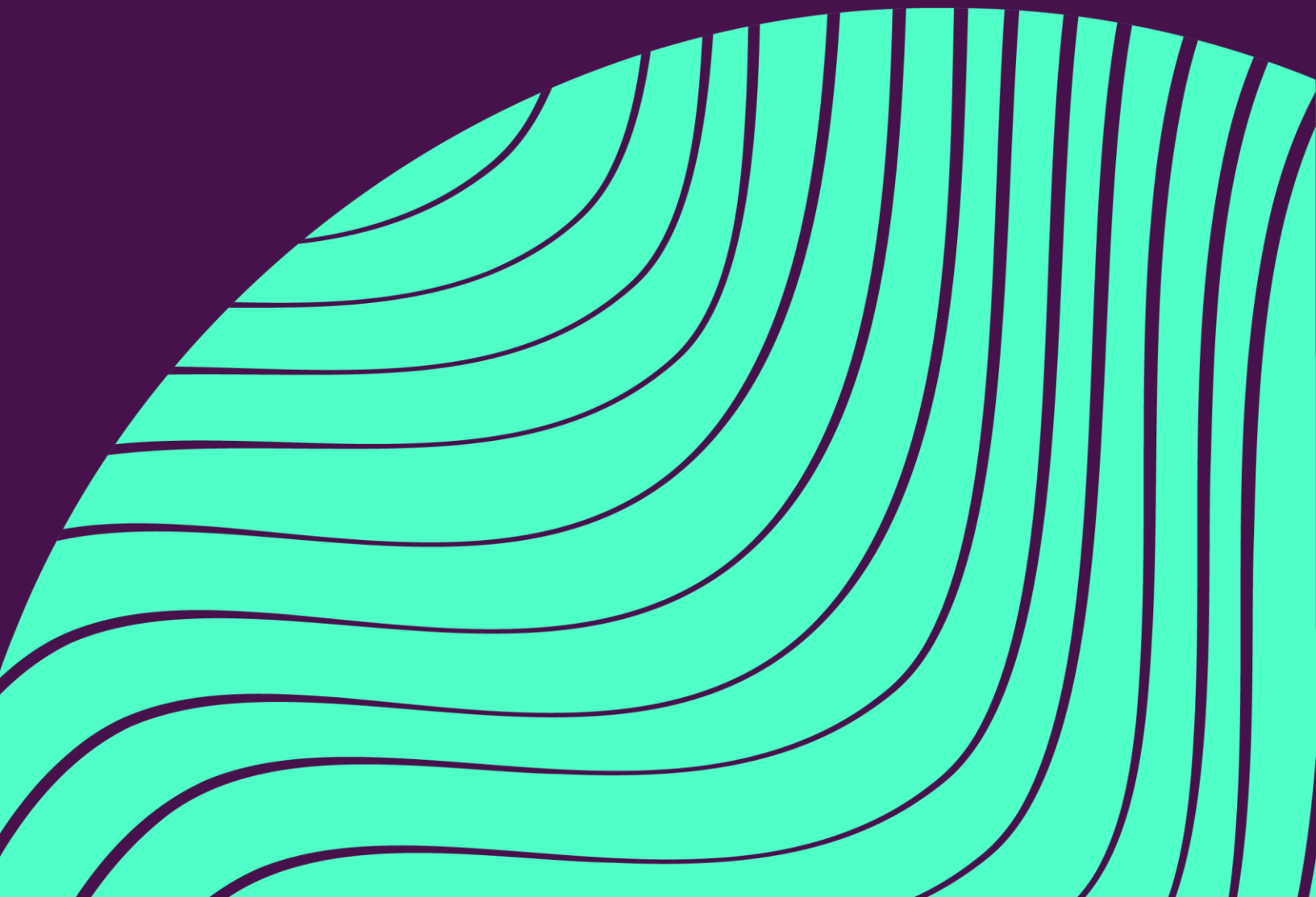
seramount
Talent Solutions for Better Workplaces

GUIDE

DEI in 2025: What's Shifting and What's Staying the Same



DEI in 2025: The Bigger Picture

> 2025 has been a pivotal year for DEI. In many cases, DEI initiatives have been de-prioritized or even stigmatized as organizations navigate an increasingly complex and polarized environment.

