

# **Creating Inclusive Tech Hubs Part 3**

## The Role of Leadership in Diversity and Inclusion

# The Role of Leadership in Diversity and Inclusion

## Table of Contents

<b>About This Series</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Leaders Must Lead On Inclusion Efforts</b>	<b>3</b>
Communicate the “Why”	3
Leading with Empathy	4
Building Empathy & Filtering Individual Biases	4
Should You Conduct Unconscious Bias Training?	5
<b>Developing Inclusive Leadership Structures</b>	<b>6</b>
Creating Pathways to Leadership	7
Embedding Diversity and Inclusion into Succession Planning	8
<b>Creating Equitable Promotion and Compensation Policies</b>	<b>8</b>
Steps to Equal Pay	9
Steps to Equitable Promotion	10
<b>Improving Your Recruitment Process</b>	<b>10</b>
Instituting the Rooney Rule	11
<b>Building a Diverse Board</b>	<b>11</b>
Finding Diverse Board Members	12
Creating an Associate Board Membership Position	12
<b>Next Steps Checklist</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Action Plan</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Additional Resources</b>	<b>15</b>

## About This Series

“Creating Inclusive Tech Hubs” is a six-part series focused on helping tech hub leaders develop more inclusive cultures, programs and spaces. The series, which includes six easy-to-follow videos plus corresponding resources, provides a comprehensive guide to help you implement the recommended strategies at local tech hubs around the world.

Welcome to Part 3 of this series: “The Role of Leadership in Diversity and Inclusion,” providing advice, tools and actionable steps for leaders to lead on inclusion. After you review these materials, be sure to check out the other installments in this “Creating Inclusive Tech Hubs” series:

1. Inclusive Tech Hubs: the Key to Future Innovation
2. Measurement & Accountability
3. **The Role of Leadership in Diversity and Inclusion**
4. Creating An Inclusive Culture
5. Expanding Your Diversity Goals Through External Programs
6. Creating Inclusive Physical Spaces

This toolkit series is created by Change Catalyst and sponsored by Women Techmakers. [Change Catalyst](#) empowers inclusive & sustainable innovation globally through Startup Ecosystem and Tech Inclusion Programs. [Women Techmakers](#) is Google’s global program that provides visibility, community and resources for women in technology.

## Leaders Must Lead On Inclusion Efforts

Leaders in a company, organization or tech hub set the values and culture of the organization and determine the measures for success. As a result, diversity and inclusion support must be prioritized by leaders and come as a mandate from the top in order to be successful.

### Communicate the “Why”

The first step is for leaders to personally believe diversity and inclusion are right for your organization and to drive this home to your staff. In order to do that, you need to align your diversity and inclusion efforts with your business goals.

Consider the following, for example:

