



Confederation of Indian Industry



Equal Opportunity Pledge- Guidelines

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) works to create and sustain an environment conducive to the development of India, partnering industry, government and civil society. In this role, it is natural for CII to promote inclusion of women in the workspace, which is the only sustainable way to achieve economic growth. Women make up half the population of the country and therefore their economic participation seems like the correct thing to do. Beyond the moralistic stand, studies also show that the participation of women in the workforce is good for business. By becoming members of CII, businesses indicate their interest in nation building and participating in best practices, increasing their competitive advantage and contributing to society at large. CII therefore believes that business can play a significant role in women empowerment and has developed these guidelines along with the CII Indian Women Network (IWN) to integrate best practices to promote inclusion.

Scope of the Guidelines

As signatories of this pledge, companies are pledging their support towards Gender Parity and encourage women to achieve their potential to the fullest. This Equal Opportunity Policy applies to all employees, potential employees, vendors, contractors, communities and visitors. Adoption of this pledge indicates adoption of a value. The guidelines therefore apply not just to recruitment but can be extended to

- Employment
- Retention
- Promotion
- Transfer
- Training and Leadership development
- Working conditions
- Wages and salary administration
- Employee benefits and application of policies
- All interaction of the company with internal and external stakeholders

Manifestation of the Guidelines

The guidelines should be interwoven into current company policies and programs. For example, the Maternity/Paternity policy should be part of the larger leave policy, the safe travel policy should be part of the travel and/or office timing policy, etc. As much as possible, the policy should be applicable to both men and women and should not single out women. The attempt is not to make separate standalone policies for women, but bring about change within the organization that is beneficial to all employees including women.

SIGNATORIES

CII encourages all its members to become signatories to this pledge. Members can choose to sign up as

1. **Leaders of the pledge:** The leaders will get established as forerunners and trail blazers in promoting inclusion at the workspace, not just in India but internationally. They will agree to lead the way by introducing policies and practices beyond the mandatory requirements of the pledge.
2. **Core Members of the pledge:** Members who are unable to commit additional time and resources to the cause, but believe that something needs to be done to promote inclusiveness can sign up as core members to the pledge.

GUIDELINES FOR CORE MEMBERS

All members signing up as CORE signatories will ensure the following within their business:

INTERNAL POLICIES

1. The company will offer maternity leave as per law.
2. The company will provide affordable child care services (eg creches) for parents.
3. The company will develop a safety policy at work (free from harassment and bullying) and for travel.
4. The company will develop a sexual harassment policy with clear channels of communication and ensure confidentiality.
5. The company will depict women positively in all its communication (internal and external)

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

1. The company will undertake building the capacity of its women vendors.

GUIDELINES FOR LEADERS

All members signing up as LEADERS will ensure the following **in addition** to the core guidelines in their business:

INTERNAL POLICIES

1. Provide paternity leave for a substantial period. The attempt of these policies should be to redistribute the responsibility of parenting so that the entire burden does not fall on the women
2. The company will provide a “back to work” program to help women coming back from maternity leave to take on full responsibility of work.
3. The company will build in flexi hours/locations to enable employees to balance home and work responsibilities.
4. The company will build awareness around subconscious bias for its managers and top leadership.
5. The company will undertake an exercise to determine parity of pay and adjust for gender bias.
6. The company will develop leadership programs and track women participation.

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

1. The company will develop community initiatives to address the issue of gender.
2. Community programs will integrate the gender lens and challenge traditional gender stereotypes.
3. The company will work towards developing a vendor diversity policy.

COLLATING IMPACT

The CII will form a committee of members who will identify parameters to capture the impact of the efforts undertaken by the signatories of the EOP. CII will collate reported indicators to represent the impact its members have been able to create as relates to inclusion of women in the workspace. At the same time, CII will also create a platform to ensure exchange of best practices and recognize outstanding achievement. CII will also work closely with its members to help them achieve these parameters.