



**DENVER**  
THE MILE HIGH CITY



**It's Time**  
NETWORK  
Engaging Women & Girls



**WOMEN'S  
COMMISSION**  
DENVER HUMAN RIGHTS &  
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS



**It's Time 2017**

# Denver Gender Equity Summit

**SUMMARY REPORT**

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Over 350 community members joined Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock and other metro mayors, city managers, and key stakeholders from foundation, business and non-profit sectors in Colorado to collaboratively prioritize solutions and pledge action to address systemic inequity. Participants examined how government policies and organizational practices can promote gender equity and inclusion in Denver and other cities throughout the state. They explored three key topics that underlie this issue: Career Advancement, Family-Friendly Workplaces, and Cultures of Inclusion. If Colorado can make significant progress on each of these issues, we will have made great strides toward achieving gender equity in the workplace.

Hosted by It's Time Network, Denver Mayor Michael B. Hancock's Office, Denver's Office on Women and Families and the Denver Women's Commission, attendees included members of the Metro Mayors Caucus and leaders, and grassroots participants from the public, private, nonprofit and community sectors. Using a unique conference technology and format, known as America Speaks, participants were able to see common themes and opinions displayed in real time and vote on a set of actionable priorities on each topic electronically, for immediate and transparent results.



**Goal:**

It's Time 2017 Denver Gender Equity Summit – Convene a cross section of leaders, including Mayor Michael B. Hancock, metro mayors, city managers, and key stakeholders from the business and non-profit sectors to develop short term strategies and long term infrastructure to advance gender equity in workplace settings and beyond.

**Outcomes/Objectives:**

1. Promote the importance of gender equity, inclusion and intersectionality in the workforce setting and beyond;
2. Compile ordinances, policies, and executive orders from the Metro Mayors Caucus;
3. Partner with city managers to examine internal workforce practices to promote equity and inclusion in the workforce;
4. Compile and capture key strategies from the business and non-profit sector

It's Time Network Denver Network City Chapter  
The Denver Women's Commission

# It's Time 2017: Denver Gender Equity Summit

## A Message from the Summit Organizers

As you approach your work today, we ask that you consider the meaning of the terms, equality, equity and inclusion. **Equality** is treating everyone the same regardless of their specific requirements. **Equity** provides people with tailor-made tools to accomplish a given goal. **Inclusion** is an action, it is how we set the stage for everyone to contribute and participate in an authentic and intentional manner.

To reach our goals of an equitable workplace requires that we are mindful of Intersectionality, a term that recognizes the interconnected dimensions of our identity and how exclusion, discrimination, and disadvantage based on race, ethnicity, sex, class, gender identity, sexual orientation, and ability compound and overlap.

