(ISC)²®

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION
Strategic Plan 2021-2030

MESSAGE FROM OUR DEI GLOBAL TASK FORCE

As the world's leading cybersecurity professional organization, we are responsible to lead the charge to ensure our profession reflects the diversity of world in which we serve. We are passionate about representing, elevating and valuing the global perspectives of our communities.

We are not just passionate about this because it is the right thing to do. Diversity, equity and inclusion are strategic priorities for all of the organisations we represent and we believe that ensuring a safe and secure cyber world means ensuring a diverse, equitable and inclusive cybersecurity profession. This initiative is imperative to be innovative and solve the world's increased cyber problems today and in the future.

Our profession today does not reflect the world we live in and we must continually challenge ourselves to ensure that diversity and inclusion are at the heart of our workforce and is our way of life.

This Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan affirms our ongoing commitment to this one main goal—**to redefine the image of the cybersecurity professional and the profession to accurately reflect and value the diversity of the world it protects**. We will achieve this goal by focusing on five objectives:

Objective 1:
Establish (ISC)^2 in the global market as a leader, and go-to resource, for diversifying the cybersecurity profession.

Objective 2:
Increase the number of women and people of color who engage with (ISC)^2 as event attendees, professional development participants and speakers.

Objective 3:
Increase the pipeline of diverse cyber students.

Objective 4:
Increase the number of women and people of color in (ISC)^2's membership to accurately reflect the increasing number of those represented in the profession.

Objective 5:
Increase the number of women and people of color in leadership roles (Director and above) to ensure equal representation across job levels.

This strategy must be driven from the top, with visible leadership and accountability. Ultimately, we strive to make diversity, equity and inclusion part of everything we do, with success depending on everyone within the profession.

As members of the (ISC)^2 Global DEI Task Force, we are proud to lead the way in this vital area.

(ISC)² GLOBAL DEI TASK FORCE

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ABOUT THE PLAN

The (ISC)² Diversity Equity & Inclusion Strategic Plan sets out our diversity, equity and inclusion goal for the cybersecurity profession, our strategic priorities and the objectives we'll achieve to realize this goal.

How the Plan Was Developed

The Plan draws on the most recent information gathered and directions identified through global research conducted by an international research firm, the evaluation and review of previous research conducted by (ISC)², and various organisations on the current global cybersecurity workforce.

The Plan was developed in stages to allow our teams, leadership and the (ISC)² Global Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Task Force to be involved in every step of the process. Extensive consultation was held with the Task Force and externally with industry partners and inclusion-focused organizations. Brainstorming sessions and focus group discussions also informed our team to help develop the Plan.

Our Plan is focused on gender diversity; racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity; and diversity of education, thought, skills and experience. Our strategy is centered around two strategic priorities:

1. Create Awareness & Access:
Overcome the lack of awareness of the breadth of opportunities and flexibility in the cybersecurity profession particularly among women, low-income communities, communities of color and the student pipeline to drive diversity today and ensure a diverse population in the future.

2. Support the Profession:
Develop structured guidelines, programming, alternative professional pathways, training, and strategic partnerships to support professionals, leaders, and organisations in building and sustaining an equitable, diverse and inclusive profession.

Our performance against the Plan's initiatives and measurements will be monitored and regularly reported to the (ISC)² Board of Directors and Leadership Team.

WHY DEI MATTERS

As the world's leading cybersecurity professional organization, we have a responsibility to lead the profession and to ensure it accurately reflects, represents and values the rich diversity and perspectives of our communities and members across the globe.

> We take this responsibility seriously and consider diversity, equity and inclusion as a top strategic priority.

Prioritising diversity, equity and inclusion and ensuring it is a part of everything we do is more than a strategic focus. It is essential to the success of the cybersecurity profession and, subsequently a "safe and secure cyber world." In order to achieve this mission, we must authentically ensure our workforce is as diverse as the global communities we serve.

