

Research Report

YOUNG MEMBERS' PERSPECTIVES OF DIVERSITY & INCLUSION IN ST JOHN

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Report summary

Diversity and inclusion in St John: Young members perspectives in 2014 is a research report by the Australian Youth Advisory Team.

In 2014, the Australian Youth Advisory Team (formerly the Australian Youth Council) engaged young members of St John to gain an understanding of what diversity and inclusion means to this future generation, and to determine young members' perceptions regarding diversity and inclusion in St John, and future directions for the organisation. A consultation was held at the annual Youth Stakeholders Weekend in Blaxland, New South Wales in July 2014, in addition to an online survey completed by 156 young members of the organisation. The results of the consultation and online survey are presented herein.

While there were many differing views and understandings around diversity and inclusion, and these did vary with age, commonalities in members' definitions led to diversity being viewed as all the ways in which people differ, and inclusion is the way we participate and use diverse knowledge, skills and resources to benefit our organisation and the community.

The research also highlights that respondents believed that St John in Australia is already a very diverse organisation, with 89% of respondents rating St John 6 or above out of 10 for diversity, and 80.9% rating 6 or above out of 10 for inclusion. This feedback is linked to the respondents stating that diversity is beneficial to an organisation, and inclusion is an essential tool to leverage an organisation's success. 'Respect', 'humanity', 'equality', 'validity', 'awareness', 'welcoming' and 'mindfulness' are all words which respondents used when trying to convey their thoughts on diversity and inclusion. If St John can include these words in our dialogue and create an organisation which becomes synonymous with this culture, we may be able to tap into previously unseen potential and achieve a better Australia through our services.

Based on the research findings, this paper recommends several strategies for St John to benefit from a diverse and inclusive organisation.

1. Undertake research with both a) members and b) the broader community, to identify current barriers to participation in St John services and programs and to determine methods for improvement. Following this research, a strategy to eradicate these barriers should be developed and implemented.
2. Undertake research regarding current awards and promotion/appointment schemes regarding the regarding uptake of such schemes by diverse groups and perceptions from members, and make recommendations for ways forward.
3. Undertake research regarding determining opportunities for increasing communication and networking between various aspects of the organisation (e.g. Cadets and adult divisions).
4. Undertake research regarding restrictions regarding attendance at duties for younger members and members' views in relation to the same.
5. Establish a 'Diversity Council'. A Diversity Council could be tasked with, for example:
 - seeking methods for the organisation to monitor and report on the diversity of the membership across all service areas nationally
 - making recommendations as to the engagement diverse groups in the community regarding first aid learning and/or volunteering opportunities
 - reviewing policy, procedures, practices and decision-making processes to ensure that barriers to diversity and inclusion are not present

- investigating and advising on organisational good practice strategies for potential application in St John
- identifying good practice models to strengthen communication and networking channels between different areas of St John (e.g. at a divisional level in order to share knowledge, experiences and resources or between Cadet and adult members) and referring these to the appropriate area(s) of the organisation
- developing education campaigns targeted at all members (paid and volunteer) aimed at improving awareness of matters that relate to diversity and inclusion in St John and the broader community, and teaching respectful practices, and
- finding methods for acknowledging and celebrating the diverse and inclusive nature of our organisation. For example, involving ourselves in different cultural events and forums in the community, including feature articles on members who identify as diverse in organisational newsletters and forums such as Spotlight, establishing diversity networks within the organisation.

Looking beyond our walls, we are able to seek counsel from other organisations on diversity and inclusion, as well as utilise the diverse experiences of our Board and membership. By harnessing these capacities, St John is well placed to become a leading not-for-profit organisation in diversity and inclusion practices in Australia.

What is diversity and inclusion?

There appears to be no single agreed definition of diversity and inclusion, or how these two ideals interact. Are they mutually exclusive, interchangeable, inextricably linked or somewhere in between? To some, diversity and inclusion means tolerance, acceptance or an attitude.¹ To others diversity and inclusion are interchangeable words.² To others still, diversity and inclusion is about numbers, racial and gender differences—diversity: a code word for affirmative action or laws designed to ensure representation of minority groups.³

In all instances, however, the common thread in the way diversity is defined seems to be that diversity is simply all the ways in which we differ; it is the state of unlikeness. The ways in which we can be diverse is a never-ending list of possibilities; we can differ in work experience, marital status, educational background, parental status, income, religious beliefs, geographic location, race, gender and myriad of other examples. And the common ground on the idea of inclusion is thought to be the way in which we bring together and harness these diverse forces and resources in a beneficial way.⁴

'Inclusion puts the concept and practice of diversity into action by creating an environment of involvement, respect, and connection— where the richness of ideas, backgrounds, and perspectives are harnessed to create ... value'.⁵ It is the common ground, when discussing the implementation of a diversity and inclusion strategy that the two terms are not interchangeable; they are, in fact, inextricably linked, and that for such a strategy to be successful, an organisation will need both diversity and inclusion to be successful.⁶

When implementing a diversity and inclusion strategy, the success of such a strategy is often thought of in terms of its visible effects: the ability to better include people with visible differences such as gender and race and the ability to eliminate discrimination based on these differences.⁷ Evidence suggests, however, to enable these visible outcomes, a successful diversity and inclusion strategy focuses on being able to encompass diversity of thought.⁷

So where the definition of diversity and inclusion is about our state of unlikeness and how we are better able to develop inclusive practices that harness this difference, the implementation of a diversity and inclusion strategy, and the success of this strategy, should focus on perspectives and capabilities as the point of difference, rather than visible characteristics.⁸ A diversity and inclusion strategy is the starting point, but the success of an organisation with such a policy will be its ability to encourage diversity of thought and capabilities, and corral these into practices and a culture that is inclusive and as a result, diverse.