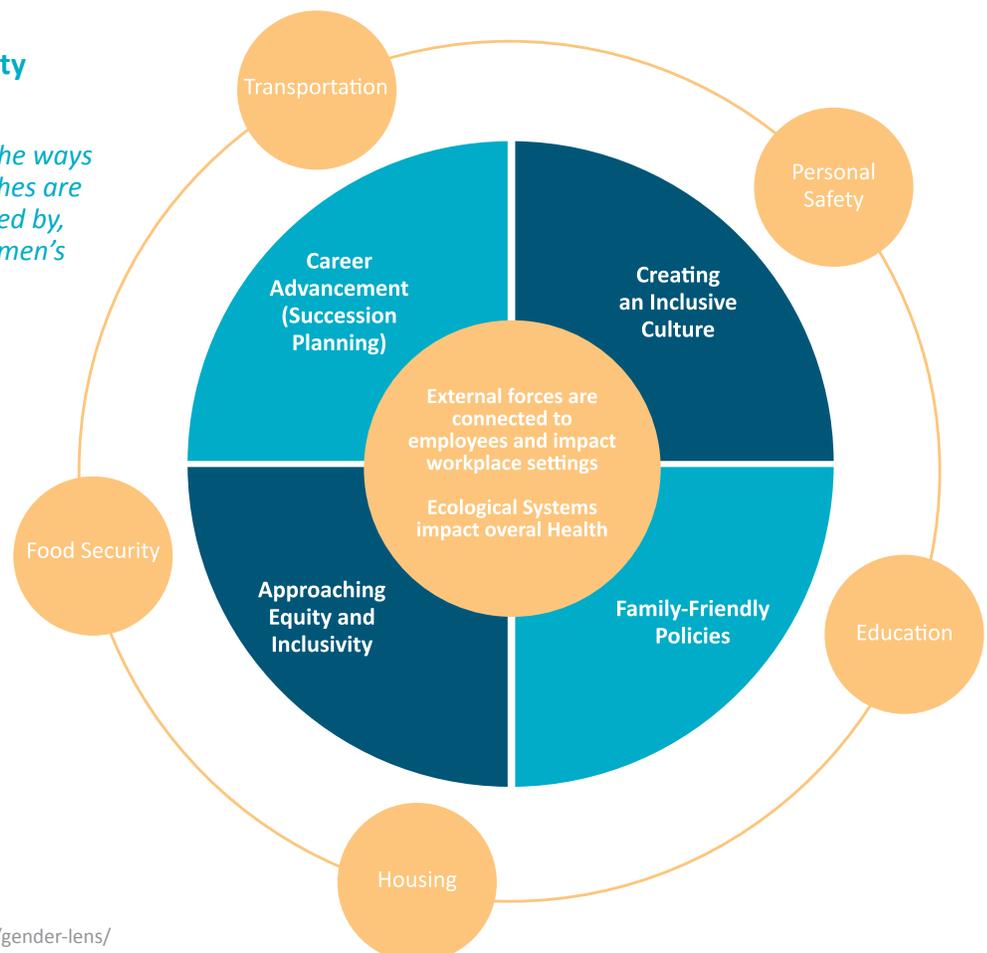
### Why is it important to use an intersectional lens as we pursue equity?

- It can help to identify people who are left out in the margins in our pursuit of equity.
- It can expose gaps in policies and practices that might be working for a few, but not all.
- It can generate opportunities for new cross community partnerships in the pursuit of more equitable workplaces.

Intersectionality also allows us to see how equity at work is influenced by where we live, thrive, and learn and our ability to access systems like transportation, affordable housing, quality education, and public safety. When we lead through an intersectional lens, we can capture the richness of our community's diversity and build a better future for all.

## It's Time 2017 Gender Equity Summit Focus Areas

*"Using a gender lens reveals the ways in which content and approaches are gendered – informed by, shaped by, or biased toward men's or women's perspectives or experiences<sup>1</sup>"*



<sup>1</sup><http://tag.rutgers.edu/teaching-toolbox/gender-lens/>

## Who Attended the Summit:

### What is your gender?

Female	86%
Male	11%
Transgender, M to F	0%
Transgender, F to M	0%
Gender Queer	2%
Other	1%

### What is your ethnicity?

Hispanic/Latino (of any race)	17%
Not Hispanic	83%

### What is your race?

Black/African American	10%
Native American/Alaskan Native	3%
White/Caucasian	68%
Asian	4%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	1%
Other	14%

### Where do you live?

Denver Metro Area	74%
Colorado outside this Metro Area	23%
Elsewhere in the US	3%
Outside the US	0%

### What is the highest level of education you've completed?

Some high school	0%
High School graduate	1%
Some College	7%
Bachelor's degree	34%
Graduate degree	56%
Other	2%

### What is your experience in relation to gender equity issues?

Complete gender equity in the workplace	9%
Substantial gender equity in the workplace	49%
Significant gender inequity in the workplace	33%
Major gender inequity in the workplace	10%

### What is your role relative to gender equity?

Policy or government related work in gender equity	27%
Work at non-profit that addresses gender equity	36%
Not currently doing any work on gender equity	21%
Other	17%

## Summit Format

The format for this event was a “21st Century Town Hall Meeting” format developed by the nonprofit America Speaks. All 350 participants received participant guides and listened to panel discussions throughout the day. Everyone was randomly assigned to tables where they participated in facilitated, small group discussions to generate ideas to address the three key topics. The comments from more than forty tables were analyzed and developed into themes that summarized the main ideas and priorities for action for everyone participating. Since these table conversations were informed by data and best practices, and incorporated the views of many diverse people, the priorities that were developed and the results of the keypad polling reflect more than just individual views. They reflect the shared wisdom of many people from the Denver Metro Area and beyond that emerged during a day of learning and dialogue. Below is a list of the main themes identified in each discussion, as well as the keypad polling results, when participants were asked to prioritize the ideas.

