



Designing inclusive organizational identities

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Abstract

Organizational identity can be a key instrument in designers' pursuit to build organizations that employ individuals from diverse social groups and create inclusive workplace cultures that support all members' belonging, regardless of their status in society. We define an inclusive organizational identity as the belief (held by internal or external stakeholders) that inclusivity is one of the defining characteristics of an organization; that the organization intentionally incorporates diverse individuals—including those with historically marginalized social identities—into its governance, operations, and outputs. Building on studies in different literatures—ranging from micro-level research in psychology of belonging, meso-level research on sensegiving, and macro-level research on how organizations are perceived by their audiences—we develop a design-based approach to organizational identity. In order to create inclusive identities, designers will need to address trade-offs around whether to make identity claims, claim inclusivity as an identity feature, and affiliate with ideologies of inclusion (assimilation versus multiculturalism). If they choose to make identity claims, designers can bolster those claims by developing managers as stewards of the organization's identity, facilitating employee participation to define inclusivity, and being transparent about diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) efforts.

Keywords Organizational identity · Inclusion · Multiculturalism · Diversity · Belonging

Introduction

The last several decades have seen many organizations taking initiative to increase the diversity of their workforce along demographic, socio-economic, and other dimensions of difference; support equity among employees from diverse groups; and create inclusive workplace climates and cultures that support all members' belonging, regardless of their status in society (Leslie 2019; Nkomo et al. 2019). More recently—with increasing stakeholder attention to the role that organizations play in exacerbating societal inequality and the commensurate role they can play to alleviate it—the call for organizations of all kinds to join the battle against social injustice has intensified (Pager and Shepherd 2008; Amis et al. 2018, 2021).

We argue that a key design instrument in the pursuit of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) is organizational identity. Organizational identity—in analogy to

individual identity—refers to beliefs about an organization's core characteristics. It exists as an account, a socially constructed entity, a concept in the minds of internal or external stakeholders.¹ For internal stakeholders, an organization's identity describes “Who we are as an organization” (Albert and Whetten 1985) and is an important reference for evaluating and expressing belongingness. For example, staff and faculty at a university might categorize their organization as “collaborative”, “small”, and “supportive” (Hsu and Elsbach 2013). For external stakeholders (e.g., customers, suppliers, investors, and regulators), an organization's identity describes the organization as a social actor and is a critical point of reference for evaluating its performance, social worth, and legitimacy (Hsu and Hannan 2005; King and Whetten 2008; Whetten 2006). For example, being an “American-modeled”, “classical”, or “technical” university in Turkey shapes the way it is evaluated by potential students (Topaler et al. 2021), while designations such as being

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¹ While some researchers normally study perceptions of organizational identities from these two vantage points separately, we draw from both literatures. Where we suspect the distinction to be relevant, we indicate whether we are referring specifically to internal or external stakeholders (Tripsas 2009).

an “R1” institution, “Ivy League” university, and a “liberal arts” college are relevant in the United States.

We define inclusive organizational identity as the belief (held by internal or external stakeholders) that inclusivity is one of the characteristics of an organization; that the organization incorporates diverse individuals—including those with historically marginalized social identities—into its governance, operations, and outputs. Inclusivity of identities can impact efforts to advance DEIB because organizational identities mediate how internal and external stakeholders relate to organizations (Brickson 2005).

Internally, we expect inclusive organizational identities to help facilitate feelings of belonging. Employees assess their belonging in organizations partly through the congruence of organizational identities with their own personal identities (Brickson 2013). Members of stigmatized or low-status social categories are more likely to feel belonging uncertainty (Walton and Cohen 2007) and stereotype threat (Chaney et al. 2016; Steele et al. 2002). These might be mitigated by an inclusive organizational identity, which communicates and reinforces that minorities can have a voice and feel respected, despite their difference. Research suggests that if members of an organization feel that their personal or social identities do not conflict with any aspect of the organization’s identity and they can more comfortably express their authentic selves without having to mask their social identities, their motivation, engagement, and well-being will be greater and they will perform better (Cable et al. 2013; Rogers et al. 2017; Van den Bosch and Taris 2014). Members who identify with victims of negative social-identity-relevant news events (e.g., murder of George Floyd) are less likely to experience negative mental health consequences and engage in avoidant behaviors at work if their work environment provides safe spaces to engage in conversations about their social identities (Leigh and Melwani 2022).

Individuals who see their membership in an organization as a part of their personal identities are said to identify with the organization. Research finds that individuals who identify with an organization are more likely to abide by its norms (Ashforth et al. 2008; Ellemers and Rink 2005). We, therefore, expect inclusive organizational identities to elicit more inclusive behaviors from employees that identify with the organization. This would, in turn, create a more inclusive climate for all employees (Mor Barak 2015; Shore et al. 2018, 2011).

In the eyes of external stakeholders too, demonstrated inclusion is increasingly becoming a source of positive distinction for organizations and may provide an advantage. For instance, workplace rankings that include DEI ratings (e.g., Great Place to Work) and specialized employee review sites (e.g., Fairygodboss for women) equip job seekers and other external stakeholders with insights that can shape their perception of, and decision-making about, organizations. As

a result, inclusive identities can attract more diverse talent and employees that internalize DEIB goals, thus facilitating the creation of an inclusive culture.

Given the potential value of inclusive identities, we contend that identity beliefs are important targets of intervention alongside structure, culture, and other elements of organization design. However, because perceptions of identity in general and its inclusiveness depend on how stakeholders are treated by the organization—which, in turn, will depend on its structure and culture—a question that naturally follows is how interventions to make identities inclusive can contribute to DEIB goals in ways that are distinct from other interventions.

As beliefs about “who we are”, organizational identity beliefs can be seen as a subset of culture. At the same time, answers to the identity question “Who are we as an organization?” can include references to a shared culture, as in “We are an organization with a certain culture.” Despite this close relationship between the two concepts, identity beliefs can be distinguished from other cultural constructs by virtue of their reference to selfhood. Identities point to individual entities (persons and organizations) as members of categories (Hsu and Hannan 2005; Koçak and Puranam 2023). Thus, when an individual says, “I am a mother” or “I am Black”, they state their membership in a category, acknowledging the relevance of that category for defining who they are as a person. When an individual says, “I am a feminist” or “I am anti-racist”, such statements show commitment of one’s personal identity to a cause and imply greater dedication than saying “I support the feminist movement”, or “I advocate for anti-racism.” In the same way, framing inclusivity around the organizational self-concept (“We are inclusive”) can be more effective for the internalization of DEIB goals than framing inclusivity exclusively around activities (“We support DEIB”). In organizations with inclusive identities, individuals who identify with the organization are less likely to think, “I’m doing these DEIB activities only because I’m required to do them”, because distancing themselves from the inclusive identity of the organization would create a distance between their self-concept and the organization’s identity.