Organisations would benefit from a diversity and inclusion strategy that aims to '... attract, recruit and retain the best talent from the widest pool of candidates, while increasing creativity and innovation from leveraging different thought styles'.⁹

Why are diversity and inclusion important?

In simple terms, the nature of volunteering is changing and evolving as rapidly as community needs and wants are changing and evolving.¹⁰ As such, the not-for-profit sphere, with its 6 million volunteers, is acknowledging that it is time to challenge its idea of what volunteering entails in 2015, and examine how we can change to accommodate these shifting ideas of volunteering.¹¹

Twenty-five years ago, Australia was celebrating volunteers who maintained a long term and regular commitment.¹² Now young people's rates of volunteering are increasing, with the number of people volunteering doubling; however, the number of hours contributed

per person has decreased.¹² Volunteers, almost half of whom are females juggling families and/or work commitments, look for and take on short term volunteering options.¹³

Organisations that embrace this new world of volunteering are doing so through the prism of diversity and inclusion. This is because thinking in these terms allows an organisation to move from identifying problematic outcomes to implementing an organisation-wide strategy that reinvigorates the organisational view and in turn solves the problematic outcomes.

Research findings: What do young members think diversity and inclusion is?

A consultation was held at the annual Youth Stakeholders Weekend in Blaxland, New South Wales in July 2014, in addition to an online survey targeted at young members of the organisation. The results of the consultation and online survey are presented below.

Consultation results: Youth Stakeholders Weekend

A consultation was held with St John youth representatives from across the states and territories. Participants' ages ranged from 16 to 25 years. The consultation aimed to explore the group's ideas, beliefs and suggestions regarding diversity and inclusion in St John. The following is a summary of the results of the consultation.

What do you think diversity and inclusion is?

The respondents' answers to this question have been grouped into the 5 common themes.

1. Equality

Encouragement of the acceptance and involvement of all individuals within the organisation, rather than focusing on one particular demographic.

2. Participation

Acknowledgement of an individual's skills, knowledge and education base, and allowing them to freely demonstrate these and participate fully.

'Diversity is differentiation/awareness with inclusion being the act of participating'. YSW participant

3. Pride

Individuals being proud of their origins, race, beliefs and education, and feeling comfortable to freely express this.

4. The avoidance of labelling

Not labelling people inappropriately, and the removal of barriers that labelling may create.

5. Respecting differences

Involves the ability to share opinions and speak freely without reprisal, and acknowledging and respecting differences in skills, education, knowledge base, age, gender, sexual orientation etc.

'It's about thinking outside of the box and ensuring that our services are accessible to all.' YSW participant.

Is diversity and inclusion important?

The participants unanimously agreed that for St John, diversity and inclusion are very important for the success and future of the organisation.

'We need to consider diversity as a whole of culture change of attitudes and prejudices, not policy change, whilst also looking at diversity of ideas, not diversity of persons.' YSW participant.

Why are they important?

Participants felt that an organisation that is diverse and inclusive:

- encourages new ideas
- is more attractive to the general population
- celebrates and values difference
- encourages participation
- raises comfort levels and feelings of belonging and being respected.

Participants also thought that a diverse and inclusive organisation is one that does not have the main focus based upon meeting diversity/inclusion quotas.

'We focus a lot on cultural diversity; we should also focus on economic status, social status and lifestyle points.' YSW participant

What are other not-for-profit organisations doing?

- *Making volunteering for accessible to different groups of people*– Surf Life Saving Australia incorporated the 'Burkini' into their uniforms (unfortunately there is nothing on their website or in social media about this initiative).
- *Accessing diversity through recruitment*– One participant described that when recruiting, an unknown organisation gave an exercise around diversity. The exercise wasn't about achieving correct or incorrect answers, it was about observing how the participants answered the question (the organisation was looking for leadership, decision-making and problem-solving skills).

'Our volunteering doesn't fit everyone's lifestyle—are we limited by having too many requirements? Should we look at more episodic volunteering opportunities to encourage people from more diverse backgrounds to join?'
YSW participant

- *Using novel advertising to attract diverse volunteers*– The Big Help Mob (BHM) volunteering model is best described as a flash mob of volunteers. BHM has a mobile phone App to assist people in deciding what types of volunteering they want to get involved with. There are opportunities in St John where we can engage episodic volunteers (other than in Event Health Services or Community Care, for example).

St John has already been involved in adopting some of these strategies, evident as one member commented on a recent St John (NT) initiative,

'In St John (NT), we looked at processes for recruitment and targeted specific population groups (e.g. a Greek person is teaching people of Greek ethnicity). This was a really simple thing to do which did not take a huge amount of time or effort.' YSW Participant

Who should lead diversity and inclusion in St John?

The group agreed that diversity and inclusion in St John is everyone's responsibility and that organisational leaders and managers must be the role models for diversity inclusion.

'Diversity doesn't have to be that hard. It's about commitment.' YSW participant

Survey results

The AYC conducted an online survey between August and September 2014, to gain the views of young St John members regarding the topic of diversity and inclusion (particularly within St John). The respondents, 156 St John members (aged 12–25 years), were rewarded with a humorous animal clip as an incentive and reward for their participation.

Participant information questions

How old are you?

