

# New Year, Renewed Push: India Inc Unites for More Diversity

Cos look to improve numbers by aligning inclusion efforts with business goals

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**Bengaluru:** Corporate India is doubling down on diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) efforts in the new year, running counter to a growing pushback against the movement in the US. Both homegrown and multinational companies are intent on bettering their diversity numbers—across women, persons with disabilities (PWDs), LGBTQIA+, veterans and neurodiverse individuals among others—as they believe diverse perspectives, experiences and talent drive innovation, collaboration and growth, strengthening competitive edge and

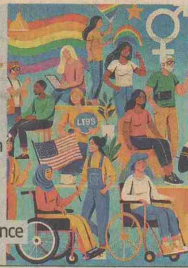
## DEI on the Mind

**COS LOOKING TO HIRE MORE WOMEN, PWDs, LGBTQIA+, VETERANS, NEURODIVERSE INDIVIDUALS TO:**

**IMPROVE COLLABORATION;** boost engagement, innovation, decision-making, productivity, organisational outcomes

**Help attract and retain talent from a wider pool**

**Strengthen environmental social & governance roadmap**



impact.

Companies such as Axis Bank, Deutsche Bank, RPG Group, SAP India, Mphasis and Up-Grad are adopting multi-pronged strategies, ranging from

tweaking their hiring and career development programmes and making managers accountable for ensuring diversity of their teams to aligning D&I efforts with business goals.

“Embracing inclusion makes us more creative, innovative, and brings out the best in us,” said Shweta Mohanty, head of human resources at SAP India. “2025 will mark a shift in leadership culture where driving inclusive culture or inclusive leadership will be recognised as a critical competency,” Mohanty said.

This year, SAP will increasingly use data analytics and technology to help ensure that D&I efforts are aligned with business goals, she said. Women’s representation will be in focus, returnship programmes will be expanded, as will be the focus on neurodiversity.

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## Multi-level Approach

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The emphasis will be on flexible work arrangements and specialised career development programmes.

For Deutsche Bank, addressing intersectionality and inequality of opportunities for those from socially and economically marginalised backgrounds will be a priority in the coming years, said Madhavi Lal, managing director and head-HR, India.

The bank is aiming for 35% women in its top ranks in 2025 as part of its

35 by 25 goal.

Initiatives that the bank will be launching in 2025 include a strategy for hiring PwDs, veterans and members of the LGBTQIA+ community via grad programmes, apprenticeship and partnerships with external experts and introducing special programmes to hire and develop neurodiverse talent.

### MOVING FORWARD

‘Companies in sectors that have traditionally not been big on diversity are also gung-ho.

“Diversity is not just a metric, it’s a reflection of our belief in building a future-ready workforce,” said Riya Dalvi, chairperson-DEI at RPG Group.