There is a compelling business case for embracing diversity and inclusion in our profession. A growing body of research shows organisations that embrace diversity and establish an inclusive industry and workplace culture perform at higher levels, which means a safer and more secure cyber world. The direct benefits of diversity, equity and inclusion include higher employee engagement and retention of talent, better decision-making, faster and more creative problem solving and greater innovation—to name a few.

At (ISC)², we recognise a diverse range of experiences, perspectives, skills, and ideas makes us a stronger, more effective, innovative and safer community. This includes both our focus on increasing diversity within the cybersecurity profession and within our own organisation. In 2021, we embarked on our own diversity, equity, and inclusion initiative to ensure those within (ISC)² reflect the global communities in which we serve, have a clear sense of belonging within (ISC)², and that we are employing the best equitable practices in pay, recruitment and advancement.

Our first step was to form a representative Global Champions program including volunteer employees from various levels, regions and teams to improve our DEI efforts across the entire organization. We also partnered with diversity, equity and inclusion professionals to assess where we are today on our inclusion journey, which included developing a snapshot of the diversity of all of our offices across the world and conducting a comprehensive review of the following areas:

- Equitable representation across our workforce
- Inclusive training and practices within our workplace
- Diverse and inclusive practices within our external communities and marketplace
- Internal communication and awareness around diversity, equity and inclusion
- Organizational culture

The Champions used the results of this assessment together with their unique perspectives and experiences to develop a comprehensive internal strategy and action plan to address these key priorities.

(ISC)² | INTERNAL DEI STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

PHASE I - 2021
Building awareness and establishing internal practices

PHASE II - 2022
Implementing internal practices, guides and traning and integrating metrics

PHASE III - 2022
Reporting on growth assessing and adjusting implemented activities

PRIORITY 1: Employing Best Practices in Recruitment, Pay & Advancement

Using best-in-class and innovative tools to ensure we and the profession are equitably paying, recruiting and advancing ethic/racial groups and women at a pace concurrent with global practices

PRIORITY 2: Cultivating Cultural Competency & a Global Mindset

Integrating consistent training, social/cultural activities, tools and guides to ensure everyone is fully supported and empowered to increase their awareness and understanding of (ISC)² as one organisation that fully sees and values our various cultures, regions and individuals

PRIORITY 3: Integrating Inclusive & Transparent Communication

Operating with a fully open and transparent mindset while developing and implementing various communications mechanisms for employees and members; ensuring every employee has a timely, equal and appropriate level of awareness and information needed to perform at their best and succeed

PRIORITY 4: Creating a Sense of Belonging

Developing and implementing safe spaces, social/cultural activities, awareness celebrations, and employee-led communities to ensure everyone—including our members—feel heard, empowered, valued, proud and included

HOW WE DEFINE DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

When we talk about diversity, we are referring to the differences that make people unique. These include visible differences such as gender, age, language, ethnicity, race, cultural background and visible disabilities; and non-visible differences such as sexual orientation, religious belief and invisible disabilities. We also recognize diversity as the many ways that people are different in other respects such as family composition, educational or skill level, socio-economic background, geographic location and diversity of perspectives and thought.

DIVERSITY

Diversity is about who we are and the different ways we show up. Individually, each of us has different characteristics that make us unique.

EQUITY

Equity seeks to ensure an equal outcome for each person despite different circumstances by allocating resources and opportunities tailored to their specific needs.

INCLUSION

Inclusion is about level of participation and creating an environment where diversity is accepted and celebrated, and all people are able to fully participate.

OUR DEI MISSION & VISION

Our Vision

Fostering and advancing a

DIVERSE, EQUITABLE and INCLUSIVE

cyber world.

With that vision as our guidepost, our charge is

To remain committed to diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging across ethnicity, race, gender, age, religion, ability, status, identity, perspective and experience.

WE ARE FUELED BY THESE DIFFERENCES

that not only help to generate the innovative ideas we need to solve the complex problems facing our society, organisations and the cybersecurity community globally, but also what we need to collectively learn, grow and thrive.

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. Create Awareness & Access

(ISC)² seeks to overcome the overarching lack of awareness of the breadth of opportunities in the cybersecurity profession. This lack of awareness is especially noteworthy among women, those in low-income communities, communities of color and the student pipeline.

