,350 Jemena and contractor personnel.
- › Project Ready Training Program: A ten-week, live-in training program for 58 local Traditional Owners and Aboriginal people focused on delivering basic civil construction skills and provision of jobs as part of the pipeline construction workforce.
- › Pipeline to Success: A new Indigenous Workforce Mentoring Program in collaboration with Saltbush Social Enterprises for Indigenous job seekers aiming to equip participants with mentoring and leadership skills

Jemena's work also includes various sponsorships and financial support initiatives.

Through its commitment to a Reflect RAP, Jemena has spent time scoping and developing deeper relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, understanding key relationships, and committing to actions or initiatives. Since the launch of its RAP in 2020, Jemena has established an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee and invited Indigenous team members to participate in RAP working group meetings, conducted a review of job advertisements to mitigate barriers to apply, implemented Acknowledgement of Country for internal and external meetings and, importantly, communicated its commitment to reconciliation to its own people and external stakeholders.

Jemena remains committed to establishing successive RAPs as the company matures its understanding and approach to Reconciliation in Australia and is proud to be a business that is taking steps to reflect the richness and diversity of its customers, clients, and communities.

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



### Kerrard Minniecon

Supervisor, Power Services

**Kerrard Minniecon**, a supervisor in Jemena's Power Services team and a proud Kabi Kabi, is part Aboriginal and part South Sea Islander (Vanuatu) and immensely proud of both of his heritages.

Starting his career at 19 years old, Kerrard was one of the youngest and one of the first Indigenous men to be trained as a lineworker in Australia. Twenty-six years later, he still proudly works in the industry that has taken him halfway around the country. Kerrard counts this as one of his greatest achievements.

To Kerrard, one of the most special things about working for the company is that it recognizes and celebrates cultural events such as National Reconciliation Week and National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance.

"Indigenous culture is strong in Australia, but there are so many cultures that work in our industry that I think we should all show interest, respect, and should be a part of," said Minniecon.

Kerrard began his career in the industry in 1995 and said that the company was the first to celebrate and recognize the cultures within the business. He continues to give back by volunteering his time to support and to mentor new Indigenous recruits, providing them guidance and sharing with them his industry knowledge and experiences.

## ABOUT NATIONAL GRID

National Grid plc is an international electricity and gas company based in the United Kingdom (U.K.) and northeastern United States (U.S.). The company has approximately 23,000 employees across operations worldwide. In the U.S., National Grid is one of the largest investor-owned electric companies and serves more than 20 million people throughout New York, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island. In the U.K., National Grid owns and operates Britain's largest distribution business, comprising four of the eight regional gas distribution networks. National Grid's vision is to be at the heart of a clean, fair, and affordable energy future in an industry sector where the pace of change is accelerating with increasing focus on decarbonization, digitalization, and decentralization.

## Advancing DE&I at National Grid

Over the past several years, National Grid increasingly has focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) as a business imperative. However, 2020 was an unprecedented year; numerous events, not solely linked to the global pandemic, has meant that the external DE&I landscape is increasingly visible and changing at pace, impacting colleagues personally and the communities National Grid serves.

These global events have elevated the urgency in which businesses need to adjust their DE&I mindset and strategic priorities to keep up with the ever-changing societal expectations. Economic crises, cultural revolutions, and social justice movements calling for equity in varying intersections of race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, (dis)ability, and faith have increasingly elevated the accountability and social responsibility of businesses like National Grid.

In the wake of the murder of George Floyd, National Grid had the opportunity to reflect on how its policies and practices reflected the needs of its customers and employees.

Within the past year the company has made significant changes as it impacts the company's DE&I commitments:

- > **Appointed a new Chief Diversity Officer**
  - Upon her arrival in January 2021, National Grid Chief Diversity Officer Natalie Edwards embarked on several Listening Tours to hear from the business units at National Grid with the intent of listening, learning, and acting to ensure employee's experiences and voices are heard (both office and field based) and incorporated into any future plans.
- > **Recruited a New DE&I Team**
  - The DE&I team grew to 13, joining internal and external talent together with the existing team.
- > **Implemented a DE&I Strategy**
  - A new DE&I Strategy was created to transition DE&I from being a People & Culture initiative to being everyone's accountability. The strategy focuses on 5 specific Pillars:

### Let our impact be known far and wide

Establishing National Grid as a leader in the clean energy future through Ecosystems and Communities.