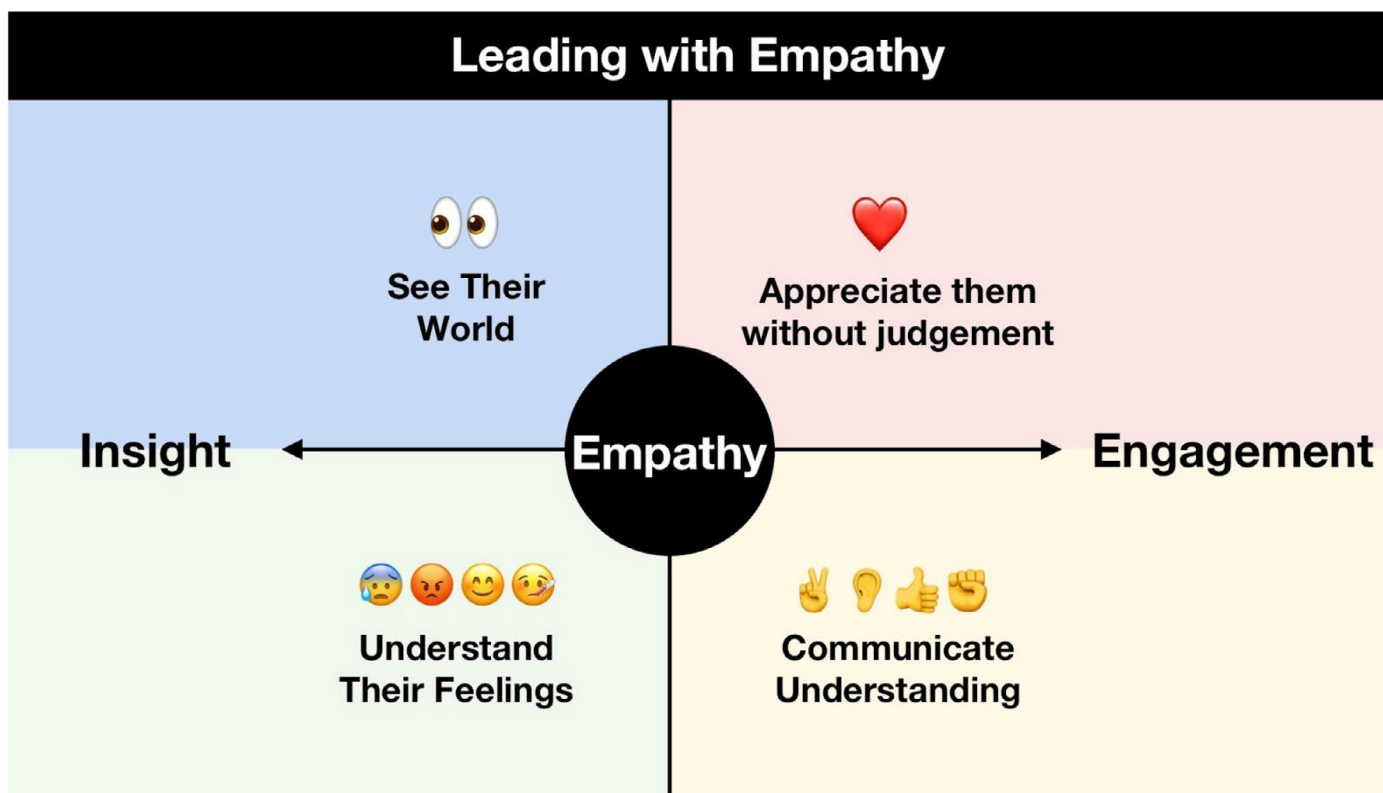
1. How will diversity affect your market growth, improve product/service design and develop disruptive innovation?
2. How will inclusion affect your staff productivity, customer satisfaction and overall profitability?
3. How will a diverse staff better attract, educate and support a diverse tech population?

For more resources on identifying specific measures for success, see [Part 1: “Inclusive Tech Hubs: the Key to Future Innovation](#) and [Part 2: “Measurement & Accountability”](#) of this toolkit.

## Leading with Empathy

Leaders must be empathetic to differences and the barriers underrepresented people in tech face. We call this “Leading with Empathy.”

Theresa Wiseman, a scholar in the nursing field, developed a [framework for empathy](#) through years of literary and ethnographic research. We have expanded on her framework for our own work in empathy in the diagram below.



Created by Melinda Briana Epler, Change Catalyst. Adapted from the work of Theresa Wiseman.

Empathy requires both insight and engagement: empathy is learning to see another person’s world and understanding their feelings. It is also appreciating them without judgement and communicating an understanding of their world, feelings and experiences.

## Building Empathy & Filtering Individual Biases

As a leader, you must continually advocate for your organization to be inclusive. Part of this work is to get uncomfortable and become self-aware of your own biases. Whether working on your own development or that of your team, here are some ways to develop empathy:

**Self-awareness is a prerequisite to empathy.** The following are a few ways you can build empathy within yourself and others in your community:

- ❑ Emotional intelligence training
- ❑ Meditation
- ❑ Executive coaching
- ❑ Wellness programs that include mindfulness
- ❑ Read about empathy and compassion

**Proximity is also an important component of empathy.** People are more likely to understand the world and feelings of others if they have met them and built a relationship with them. Expose yourself to new people and perspectives, go outside your comfort zone, change what you experience as “normal.”

- ❑ Expand your network
- ❑ Attend diverse events
- ❑ Create opportunities for connectedness (such as games, field trips and celebrations - be sure to pick something that works across all genders, races, ethnicities, classes, abilities, religious beliefs, geographic origins, sexual orientations, ages and socioeconomic backgrounds, people who are veterans and those formerly incarcerated, etc.)
- ❑ Travel to new places
- ❑ Talk with new people
- ❑ Build true relationships with people not like you
- ❑ Encourage others around you to do the same

**Once you have built empathy, you can begin to address your own biases and learn to filter them.**

## Should You Conduct Unconscious Bias Training?

Unconscious or implicit biases are attitudes, beliefs and stereotypes that affect our understanding and actions outside of our conscious awareness. Unconscious or implicit bias training seeks to make individuals aware of these biases.