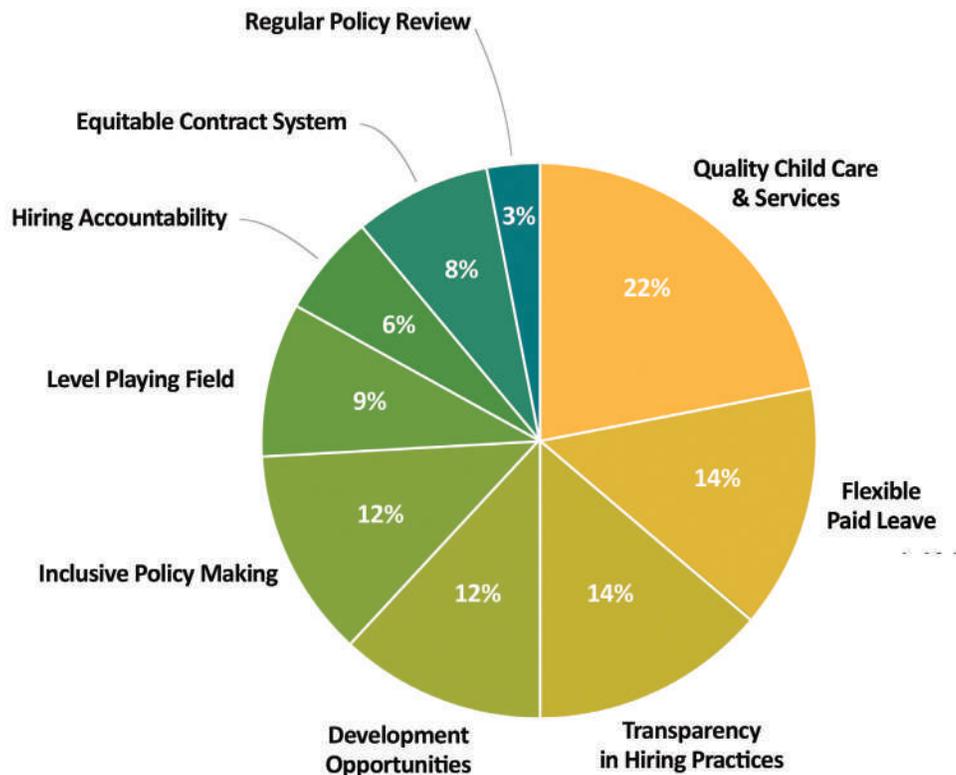
## Career Advancement

### **Most important challenges that get in the way of women’s ability to advance in their careers:**

1. Traditional male oriented social norms, for example that women don’t need the money and/or don’t want the responsibility
2. There is a white male way of doing business that excludes women, for example, closed social networks masculine language
3. Competing priorities for work and family
4. Care-giving stereotypes
5. Lack of affordable childcare
6. Some women lack confidence, doubt their skills and are risk averse, for example, they hesitate to apply for positions when they do not have ALL of the skills required on a job posting
7. Concern for personal safety at work and outside of work (domestic violence, sexual harassment, bullying)
8. A double standard that women who advocate for themselves at work are considered “bitchy and bossy” while men are considered “strong and smart”
9. Gender gaps in leadership positions
10. GEM: Age and appearance bias exists much more for women than men
11. GEM: Women take on much of the emotional labor at both work and at home but it is not work that leads to career advancement