The survey sought to learn basic information about who the survey respondents were, including the age demographic of each participant and their role in St John.

The age of respondents ranged from 12–25 years. The high participation rate in the 19–25 age range makes sense given that proportionally, this cohort had a broader range of ages specified (7 years) than the other groups that spanned only 2 to 3 years (Figure 1). These age classifications were chosen consistent with theory on periods of development. During ages 12 to 14, known as early adolescence, formal operational thinking begins.¹⁴ During late adolescence (15 and up to 19 years), the formation of a positive identity occurs.¹⁴ However, there is a significant difference of the developmental maturity of a 15 year old and 18 year old, hence subdividing these categories into two distinct groups.¹⁴ Early adulthood includes the young adult years, including the early 20s.¹⁴ While these groupings differ slightly to St Johns definition of youth, being children (12-17) and young adults (18-26), they provide greater insight into views of these young members developmentally.

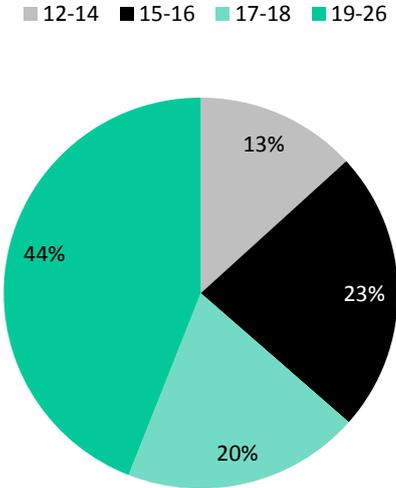


Figure 1. Respondents' age (year) by cohort.

Survey responses

Using your own words, how would you describe the terms 'diversity' and 'inclusion'?

This question was answered by 50% of the 156 respondents. Participant responses have been grouped into common themes with their frequency specified. The top 3 common themes have been highlighted.

1. Diversity as differentiation

Diversity was commonly seen by respondents ($n=55$) as the way people differ from one another, or as a method of differentiating from others or groups, such as race, gender, religion, sexuality, class, ability and so forth.

'In broad terms, diversity is any dimension that can be used to differentiate groups and people from one another. It means respect for and appreciation of differences in ethnicity, gender, age, colour, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, education, and religion. But it's more than this. We all bring with us diverse perspectives, work experiences, life styles and cultures...'

Respondent

People however went beyond traditional categorical definitions to suggest that diversity is also about diversity in thought, skills, experience and world view.

'We are all different but we can all come together as one.' Respondent

2. Inclusion is about participation regardless difference

Respondents felt that, inclusion is about giving all people the opportunity to participate in all facets of life ($n=51$). The act of inclusion was seen as voluntary and must be regardless of difference. Key areas included aspects such as participation in:

- decision-making
- leadership roles
- activities
- volunteering
- friendship/other groups
- conversations
- events.

Respondents also felt that inclusion involved action on their part and on the part of organisation, such as:

- to promote inclusive practices
- having open membership where people can join and participate in roles suitable for their abilities
- encouraging people from all backgrounds to get involved in activities
- acceptance practices
- striving for equality and accessibility
- valuing all contributions
- working together to solve problems or achieve common goals.

Some respondents ($n=5$) also felt inclusion involves certain acts, such as excluding marginalisation, ensuring/advocating discrimination does not occur, striving to embrace diversity and being aware of diversity and the issues that certain population groups face.

'Inclusion: opening opportunities for as many people from as many places without bias.' Respondent

'Diversity and inclusion go hand-in-hand and are imperial to the success of any organisation in the 21st century.' Respondent

3. Inclusive environments

Respondents also felt that inclusion was about the environment that is established. For people to feel included, respondents ($n=14$) believed that people must be made to feel:

- welcome
- cared for
- comfortable
- like they belong or are part of [an organisation]
- valued
- respected
- are not treated as 'other'.

'The gauging of how welcoming individuals are, and how comfortable they feel to stay.' Respondent

Respondents also described multiculturalism, commonalities and relationships as central to inclusive practices.

On a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being Great! Wow! Or Fab!), how diverse do you think St John is?

The result for this question demonstrated that generally, respondents feel that St John is a diverse organisation, with the average ranking 7.9 out of 10 (Figure 3). The results demonstrate positive views regarding diversity by all respondents with 89% ranking St John above 5 on the scale; however perceptions appeared to decline slightly as age increases. Noticeably, respondents aged 12–14 years were more inclined to rate St John as high on the diversity ranking scale (58.3% of those aged 12-14 ranking St John at 10), while the other age groups (Fig. 2).

Using the same scale, how inclusive do you think St John is?

The comparative rating between the diversity and the inclusivity of St John, suggest that respondents think St John marginally more diverse than inclusive, with an average ranking 7.6 out of 10. Again, the results demonstrate a positive view of St John in relation to inclusivity, with 82% of respondents ranking St John above 5 on the rating scale. Again, younger respondents (12 to 14) tended to rank St John as higher for inclusivity (with 66.7% ranking St John at 10) than other age groups (Fig. 3).