### Bold actions through communication

Our DE&I voice and communications will create organisational radical transparency, engagement and trust by offsetting the status quo.

### Equity is experienced every step of the way

We are deliberate in attracting, hiring, developing, progressing, and retaining diverse and underrepresented talent.

### Creating equity and belonging through inclusive behavior

Creating and maintaining an inclusive mindset where everyone is accountable and empowered to lead, coach, and behave inclusively regardless of role, level, or status.

### Integrate and elevate our employee resource groups

Supporting the business to build a diverse workforce for the future, advancing our culture of inclusion and innovation and enhancing the business performance and reputation.

This strategy allows for more focus on communities and eco-systems, employee resource groups (ERGs), global projects, and engaging with operational colleagues. These new areas of focus have been inspired by best practice from other organizations and will help National Grid make way to becoming a pioneering organization.

- > **Introduced DE&I Targets for Leaders**
  - To help National Grid move towards its goal of creating a truly diverse and inclusive organization, for the first time ever, the company introduced key diversity measures as part of its Annual Performance Plan targets for leaders. The company views this as a big step and the right thing to do.
- > **Launched Initiative to Retain Leaders**
  - Over the past year, there have been many changes across the business, and retaining talent from all backgrounds, including diversity of leaders, is important. National Grid launched a Stay Interview process with some of its leadership population to find out why these individuals stay with the company. The findings will be used to help the company continue to attract and retain the best talent moving forwards, placing particular emphasis on its aim of enhancing diversity to be more reflective of its local communities.
- > **Elevated DE&I conversations**
  - Focusing on external events that affect customers and colleagues; examples include the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) hate crime dialogue that had approximately 400 attendees and the Global Crisis in Afghanistan, Haiti, Lebanon, and around the World Forum that had approximately 450 attendees.
- > **Aligned ERG Involvement**
  - National Grid has aligned ERGs with its business strategy with the aim to advance its culture of inclusion and innovation and to invest in its ERGs to support and retain a diverse workforce for the future. In partnership with its 12 ERGs, it has celebrated some important dates in the past year.
    - > Black History Month
    - > Juneteenth
    - > Asian Pacific Month
    - > Pride Month
    - > Hispanic Heritage
    - > Global Inclusion week

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



**Victoria Matthews**  
U.S. Sr. Specialist,  
Union Engagement

**Victoria Matthews** is a senior specialist of Union Engagement at National Grid who works on the DE&I team to ensure clear engagement and communications with the DE&I team and union employees.

“Last year, after the murder of George Floyd, conversations around mental health, racial inequality, and discriminatory behavior began to surface in ways I had never experienced before at National Grid. I leapt at the opportunity to talk about these issues, as this is what I went to school for and it is what I am the most passionate about. I was a gas clerk at the time and, because of the pandemic, I was instructed to work from home. Striking the balance between the DE&I work that I loved and my blue-sky role became a possibility for me. I was able to join more forums, engage with more leaders, and share more of my DE&I knowledge with a larger audience than I could before.

DEI discussions and initiatives have helped to dispel the sense of invisibility I was trapped in. There is a sense of urgency that was not there before. I never believed myself to be powerless, but the sentiment was always present, and I found myself having to fight those feelings more often than I cared to. As a Black woman, my identities are ones that affect every single aspect of my life. Knowing there are people taking seriously the marginalization that I and others like me experience every day is amazing. Being on a team that is supportive of who I am and that operates in kindness has been a life-changing experience for me. They have made space for me where there wasn't any before.”

## ABOUT NOVA SCOTIA POWER

Nova Scotia Power (NS Power) is a regulated electric company that services 95 percent of the generation, transmission, and distribution of energy in Nova Scotia. The company has 1,800 employees and services 535,000 residential, commercial, and industrial customers across the province. Its diverse fuel mix generates more than 2,400 megawatts of electricity delivered across 32,000 km of transmission and distribution lines. NS Power has more than CA\$5 billion worth of generation, transmission, and distribution assets and is a wholly owned subsidiary of Emera, an international energy firm headquartered in Halifax. Nova Scotia Power shares a strategic focus with its parent company on safely delivering cleaner, affordable, and reliable energy to its customers.

## Five Theme Approach to DE&I

NS Power launched its company wide Diversity and Inclusion Strategy in 2018 and has been building on it ever since. The original strategy was developed in collaboration with more than 45 employees from all areas of the business, representing a breadth and depth of diversity characteristics. This advisory group has grown to more than 120 people and continues to meet and to advise the business. At least eight areas of the business have developed their own sub-committees to build awareness and to embed the concept of inclusion in their work.