Please take caution: unconscious bias training is often seen as an “easy fix” for companies looking to address inclusion. However, [research has shown](#) that **these trainings do not work well – and can actually backfire** – if not done properly and/or if done in a group that has severe, deep-seeded prejudices. Before conducting bias training, individuals in your community must be highly self-aware and emotionally intelligent and have a desire to learn and improve their relationships with others.

If you decide to conduct unconscious bias training:

- ❑ Develop an Inclusion Plan (see Part 4: Creating An Inclusive Culture) and ensure your unconscious bias training sits within a robust plan of action.
- ❑ Create self-awareness and empathy-building programs first.
- ❑ Measure your inclusion and make sure you have a culture that your community finds inclusive. (See Part 2: Measurement and Accountability Guide.) If not, work on that further before instituting bias training.
- ❑ Select a bias training service-provider that can show proven results and check their references.
- ❑ Measure your results and use learnings to improve subsequent trainings.

The goal of the training is sustained behavior change. Behavior change unfolds over time - so your training should help change unfold over time by facilitating self-awareness, sustained action and personal accountability. (Never institute a “one and done” bias training.)

To learn how your biases may be affecting your decision making, you can take a [free Implicit Association Test at Project Implicit](#). For more information about conducting bias training, you might check out [Google’s online re:Work curriculum](#).

## Developing Inclusive Leadership Structures

With leadership comes a responsibility to bring diverse voices into your decision-making process. It’s essential for leadership to advocate for the company’s diversity and inclusion – and for leadership to be diverse themselves.

- ❑ Create a pathway for current staff and team members to become leaders in your organization.
- ❑ Ensure your promotion policies and salary compensation are equitable across all groups.
- ❑ When doing an executive search, you may want to institute a version of the Rooney Rule so that you are always viewing diverse candidates (see below for more information about the Rooney Rule.)
- ❑ Embed diversity and inclusion strategies into your succession planning.

Develop a Diversity Committee or Inclusion Advisory Board (see [Part 4: “Creating an Inclusive Culture”](#) of this toolkit).

## Creating Pathways to Leadership

The most cost-effective way of hiring leaders is to hire from within. Often people from underrepresented backgrounds don't have the mentor networks, funding for continued education, or other pathways that help them become leaders in their fields. The following are just a few possible programs that provide pathways to leadership for staff and community members:

- ❑ Leadership coaching
- ❑ Mentorship programs
- ❑ Continuing education programs
- ❑ Volunteer programs with options for leadership roles
- ❑ Speaking and writing opportunities
- ❑ Associate Board Memberships (described below)



Photo Credit : iStock

Develop and share key pathways to leadership for all staff and community members: make sure it is clear what skills and qualities are needed to move from coordinator to manager, manager to director, from director to VP, from VP to Officer.

Also remember that simply offering someone increased responsibility can make a big difference in their ability to grow and eventually lead.



## Embedding Diversity and Inclusion into Succession Planning

For many tech companies and organizations, the founders and other top level leadership are not very diverse. Diversity may not have been something your leadership thought about until the organization got bigger. However, chances are that most leaders are not planning to be in that position forever, due to a merger, acquisition or another opportunity. There are things you can do to lay the groundwork for a more diverse and inclusive leadership team in the future of the company or community.

Many of the strategies in the “Pathways to Leadership” section above are important when thinking about succession planning. We’ll also dive into board diversity in the following section. Here are some other ideas to consider:

- ❑ Include diversity and inclusion goals in performance evaluations of executives and managers.
- ❑ Ask all top leaders to commit to personally mentoring underrepresented successors.
- ❑ Involve your Inclusion Advisory Board in all succession decisions.
- ❑ Provide opportunities for underrepresented staff to gain exposure to leadership in formal and informal ways.
- ❑ Inform high potential successors you’re considering them for leadership and include their input in decisions.
- ❑ Offer leadership coaching and management training to potential leaders.
- ❑ Invite underrepresented emerging leaders to present in board meetings.
- ❑ Make sure your board and other leaders understand the value and goals for diverse and inclusive succession.