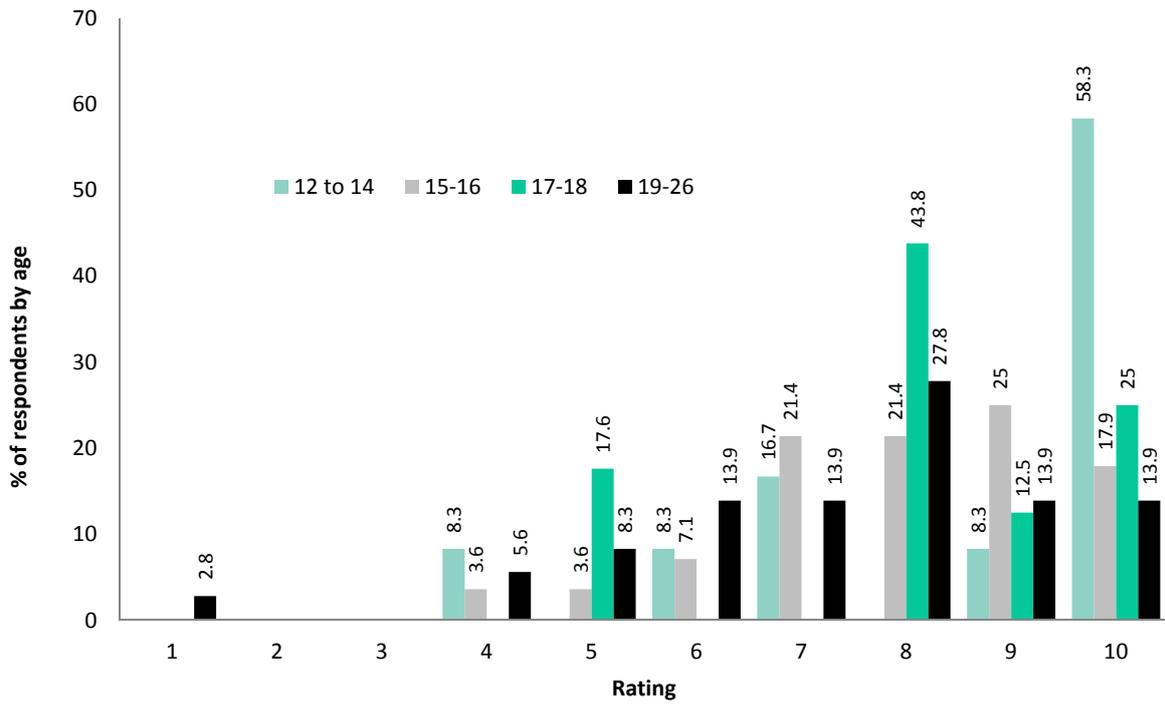


Figure 2. Diversity ranking, by age of respondents.

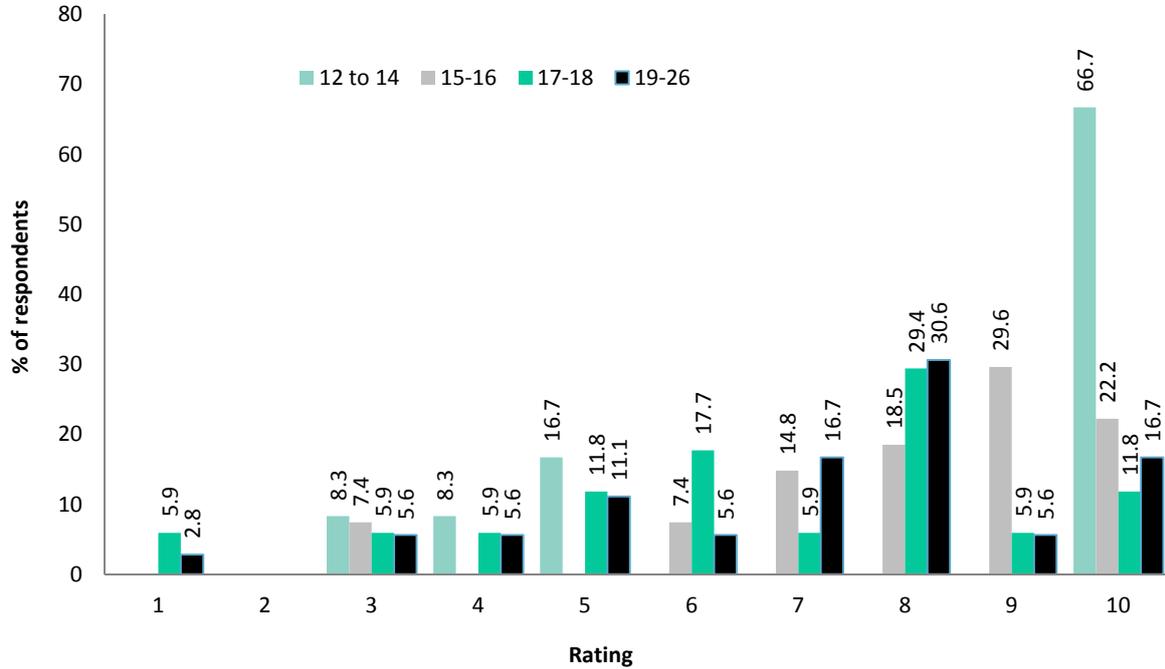


Figure 3. Inclusivity ranking, by age of respondents.

What are some examples of diversity and/or inclusion in your life?

The answers to this question, of which there were 55 respondents, have been grouped into key themes and are presented in order of theme, highest to lowest frequency.

1. School/university/other studies

Respondents ($n=19$) felt that their school, university or study environment was an example of diversity and/or inclusion in their life. Respondents felt that they interacted with persons from 'all walks of life' (respondent) in attending their studies, enjoying a diverse range of study topics, teaching and learning styles, and many enjoyed being included in school activities without risk of exclusion.