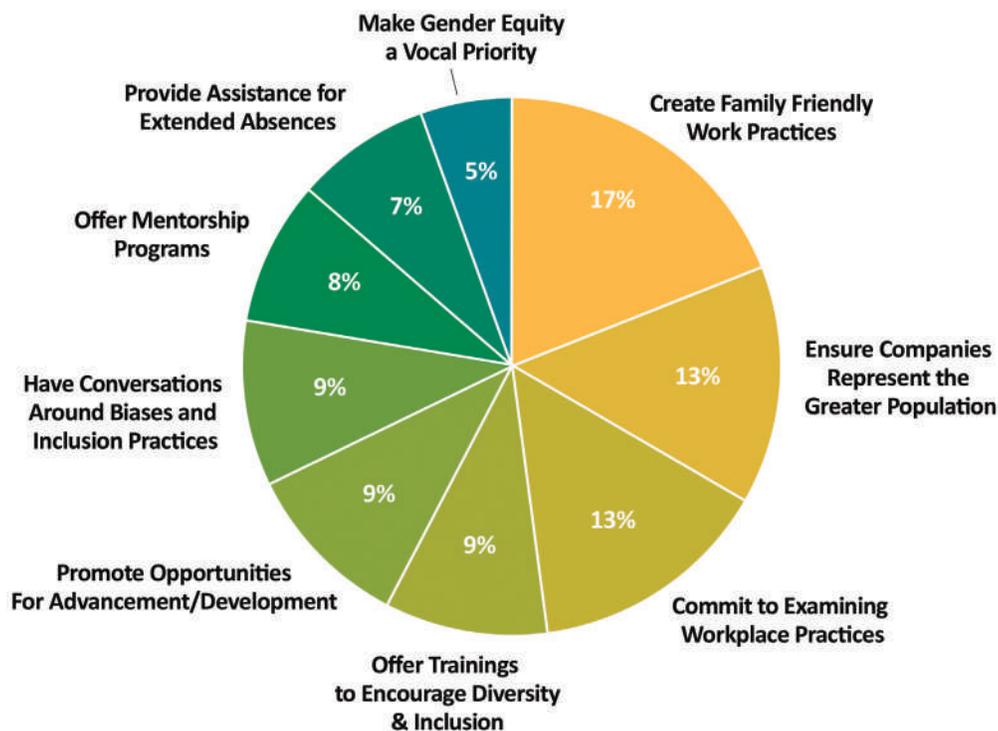
## Government policies that are most critical to address women's career advancement:

1. Support quality and affordable child care, education, housing, transportation, healthcare, and food services (22%)
2. Require protected, flexible paid leave and sick days (14%)
3. Implement transparency regarding hiring practices, pay structures and pay rates (14%)
4. Create opportunities for advancement and professional development and raise awareness of these resources (e.g., scholarships, trainings) (12%)
5. Develop a policy making process that is inclusive of multiple voices, kinds of expertise and lived experience and is tailored to specific employee populations (as opposed to blanket policies) (12%)
6. Create policy that levels the hiring playing field (e.g., ban the box, ban the previous pay question) and broaden recruiting practices (9%)
7. Ensure accountability in hiring and managing staff (e.g., performance reviews and background checks) (6%)
8. Revise the procurement and contracting system to reward contractors who demonstrate that they have achieved pay equity, small businesses, and women-owned businesses (8%)
9. Review policies on a regular basis and revise as needed (3%)



## Organizational practices that are most critical to address career advancement for women:

1. Create family-friendly work practices and flexible environments (i.e. lactation rooms, equal parental paid leave time regardless of gender, flexible work schedules, telecommute, etc.) (17%)
2. Create accountability to ensure that the entire company represents the greater population. Be intentional in recruitment, onboarding, and advancement to find people to fill your needs, not based on gender (13%)
3. Commit to taking an honest examination of workplace practices and encouraging open conversations about bias and areas of change (13%)
4. Make a conscious effort to offer trainings that encourage diversity and inclusion (9%)
5. Offer and promote opportunities for professional development and career advancement (9%)
6. GEM: Provide experiential activities in workplace to bring the conversation around implicit/unconscious bias and inclusion practices to light (9%)
7. Offer programs focused on mentorship—particularly for women and people of color (8%)
8. Offer programs that provide assistance for any extended absence from workforce (i.e. childbirth, incarceration, etc.) (7%)
9. GEM: Make gender equity a vocal priority in the organization (5%)