> *"We need to shift the definition of cyber. Make cyber – and how we define it – more inclusive."*
>
> – Bridget Kenyon, CISSP

When you search the term "cybersecurity," the first image you're greeted with is often a hoodie-clad shadowy figure at a computer. That figure is most likely male, and even though all you can see are their hands, likely white. The term is also associated with images of criminal actors and shadowy figures. Even when thinking about "the good guys," popular imagery within cybersecurity itself tends to rely on computers, server rooms, SOC facilities and sometimes simply binary code or icons to designate battle (skulls, locks and shields).

However, the field of cybersecurity itself has so much more to offer. The DEI Task Force had incredibly valuable input to provide to this topic. Through our discussion, we focused on the numerous challenges that contribute to the lack of awareness and the lack of perception of access to the cybersecurity field.

This discussion led us to three objectives as it relates to creating awareness of cybersecurity as a profession, and access to entering it:

Objective 1:
Establish (ISC)² in the global market as a leader, and go-to resource, for diversifying the cybersecurity profession.

Objective 2:
Increase the number of women and people of color who engage with (ISC)² as event attendees, professional development participants and speakers.

Objective 3:
Increase the pipeline of diverse cyber students.

The story of the cybersecurity workforce gap is one (ISC)² is all too familiar with. Our annual Cybersecurity Workforce Study provides an estimate each year of the deficit of qualified professionals facing the industry. Simply put, there are not enough cybersecurity professionals to go around.

This shortage prevents obvious challenges in the industry – burnout, turnover in staff, rising salaries which price out SMBs from competing for talent – but it also creates an opportunity. The need for diverse talent in cybersecurity cannot be ignored because the need for talent in cybersecurity is so prevalent.

The annual Cybersecurity Workforce Study, and other (ISC)² research is known industry-wide and focuses on issues facing the profession and professionals, as well as solutions to challenges. Using our access to cybersecurity professionals around the world, and our research resources, (ISC)² seeks to use their position to join other global leaders in the mission of diversifying the cybersecurity profession.

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

2. Support the Profession

Diverse cyber professionals need support not only as they enter the profession, but also to advance and remain within cyber. Through discussion with the DEI Task Force, we have found that not only do we need to address the recruitment of diverse individuals, but also the overwhelming retention challenge has many diverse individuals that enter the profession often leave within five years due to various challenges. This includes finding a mentor, overcoming biases, finding a sense of belonging in like-minded networks, and finding growth opportunities. Ensuring diverse professionals are presented throughout all job levels are key to diverse individuals entering the profession and staying because they see others who represent them.

In addition, our research indicates that our membership of women and people of color does not reflect the diversity of the profession today. In order to ensure inclusivity in our profession, we understand that our membership must also become more diverse.

The following are the two objectives we'll achieve to support the profession.

Objective 4:
Increase the number of women and people of color in the (ISC)[2] membership to accurately reflect the increasing number of those represented in the profession.

Objective 5:
Increase the number of women and people of color in leadership roles (Director and above) to ensure equal representation across job levels.

ACTION PLAN

(ISC)² DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES MAP 2021 – 2030

ONE MAIN GOAL:
To redefine the image of the cybersecurity professional and the profession to accurately reflect and value the diversity of the world it protects

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1
Create Awareness & Access

Overcome the lack of awareness of the breadth of opportunities and flexibility in the cybersecurity profession particularly among women, low-income communities, communities of color and the student pipeline to drive diversity today and ensure a diverse population in the future.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2
Support the Profession

Develop structured guidelines, programming, alternative professional pathways, training and strategic partnership to support professionals, leaders and organizations in building and sustaining an equitable, diverse and inclusive profession.

Objective 1
Establish (ISC)² in the global market as a leader, and go-to resource, for diversifying the cybersecurity profession.

Objective 2
Increase the number of women and people of color who engage with (ISC)² as event attendees, professional development participants and speakers.

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Objective 5
Increase the number of women and people of color in leadership roles (Director and above) to ensure equal representation across job levels.

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