'There are many different people who come from different cultures, countries and religions at school and all try to include them in everything I possibly can.' Respondent

2. Diverse social/friendship group or activities

Respondents ($n=12$) felt that they participated in diverse social groups or activities, and their friendship groups included a high degree of diversity, including LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex) groups.

'... friends from different places, no bias or exclusion for silly reasons such as race, gender, sexual preference, religion. I have friends who are gay, transgender, Muslim, Christian, atheist. I do not exclude anyone for such silly reasons.' Respondent

3. Multicultural community (non-specified)

Respondents ($n=11$) felt they were part of multicultural communities, such as being friends with people from other countries/cultures, and/or identified as having a multicultural upbringing or family life and food.

'Multicultural upbringing ... [I] never let someone sit on their own as I did a kid.' Respondent

4. Sporting/physical activity/groups

Respondents ($n=8$) felt that engaging in sporting or physical activities, clubs or groups was an example of diversity in their lives as these environments appeared to have high rates of inclusion for people from many different backgrounds, abilities and experiences.

'In my footy club, anyone can join.' Respondent

5. St John activities

Participating in St John activities was included as an example of diversity and/or inclusion ($n=7$)

'I feel like I have been included into the organisation of St John.' Respondent

6. Diverse workplace

Working in a diverse workplace or being a minority in a workplace ($n=7$) contributed to respondents' experiences of diversity and inclusion, with respondents reporting they frequently worked with many people from 'different walks of life' such as different backgrounds, cultures, abilities, religions and so forth.

'As a male registered nurse, I am a prime example of demonstrated diversity based upon my gender. As a male nurse I am in minority group, in a heavily dominated, historically female, working group.' Respondent

'We live, work and study in diverse environments with people of all different walks of life and I believe that mostly, the younger generation is very inclusive.' Respondent

7. Inclusive practices in the community

Many respondents ($n=7$) reported that feeling welcomed, inclusion of new people in groups, and being mindful of others, were practices that shaped people's experiences of diversity and inclusion.

'At my school we are taught to have the tolerance to value our diversity. We are able to accept and value people who are of a different race, religion or who have a particular way of life which is different to ours. We all include each other no matter our similarities or differences.' Respondent

What is an example of diversity and/or inclusion from your experience with St John?

The answers to this question have been grouped into key themes and are presented in order of theme, highest to lowest frequency:

1. Participating in a diverse division

A high number of members ($n=17$) felt that belonging to a diverse division was an example of diversity and inclusion in St John. Members suggested that their divisions were highly multicultural, including members of all ages, religions, abilities, etc.

2. St John activities

Respondents ($n=15$) felt that participating in St John activities was an example of diversity and inclusion. Activities included Cadet camps and first aid competitions, and other Cadet and youth events.

3. Participating in a diverse volunteer environment

Respondents ($n=19$) reported that working in the community as volunteers, such as participating in events, was an example of diversity and inclusion. Respondents highlighted experiencing the diversity of other volunteers, plus treating or conversing with the community working in different volunteer roles as examples.

'Where I am in a general suburban adult division, we are very multicultural with ethnicity, gender, age, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, education, and religion—we have a good mix.' Respondent

4. Experiencing a welcoming environment

Respondents ($n=6$) reported that experiencing a welcoming environment, being included as part of a team, and experiencing healthy relationships between divisional members were examples of diversity and inclusion in St John.

5. Other responses

Respondents ($n=11$) reported many other examples of diversity and inclusion (each with a lower frequency than 5), including participating in decision-making forum, developing knowledge from training/experience, not experiencing barriers to joining St John, having a good Cadet-to-adult transition process, and changes to the Cadet Code of Chivalry.

'When the Code of Chivalry changed from 'one God' to 'my god' allowing inclusion of so many different religious beliefs, it opened the doors for cultural and religious diversity among our members.' Respondent

Is diversity and inclusion important to you in your life generally?

Most respondents to this question believed that diversity and inclusion was important in their lives generally (Fig. 4). None of the respondents answered 'no' to this question.

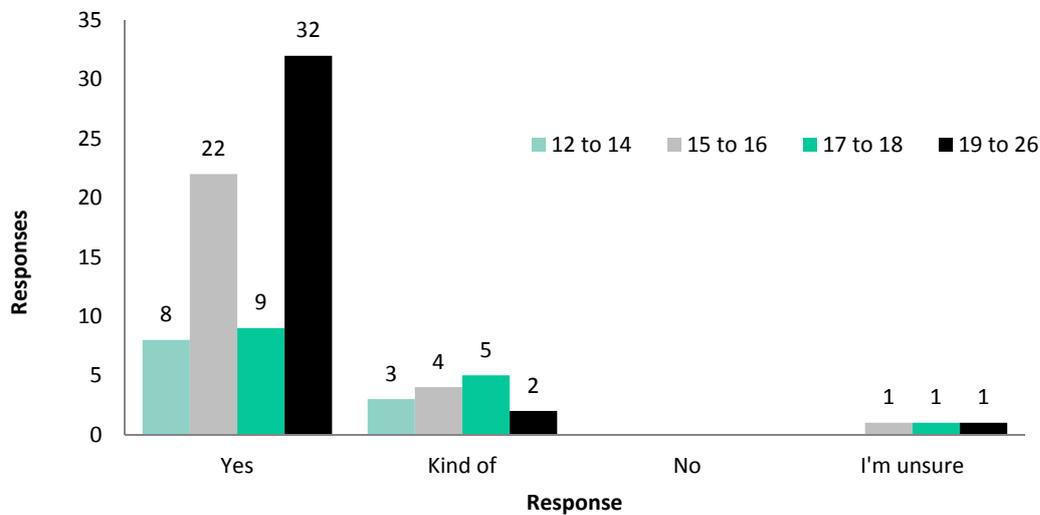


Figure 4. Importance of diversity and inclusion in the lives of respondents, by age.