Viewed by external stakeholders too, an organization’s claims of having an inclusive identity are likely to carry more weight and attract more scrutiny than claims about implementing DEIB initiatives. While structural or cultural aspects of organizations can often be described without clear evaluations (as the appropriate structure or culture is believed to be contingent on an organization’s strategy), many identity beliefs invite assessments of character. Identity descriptors such as “friendly” or “costly” convey evaluations (Hsu and Elsbach 2013) and organizational categories often carry status value (Sharkey 2014). This makes favorable identities a valuable resource for organizations

(Durand et al. 2007; Granqvist et al. 2013; Kodeih et al. 2019; Pontikes and Kim 2017). In the same way, being known as “inclusive” in an environment where inclusivity is valued will create positive value for an organization through heightened visibility and approval from external stakeholders. Conversely, customers, investors, and job seekers who care about DEIB may withhold or withdraw support from organizations that are not perceived as inclusive, as evidenced in cases of shareholder proposals and consumer boycotts over organizations’ political activities or public claims (Davis 2020; Ginder and Kwon 2020; Miller 2021; Rastad and Dobson 2022).

The dual nature of identities—i.e., the fact that they are incorporated into individual members’ self-concepts while their social value is controlled by other individuals inside and outside the organization (Haslam et al. 2003)—makes them effective tools of social control. Members of organizations care about what outsiders think of them (Dutton and Dukerich 1991). Leaders of organizations working to be recognized as inclusive by stakeholders will therefore be attuned to audience expectations and perceptions. At the same time, external stakeholders attend to insider perceptions to judge the authenticity of external-facing claims (Deeds Pamphile and Ruttan 2022). However much leaders can try to affect identity perceptions through sensegiving efforts (Ashforth et al. 2011, 2020; Gioia et al. 2010), audiences will attend to criticism from whistleblowers and opponents. If they find their expectations violated with a breach in the contract that an inclusive identity essentially creates, they can easily retract the symbolic rewards they conferred on organizations that had claimed to be inclusive (Kreiner and Ashforth 2004). Furthermore, identity beliefs tend to be sticky. If discriminatory practices cloud the way an organization’s identity is perceived by stakeholders, even if those practices are few, or even after they are eventually remedied, they can have long-lasting negative consequences for organizations. Knowing this, organizations that claim inclusivity as part of their identities are likely to try and avoid negative publicity, committing to DEIB initiatives for the long term. Thus, the dual nature of organizational identities creates a reinforcing dynamic for DEIB efforts, something that cultural or structural interventions alone cannot do. This dynamic creates continuing monitoring of leaders, who might be tempted to pay lip service to DEIB goals without committing to the actions that further those goals. Claiming an inclusive identity—even when it is aspirational—can help envision a better self that one can move toward, creating an impetus for members to engage in more inclusive behaviors.

Given the complementary value that claiming an inclusive identity can create for organizations in addition to DEIB initiatives to change organizational cultures and structures, we propose that stakeholders who want to make their

organizations more inclusive take a design approach to their organization’s identity claims. However, to our knowledge, there is no existing source that reviews the relevant research on inclusivity of organizational identities, nor any guides to key questions and challenges involved in designing inclusive organizational identities. Our goal in this paper is to provide guideposts for practitioners who want to craft their organizations’ identities in the service of becoming more inclusive and equitable for more diverse stakeholders and for scholars who want to support such efforts.

Creating and maintaining inclusive organizational identities may be more difficult than it seems—and increasingly so—for several reasons. First, merely refraining from defining organizational identities in exclusionary terms (e.g., terms that hate groups use to define themselves) does not protect against perceptions of racism, sexism, ageism, ableism, and other forms of discrimination seeping into stakeholders’ organizational identity beliefs. This is because organizational designers are not working with a blank canvas—devoid of bias—and do not have absolute control of how internal and external stakeholders perceive their organization or how they construe of various concepts that can be associated with their organization’s identity.

Second, whereas increasing polarization of attitudes and beliefs in society makes it more important than ever that organizations create an identity that supports mutual respect, inclusion, and thus productive collaboration regardless of social identities, polarization also makes it harder to create an identity claim that appeals to all stakeholders. For instance, incorporating cultural ideologies such as colorblindness or multiculturalism into organizational identity claims can have undesirable impacts on perceptions of inclusivity by (respectively) minority or majority members (Dovidio et al. 2016; Plaut et al. 2011, 2018). Among some audiences, adopting DEIB initiatives or making claims of inclusivity may in themselves be seen as alienating (Brown and Jacoby-Senghor 2021; Kaiser et al. 2022; Plaut et al. 2011), given that such efforts have recently become politicized (Murray 2023; Thomason and Sitzmann 2023).

Third, whereas employees seek opportunities for more personal expression in the workplace (Cha et al. 2019) and place demands on their organizations and their leaders to make pronouncements on social and political issues (Warren 2021), the spread of “culture wars” (Macy et al. 2019) to encompass a multitude of issues including DEI initiatives makes it increasingly harder to find a stance that will not draw organizations into conflict.

Using organizational identities to further DEIB goals presents a tough balancing act in this context, one that requires us to begin our discussion with a note about two caveats. First, as with any other design problem, there is not one solution that will work well for every organization. We identify trade-offs and contextual factors that can

help designers evaluate those trade-offs, rather than present “best” practices. The examples we use are intended to illustrate responses of organizations to their design challenges, rather than serve as exemplary solutions. Second, our focus is on the conceptualization and ideation of organizational identities to promote inclusivity—not on design interventions for building organizational structures and cultures to achieve DEIB goals. We intend to complement the large body of research on the latter (e.g., Dobbin and Kalev 2016, 2018, 2022; Stephens et al. 2020; Tetlock and Mitchell 2009) and note that identity claims that do not correspond to reality will not be accepted by stakeholders and may even backfire (Kovács et al. 2017; Wilton et al. 2020). In other words, crafting an inclusive identity should be seen as a lever for building inclusive organizations, not a substitute for it. Relatedly, the examples of identity claims that we share may be decoupled from the perceptions that some stakeholders have of those organizations or may eventually be challenged.