Seramount works with more than 600 partners and is always cataloging what these partners are doing so we have a benchmark/best practices for peers to compare themselves to. Through this research, we've discovered trends and changes in the DEI landscape. With the first half of the year nearly through, Seramount wants DEI leaders to reflect and properly plan for the next half of the year.

To stay ahead of the curveballs, it's important for leaders to increase internal communication efforts and increase protections around vulnerable communities.

Major Shifts



Companies are deciding to no longer speak publicly about their DEI strategies



DEI rollbacks are happening nationally, with many major companies taking back their DEI commitments



Many companies are rebranding their inclusion efforts to reduce visibility of their programs

Staying the Course



Support for ERGs is stronger than ever, with many companies leaning on them to support employees' needs



Many companies aren't pausing their inclusive hiring goals but are reframing their approach to not be seen as favoring specific demographics



DEI initiatives continued to be a powerful driver of business value across organizations

This is just a snapshot of what we are seeing in market, and with so much gray area, things continue to change. It's important to consult an expert to ensure whatever decisions you make regarding your inclusion programs are legally safe and low-risk.

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Major Shifts in the Workplace

Further Insights in Inclusion Shifts in 2025

1 Removing Public DEI Statements

Many organizations are moving their DEI strategies to a more internal approach, rather than publicly stating that they are continuing their DEI strategies. Some organizations have even gone as far as removing their DEI statements from their public-facing websites and external communications to avoid putting a target on their company as a result of federal policies.

2 DEI Rollbacks

In response to political and societal shifts around DEI, many organizations are now scaling back or even reversing their DEI initiatives and policies. These rollbacks range from smaller changes such as restructuring or downsizing DEI offices to more sweeping changes, such as publicly stating they will no longer have DEI initiatives as a core-business value; many of these organizations have experienced reciprocal backlash in response.

3 Rebranding DEI Programs

With the words *diversity* and *DEI* becoming targets coming directly from the President's office, the words have lost their true meaning and have made organizations nervous to promote them. By changing DEI programs to include the words *belonging* and *culture*, some organizations have found that they can continue their work, in a broader sense. If this shift is something you're interested in learning more about, Seramount has created a new resource to help leaders learn more about rebranding initiatives.

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Stability Amid the Storm

1 ERGs Supporting Employees' Needs

Employee Resource Groups have continued to be a major source of support. ERGs have proven to stand the test of time and withstand the multitude of changes the DEI landscape has endured. Even with intense political scrutiny coming from federal policies around diversity and inclusion, ERGs are a way to still acknowledge employees from all backgrounds. While ERGs are relatively low-risk in this environment, there are a few changes that are needed to stay that way, such as ensuring it is clear to all employees that membership and any events are open to all who are interested in participating.

2 Continuing Inclusive Hiring Practices

While inclusive hiring remains a priority for many organizations, the way it's being approached is shifting. Amid political and societal pushback, companies are moving away from explicit representation goals, diverse candidate slates, and targeted internship programs. In their place, a focus on inclusive best practices is gaining traction—such as standardized interview processes, consistent evaluation criteria, and skills-based hiring models. These approaches still promote equity by reducing bias and expanding access, without relying on language or methods that have become politically sensitive.

3 DEI as a Business Driver

The discord fueling the backlash against DEI underscores persistent misconceptions about its purpose, but practitioners know it delivers real business value, from driving innovation and revenue to mitigating reputational and legal risks. In fact, early reports show some companies that stepped away from DEI are now returning. By embedding DEI into core business strategies, it becomes much harder to reverse when volatile times come around.

Need help navigating what's next?

Contact Seramount for expert guidance on how to approach the rest of 2025 and build a sustainable DEI strategy for the future.

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202-747-1000 seramount.com