In 2021, the company added “Equity” to reflect its focus on removing systemic barriers and continues to evolve its DE&I strategy. Through an internal assessment with focus groups and a 2021 Employee Engagement Survey, NS Power updated its strategy for the 2022-2024 period consisting of the following theme areas:

- > Educate, Celebrate, & Communicate
- > Understand DE&I Data & Metrics
- > Attract & Retain People
- > Lead & Be Accountable
- > Listen To & Serve Society

### Educate, Celebrate, & Communicate

- > Under this theme, NS Power identifies different actions to enhance understanding and ‘continue the conversation’. A few of them are:
  - Creating and maintaining a Downie-Wenjack Legacy space dedicated to showing commitment to and encouraging conversations on reconciliation.
  - Including respectful workplace and DE&I training in labor pool orientation.
  - Sharing annual calendar observances and celebration in advance to highlight celebrations special to employees (i.e. Diwali, Chinese New Year) and encourage employees to embrace diversity within their own unique teams through multicultural potlucks, diversity moments, and educational sessions.
  - Recognizing International Women’s Day, National Indigenous People’s Day, Treaty Day, and Pride through company-wide events.
  - Participating in Electricity HR Canada initiatives.
  - Communicating through the weekly employee newsletter, intranet site, and internal GRID D&I site.
  - Providing training including unconscious bias training attended by more than 1,850 employees and training for leadership on ensuring workplace inclusivity.
  - Holding company-wide webinars to address social justice issues such as anti-Black racism and anti-Asian racism.



Five women Nova Scotia Power power plant employees.



During Diwali, NSP employees shared traditional Hindu artwork, called 'rangoli', which is often at the main entrance of a home to welcome people.

### Understand DE&I Data and Metrics

- › Under this theme, NS Power will use their baseline data and continue to measure progress against it with a variety of metrics. To do so, NS Power outlined proactive steps to meet its targets:
  - Adopting the 15 Global Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Benchmarks maturity model.
  - Conducting “pulse” surveys with employee resource groups, DE&I networks, and employees related to strategy progress.
  - Conducting bi-annual employee engagement surveys to measure inclusion.
  - Rolling out annual Count Yourself in Self Identification survey campaign.
  - Updating metrics against demographic goals every 6 months.

### Attract & Retain People

- › NS Power recognizes that outreach and relationship building with diverse community serving organizations will increase diversity among applicants. Some of the ways in which NS Power aims to develop opportunities and promotions that are equitable, available, and intentional are:
  - Sustaining employee resource groups including a Black employee resource group, PRISM employee resource group, and one for women in trades and technology that has been active for more than ten years.
  - Investing in co-operative education and opportunities for youth.
  - Collecting and tracking aggregated demographic data as it relates to applications, short list, hiring, promotion, and representation throughout levels of leadership.
  - Launching scholarships for Women in Trades, Engineering, Technology & Innovation, and African Nova Scotian scholarships.
  - Editing job descriptions to remove gendered language and reviewing hiring processes to identify and address potential for biased decision-making.

### Lead and Be Accountable

- › NS Power is committed to accountability to take real action and demonstrate understanding of historic inequities. To embed inclusive leadership, some of the actions taken across the business are:
  - Designating budget toward DE&I initiatives.
  - Developing a process to ensure contractors are following a Respectful Workplace Policy.
  - Conducting an annual compensation gap analysis and eliminating discrepancies.
  - Assisting employees who are new Canadians to attain Permanent Residency status with the Canadian government.

## Listen to & Serve Society

- › NS Power seeks to find ways to help build capacity for individuals, business owners, and communities. To do so, NS Power has taken some of the following actions:
  - Developing a Responsible Sourcing strategy to enhance opportunities for diverse owned suppliers.
  - Reviewing NSP facilities and asset nomenclature to understand cultural appropriateness and rename where appropriate.
  - Developing relationships with diverse community-serving organizations and partnering on initiatives.

Pursuing a holistic approach based on these themes, one key area in which NS Power applies its DE&I strategy is with the thirteen Mi'kmaq communities that span the province. The company seeks opportunities to learn about the historic and current experiences of Indigenous people through webinars held by elders, adopting land acknowledgements in meaningful ways, and recognizing and celebrating their contributions.