In the following, we introduce organizational identity as a design tool, defining content and strength of identities (“[Organizational identity as a design tool](#)” section), identify decisions that designers will need to make to claim an inclusive identity, along with the various trade-offs involved in making those decisions (“[Design specifications for creating an inclusive organizational identity](#)” section), and review organizational practices that can support claimed identities (“[Design specifications for creating convergence on inclusivity](#)” section). We conclude with key questions that remain for organizational scientists to answer so they might guide practitioners in their quest to build inclusive organizational identities (“[Discussion and conclusion](#)” section).

Organizational identity as a design tool

Organizational identity is not an obvious design instrument because it is defined and validated by stakeholders. In this section, we define two constructs—content and strength of identity—to help examine how designers might approach organizational identity as a lever for intervention.

Stakeholders may define *content* of organizational identities in terms of one or more attributes that they see as central, distinctive, and enduring (Albert and Whetten 1985) and in terms of membership in one or more organizational categories (Hsu and Hannan 2005). Salient aspects of identities may include organizations’ strategy (Irwin et al. 2018), mission (Glynn 2000), technology (Carroll and Swaminathan 2000), location (Hannan and Negro 2022), product offerings (Rao et al. 2003), reputation (Dutton et al. 1994; Hsu and Elsbach 2013), culture (Corley 2004), and human resource practices (Baron 2004). When core features that define an organization’s

identity include a clear purpose, the identity can help make that purpose seem more relevant to members (Albert and Whetten 1985; Ashforth and Mael 1996; Whetten and Mackey 2002). An organizational identity that expresses the goals of the organization clearly can help recruit employees that share those goals (Ashforth et al. 2008; Dukerich et al. 2002). For example, Patagonia, an outdoor brand and retailer, presents a consistent identity that centers on protecting the environment. On its career page, it opens with “We’re in business to save our home planet...” and invites candidates whose values align with its own (Patagonia 2022).

Strength of organizational identity refers to the degree of consensus around identity beliefs and the extent to which these beliefs shape behaviors (Cole and Bruch 2006; Kreiner and Ashforth 2004). Stakeholders inside (e.g., managers versus employees; employees in customer-facing positions versus in support functions) and outside (e.g., shareholders, regulators, and consumers) the organization can have inconsistent beliefs about an organization. Individuals’ roles and occupations make different aspects of organizations salient to them and they may also be differentially motivated to see their own organization in a favorable light (Bridwell-Mitchell and Meziar 2012; Hsu and Elsbach 2013). Notwithstanding such variability, a workable consensus around identity perceptions sometimes exists, among both internal and external stakeholders (e.g., Topaler et al. 2021).

Like strong cultures, strong identities may facilitate coordination (Ashforth et al. 2008; Kogut and Zander 1996). The added value of a strong identity over strong culture is the personal investment that comes with identification. If individual members of the organization identify with the organization, that is, see their membership in the organization as a part of their self-concept, they are likely to internalize organizational goals as their own (Ashforth et al. 2011; Dutton et al. 1994). Employees that identify with the organization and what it represents may have greater motivation to do what is good for the organization, with a lower need for pecuniary incentives (Akerlof and Kranton 2000, 2005; Dutton et al. 1994). Identification can also create greater loyalty and commitment to the organization, benefiting the organization through lower turnover (Ashforth et al. 2008; Richter et al. 2006). For employees, feelings of congruence with the organization’s identity can enhance self-affirmation and self-esteem (Leonardelli et al. 2010) and satisfaction with the organization (Leonardelli and Brewer 2001). For external stakeholders, clear and stable identities signal commitment, consistency, and therefore reliability as an exchange partner—in turn generating greater commitment from them (Hannan et al. 2007). For instance, Patagonia’s strong identity has been credited for the premium price points it can charge, loyalty it commands from customers,

and the commitment it garners from its employees (Aten 2023; Chouinard 2016; Stanley 2021).

Design specifications for creating an inclusive organizational identity

In this section, we consider ideation of an organizational identity in terms of a design specification: what are the decisions that designers need to make and the parameters that they need to consider while conceptualizing their organization's identity, so that it is perceived as inclusive? In "Design specifications for creating convergence on inclusivity" section, we consider organizational practices that can help build convergence around an inclusive identity across stakeholders. We do not wish to imply that conceptualization and acceptance of organizational identities are separate processes. However, we find it easier, for expositional purposes, to discuss these in separate sections, much like how strategy formulation and implementation are often studied separately.

Per the distinction we introduced in "Organizational identity as a design tool" section, we use content and strength of organizational identities to help us assess the likely impact of design choices. In terms of content, inclusivity of organizational identity refers to whether (at least some) stakeholders believe an organization to be inclusive of diverse social identities. If only some stakeholders hold this view and there is no consensus, that will point to a weak inclusive identity. Given the benefits of inclusive identities that we have recounted above, we assume that organizations would rather be perceived as inclusive by most of their stakeholders. However, this does not mean that designers should take a top-down approach to making claims of inclusivity or even that they should make any identity claims at all. Contingencies are integral to the practice of organization design and crafting an inclusive organizational identity is no different. In the following, we outline the alternative courses of action and the trade-offs that designers will need to consider.

Whether to make identity claims top-down or not

Claiming a particular identity, typically within the context of a mission or values statement, is probably the first design tool that comes to mind when attempting to shape organizational identities. Identity claims can help create a shared understanding around identity beliefs. They can thus strengthen designers' preferred view of an organization's identity in the eyes of stakeholders.

The trade-off here is that whereas clearly defined and formally propagated identities can facilitate coordination

by focusing members on the same identity (Kogut and Zander 1996), they might be too restrictive. They can be suffocating for people who value autonomy and off-putting for employees that want to express their uniqueness (Kreiner et al. 2006). Some studies find that in organizations that seek to regulate identity too broadly, employees might develop negative affect and resentment toward their employer (Bardon and Pez  2020; Van Laer and Janssens 2017; Zanoni and Janssens 2007). Not making any identity claims or defining organizational identities in ambiguous terms might create more room for individuals to develop their individual work identities in ways that resonate with them. As suggested by the job crafting literature, this flexibility can support flourishing at work (Dutton et al. 2010; Rosso et al. 2010; Wrzesniewski and Dutton 2001; Wrzesniewski et al. 2013).

