



# Employee Resource Groups City of Olympia

May 2024



**“Treat your employees like they make a difference, and they will.”**  
- Dax Bamania

# What are Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)?

- Voluntary, employee-led groups brought together to **build community among shared identities** and/or interests
- **Provide support** in personal or career development and **add perspective to City-wide challenges**
- **Create opportunities** for relationship building, mentorship/mentoring, and creating a better work environment



“Find a group of people who challenge and inspire you, spend a lot of time with them, and it will change your life.”  
- Amy Poehler



# Why ERGs?

- **Give voice** to people who are part of historically underrepresented groups in the workforce.
- Allows groups to air grievances as well as **access** professional development resources.
- **Provides a forum** in the workforce where members can meet to discuss and address workplace issues.
- **Gives a safe place** to connect with others who may understand their experience.



“The magic of  
new  
beginnings is  
truly the most  
powerful of  
them all.”  
- Josiyah Martin

# ERG business case:

- ✓ Makes the work environment more diverse and better for everyone ([Effective employee resource groups are key to inclusion at work...](#))
- ✓ Creates a safe place for workers ([Employee resource groups: importance and effectiveness](#))
- ✓ Works to attract the best talent for employment ([A Detailed Guide to Creating an Effective ERG Leadership Structure](#))
- ✓ Improves morale, engagement, belonging, and retention ([Effective employee resource groups are key to inclusion at work...](#))
- ✓ Promotes external impact ([Effective employee resource groups are key to inclusion at work...](#))
- ✓ Builds community across the City ([Effective employee resource groups are key to inclusion at work...](#))
- ✓ Creates greater innovation ([Employee Resource Groups: Everything You Need to Know](#))



**“A business  
is simply an  
idea to  
make other  
people’s  
lives  
better.”**  
-Richard Branson

# How ERGs support the work to Update Olympia 2045

([Olympia 2045: Comprehensive Plan Update](#) | [Engage Olympia \(olympiawa.gov\)](#) – Community Values & Vision)

**EQUITY** - “We envision a future where Olympia has a diverse and inclusive community, a robust and resilient local economy, and a strong multicultural arts and heritage presence for all to enjoy”

*[ERGs show the City’s commitment to a diverse and inclusive community and support our multicultural arts and heritage presence]*

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION & PARTNERS** – “Through collaborative and open discussions, Olympians embrace a shared responsibility to make our community a better place.”

*[ERGs provide one way the City is demonstrating a commitment to collaboration, participation, and partnerships]*



**“If you  
want to  
change the  
world, start  
with  
yourself.”  
-Mahatma  
Ghandi**

# How ERGs support the work to Update Olympia 2045

[Plan Update](#) | [Engage Olympia \(olympiawa.gov\)](#) – Community Values & Vision

[\(Olympia 2045: Comprehensive](#)

**PARKS, ARTS & RECREATION** – “A healthy, fun, welcoming and enriching place to live for all Olympians.”

*[ERGs provide one source of feedback and ideas to achieve this vision]*

**ECONOMY** - “Every Olympian is afforded quality lifelong opportunities that build pathways to upward mobility and financial stability. Olympia is a safe, resilient and welcoming city with abundant community character, making our city a choice place to live and a destination for visitors.”

*[ERGs help the City to be more inclusive and innovative in some of its challenges and issues]*

**PUBLIC SERVICES**— “Responsive services and affordable housing for all.”

*[ERGs are utilized to realize barriers and bridges to achieve this vision]*



“People working together in a strong community with a shared goal and a common purpose can make the impossible possible.”  
-Tom Vilsack

# What ERGs are at the City?

- **Staff of Color** (Launched on 02/07/24)
- **Women's Group** (re-Launched on 03/07/24)
- **LGBTQIA2S+ Group** (Launched on 04/03/24)
- **Disability Group** (Launched 05/08/24)



**“Every moment is an organizing opportunity, every person a potential activist, every minute a chance to change the world.”**  
- Dolores Huerta

# What happens at an ERG?:

An ERG decides their scope and desired outcomes. They decide who they are, how/when/where they meet and what they do. Below are some ways an ERG may get involved in the workforce:

- Volunteering
- Health & Wellness
- Social connection inter-departmentally
- Taking on City workforce & community issues
- Policy, practice, process change(s)
- Staff development
- Building morale and capacity for employee engagement, retention, and recognition



**“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world.**

**Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”**

**-Margaret Mead**

# ERG Leadership & Support

- ERG leaders meet quarterly to learn, know and grow from each other.
- ERGs are led by staff and sponsored by an Executive
- ERG inquiry and set-up are support through a standardized process which starts with contacting Keli Drake
- Keli Drake supports the ERGs and the ERG leadership team



**“Progress occurs when courageous, skillful leaders seize the opportunity to change things for the better.”**  
—Harry S. Truman

# Questions?



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**"When you make  
a choice, you  
change the  
future."**

**- Deepak Chopra**