NS Power's Mi'kmaq Relations team is responsible for ongoing relationship building with Mi'kmaq communities in Nova Scotia. Through agreements with Mi'kmaq communities and the Assembly of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq Chiefs, the team shares information on projects, and helps build capacity to participate in NS Power projects, develops partnerships, protects cultural resources at the company's sites, and provides opportunities for education and employment. Some of the initiatives NS Power has launched to support Mi'kmaq communities include:

- › Providing four \$1,000 bursaries to First Nation Mi'kmaq students entering any year of a full time post-secondary education program in Power Engineering, Power Line Technician, Instrumentation Tech, Engineering, Finance, Technology, Business, Marketing & Communication, Environmental Sciences, or Law with an opportunity to participate in a 12-week paid internship at NS Power during their term of study.
- › Flying the Mi'kmaq flag 365 days a year at the corporate office.
- › Hosting workshops, site visits, and celebrations for employees to learn about Mi'kmaq history and culture. The programs have provided a greater appreciation of Mi'kmaq culture, heritage, and tradition, conveyed the importance of understanding cross-cultural differences, demonstrated the impacts of the Indian Residential School system, and call for reconciliation across corporate Canada.
- › Providing support for and attending cultural events and activities in Mi'kmaq communities across the Province including summer games, Mawio'mi, conferences, Elders gatherings, cultural celebrations, and sacred ceremonies.

In 2021, NS Power's Board of Directors and employees adopted a land acknowledgement and designed a resource for the business to understand its intention, and how to respectfully include it in meetings and events. The company continues to seek meaningful ways to reflect its commitment to working with the Mi'kmaq communities.

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



**Opal Harlow**

Mi'kmaq Project Liaison

“The work that I am involved in involves building lasting relationships with local Mi'kmaq leaders, community members, and Elders. I often use my traditional knowledge and science knowledge together to create what I call ‘two-eyed seeing.’ When conducting environmental work, as it is my passion, I excel and get to teach my coworkers ways to be a good treaty partner.

As projects conduct archeology, I learn more about Mi'kmaq history and I get to see where my ancestors once called home, where they traveled, and where they hunted and gathered!

Wela'in (Thank you).”



## ABOUT OPG

As Ontario's largest clean electricity generator, Ontario Power Generation (OPG) produces about half of the province's power with a diverse mix of generating sources. With 18,910 megawatts capacity, OPG operates 66 hydro stations and two nuclear stations as the main sources of generation as well as biomass, gas, and solar generation.

Today, approximately 60 percent of Ontario's power needs are supplied by nuclear and OPG's hydro stations account for more than one-third electricity production. Owned by the province, OPG is Ontario's largest clean power generator with more than 9,300 employees. With the help of its employees, site communities, and partners, OPG is working to ensure a more sustainable future, a cleaner environment, a stronger economy, and more livable communities.

## OPG's Reconciliation Action Plan

Launched in October, OPG's Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) was developed by leaders across the company and includes actions that are within the sphere of influence of its business and further reconciliation with Indigenous peoples across the province. OPG's reconciliation vision is to support the improvement and well-being of Indigenous communities, people, and employees. To achieve this, OPG aims to focus on its commitment to collaboration and levelling the playing field, which is integral to its purpose and to the company's values.

For more than a century, OPG and its predecessor companies have produced electricity for the province, while operating on the Treaty Lands and traditional territories of Indigenous communities. It is a legacy that includes many positives, including the development of hydro assets that to this day, provide Ontario with low-cost, renewable power. The other side of this legacy is that hydroelectric development over the course of the 20th century had significant, negative impacts on many Indigenous communities.

It was not until 1992 that OPG's predecessor company, Ontario Hydro came to realize it had to change the way it does business. Central to this change was the need to build better relationships with Indigenous communities and people through developing a formal framework to assess and resolve historic grievances, largely related to the flooding of reserve lands. Agreements were reached and apologies were made and that set the groundwork for the relationship building and partnerships that OPG has been undertaking. Since 2009, OPG has completed equity partnerships with five First Nations on four new generation projects.



Peter Sutherland Sr. Hydro Station built by OPG and partner Coral Rapids Power, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Taykwa Tagamou Nation (TTN).



"Ode to the Canoe" by Patrick Hunter, a two-spirit Ojibwe painter, graphic designer, and entrepreneur from Red Lake, ON.

OPG also has introduced an Indigenous Opportunities Network (ION) which is an initiative designed to increase the number of Indigenous people working in the nuclear industry. OPG works closely with Kagita Mikam Aboriginal Employment and Training and the Electrical Power Systems Construction Association (EPSCA) to place ION workers in the building trades on some of OPG’s most diverse and innovative projects.