Ambiguous identities might also allow members who have different identity beliefs about their organization to co-exist peacefully. Ambiguity can create an elastic shared identity that permits expansion and stretching of identity conceptions while maintaining member identification (Kreiner et al. 2015). In organizations with weak identities, members with different social identities can each feel belonging and identify with the organization, finding congruence and appeal in different aspects of the organization. This can be particularly helpful when there is potential for conflict around expressions of social identities.

Whether to claim inclusivity as an identity feature

For organizations that decide to make identity claims, a key design decision is whether to explicitly claim inclusivity. For organizations whose main mission is inclusion of particular social groups, making that a central tenet of identity is an obvious choice: examples include Historically Black Colleges and Universities, women's colleges, and silent restaurants staffed by deaf and mute servers. For organizations that aim to be inclusive in addition to having a different goal at the core of their mission, however, the choice to incorporate inclusivity claims into their identity statements is not an obvious one. Some organizations do make inclusivity a central part of their identity claims: For example, the apparel retailer Gap, Inc, claims it is "Inclusive by Design" and invites readers to "Discover how we're weaving inclusion into everything we do for our customers, our communities, and the planet (Gap Inc. 2022)." The fact that Gap ranked 4th in Refinitiv's Global Diversity & Inclusion Index, Refinitiv (2022) suggests that these formal claims might have served to make the organization more inclusive.

However, there are also organizations that are known to be inclusive, yet do not explicitly reference inclusion in their identity presentation. For example, Nordstrom, another apparel retailer, is ranked 8th in the same Refinitiv index

(thus indicating that at least a substantial portion of stakeholders regard it as an inclusive organization) but does not mention inclusivity as a core identity attribute on its Web site (Nordstrom 2022). Clearly, claiming inclusivity is not necessary for being perceived as inclusive. Nor is claiming inclusivity sufficient for being perceived as such.

Kreiner et al. (2015) describe how inclusion had been a core tenet of the Episcopal church's identity, but the election of an openly gay bishop in 2003 revealed that the term was interpreted differently by different factions within the church. Moreover, audiences know that claims of inclusivity can be false. Claims of diversity that are not matched by actual diversity can heighten concerns about fitting in, being authentic, and performing well at the organization for people with underrepresented ethnicities, thus creating incongruence and jeopardizing attempts to be inclusive (Cole and Salimath 2013; Wilton et al. 2020).

Given that *claiming* an organization's identity to be inclusive is neither necessary nor sufficient for having *stakeholders recognize* it as inclusive, it is important to point to contextual factors that determine the pros and cons of making identity claims of inclusivity. On one hand, claiming to be inclusive will attract scrutiny from internal and external stakeholders; claiming inclusivity without also emphasizing DEIB efforts in other communications or following through with initiatives might endanger perceptions of disregard, carelessness, hypocrisy, or deception. On the other hand, not claiming inclusivity may lead stakeholders to assume its intentional absence or perceive the organization as exclusionary.

Despite efforts to diversify, mainstream organizations are not race nor gender neutral (Cheryan and Markus 2020; Ray 2019; Whitehead 2003). Moreover, historically, the ideal worker and leader norms have centered around White men (O'Connor and Cech 2018; Rosette et al. 2008). By extension, at least some stakeholder groups might perceive their social identities to be a barrier for their inclusion in the organization's governance, operations, or outputs. They might feel pressured to engage in codeswitching behaviors (McCluney et al. 2021) and demonstrate cultural fit (Rivera 2012). This is probably more of a risk for organizations whose identities are built around an archetypal member or the character of a charismatic founder. For example, Abercrombie & Fitch, which defined the cultural zeitgeist for 90s teens in the United States, presented an "All-American" identity that was—to the extent of what was (sometimes) legally permissible—primarily associated with White, blonde, blue-eyed, skinny women or muscular men (Holand 2022).

Given the legacy of discrimination, organizations that make some identity claims but do not include inclusivity in those claims might risk racism, sexism, ageism, ableism, and other forms of discrimination being imputed to them. In

other words, claiming identity elements that are not discriminatory may be insufficient. For example, an organizational identity that is defined in terms of professionalism would not be inclusive without an explicit elaboration that expands the definition beyond the societal default that implies masculine conduct (Cheryan and Markus 2020; Danbold and Bendersky 2020; Turco 2010) or Whiteness (Ferguson and Dougherty 2022; Ray 2019; Wingfield 2010). While anthropomorphic expressions of organizational identities may be easier to visualize and communicate (Ashforth and Mael 1996; Ashforth et al. 2020), they may be more likely to slip into being perceived as excluding protected categories. Similarly, identities built around an established local community or profession can be easier to build, as they will likely resonate with the workforce, but may be exclusionary if those communities or professions themselves have traditionally not been inclusive or have been strongly associated with particular social identities (e.g., nursing and women).

Even identities built around progressive ideals like environmentalism might need to be evaluated and revised where appropriate. For instance, Patagonia recently acknowledged that their identity claims, which centered on environmentalism, had blind spots when it came to inclusivity: "We are a White-led outdoor company reliant on recreation on stolen Native lands that are not yet safe for all. Recent months have revealed how much more we need to do to live up to our values as an activist company. We missed too much (Patagonia 2020)."

Therefore, even though it is neither necessary nor sufficient to claim inclusivity, it is likely to help as an assurance against exclusionary beliefs seeping into identity beliefs held by internal or external constituents. A recent study suggests that this is especially important in organizations with strong identities. To et al. (2023) find that managers, who are more likely to identify strongly with their organizations, perceive less inequity in their workplace, possibly due to the tendency of individuals to boost their self-esteem by focusing on the positive and ignoring the negative aspects of their organizations' identities. In an experiment, asking managers to deliberate on inequities within their own organization challenged their default positive view—helping to overcome their resistance to diversity initiatives. Thus, revealing an intention to be inclusive, while supporting critical examination of whether those intentions are being served, appear to be useful steps toward becoming inclusive.