Respondents were afforded the opportunity to provide comments for this question. The common themes from these respondents ($n=16$) included:

- agreement with the statement that diversity and inclusion are important in their lives
- feeling welcomed and valued as important
- being aware of diversity/difference is important, but *practicing* inclusion is what matters
- looking for commonalities and not differences
- that St John should be reflective of the multicultural/diverse Australian community
- ensuring equal treatment for all
- practicing inclusion for the right reasons, not simply because it looks good for organisations.

'Diversity and inclusion is important in my life because we are all made human and we all deserve the same respect and inclusion.' Respondent

Do you think diversity and inclusion is important for St John?

Overwhelmingly, 93.2% of the 88 participants who responded to this question selected 'yes' to this question (Fig. 5).

Again, respondents were afforded the opportunity to provide comments, a small number reinforcing that diversity and inclusion is important for St John. Other responses included:

- that it is important to work towards common goals
- it is useful to have a diverse workforce to reflect the communities St John works in; this reflects an organisational commitment to diversity and inclusion
- innovative practices are essential.

One respondent noted that while diversity and inclusion is essential, given the role St John plays in the event health services environment, some selection on the basis of ability is mandatory.

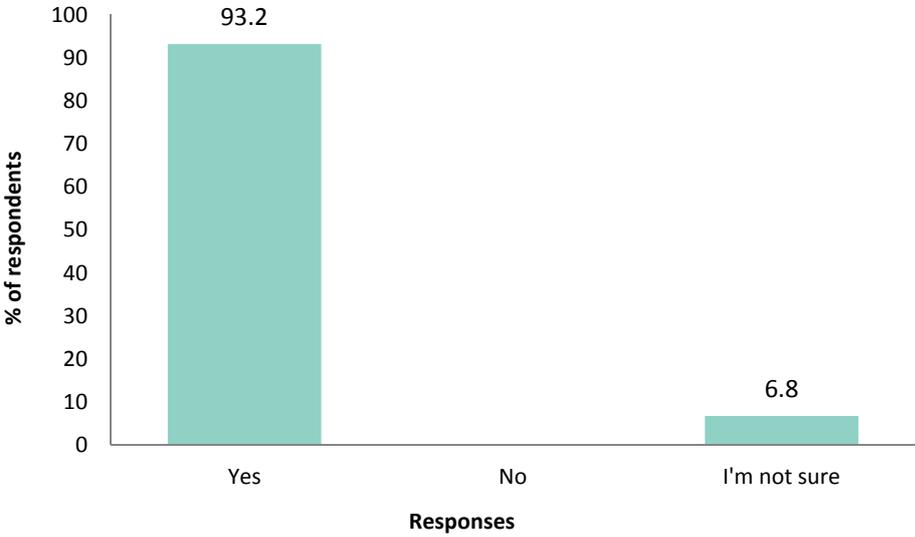


Figure 5. Importance of diversity and inclusion for St John.

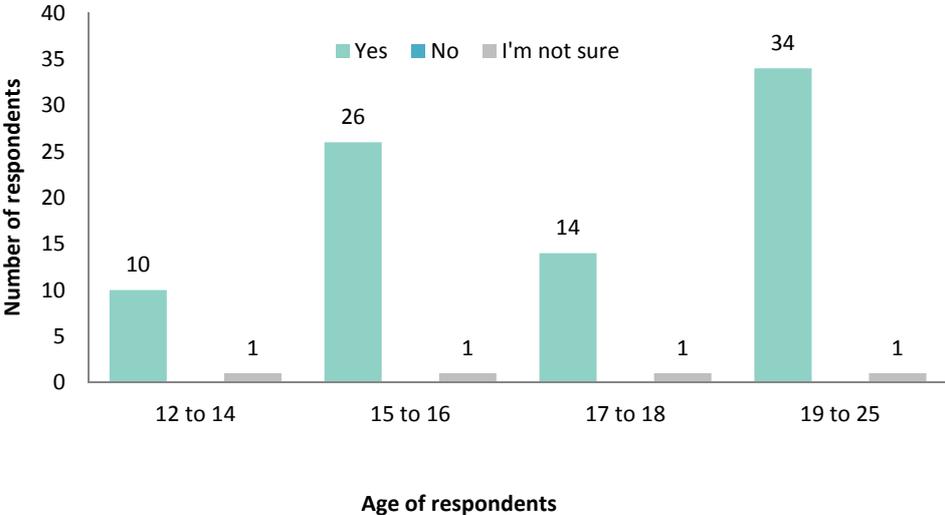


Figure 6. Importance of diversity and inclusion for St John, by age.

Do you think St John needs to do more in the area of diversity and inclusion?

The majority of respondents felt that St John can make improvements in the area of diversity and inclusion, suggesting that it is a priority for the organisation (see Fig. 7).

Respondents aged 12–14 had the highest rate of the response 'Not right now, but maybe in the future' (being 50% of the sample size who responded to that question) suggesting this age group had the most satisfaction with diversity and inclusion in St John at present. The 19–25 age group had the highest rate of the response 'Definitely–ASAP' (39% of respondents in the sample size who responded to this question) suggesting this age group had the most dissatisfaction with the diversity and inclusion in St John at present.