People often seek people who are like them for mentoring and promotion – do the work now to broaden and diversify your potential candidates.

Learn about creating an Inclusion Advisory Board in [Part 4: “Creating an Inclusive Culture”](#) of this toolkit.

## Creating Equitable Promotion and Compensation Policies

Pay equity is when all people – regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, class, ability, religious beliefs, geographic origin, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic background, people who are veterans and those formerly incarcerated, etc – are paid the same amount for the same work or work of comparable value. In addition to wages, this includes bonuses, performance and merit payments, discretionary pay and travel budgets, employee stock ownership plan (ESOP) shares, paid time off, medical and other benefits.



Photo by Melinda Briana Epler



Without equal compensation and promotion policies that are enforced, individual biases can play a significant role in who is promoted and how much people in the company are paid.

If you don't have paid staff, ensure you offer equal volunteer benefits and titles to all members and leaders.

## Steps to Equal Pay

Here are some steps you can take to ensure equitable compensation across your tech hub:

- ❑ Communicate to your team what you're doing and why it's important.
- ❑ Develop an evaluation committee that is fully representative of your tech hub and community.
- ❑ Document all jobs at your tech hub or organization by collecting job descriptions, deploying questionnaires and/or conducting interviews.
- ❑ Develop [job evaluation criteria](#) - this criteria should be unique to your tech hub and specific industry.
- ❑ **Manage biases in job descriptions:**
  - ❑ Use gender-neutral and fully inclusive language.
  - ❑ Place value across all skills, responsibilities, effort and conditions needed for the job.
  - ❑ Focus on skills needed vs personality traits.
- ❑ **Identify wage, bonus and benefit gaps:**
  - ❑ Create a job matrix you can use to compare wages, bonuses and other benefits across positions (eg Grade 1-10; or Specialist-Coordinator-Manager-Director-VP-Officer).
  - ❑ Determine pay rates for each grade.
  - ❑ Ensure you're evaluating the job not the person filling the job (if someone has a PhD but only a BS is needed, this should not factor into the pay).
- ❑ **Implement compensation equity:**
  - ❑ Calculate the inequities.
  - ❑ Create a timeline and method for increasing the pay for each person currently not receiving equal pay (do not reduce wages to correct for pay inequity).
  - ❑ Communicate the results of the effort and the timeline for adjustments.
- ❑ Regularly review wages, bonuses and other benefits to maintain compensation equity.

## Steps to Equitable Promotion

Take your organization through an audit process similar to the Pay Equity process above, to ensure equity in promotion. Additionally, consider the following:

- ❑ Have regular, timely and effective performance evaluations to:
  - ❑ Set clear expectations, based on standardized job descriptions across your organization.
  - ❑ Establish clear criteria for promotion based on skills, responsibilities and effort.
- ❑ Have regular, timely and effective peer-reviews of performance. These can be 360 Reviews or other peer reviews that are incorporated into the overall review of an individual.
- ❑ Audit promotions following each performance evaluation process to ensure promotions are equitable across all genders, races, ethnicities, classes, abilities, religious beliefs, geographic origins, sexual orientations, ages and socioeconomic backgrounds, people who are veterans and those formerly incarcerated, etc. Ensure everyone has equal access to work-based training.
- ❑ Ensure networking and mentoring events are available to – and inclusive of – all people in the organization (including parents and other caregivers who may not be able to attend in the evening).



## Improving Your Recruitment Process

Broadening your recruitment to include diverse representation starts with understanding your current process and numbers: e.g., What are your current staff metrics? Where are you sourcing new candidates? What is your hiring process? Where are diverse candidates falling out of the pipeline?, etc. Here are few steps to get started:

- ❑ Benchmark current diversity in your staffing and compare representation with local census data.
- ❑ Develop incremental goals to reach parity.
- ❑ Gather a group of recruiters to map each step in your current recruiting process, from sourcing through their first day on the job.
- ❑ Identify key areas within the recruiting process where diverse candidates are dropping out of the process. Often we see tech companies need the most inclusion work in sourcing, interviewing and making the offer. But each company is different - identify where you're missing opportunities.
- ❑ Work specifically on these areas to improve the process. You may want to hire a consultant to help identify opportunities for improvement.
- ❑ Gather feedback in your recruiting process from each candidate who comes through, whether or not they were hired. Regularly make improvements to your recruiting based on this feedback.
- ❑ Just like your product team, make sure your recruiters are refining processes over time, evaluating and pivoting as needed.