Aligning with ideologies of inclusion to build unifying identities

In claiming an organizational identity, designers often aim to create a superordinate identity with which all members can identify. A prominent research stream argues that creating a superordinate identity that bridges across multiple social

identities is the key to harnessing the potential benefits of a diverse workforce (Mannix and Neale 2005). Inclusive leadership behaviors are found to help create greater effort by employees and stronger team performance because they create a shared team identity, especially in teams that are professionally more diverse (Mitchell et al. 2015). Research on the Common Ingroup Identity Model, built on the well-known “intergroup contact hypothesis (Allport 1954)”, argues that emphasizing shared social identity can transform cognitive representations of ingroup relations from “us” and “them” to “we”, help dissolve potentially conflictual differences, and improve intergroup attitudes (Dovidio et al. 2015; Gaertner and Dovidio 2009; Gaertner et al. 2000). For instance, emphasizing a common organizational (such as school) identity in groups leads to better coordination and cooperation relative to emphasizing social (ethnic) identities (Chen et al. 2014).

In trying to make superordinate identities inclusive of traditionally marginalized groups and create a sense of harmony and unity among individuals identifying with different social categories, designers have often referred to ideologies of being “colorblind” or being “multi-cultural”. Studies on the responses that these two claims generate illustrate the importance of building a common understanding with stakeholders. Among Whites in the United States, endorsement of colorblind racial attitudes is correlated with racial prejudice (Neville et al. 2000; Knowles et al. 2009; Richeson and Nussbaum 2004). Therefore, upholding a colorblind ideology as part of an organizational identity claim can accentuate biases and uphold inequalities in organizations or create perceptions that the organization imposes majoritarian values on its workforce (Apfelbaum et al. 2012). For instance, a survey of work units in a healthcare organization in the U.S. found colorblind ideologies of White members correlated with lower psychological engagement and higher perception of bias among other racial groups (Plaut et al. 2009). Colorblind policies can also make detection of discrimination less likely (Plaut et al. 2009, 2018), thereby discouraging collective action to achieve true equality (Dovidio et al. 2015). As with colorblind policies, a sexual-orientation-blind policy of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” may increase victimization while attempting to integrate LGBTQ+ individuals (Burks 2011). External stakeholders too, when presented with colorblind policies but a non-diverse workforce, perceive higher risk of discrimination and express distrust of organizations (Purdie-Vaughns et al. 2008; Wilton et al. 2015).

While assimilationist (i.e., colorblind) ideologies discourage expressions of social identities, an ideology of multiculturalism, with its emphasis on the appreciation of different social identities, encourages expression of non-dominant identities. Research finds that relative to White participants, ethnic minorities endorse multiculturalism to a greater extent both in the United States (Wolsko et al.

2006) and in Europe (Verkuyten 2005). Moreover, the more majority group members endorse multiculturalism (versus assimilationism), the less likely they are to show negative out-group evaluation (Verkuyten 2005). In the survey we cited above, Plaut et al. (2009) analyzed how racial or ethnic minority employees responded to their White coworkers holding multiculturalist (e.g., “Employees should recognize and celebrate racial and ethnic minorities”) or colorblind (e.g., “The organization should encourage racial and ethnic minorities to adapt to mainstream ways”) beliefs. When White employees held multiculturalist (versus colorblind) beliefs, minorities reported higher engagement and lower perception of bias. Similarly, an experiment showed that when primed with colorblind (versus multiculturalist) ideology, Whites exhibited more prejudice, which inhibited the cognitive performance of their ethnic minority partners (Holoien and Shelton 2012).

However, multiculturalism and its attendant emphasis on differences is not found to be universally better than an emphasis on equality. Apfelbaum et al. (2016) find that highlighting differences (versus equality) is more effective when minority groups’ representation is moderate, but less effective when groups’ representation is very low. This is in line with the “optimal distinctiveness” argument in psychology, which predicts that identification with a collective identity will be most beneficial to an individual if it can create both belonging and distinctiveness (Brewer 1991; Shore et al. 2011). While large categories facilitate belonging with many others and small groups provide the most distinctiveness, moderately sized groups provide their members with both belonging and uniqueness (Brewer 1991; Leonardelli et al. 2010). This implies, for instance, that a racial or ethnic category can be an optimally distinct identity for an individual in an organization if the category is represented by neither too few nor too many members. Conversely, individuals who find their racial or ethnic identities under- or over-represented in the organization may wish to connect with colleagues through other aspects of their personal or social identities.

In the context of racial and gender identities, Apfelbaum et al. (2016) argue that drawing attention to social group differences can accentuate representation-based concerns such as fear of excessive scrutiny and stereotyping among minorities. In a study of major U.S. law firms, they find that firms that emphasized differences had lower attrition rates among White women (who comprised around 35% of employees), whereas firms that emphasized equality had lower attrition rates among Black individuals (comprising around 5% of employees). Other studies find that multiculturalism can also cause backlash and hostility from White members—who are more likely to feel threatened and excluded (Dover et al. 2016; Morrison et al. 2010; Plaut et al. 2011, 2018), or increase beliefs in race essentialism among majority

members (Wilton et al. 2019), leading to tokenism and pigeonholing of minority members (Plaut et al. 2018).

Taken together, current research points toward a design approach that accounts for various contextual factors. In general, building a shared organizational identity can be effective for focusing members on common goals and building commitment to the organization. However, emphasis on a shared identity need not involve advocating a colorblind ideology and designers should avoid doing so—whereas a trans-racial community may be ideal, it is not aligned with reality in most settings. Additionally, people from marginalized groups often perceive colorblindness as an effort at domination by the majority. Therefore, a focus on shared organizational identity should be accompanied by efforts to respect the experiences of marginalized groups (Rogers et al. 2017), recognize and address inequities associated with distinct identities (Dovidio et al. 2016), create psychologically safe environments for members to express their personal and social identities (Gardner and Prasad 2022; Leigh and Melwani 2022), and curtail perceptions of victimhood among members of dominant social categories (Kaiser et al. 2022).

In addition, organizations that are already diverse with well-represented minority categories may explicitly adopt a multicultural ideology to create a strong inclusive identity. If designers decide to emphasize multiculturalism, they should remember that in much of the U.S., people live racially segregated lives outside of work. Creating a safe environment for inter-racial interaction and conversations centered on social identities will therefore require attention to how multiculturalism is communicated, so that majority members do not see it as “only for minorities” (Plaut et al. 2011) and minority members do not feel pigeonholed and locked in into their social categories.