## Family-Friendly Workplaces

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“If we want young ladies to be the boss someday...we need to teach them to be entrepreneurs.”  
- Mayor Michael B. Hancock



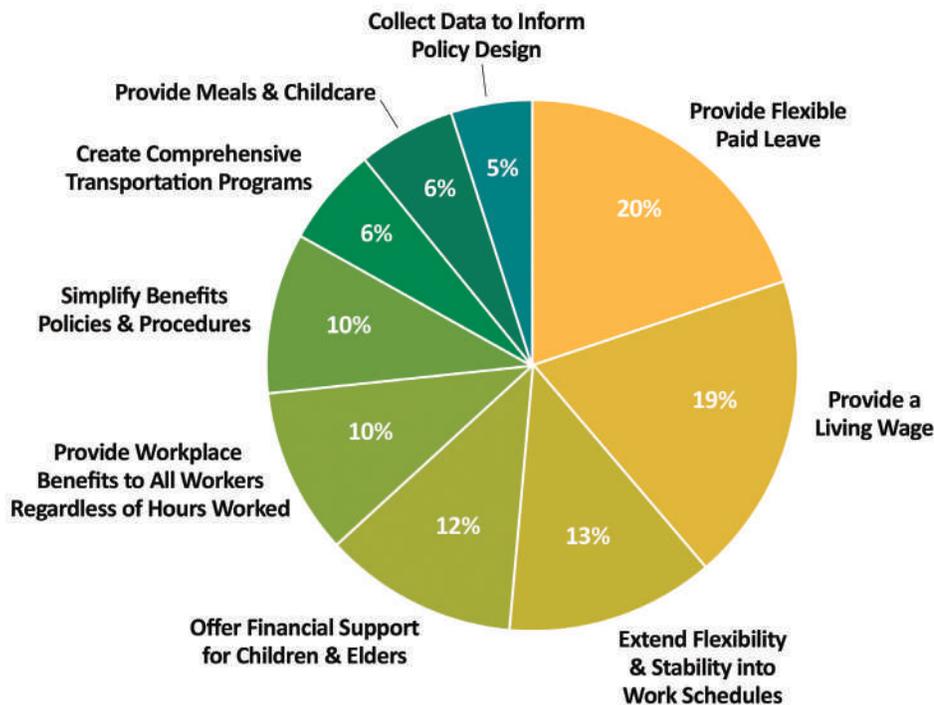
### **Biggest concerns or challenges for women in balancing their personal/family needs with their employment:**

1. Inflexible work policies force women to choose between job stability/security and the ability to care for family
2. Lack of affordable child, elder and family members with special needs care for traditional and non-traditional work hours (2nd, 3rd shifts)
3. Leave policies do not meet the needs of all employees, for example, when employees need small blocks of time off for appointments, school visits, etc.
4. Mismatch between school schedules and work schedules (especially summer!)
5. Perception that mothers are less committed and productive
6. The needs of women without children and diverse family structures are also not considered sufficiently
7. Lack of mental health support and services
8. GEM: Double standard of women taking time off for kids (can she do this job?) vs. men taking time off for kids (what a great, involved dad!)