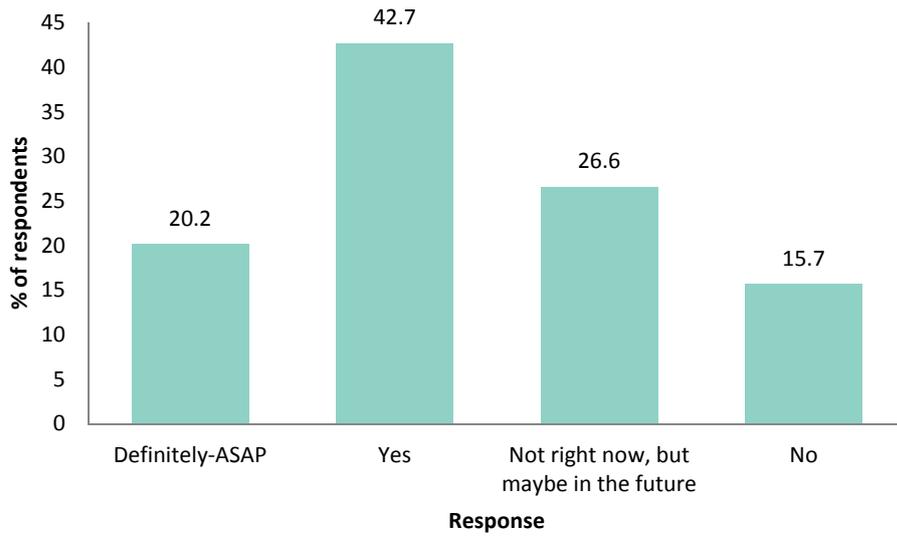


Figure 7. Degree of priority for improvement within St John.

Respondents were afforded the opportunity to provide comments for this question. Respondents ($n=14$) felt that:

- more needs to be done to target diverse communities for first aid courses
- more needs to be done to increase cultural diversity of members
- LGBTI people feel less validated in their participation in SJAA and often feel the need to keep quiet about their LGBTI status
- St John would benefit from greater communication and networking between divisions
- encouraging Cadets to become involved with adult divisions would aid inclusion
- more open divisional nights may assist
- cultural awareness of members required development
- restrictions for Cadets to attend certain duties is a barrier to inclusion.

Discussion

The research has yielded rich information on the perspectives of younger St John members, and provides St John with insights that may serve as a window into a future that is not yet written and full of possibilities. St John may potentially use the results contained herein as a road map for how the organisation may further engage members from all pockets of the Australian community in its core goal of making first aid a part of everybody's life, whether this be in relation to volunteer or commercial first aid services.

The research has demonstrated that young members feel that St John is both an inclusive and diverse organisation. With averages between 7.5 and 7.9 out of 10 for diversity and inclusion respectively, it can be suggested that St John is faring well for diversity and inclusion practices. However, there is room to benefit further by learning from our membership, continuously improving existing practices, and employing innovation.

As young adolescents (12-14) tended to rank St John higher than the other age cohorts. The researchers speculate that this may be due to age, maturity and experiences of the participants. Human development is cumulative, that is, people's view of the world is shaped by previous experiences that are both products of social interactions and their environment.¹⁴ For example, 12-14 year old members generally do not have leadership responsibility in divisions and would experience inclusion in a very different way to say, a 19 year old engaged in a management role. Similarly, regarding diversity, any young person may join a cadet division (regardless of background), however do we recruit a specific type of young person into leadership roles (e.g. personality type). What each group experiences and expects from diversity and inclusion may be very different and will affect their perspective on whether or not we do this well in St John. Additionally, early adolescents' formative operational thinking processes have only just begun—that is, from age 11, adolescents only begin to reason, systemise their ideas and create theories about the world and their place in it.¹⁴ As a result, younger adolescents tend to be more idealistic than their older counterparts.¹⁴

Interestingly, respondents felt that diversity and inclusion was more important in St John than in their day-to-day lives. This suggests that young St John volunteers are seeking a supportive and inclusive culture in which to give time and effort, most likely because they care about the organisation and its cause. This hypothesis would be consistent with the literature on the volunteering trends of young people and their motivations to volunteer. The leading motivation for volunteering being altruism, including factors like believing in the cause supported by the organisation, undertaking activities that they are passionate about and interested in.^{15, 16} Organisations like St John have the opportunity to harness this passion and become active agents in leading diversity and inclusion both at the organisational level, as well as in the community.

While respondents were on the whole satisfied with the diversity and inclusion practices of St John, the majority felt that there was some margin for improvement, now or in the near future. For example, according to respondents, St John could benefit from developing strategies to further engage members of the Australian community from diverse backgrounds in first aid learning and volunteering. Some participants suggested that organisations can benefit from their makeup and client-base being reflective of the broader community. The First Aid in Schools is wonderful example of an initiative that targets a broad population in our community. Conversely, Project Survival targets a narrow population group (e.g. those that are experiencing disadvantage) in the community. These examples are evidence of areas St John is already addressing inclusivity and diversity.

Respondents also felt that St John could further benefit from continuing existing work around developing strategies and showing leadership in reducing barriers between Cadet

and adult members—respondents suggested this occur both at a divisional and event level. Improved communication and increasing networking opportunities was mentioned by many respondents as a way to develop our inclusiveness and eliminate these silos.

