



Advancing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging at VHB

Diversity is a core value at VHB, and we are dedicated to fostering a culture of belonging where everyone feels welcome, respected, valued, and has equitable opportunities to develop and drive their careers. People from all backgrounds and life experiences are encouraged to be their authentic selves and are valued equally. We recognize that our efforts have no end date; we will always be iterating and improving as we continue this journey.

“Research tells us that diverse organizations with inclusive cultures are more likely to attract and retain talented professionals; be high performing, innovative, and agile; and meet or exceed financial targets. As important as these outcomes are, they are not the end game. At VHB, we are committed to sustaining a diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization because only in such an environment can each of us become our best self.” — *Mike Carragher, President & CEO*



VHB’s **DEIB Steering Committee** (DEIBSC), works to advance our strategic focus on DEIB, both internally and externally. Chaired by Mike Carragher, President & CEO, the 12-member committee includes executive, regional, and office leaders, as well as representatives from employee resource groups. The DEIBSC is responsible for helping to establish VHB’s long-term DEIB vision, goals and annual initiatives and measuring progress. Our focus areas are divided into four categories: **culture, recruiting, clients,** and **industry**, which are highlighted here.

Culture

Fostering our equitable, inclusive culture where everyone can feel like they belong.

Equity

VHB has longstanding policies and procedures in place to verify we are paying employees fairly and appropriately. We conduct extensive internal salary audits and benchmarking to maintain competitive pay across our footprint. We also build rigor into our pay equity policies and procedures by retaining independent experts to review pay equity. VHB was one of the first companies to sign the Boston Women’s Workforce Council’s 100% Talent Compact. In an effort to eliminate the gender and racial wage gaps, VHB reports companywide employee demographic and salary data anonymously to BWCC every two years.

Inclusion

Below are some of the ways VHB is advancing a more inclusive culture.

- **Unconscious Bias Awareness Workshop.** VHB created an unconscious bias awareness workshop to enhance employee understanding of bias, its prevalence, and how it can impact decision-making. All employees are encouraged to participate in this program.
- **Community Conversations.** Community Conversations offer a safe space that is open to all employees to listen, learn, and connect with the intent of building a stronger, more inclusive VHB community.
- **VHB IDEAL: Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity Alliance.** An employee resource group with 270+ members that engages employees on shared concerns and interests and promotes awareness, inclusiveness, openness, and diversity across the company.

Recruiting

Initiatives to attract and hire more diverse qualified candidates.

- **College Ambassador Program.** VHB College Ambassadors help build long-term relationships and connections with a diverse group of colleges and universities to attract more diverse candidates into our talent acquisition pipeline.
- **HBCU Connect Partnership.** VHB has been a dedicated partner of [HBCU Connect](#) for over five years, working together to showcase job opportunities on their platform and increase our presence among students and alumni from historically Black colleges and universities. Moving forward, we are excited to continue our collaboration and explore new strategies to cultivate relationships and attract inspired, innovative, qualified, and diverse professionals from HBCUs.



- **CREST (Commercial Real Estate Success Training).** VHB participates in the CREST program, a 10-week paid internship program that provides opportunities for women and people of color to learn about the commercial real estate industry. We've supported CREST since 2018 and have hosted four interns.
- **VHB's Guiding Principles for Hiring & Attracting Talent** support hiring managers in attracting and hiring employees from a full spectrum of diversity.

Clients

We're focused on elevating and embedding DEIB throughout all the work that we do.

Supplier Diversity

VHB partners with small and diverse businesses in both the public and private sectors. VHB's supplier registration portal, powered by minority-owned business [Supplier Gateway](#), helps to identify new diverse suppliers as well as track and report data.

55% of VHB's spend on billable projects was made up of small/diverse owned businesses in 2022.

Through B2B@VHB networking events, VHB offices help advance supplier diversity by hosting social/networking events for existing and potential new minority- and women-owned businesses (MWBES) and other diverse businesses.

Enhancing Equity in the Built Environment

From equitable access to transportation, healthcare, education, and employment, to affordable housing and green space, equity in the built environment can take multiple forms. VHB works closely and collaboratively with communities to understand what they truly need. We are dedicated to delivering future-focused solutions that build equitable and inclusive infrastructure. [Learn more.](#)



Industry

Leading change by modeling and inspiring progress.

- **D&I Focused Survey.** VHB is a leader in advancing DEIB in the AEC industry. In 2018, VHB co-sponsored (with the ACEC Design Professionals Coalition) the first D&I-focused survey conducted in the AEC industry, which established a baseline for benchmarking D&I program development. Survey results and collected examples and insights on best practices for furthering DEIB initiatives were published in a March 2020 report, [Diversity & Inclusion, Keys to Success & Lessons Learned](#).
- **Diversity Roadmap.** In 2023, in partnership with the ACEC Research Institute and Zweig White, VHB helped develop and launch the [Diversity Roadmap](#), a DEIB maturity model and benchmarking tool, enabling engineering firms to measure their current DEI&B efforts and progress. The Diversity Roadmap provides engineering firms representing the built environment with a structured approach to assess, monitor, and advance their DEI&B efforts. It allows them to align with industry standards, attract diverse talent, and create an inclusive workplace that promotes innovation, creativity, and sustainable growth.
- **Tufts University Racial Equity in Policy & Planning Fellowship Sponsor.** This fellowship program aims to empower graduate students from underrepresented backgrounds by providing them with a curriculum focused on environmental justice in planning.

Thought Leadership

ACEC FALL CONFERENCE

Fireside Chat: A Look Inside the Diversity Roadmap

Chief People Officer, Keri Kocur

EFCG HR EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE, 2023

DEI: Taking the Next Steps

Presenter: Chief People Officer, Keri Kocur

ACEC GEORGIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 2023

DEIB is Good for Business

Presenter: Chief People Officer, Keri Kocur

FIDIC GLOBAL INFRASTRUCTURE CONFERENCE, 2022

Environmental, Social, Governance Panel

Presenter: Mike Carragher, President & CEO

2021 WTS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

How to Commit to Being an Active DE&I Partner

Moderator: Mike Carragher, VHB CEO & President

2021 EFCG EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Beyond Doing Well, Doing Good

Panelist: Mike Carragher, VHB CEO & President

WHITEPAPER

Building a Sustainable, Equitable, and Resilient Future

ENGINEERING INC. MAGAZINE, SPRING 2020

"Expanding the Conversation: Twenty-two engineering firms lead an effort to promote industrywide progress on diversity and inclusion."

ARTICLE

VHB Bike-Ped Panel Addresses Barriers Faced by People of Color

DEIB Awards

2023 | NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CORPORATE DIRECTORS

DEI Award Finalist

2023 | ACEC CT DEIB AWARD

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Award

2022 | ACEC NEW YORK

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Award

2021 | WTS BOSTON

Honorable Ray LaHood Award

Mike Carragher, VHB CEO & President

2021 | AEC ADVISORS' DIVERSITY INDEX TOP FIRMS

Gender and Gender & Race Combined Index

2020 | WTS-NC

Rosa Parks Diversity Leadership Award

2020 | NAIOP-MA

Impact Awards, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion category

2018 | WTS

International Employer of the Year