

Ascend Telecom Infrastructure Private Limited



Diversity, Equal Opportunity and Inclusion (DEI)

Objective of the Policy

The primary objective of this policy is to promote equitable and unbiased practices across the organization. We aim to eliminate unlawful or unethical discrimination and treat everyone with respect and dignity. Through this approach, we strive towards fostering healthy relationships amongst everyone regardless of their background or identity, or diverse abilities, thereby making Ascend Telecom a safe workplace.

Scope and Applicability

This policy binds Ascend Telecom employees together and fosters a healthy workplace which ensures respect and dignity for everyone. It covers everyone (including contract workers, interns, trainees and others with any other kind of work engagement with the organization) regardless of their backgrounds, experiences, or hierarchies.

Policy Statement

Ascend Telecom is committed to fostering a culture of inclusion, diversity and equity. Inclusion is in our very 'DNA' which defines us, guided by our strong values — the "Spirit of Ascend Telecom". These values are the cornerstone of our Inclusion and Diversity (DEI) practices. We are determined to build an ecosystem where inclusive behaviors are lived and practiced by all, and remain part of the organization's ethos.

Our human capital is the most valuable asset we have. The collective sum of the individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, inventiveness, innovation, self-expression, unique capabilities and talent that our employees invest in their work represents a significant part of not only our culture, but our reputation and company's achievement as well.

We embrace and encourage our employees' differences in age, colour, disability, ethnicity, family or marital status, gender identity or expression, language, national origin, physical and mental ability, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, veteran status, and other characteristics that make our employees unique.

Ascend's diversity initiatives are applicable—but not limited—to our practices and policies on recruitment and selection; compensation and benefits; professional development and training; promotions; transfers; social and recreational programs; layoffs; terminations; and the ongoing development of a work environment built on the premise of gender and diversity equity that encourages and enforces: ☑ Respectful communication and cooperation between all employees.

- Teamwork and employee participation, permitting the representation of all groups and employee perspectives.
- Work/life balance through flexible work schedules to accommodate employees' varying needs.
- Employer and employee contributions to the communities we serve to promote a greater understanding and respect for the diversity.

All employees of Ascend have a responsibility to treat others with dignity and respect at all times. All employees are expected to exhibit conduct that reflects inclusion during work, at work functions on or off the work site, and at all other company-sponsored and participative events. All employees are also required to attend and complete annual diversity awareness training to enhance their knowledge to fulfil this responsibility.

Communication & Awareness – We focus on ensuring sustained communication about DEI to all employees. Regular leadership communication through townhalls, team meets, awareness mailers and blogs, reinforce our inclusion philosophy. We ensure that our communication is inclusive and accessible to all.

• **Equal Employment Opportunity** – Ascend Telecom is an equal opportunity employer. We focus on meritocracy and do not engage in or support discrimination in hiring, compensation, access to training, promotion, or retirement based on ethnic and national origin, race, caste, religion, disability, age, gender, creed, marital status, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, political orientation, protected veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law. We hire and promote based on qualifications, performance and abilities.

• **Accessibility** – We recognize that accessibility is a lever for creating a barrier-free environment where everyone can excel. We strive towards providing accessible digital and physical infrastructure by adhering to universal design principles.

• **Advancing Equality and Inclusion** – As a responsible organization, we raise awareness and educate employees on key areas of diversity and inclusion. We commemorate globally recognized days such as International Women's Day (IWD), and International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD).

Our Vision

Inclusion is a 'way of life' at Ascend Telecom, and this is achieved by integrating diversity effortlessly into every day working and encouraging all Ascend Telecom employees to be their authentic selves at all times. We are committed to creating and nurturing a sense of belonging through equitable practices and by embracing all forms of differences. We aspire to help our clients maximize value of their businesses and make Ascend Telecom an employer of choice that attracts, develops and retains diverse talent.

Focus and Commitment

The strategic agenda of the Diversity and inclusion charter is "treating everyone equally and ensuring inclusivity for all". We recognize and respect diverse people in our workforce such as people of different age groups, color, family or marital status, language, national origin, political affiliation, religion, socio-economic status, veteran status and other characteristics that make people unique.

We are committed to make deep inroads in the area of gender inclusion, disabilities inclusion, nationalities, suppliers' diversity, LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex and Asexual) inclusion and racial & ethnic inclusion. In addition, we remain focused on creating a culture of belonging through elimination of unconscious bias and moving towards conscious inclusion.

Grievance Redressal

Our internal grievance redressal system — The whistle blower protection Process — enables employees, vendors and service providers, contract employees, clients, retainers, consultants, trainees and interns to raise any grievance or complaint across various categories like sexual harassment, discrimination, health & safety,

unfair employment practices, among others. Similarly, our policy on Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) at the workplace provides a strong framework of confidentiality, assurance and protection to all.

We are committed to maintaining a safe workplace free from discrimination or harassment of any kind. All the cases are evaluated objectively and fairly.

Employees may report concerns to their reporting manager or HR manager

For complaints regarding sexual harassment, employees can also write to shrc@ascendtele.com.

Diversity and Inclusion Committee

The CEO is the key sponsor of the committee which was formed in 2021. It includes the CPO, as well as the functional and circle heads.

The primary objective of the committee is to drive inclusion in a sustainable manner across the organization as it is a key agenda for our board reviews.

The council meets quarterly to review key metrics, overall progress and discuss priorities for the upcoming quarter. Each council leader is accountable for driving a key actionable by cross-leveraging and collaborating with teams across.

Governance Redressal Mechanism

The HR team is responsible for the governance of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) charter. Periodical scorecards are published to the board for review of key metrics like gender pay parity, attrition, hiring among other. Employee perception of DEI is gauged through annual employee engagement surveys. Key organizational metrics on DEI are voluntarily disclosed publicly in the Annual and Sustainability reports. We regularly track completion of the Unconscious bias e-module with a key focus on leadership.

Inclusion in Action

We are committed to leveraging unique experiences and perspectives from our employees across a diverse spectrum to serve our customers across the globe. Diversity and Inclusion is the foundation for us to stay competitive in the market. Our initiatives and programmes help employees become more aware of their biases so they can demonstrate inclusive behaviors. Inclusive strategies are followed throughout the employee lifecycle

(hiring, training, career development, rewards & recognition, compensation & benefits, etc.) and drive enhanced employee experiences.

While there is leadership engagement to make inclusion a reality at Ascend Telecom, an internal network of passionate enthusiasts and allies from Business, Functional Team and HR Teams drive efforts to build inclusion as a 'way of life'.

Substantial references of Ascend Telecom's inclusive practices:

Policies & Procedures – Our key people policies and processes are inclusive in nature, underscoring fairness and equity and creating a balanced approach across a diverse spectrum of employees. Some of our policies offer certain benefits, and explicitly call out the support system for those from historically underrepresented backgrounds in order to consciously ensure non-discrimination. In addition, the policies are devised in line with statutory requirements wherever necessary.

Approving Authority

The DEI / HR head is the final approving authority for rolling out any initiatives under the charter, and is also the approval authority for budgets.