Respondents also felt that St John might benefit from finding more ways for all people's contributions, regardless of their backgrounds or difference, to be valued, welcomed and included. Undertaking research about the inclusiveness of St John's existing awards and promotion/appointment schemes may be one method for ensuring that recognition and procedural fairness is applied to members equally across the board.

Though young, these members seem to understand the importance of continually moving forward on this journey of organisational growth and improvement. Embarking on such a journey is part of quality improvement and will aid St John in not just surviving, but thriving. The organisation must leverage the benefits the diverse membership has to offer, and continue to seek more inclusive ways in which to operate so as to build a safer, better and more resilient Australia in which to live, work and volunteer. To do this, St John might look to other organisations that are already employing strategies to ensure a diverse and inclusive workforce. For example, the Australian and New Zealand Banking Group (ANZ) have established a Diversity Committee to drive diversity and inclusion in ANZ. Elements of the ANZ strategy include:

- education and communication of all line managers and employees on existing policies and processes
- challenging unconscious bias in mindsets and behaviours in policy and processes, such as recruitment, promotion, leadership and other systems
- ensuring flexibility in work options across all aspects of the employee lifecycle
- measuring performance in diversity and inclusion by undertaking a whole of employee survey to better understand the demographic diversity of the workforce, assess levels of employee engagement and inclusion amongst different groups in the organisation
- a focus on sexual orientation and gender inclusion through the ANZ Pride Network that aims to be a contact point and support for LGBTI employees in ANZ. The ANZ Pride Network focuses on raising awareness, education, removing unconscious bias in policy and processes, and establishing external partnerships to inform their approach, and importantly, celebrating their people and progress.¹⁷

Goldman Sachs Australia has also incorporated a network for LGBTI employees into their diversity strategy via the GLaM Network, and believes that their workforce must be reflective of the diversity of the communities in which they work in. Approximately 12% of the Goldman Sachs Australia workforce is LGBTI with a managing director identifying as LGBTI.¹⁸

Pro Bono Australia, however, suggests that Australian not-for-profit organisations have fallen behind their business sector counterparts and are only in their infancy in diversity and inclusion practices.¹⁹ Pro Bono Australia believes that Australian not-for-profits could learn much by evaluating their own organisational structures and practices.¹⁹

Raising awareness and teaching respect are among the solutions alluded to from the qualitative data collected and the YSW consultation. ANZ has tackled this issue in the workplace by initiating education and communications strategies.¹⁷ The Commonwealth Bank employs a *Diversity in Leadership* approach that also includes awareness raising and education, transparency, mentoring and casting a diversity lens over all policies and practices.²⁰

St John may benefit from implementing its own diversity strategy, with similar aims to those of ANZ, Goldman Sachs and Commonwealth Bank.²⁰ Like ANZ, St John may benefit by better understanding its membership and how it is faring with respect to the barriers faced regarding diversity and inclusion practices, by conducting research with its

membership. Following this, St John may then design targeted strategies to make improvements. For a culture of inclusion to be evident, a diversity and inclusion strategy must then inform our decision-making processes in the daily running and leadership of the organisation.

When respondents conveyed their thoughts on diversity and inclusion, they used terminology such as 'respect', 'humanity', 'equality', 'validity', 'pride', 'awareness', 'welcoming' and 'mindfulness'. St John is presented with the opportunity to further understand what its members are attempting to say on this important topic, and use these powerful key words in framing the values of a strategic framework that will aid St John in benefiting from a diverse and inclusive organisation now and into the future.

The responsibility of diversity and inclusion cannot, and should not, rest on a person or group; diversity and inclusion is an outcome of culture. In saying this, to achieve this culture of change, and strengthen St John's existing practices, strong leadership, innovation and a strategic plan is required to create a culture of inclusion and the wisdom to acknowledge the benefits of diversity and move forward as an organisation.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. Undertake research with both a) members and b) the broader community) to identify current barriers to participation in St John services and programs and to determine methods for improvement. Following this research, a strategy to eradicate these barriers should be developed and implemented.
2. Undertake research regarding current awards and promotion/appointment schemes regarding the regarding uptake of such schemes by diverse groups and perceptions from members, and make recommendations for ways forward.
3. Undertake research regarding determining opportunities for increasing communication and networking between various aspects of the organisation (e.g. Cadets and adult divisions).
4. Undertake research regarding restrictions regarding attendance at duties for younger members and members' views in relation to the same.
5. Establish a 'Diversity Council'. A Diversity Council could be tasked with, for example:
 - seeking methods for the organisation to monitor and report on the diversity of the membership across all service areas nationally
 - making recommendations as to the engagement diverse groups in the community regarding first aid learning and/or volunteering opportunities
 - reviewing policy, procedures, practices and decision-making processes to ensure that barriers to diversity and inclusion are not present
 - investigating and advising on organisational good practice strategies for potential application in St John
 - identifying good practice models to strengthen communication and networking channels between different areas of St John (e.g. at a divisional level in order to share knowledge, experiences and resources or between Cadet and adult members) and referring these to the appropriate area(s) of the organisation
 - developing education campaigns targeted at all members (paid and volunteer) aimed at improving awareness of matters that relate to diversity and inclusion in St John and the broader community, and teaching respectful practices, and
 - finding methods for acknowledging and celebrating the diverse and inclusive nature of our organisation. For example, involving ourselves in different cultural events and forums in the community, including feature articles on members who identify as diverse in organisational newsletters and forums such as Spotlight, establishing diversity networks within the organisation.

Notes

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