Delta Air Lines, which is 27% Black and headquartered in Georgia (Delta Air Lines 2023), which is 33% Black (U.S. Census Bureau 2022), appears to have made significant progress in building a diverse workforce while claiming an inclusive identity that incorporates diverse social identities. Delta declared its intention to become an “anti-racist, anti-discrimination organization” in 2020 (Bastian 2020), thus framing its inclusivity statement in a way that can appeal to majority members who might align with the claim of “anti-discrimination” more than with “anti-racism”. Delta also adopted a policy of “skills-first hiring”, eliminating the college degree requirement for some higher-paying jobs while providing apprenticeships and an analytics academy (Delta Air Lines 2022). When communicating its skills-first recruitment efforts, Delta highlighted career journeys of employees from diverse ethno-racial backgrounds, including a White executive, who advanced in Delta without a college degree. The firm also presented data to show that college degree requirements exclude not only Latinx and Black individuals,

but also White and Asian individuals. Their Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer reinforced the message: “Delta is a winning organization... and we know being able to attract a winning workforce means being able to attract the best and the brightest talent from everywhere (Delta Air Lines 2022).”

Making credible claims in a polarized environment

As we noted in the Introduction, political polarization in society, and increasingly common association of DEIB efforts with a “liberal” or “woke” agenda make it difficult to claim an inclusive organizational identity. As terminology around DEIB changes, stakeholder expectations become more heterogenous and change rapidly over time, organizational designers can legitimately feel like they are on slippery ground. In the current environment of “culture wars” within the United States that cloud even academic exchanges (Thomason et al. 2023; Waldman and Sparr 2021), organizations can expect negative attention whether they claim an inclusive identity or not.

This contentious environment partly stems from identity claims easily being construed as “cheap talk” (Foss and Klein 2023). The fact that identity claims are easy to make, without building any substance behind them, creates distrust on the part of stakeholders who care about true inclusivity and want to separate organizations that merely pay lip service to DEIB from those that walk the talk (Wilton et al. 2020). At the same time, inclusivity is hard to demonstrate. Existing within stakeholder perceptions and defined in terms of a consensus on beliefs that the organization is inclusive, its verification relies on repeated proof of absence of discrimination, which can be perpetrated by not only leadership but also anyone in the organization. Moreover, stakeholders differ in how they define inclusion and what they will consider adequate evidence of it. Having to contend with limited visibility into internal affairs of organizations, outside stakeholders may rely on hearsay, fueling uncertainty and anxiety for organizations’ spokespersons and possibly pushing them to seek refuge in boilerplate statements that are truly cheap talk.

In this context, it is important for designers to remember that their organization’s identity is a negotiated construct. Having claims of inclusivity be verified by stakeholders will ultimately depend on building an inclusive organization (the tools for which we review in the next section). Earning stakeholders’ trust so that claims of inclusivity are received with open mind and assumption of good intent should be the goal for designing organizational identity claims. Whether or not organizations explicitly claim inclusivity, becoming recognized as inclusive requires organizations to demonstrate respect for all stakeholders regardless of their social identities, in multiple ways, on different occasions; and

being prepared to change how they do this as stakeholder expectations change.

Netflix, the entertainment streaming service based in Los Angeles, provides a rich example. Known for its strong culture that is thoroughly managed by its leadership team, Netflix displays its culture memo on its career website for potential employees to determine whether they would thrive at the firm. In the early versions of this document, the company did not make clear identity claims and appeared to discourage expressions of personal or social identities to further its goal of building a strong culture around an ambiguous organizational identity. The list of valued behaviors and skills in its memo included “You are non-political when you disagree with others.” And “You seek what is best for Netflix, rather than best for yourself or your group.” (Netflix 2009). Based on prior research that we cited in “[Whether to make identity claims top-down or not](#)” section, we suppose that this would have facilitated peaceful co-existence of members despite potentially conflicting political views.

This emphasis on a superordinate (yet not clearly defined) organizational identity that united members of differing views was challenged when Netflix’s release of comedian Dave Chappelle’s stand up special “The Closer”, in which he used provocative humor to contrast the status differences between the White LGBTQ+ community and the Black community, led to accusations of the company condoning transphobic and homophobic content. In response, Netflix updated its culture memo to include both assimilationist and multicultural ideals. The modified instructions included those on how to disagree—changing from “Disagree openly” to “Disagree then commit”, the latter suggesting that after a healthy debate, employees should rally around the final decision even if they still disagree. At the same time, the revised values statement encouraged employees to be cognizant of diverse cultural priors of their colleagues, with the list of valued behaviors now including, “You adapt your communication style so you can work effectively with different people, including those who don’t share your native language or cultural norms”, “You work well with people of different backgrounds, identities, values, and cultures”, and “You are excited to help build diverse teams where everyone feels welcomed and respected.” Netflix also added a clear claim of a common organizational identity anchored on commitment to artistic expression: “Not everyone will like—or agree with—everything on our service. While every title is different, we approach them based on the same set of principles: we support the artistic expression of the creators we choose to work with; we program for a diversity of audiences and tastes; and we let viewers decide what’s appropriate for them, versus having Netflix censor specific artists or voices (Limbong 2022; Netflix 2022).” The text goes on to warn potential employees that they may have to work on content with which they do not agree. All together, these changes

culminate in a more clearly defined superordinate identity (around artistry) and explicit claims of inclusivity, which is very different from Netflix’s earlier approach, but just as well aligned with the current environment.

Design specifications for creating convergence on inclusivity

It is important for designers to consider not only how to position their identity claims, but also how to communicate these claims and facilitate their internalization by members and acceptance by external stakeholders (Voss et al. 2006). The principal goal, of course, is to build an inclusive organization, not just claim an inclusive identity. Research on DEIB interventions points to effective tools for building inclusive structures and cultures in organizations (e.g., Dobbin and Kalev 2022; Stephens et al. 2020; Tetlock and Mitchell 2009). In this section, we highlight the design tools that seem most relevant for bolstering claims of inclusivity to support the broader goal of building inclusive organizations.

Recognize the limits of top-down identity claims

Much research on organizational identities within the psychology-based organizational behavior tradition has assumed that organizational leaders can design identities by articulating “Who we are as an organization” (Albert and Whetten 1985; Ashforth and Mael 1996; Pratt and Foreman 2000; Scott and Lane 2000) and communicating these identity claims to internal (Ashforth and Mael 1996; Ashforth et al. 2020; Hatch and Schultz 2002; Kärreman and Frandsen 2020; Voss et al. 2006) or external stakeholders (Bartkus and Glassman 2008; Elsbach and Sutton 1992). However, there is no work, to our knowledge, that examines how often these efforts succeed in having members internalize those claims as identity beliefs. In contrast to the top-down view, some have argued that shared identity beliefs are constructed bottom-up but CEOs and other visible executives can bolster or break them (Ashforth et al. 2011). Employees associate senior management as proxies for the organization (Fulmer and Gelfand 2012; Haynie et al. 2016). Thus, when CEOs speak out on ideological or political issues in a manner that is (not) aligned to employees’ views, employees’ organizational commitment and identification increase (decrease) (Bermiss and McDonald 2018; Wowak et al. 2022).