In August 2021, in recognition of these efforts (among others), OPG was awarded a Gold certification by the Canadian Council for Aboriginal Business’s Progressive Aboriginal Relations program, in which OPG has been actively participating since 2015. While a Gold certification is an indicator of sustainable positive outcomes through collaboration and proactive approaches to Indigenous relations, and a great accomplishment for any company, OPG recognizes there is more to do. In fact, companies at the Gold level are expected to continuously self-assess and develop strategies for continued progress – which is where OPG’s RAP comes in.

When senior leaders learned about the RAP, they all agreed it made sense as the next step for OPG and supported it wholeheartedly. They set to work to create targets that will lead to improved outcomes for both the company and Indigenous communities. At the CEO’s direction, ambitious targets were developed with the understanding that they are meant to drive accountability, transparency, and positive outcomes for Indigenous communities. The target timelines range from one to ten years with an annual review process in place to modify or build upon the targets.

One of the most important targets includes driving CA\$1 billion in economic revenue through innovative procurement opportunities for Indigenous suppliers by 2032. As OPG continues to maintain and operate its fleet, the company seeks opportunities at every turn to meet this goal.

**Some of the other actions OPG is planning to take under the RAP include:**

- › Increasing representation of Indigenous employees at all levels.
- › Working with ION to grow the Indigenous skilled talent pool.
- › Enhancing employee knowledge and understanding through the development of an online Reconciliation Knowledge Hub.

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



**Christine John**

Senior Advisor,  
Indigenous Relations

**Christine John** is a senior advisor of Indigenous Relations with Ontario Power Generation. Growing up on the Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nation, Christine always envisioned advocating for others and making the world a better place for her people. Over her 17-year career, Christine has found ways to ensure the Indigenous voice is at the table and included in discussions.

Since joining OPG in early 2021, Christine has supported the organization in a verification process that resulted in the company being awarded a Gold certification in the Progressive Aboriginal Relations program and the development of OPG’s Reconciliation Action Plan. Outside of her professional role, Christine serves on the Board of the Bruce Grey Child and Family Services and the Ontario Association of Children’s Aid Societies.

“I’m fortunate to have a voice and platform that allows me to drive the change our world needs,” said John.

## ABOUT TASNETWORKS

TasNetworks is the electricity transmission and distribution company serving the island state of Tasmania located at the southern tip of Australia. Owned by the State of Tasmania, TasNetworks operates as a commercial business with assets of AU\$3.5 billion and supplies more than 295,000 residential, commercial, and industrial customers with electricity. The company employs nearly 1,200 people across Tasmania who live and work in the communities they serve. TasNetworks facilitates the transfer of electricity between Victoria and Tasmania via Basslink, the sub-sea electricity interconnector. The company also provides telecommunications, data center, and information technology services to customers and has four subsidiaries: TasNetworks Holdings Pty Ltd (non-trading subsidiary), FortyTwo24 Pty Ltd, Marinus Link Pty Ltd, and Large Scale Renewables Pty Ltd.

## TasNetworks Reconciliation Action Plan

TasNetworks' electricity network spans across the state of Tasmania, a small island state located at the southern tip of Australia. The area is renowned for its wild and unique beauty, diverse terrain, and clean air and it has rich Aboriginal cultural heritage. Recognizing that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the oldest surviving cultures in the world, TasNetworks launched its Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in June 2021 in efforts to build trust with the Tasmanian Aboriginal community and to protect and nurture the country and its story. The Reflect RAP is one of the four RAP types – Reflect, Innovate, Stretch, and Elevate – which allows the company to lay the foundation to prime the workplace for future RAPs and reconciliation initiatives.

Since 2019, TasNetworks started taking steps towards reconciliation with cultural learning resources and educational opportunities to support team members in gaining a deeper understanding of Tasmanian Aboriginal history and culture. The company established a RAP Working Group to lead the development and implementation of the Reflect RAP and shared learning and experiences with Aboriginal organizations and businesses, the Reconciliation Collective, the Tasmanian Government, and other energy industry peers. Employees also started attending cultural awareness sessions with the Tasmanian Aboriginal Corporation to improve understanding in the workplace. Culminating on this work, TasNetworks moved to join a network of more than 1,100 corporate, government, and not-for-profit organizations in Australia in a formal commitment to reconciliation through the RAP program.