## Instituting the Rooney Rule

One tactic for improving diverse representation in the recruiting process is instituting the “Rooney Rule”. The Rooney Rule was first used in the National Football League (NFL) by [Pittsburgh Steelers owner Dan Rooney](#). It requires teams to interview minority candidates for executives and senior leadership positions. There is no requirement to hire them, but teams must interview at least one minority candidate.

Several tech companies have adapted the Rooney Rule for their companies, requiring at least 1-2 women and/or minority candidates to be interviewed for senior level jobs.

For nearly ten years, the rule had a significant impact on the number of African-American coaches hired in the NFL. Unfortunately, its success has tapered off since 2012, with some discussion that it [doesn't go far enough](#) to enforce hiring and training of minority candidates.

A few things to keep in mind when instituting the Rooney Rule:

- ❑ Widen your network to ensure you're interviewing more diverse candidates – you'll need to research new sourcing opportunities.
- ❑ Take the time to find quality diverse candidates (don't just interview someone because they are the only underrepresented person you know).
- ❑ Make sure your job descriptions are inclusive in language and culture. There are some great ways to get started at [Hire More Women In Tech](#). You might want to try a platform like [Textio](#) to audit your job descriptions.
- ❑ Focus your job descriptions and hiring process on the skills, responsibilities, effort and conditions needed for the job (NOT the pedigree of education and networks, as is common in much of the tech industry).
- ❑ Interview more than one underrepresented candidate. [Research shows](#) that just interviewing one woman candidate, for example, can significantly decrease her chances of being hired.

## Building a Diverse Board

If you have one, your Board of Directors has an important impact on executive leadership, role models, accountability and decision making.

- ❑ Carefully consider the diversity of new members of the board in order to develop a diverse and inclusive guiding body for your organization.
- ❑ You might consider Associate Board Memberships: usually non-voting members of your Board of Directors who bring a diverse perspective to the table.

## Finding Diverse Board Members

- ❑ Start by establishing a plan and goal for diversifying your board, with measurable objectives and a timeline.
- ❑ While you should consider at the very least instituting the Rooney Rule (described above), we recommend the board or advisors of your tech hub adequately represent your city and region – in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, class, ability, religious beliefs, geographic origin, sexual orientation, age, socioeconomic background, parental status and people who are veterans and those formerly incarcerated, etc.– and establish goals to achieve that level of diversity.
- ❑ Widen your network:
  - ❑ Attend new networking events.
  - ❑ Ask diverse organizations for recommendations.
  - ❑ Host powerful diverse and inclusive events at your tech hub and meet attendees and speakers.
  - ❑ Put a call out on Twitter and Facebook for diverse recommendations.
- ❑ Make sure your communications about a board position are fully inclusive (in language, skills, responsibilities, effort and conditions needed).
- ❑ Develop a board position that is attractive to diverse people. For instance:
  - ❑ Is it paid and/or are you offering equity?
  - ❑ Does it include widening of their network and personal brand exposure?
  - ❑ Will they feel like a token or do you have a plan for increasing diversity of the board beyond that person?
  - ❑ Does it offer growth and leadership opportunity?
  - ❑ Do they have the ability to positively affect change in your tech hub?
  - ❑ What else might this person be looking for in an opportunity like this? (You can always ask them.)

## Creating an Associate Board Membership Position

An Associate Board Member is generally a non-voting member of the Board. In all other ways, they are active members of the board, however. You can create a rotating position to open the opportunity to a variety of potential leaders in your company or organization – it could be a quarterly or annual position, for example.

The value of an Associate Board Member to the board is to have a more diverse perspective even when there are no board seats currently open. This also allows you to evaluate potential candidates for future board seats and to mentor and groom someone for the position in the future. Additionally, it engages an emerging leader in the company and trains that person for greater leadership potential.