Sociological studies of organizational identities, which focus more on external stakeholder perceptions of organizational identities, have been more cautious about the possibility of designing identities from the top-down.

The general view in this literature is that identity claims are not always accepted by audiences and may in fact be assumed to be put out with the intention to manage impressions. Kovács et al. (2017) find that restaurants that make explicit claims of authentic cuisine are perceived as being of lower quality. While it is not about DEIB claims, the study has potential significance for claims of inclusion in organizations more broadly because authenticity is about intrinsic motivation and pursuit of moral and social, rather than economic goals. Research finds that presenting DEIB efforts as being “good for business” commoditizes minorities (Carrillo Arciniega 2021; McCluney and Rabelo 2019) and heightens social identity threat, thus undermining their sense of belonging (Georgeac and Rattan 2022). Put together, these studies imply that stakeholders will not accept top-down claims of inclusivity as authentic unless they find credible evidence for inclusivity.

Develop managers as stewards of an inclusive organizational identity

While managers’ identity claims can have limited effect on stakeholders’ identity beliefs, research finds that manager behaviors inform perceptions of identity (Alvesson and Empson 2008; Hatch and Schultz 2002; Hsu and Elsbach 2013). An assessment of DEI practices found that managerial involvement had the highest influence on improving affective commitment, helping behaviors, belonging, and felt respect and the second highest influence (after mentoring and sponsorship) on perceptions of having an inclusive climate (Creary et al. 2021). Research on DEIB interventions also recommends inclusive leadership behaviors that facilitate belonging, ensure fairness and equity, value uniqueness, maintain approachability, and create psychologically safe environments for identity-based discussions (Chung et al. 2020; Javed et al. 2019; Leigh and Melwani 2022; Mulqueen et al. 2012; Randel et al. 2018; Roberson and Perry 2022), while avoiding forced inclusion, which perpetuates tokenism (Adamson et al. 2020; Ponzoni et al. 2017; Zanoni et al. 2017).

Recognizing the role of leadership, many organizations invest in training their managers to support diversity and inclusion. However, research shows that training programs that have legalistic content, which constitute the bulk of programs used in the U.S., not only do not work, but might even lead to reductions in diversity (Dobbin and Kalev 2022). Instead, cultural inclusion training that highlights the role of managers in making workplaces more inclusive and teaches them tools to do so is more effective (Dobbin and Kalev 2022). We suspect that the difference in effectiveness of legalistic versus culture-focused training might be due to mediating effects of organizational identities and

identification. A study finds that strong identification with their organizations can make managers blind to their organization’s discriminatory practices but attracting their attention to inequities can mobilize them to implement DEIB initiatives (To et al. 2023). We therefore expect that highlighting the benefits of inclusivity to managers who identify with their organizations and encouraging them to be stewards for making their organizations inclusive is likely to strengthen the effectiveness of training programs.

Facilitate bottom-up participation to define inclusivity and strengthen identity

Given the limits of executive control of identity beliefs and the complexity and dynamism of social identities, it seems that the ideal approach to defining an inclusive organizational identity for a given organization should also involve cultivating it with broad participation, rather than solely designing it at the top. Ortlieb et al. (2021) find that top-down regulation of minority (in this case, refugee) identities can be constraining for their sense of self. Jans et al. (2012) find that an inductive process of shared identity formation is more effective in creating identification within heterogeneous laboratory groups compared to a deductive process.

A participatory process can also help avoid benevolent marginalization in the organization of groups that are marginalized in society. In exploring how a German workshop changed its identity from sheltering disabled employees to including them, Hein and Ansari (2022) find that it required internal activists working with a group of marginalized actors to understand how they wanted to see themselves. Once they aligned on the self-concept, they worked on constructing the ideal organizational identity in which that self-concept could thrive. The activists then created experiences to activate the self-concept with marginalized actors who had not been a part of the initial ideation. Finally, the activists worked with the broader workforce to contrast their current state organizational identity to the ideal version and made the case for change, not by forcing the issue, but by guiding employees in workshops to make connections themselves. While the featured organization saw success with this approach, it may not be feasible for organizations that want to be broadly inclusive of a range of social identities. At the least, however, providing a psychologically safe environment for identity-based conversations and generative interactions is advisable (Bernstein et al. 2020; Leigh and Melwani 2022). Not only can such conversations diffuse threats felt by minority members (Leigh and Melwani 2022), but also serve as identity-enactment experiences (Cloutier and Ravasi 2020) that can pave the way for shared definitions of inclusivity.

Persevere through challenges

Particularly when incorporating disproportionately sensitive and salient social identities (e.g., race in the United States), the process of forming an inclusive organizational identity may create conflict. For many organizations trying to build inclusive identities, changes in some organizational practices will be necessary. Even seemingly minor changes (like changing types or timing of bonding events to be more inclusive) might lead to negative reactions. Research demonstrates that the advantaged majority group may resist efforts at inclusion and see them as exclusionary or less beneficial to them (Brown and Jacoby-Senghor 2021; Kaiser et al. 2022; Plaut et al. 2011). This may be mitigated by making sure that majority members feel included without centering them (Plaut et al. 2011). For instance, multicultural ideals may be integrated into organizational identities while also emphasizing equal opportunity components of a meritocracy (Gündemir et al. 2017). It is critical in such efforts to make sure that both attributes are assigned to both groups, to avoid perceptions that multiculturalism is for minority members while meritocracy is for majority members. This will likely require clear policies and consistent, frequent, and transparent communication to convey that inclusion and meritocracy are not mutually exclusive (e.g., Delta's skills-first hiring communications). Achieving an inclusive identity should never require lowering the bar of excellence, but it may require leveling it.