## How can organizations foster a culture of collaboration?

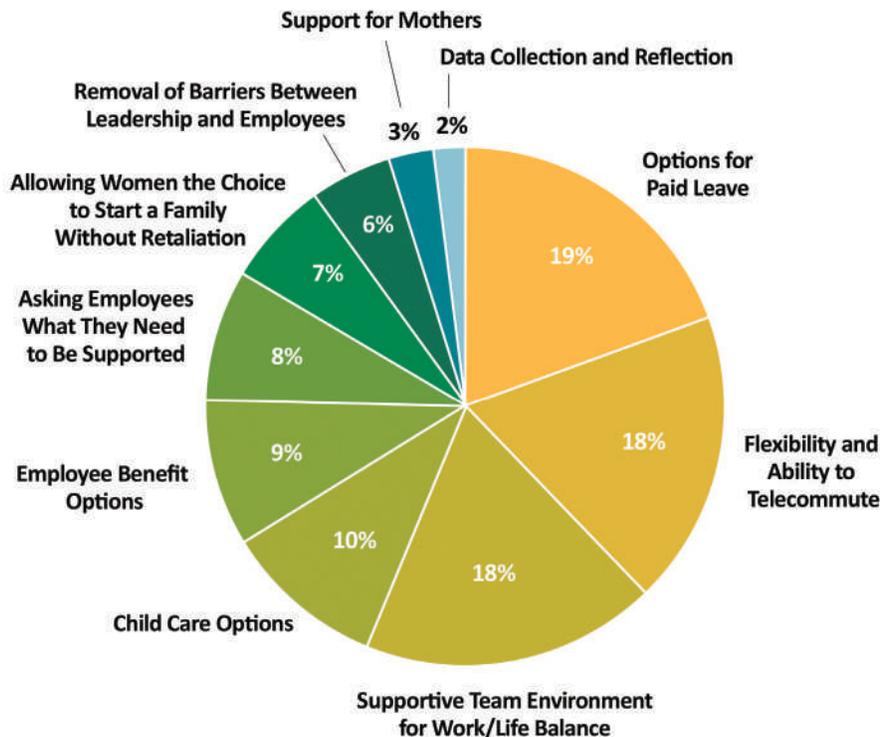
**Most important government policies needed to ensure that workplaces are family friendly:**

1. Provide leave (including sick days) for all employees that is paid, flexible, gender-neutral and job-protected to provide self- and family-care (family broadly defined) (20%)
2. GEM: A living wage is the key to so much (19%)
3. Extend flexibility and stability into the work schedule (13%)
4. Offer financial support for child and elder care that is available 24-7 (12%)
5. Provide workplace benefits to all employees upon hire and regardless of number of hours worked (10%)
6. Simplify policies and procedures for accessing benefits (10%)
7. Create equitable and comprehensive transportation and explore funding mechanisms (e.g., public-private partnerships) (6%)
8. Support workplace and community participation by providing meals and childcare (6%)
9. Collect and analyze data to inform policy design, implementation and evaluation (5%)



## Most important organizational policies needed to make organizations more family-friendly:

1. Multiple options for paid leave (i.e. care for family/children/elders, sabbatical) for all employees, regardless of gender and family structure (i.e. adoption, foster parents, etc.). (19%)
2. Flexible work hours and ability to telecommute/work from home with retaliation (18%)
3. Create supportive team environment modeled by leadership where employees are encouraged to have work/life balance (i.e. take time off, backup other employees) without resentment (18%)
4. Provide child care options (i.e. on-site services, subsidies, etc.) (10%)
5. Employee benefit options (i.e. EAP, gym subsidy, on-site wellness, reduced fare bus passes, shared leave day donations, multiple health insurance options) (9%)
6. Ask employees what they need to feel supported (8%)
7. GEM: Embrace women and allow them to make the choice to start a family without retaliation, loss of support, loss of opportunity (7%)
8. GEM: Find ways to remove barriers between leadership and employees and instill as an organizational practice (6%)
9. Support for mothers (i.e. lactation rooms, transition planning for return-to-work, etc.). (3%)
10. GEM: Data collection and reflection (2%)