## Next Steps Checklist

- ☐ Identify where diversity and inclusion efforts align with your existing business goals (e.g. market growth, service design, productivity, satisfaction, recruitment, etc.) and define key progress indicators.
- ☐ Learn to lead with empathy by developing your self-awareness and learning to filter your own biases. Ensure that you are the biggest advocate for diversity and inclusion in your hub.
- ☐ Assess empathy skills within your organization and identify programming to support your team in building these skills (emotional intelligence training, meditation, executive coaching, wellness programs, etc.).
- ☐ Create equitable promotion and compensation policies.
- ☐ Improve your hub's opportunity to recruit underrepresented talent by mapping your recruiting process. Learn where candidates are left out and correct those areas.
- ☐ Create a plan for building inclusive leadership in the future. Consider instituting the Rooney Rule.
- ☐ Embed diversity and inclusion into your succession planning strategy.
- ☐ Assess the diversity of your board and establish a plan with measurable goals & timeline for recruiting diverse members and/or create associate board membership positions to broaden the perspectives within leadership.

## Action Plan

Just like agile product development, the most important piece of diversity and inclusion is to start somewhere and then continue to improve and grow your efforts over time.

We've just given you many different ways to Lead on Inclusion. Start with one today - what will that one be? Fill out the chart below to get started on creating change in your organization!

For more information about how to develop an Action Plan, visit [Part 4: "Creating an Inclusive Culture"](#).

Overall Goal				
Desired Outcome	Action Steps	Resources Needed	Project Timeline	Measurable Progress
1.				
2.				
3.				

## Additional Resources

- Theresa Wiseman: “[A concept analysis of empathy](#),” Journal of Advanced Nursing, 1996.
- Theresa Wiseman: “[Toward a holistic conceptualization of empathy for nursing practices](#),” Advances in Nursing Science, 2007.
- Project Implicit: [Implicit Association Test](#), Harvard University, 2011.
- Melinda Briana Epler: “[Tech Diversity: 12 Things Allies Can Do](#),” Tech Inclusion, 2017.
- Kirwan Institute: [Understanding Implicit Bias](#), Ohio State University, 2015.
- Duguid MM and Thomas-Hunt MC: “[Condoning stereotyping? How awareness of stereotyping prevalence impacts expression of stereotypes](#),” Journal Applied Psychology, 2015.
- Government of Canada: [Steps to Pay Equity](#), 2016.
- Stefanie K. Johnson, David R. Hekman and Elsa T. Chan: “[If There’s Only One Woman in Your Candidate Pool, There’s Statistically No Chance She’ll Be Hired](#),” Harvard Business Review, April 2016.
- Charles Greer and Meghna Virick: “[Diverse succession planning: Lessons from the Industry leaders](#),” Human Resource Management, May 2008.
- Karen Schoellkopf: [Hire More Women In Tech](#), 2014.
- “[HR Planning: Succession Planning](#),” HR Council (Canada).
- Stephen A Miles: “[Succession Planning: How Everyone Does It Wrong](#)” and “[Succession Planning: How To Do It Right](#),” *Forbes*, 2009.
- “[Succession Planning Roadmap](#),” Workforce.com, 2013.
- Greg Garber: “[Thanks to Rooney Rule, doors open](#),” ESPN, 2007.
- Mike Sando: “[Rooney Rule in reverse: Minority coaching hires have stalled](#),” ESPN, 2016.
- Ellen Huet: “[TaskRabbit’s Formula for Building a Diverse Startup](#),” *Bloomberg Businessweek*, 2016.
- Andrea Barrica: “[Diversity debt: how much does your startup have?](#),” *500 Startups*, 2015.

---

### Copyright © 2017 Change Catalyst

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law. For permission requests, email Change Catalyst, “Attention: Permissions To Use Toolkit,” at [Permissions@change catalyst.co](mailto:Permissions@change catalyst.co)



# Creating Inclusive Tech Hubs Part 3

## The Role of Leadership in Diversity and Inclusion

**Change Catalyst**  
[changecatalyst.co](http://changecatalyst.co)  
[youtube.com/c/changecatalyst](https://youtube.com/c/changecatalyst)  
[facebook.com/changecatalysts](https://facebook.com/changecatalysts)  
[twitter.com/changecatalysts](https://twitter.com/changecatalysts)  
email: [contact@changecatalyst.co](mailto:contact@changecatalyst.co)

**Women Techmakers**  
[womentechmakers.com](http://womentechmakers.com)  
[twitter.com/WomenTechmakers](https://twitter.com/WomenTechmakers)  
[youtube.com/womentechmakers](https://youtube.com/womentechmakers)