The University of California (UC) system provides examples of active efforts to integrate inclusion and meritocracy. The university system makes accessibility and academic excellence core to its existence (University of California n.d.). When Proposition 209 banned race-conscious admissions 27 years before the 2023 Supreme Court decision to end affirmative action, enrollment of qualified Black, Latinx, and Native American students plummeted at least 50% in its most selective schools, including UC Berkeley and UCLA (University of California 2021). This prompted UC regents, leadership, and staff to evaluate and challenge myriad aspects of the admissions process and inequities endemic in education (University of California 2021; Ogundele 2023). UC Berkeley's Dean of Undergraduate Admissions explained the efforts made to update their approach: "We changed the way we recruited students. We changed the way we communicated the values of our institution to the public, and we worked with college counselors across the state and beyond to identify promising scholars... We are active in claiming our identity as an institution that seeks inclusion, excellence, and diversity (Ogundele 2023)."

In 2021, the UC system admitted its most diverse class in its history (University of California 2021). While representation in admissions at UC Berkeley and other highly selective UC schools increased, it has not reached the levels before

Proposition 209 went into effect. The UC president and chancellors (2021) explained to the Supreme Court how this hurts their identity: "UC's student population at many of its campuses is now starkly different, demographically speaking, from the population of California high school graduates. That raises concerns that UC is not enrolling sufficient students with diverse perspectives, and that it will not be perceived as open to, and welcoming of, all students across the State—which in turn threatens its legitimacy in the eyes of citizens of California." Nonetheless, the persistent efforts, innovations, and critical assessments of excellence have generated results and provided a model for not only admissions officers in other higher education institutions to improve, but also recruiters in other types of organizations.

Be transparent about DEIB efforts

While claims of authenticity can be off-putting and unbelievable, audiences respond positively when they perceive organizations as authentic (Kovács et al. 2017). Research on authenticity of organizational identities finds that stakeholders watch organizations with vigilance to make sure that they stick to their identity codes. Organizations benefit from their distinctive identity features transparent for audiences to see, as brewpubs did by displaying their production equipment behind glass (Carroll and Swaminathan 2000). In the context of DEIB, transparency is sometimes mandated by law. Even without legal requirements, however, organizations can find it easier to build inclusive identities by being transparent about their efforts. Not only can stakeholders better validate identity claims through transparency of efforts and outcomes, but transparency can also help sort individuals who value diversity into the organization.

Discussion and conclusion

Organizational identity can be a very effective target for DEI interventions. Our review of research on organizational identity and on DEI interventions has allowed us to compile a list of design specifications that are useful to consider around the core tenets of identity claims, whether cultural ideologies should be incorporated into identity claims or not, the optimal clarity versus ambiguity of identity claims, optimal distinctiveness in inclusivity claims, and the intensity with which a shared identity should be pursued. We also compiled some advice for organizational designers wishing to build an inclusive organizational identity, based on existing research. However, our review also highlights questions on which more research is needed to support organizational designers.

As we noted above, a significant body of work addresses whether and how organizations can incorporate multiculturalism into their identities in ways that do not alienate

majority members (e.g., Kaiser et al. 2022; Plaut et al. 2018; Gundemir et al. 2017). These find that articulating a shared organizational identity in ways that incorporate the majority identity as a valuable (though not a dominant) part of the identity will be beneficial. This work suggests that creating inclusive organizations will require not only designing the organization's identity, but also supporting identity work at the individual level. A key success factor is getting managers and majority members to align their workplace identities with their organization's inclusive organizational identity. Similarly, Buengeler et al. (2018) argue that managers whose (personal) leadership identities integrate their role as an effective leader with their role of supporting diversity practices are likely to increase employee-felt inclusion. Supporting this intuition, Dobbin and Kalev (2022) find that treating managers not as culprits in discrimination but as model citizens is much more effective in increasing subsequent managerial diversity. Future work in this very promising area of research is likely to develop communication tactics and other design tools to which designers will want to attend.

The extensive body of sociological research on optimal distinctiveness of organizational identities has focused on product markets, despite some arguments to study it in labor markets as well (Baron 2004). Creating distinctiveness in labor markets can attract attention from potential applicants and create greater pride among members. However, distinctiveness—by definition—implies exclusion, at least by some criteria. Therefore, there seems to be a potential conflict between distinctiveness of an organization's identity in its labor market and the level of inclusion it can achieve for its members. Research on this conjecture would be useful for understanding how to position organizational identities for recruitment.

In our review of the scholarship on organizational identity, we drew from both the psychological and sociological traditions of research. The former has historically focused on internal stakeholders, and the latter on external stakeholders. With regard to building inclusive organizational identities, both are important. Inclusivity of organizations impacts not only their employees, but also their customers and suppliers. Moreover, leaders and members attend to both internal and external stakeholder perceptions (Dutton and Dukerich 1991; Bartels et al. 2007). However, separation between these two traditions of research has left some questions unasked. For instance, we know little about how identity claims oriented toward one group of stakeholders might impact the other. We do not know how much attention customers pay to the inclusivity of organizations in their HR practices or how employees view inclusivity of organizations toward their customers. In some organizations, leaders might be more responsive to employee demands, whereas in others

they might be more responsive to customers. Depending on how power is distributed, internal or external stakeholders might be more influential in moving the organization toward inclusivity. We hope that future research can cast more light on such questions.

In emphasizing the value for individuals to express their personal and social identities in their workplace, we have relied on research on inclusive work climates, which proposes a two-factor structure of inclusiveness, consisting of belonging and uniqueness (Shore et al. 2011). Much of this research has been conducted in the West, where an individualistic orientation is more common than a collectivistic orientation. Cross-cultural research on whether perceptions of individual uniqueness support perceptions of inclusion in all cultures would be helpful for organizational designers who work outside the Western context.

In summary, building inclusive organizational identities can set the foundation for developing inclusive organizations that endure. Doing so requires the work of leaders and organizational designers to intentionally navigate the nuances and eccentricities of “who we are today” and consider the aforementioned trade-offs and design choices to determine “who we will be tomorrow.” Some may see abolishing discrimination and exclusion as the work of legal departments. However, to truly achieve an inclusive identity, leaders and designers need to scrutinize every aspect of their identity, products, and operations to ensure they do not exclude people on the basis of their social identities and invite members—who may have different cultural priors—to do the same. To achieve inclusive identities, leaders and designers also need to set up infrastructure to make everyone feel respected. When communicated consistently to insiders and outsiders, we expect inclusive organizational identities to attract and retain diverse members who can identify with their organization and thrive in it.

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