Corporate Social Responsibility leader Kirstan Wilding experiencing the Wukalina Walk, led on foot by palawa guides to learn about land and sea Country. Graeme Gardner in the background.

On June 2, 2021, TasNetworks proudly announced the launch of the RAP at the Aboriginal Elders Council with the Tasmanian Aboriginal community for the June 2021- June 2022 period. The RAP emphasizes TasNetworks' commitment to meaningful actions to build respect, relationships, and opportunities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The RAP identifies and embraces cultural diversity, different perspectives, inclusion, and employment opportunities, and seeks to build capacity for a safe and resilient community. Through the RAP, the company also has outlined a plan of commitments and actions for the course of the year.

Over the course of its engagement with the Tasmanian Aboriginal community and in line with its RAP, some activities TasNetworks already has undertaken include:

- › Fostering cultural awareness and cultural safety for everyone, by enabling more than one hundred team members to attend cultural awareness training and implementing Welcome to Country and Acknowledgement of Country protocols in the workplace, as an opportunity for team members to show respect for Traditional Owners and the continuing connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to Country.
- › The introduction of career opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander graduates to join the company, which allows the graduates to explore a variety of streams based upon their skills and passion.
- › Creating opportunities through a partnership with the Tasmanian Leaders Foundation to provide scholarships for emerging Aboriginal leaders to undertake a high-impact Leadership Enterprise and Development (I-LEAD) program.
- › The celebration of National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week. From July 4-11, NAIDOC week celebrates the history, culture, and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. NAIDOC Week is a week where the Tasmanian Aboriginal community proudly displays its culture and its pride.

“It also is a week to reflect on the past atrocities committed against Aborigines. In doing so, we are motivated to act. To right those wrongs as an act of modern reconciliation. Reconciliation is that of leadership, inclusion, and acknowledgement and TasNetworks is on that journey,” said Graeme Gardner, Aboriginal Community Engagement Advisor at TasNetworks.

Keeping the company’s purpose of powering a bright future at heart, TasNetworks’ vision for the RAP is to ensure that “all belong in this place and are connected to each other.” The company will continue to work to monitor and understand its impact with the Tasmanian Aboriginal community and report on its progress.

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



### Graeme Gardner

Aboriginal Community  
Engagement Advisor

Graeme Gardner is the Aboriginal Community Engagement Advisor at TasNetworks. He is a proud palawa man (Tasmanian Aborigine) and joined the company in 2020. He previously served as the Manager of the Aboriginal Land Council of Tasmania for nineteen years and is currently the Chair of the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre (TAC). Graeme was an active participant in the development of the TasNetworks RAP.

Graeme brings his life experience to his current role, experiencing working for his community and challenging racism and inequality across a range of social matters. With his background, he communicates effectively to understand the broad perspectives (good or bad) and develop strategies to implement change and have people acknowledge biases and reflect on their views.

“Tasmanian Aboriginal people can claim to be the most oppressed ‘native’ people in the southern hemisphere. Our land was taken, our children stolen, our people shot and rounded up, and our identity challenged. It is this history that has been excluded from the Tasmanian Education system, which creates a challenge to raise such topics in the workplace.

Diversity is stimulating. It is a wonderful ingredient to have in the workplace as it provides views from ‘left field,’ ensures any religious or cultural aspect is catered for, and creates a sense of harmony. In effect, the RAP helps us to be better people. If we are good people at work, we will be good people at home. Such conversation has been well-received and it has produced a number of champions who wish to personally support and promote a cultural understanding of Tasmania’s history. In such an environment, I am confident to achieve a ‘cultural’ shift in the workplace as the support is increasing, there are ample opportunities to deliver a message and there is an increasing awareness to Aboriginal culture, history, and heritage.

I want a culturally safe workplace that is inclusive and accepting of the diversity of people working within.”

The **Edison Electric Institute** (EEI) is the association that represents all U.S. investor-owned electric companies. Our members provide electricity for more than 220 million Americans, and operate in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. As a whole, the electric power industry supports more than 7 million jobs in communities across the United States. In addition to our U.S. members, EEI has more than 65 international electric companies with operations in more than 90 countries, as International Members, and hundreds of industry suppliers and related organizations as Associate Members.

Organized in 1933, EEI provides public policy leadership, strategic business intelligence, and essential conferences and forums.

For more information about EEI International Programs, contact **[international@eei.org](mailto:international@eei.org)**.

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