## Cultures of Inclusion

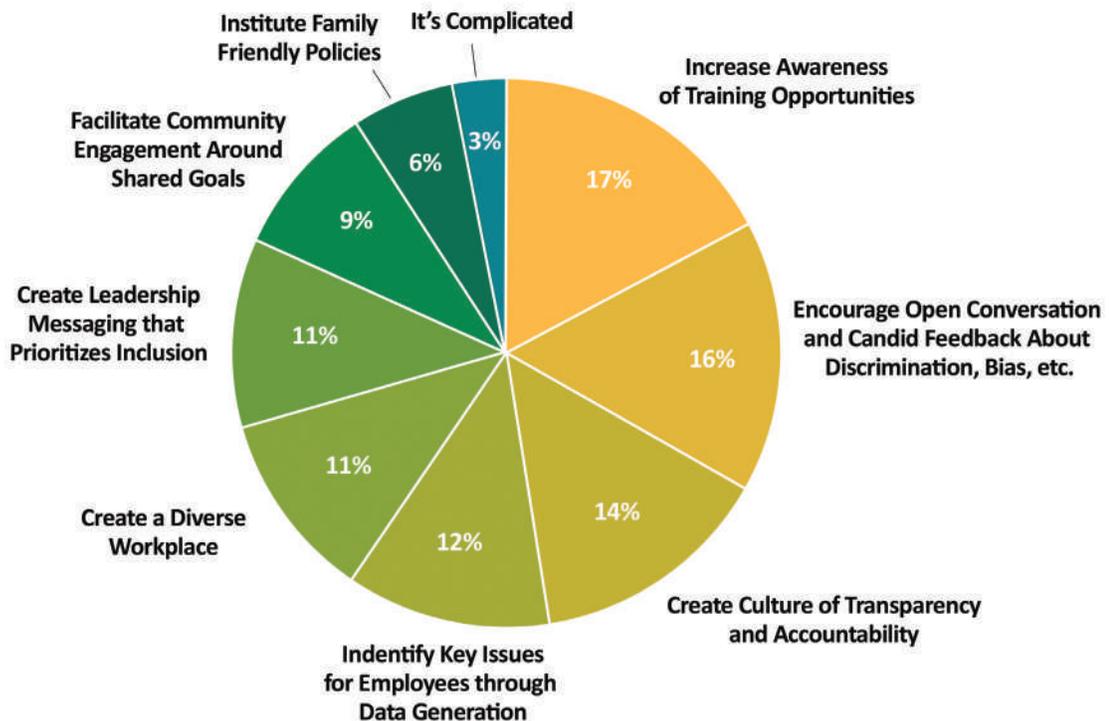
### Practices that most undermine an inclusive and welcoming workplace environment for women:

1. Practices that enable sexual harassment (i.e. make it challenging to report, lack of accountability once reported, dismissive attitudes, gaslighting)
2. Policies created for women without women at the table (i.e. dress code bias)
3. Workplace cliques (i.e. good ol' boys, gender specific activities) & lack of support from other women (i.e. mean girls)
4. Seniority practices that create feelings of entitlement, reinforce old school thinking, and perpetuate institutional/organizational-isms (i.e. sexism, racism)
5. Mansplaining: The privilege of the male voice when new ideas are submitted and when the same idea was already shared by a female
6. Not being gender inclusive outside of the binary (i.e. lack of gender neutral bathrooms, policies and spaces)
7. GEM: "Not having others like you around you can isolate you and make it feel like you are not valued"
8. GEM: Lack of diversity. Women of color policed about their hair. Trying to force them to change who they are
9. GEM: "Assumption that women and/or folks of color get to positions of power because of their marginalized identity instead of their skill and intellect"



**The most important practices that organizations should adopt to ensure their cultures are inclusive and welcoming of women:**

1. Increase awareness of and training about a range of issues (e.g., implicit bias, inclusive leadership) for all employees (17%)
2. Encourage open conversations and candid feedback about exclusion, discrimination, privilege, etc. (16%)
3. Create a culture of transparency and accountability (14%)
4. Identify the key issues and values for your organization to address through data generation (survey, focus groups) with all employees (12%)
5. Create a diverse workforce that values inclusion (11%)
6. Create messaging from leadership that inclusivity and diversity are priorities (11%)
7. Facilitate community engagement and interaction around shared values, goals, direction and inclusivity of all people (9%)
8. Institute family-friendly policies (6%)
9. GEM: It's complicated (3%)



## It's Time 2017 Denver Gender Equity Summit – Key terms and language

### Gender equity

Is the process of allocating resources, programs and decision-making fairly to allow everyone, regardless of gender, access to the full range of opportunities and benefits that come from participating and leading in society.<sup>1</sup>

**Diversity** includes all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. It is all-inclusive and recognizes everyone and every group as part of the diversity that should be valued. A broad definition includes not only race, ethnicity, and gender — the groups that most often come to mind when the term “diversity” is used — but also age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance. It also involves different ideas, perspectives, and values.<sup>2</sup>

**Equality** is treating everyone the same regardless of their specific requirements.

**Equity** provides people with tailor-made tools to accomplish a given goal.

**Inclusion** is an action, it is how we set the stage for everyone to contribute and participate in an authentic and intentional manner.

### Intersectionality

The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.<sup>3</sup>

### Project Implicit outlines implicit and explicit stereotypes:

“Stereotypes are the belief that most members of a group have some characteristic. Some examples of stereotypes are the belief that women are nurturing or the belief that police officers like donuts. An explicit stereotype is the kind that you deliberately think about and report. An implicit stereotype is one that is relatively inaccessible to conscious awareness and/or control. Even if you say that men and women are equally good at math, it is possible that you associate math more strongly with men without being actively aware of it.

In this case, we would say that you have an implicit math + men stereotype.”<sup>4</sup>

### Gender binary

“A social system that requires that everyone be raised as a boy or girl (dependent on what sex you are assigned at birth), which in turn forms the basis for how you are educated, what jobs you can do (or are expected to do), how you are expected to behave, what you are expected to wear, what your gender and gender presentation should be, and who you should be attracted to/love/marry, etc.”<sup>5</sup>

### Gender continuum

A multidimensional extension of the spectrum that includes additional gender identities outside of the gender spectrum.<sup>6</sup>

### Gender expansive

Conveys a wider, more flexible range of gender identity and/or expression than typically associated with the binary gender system.<sup>7</sup>

### Gender identity

One’s innermost concept of self as male, female, a blend of both or neither — how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One’s gender identity can be the same or different from their sex assigned at birth.<sup>8</sup>

### Gender inequality

Unequal treatment or perceptions of individuals based on their gender, arising from differences in socially constructed gender roles.

### Gender lens

Reveals the ways in which content and approaches are gendered—informed by, shaped by or biased toward men’s or women’s perspectives or experiences.<sup>9</sup>

### Gender parity

Achieving equal opportunities and equal representation across sectors for all genders.

### Gender partnership

Cooperation between people of across the gender spectrum working together toward common goals.

### Gender role

A set of social and cultural beliefs or expectations about appropriate behavior for men/boys or women/girls. Gender roles can vary from culture to culture. Strict gender roles can limit a person’s development.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup><http://www.caaws.ca/gender-equity-101/what-is-gender-equity/>

<sup>2</sup><http://racialequitytools.org/glossary#>

<sup>3</sup>[http://socialdifference.columbia.edu/files/socialdiff/projects/Article\\_\\_Mapping\\_the\\_Margins\\_by\\_Kimlere\\_Crenshaw.pdf](http://socialdifference.columbia.edu/files/socialdiff/projects/Article__Mapping_the_Margins_by_Kimlere_Crenshaw.pdf)

<sup>4</sup><https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/faqs.html#faq1>

<sup>5</sup>[http://glec.education.iupui.edu/equity/842\\_BeyondtheBinary-CampaignGuide.pdf](http://glec.education.iupui.edu/equity/842_BeyondtheBinary-CampaignGuide.pdf)

<sup>6</sup><https://www.genderspectrum.org/quick-links/understanding-gender/>

<sup>7</sup><http://www.hrc.org/resources/glossary-of-terms>

<sup>8</sup>ibid

<sup>9</sup><http://ttag.rutgers.edu/teaching-toolbox/gender-lens/>

<sup>10</sup><http://www.welcomingschools.org/resources/definitions/definitions-for-adults/>

# It's Time 2017: Denver Gender Equity Summit



Thank you for participating in It's Time 2017: Denver Gender Equity Summit.

