



Energy for
generations

Inclusive, Equitable and Accessible

Building better experiences
and opportunities at ESB

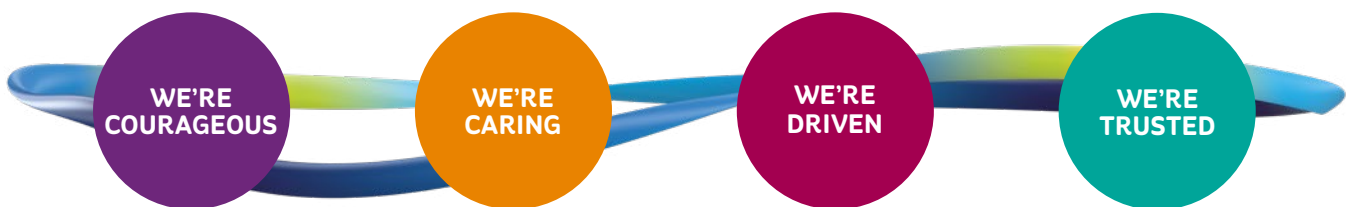




“Improving accessibility for all is an important part of life at ESB. This is something that we’re determined to deliver at ESB, to help build and sustain our increasingly diverse, strong values based and inclusive culture, ensuring equitable experiences for all. By doing so, we will have a positive impact on our employees and customers and greatly improve our ability to innovate, collaborate and find the solutions we need to achieve our Net Zero target by 2040”

Sinéad Kilkelly
Executive Director, People & Sustainability

Our Values



Having the people capability to deliver our strategic objectives with a strong values-based and inclusive culture is a foundational pillar of ESB’s strategy Driven to Make a Difference: Net Zero by 2040. To achieve this, we are committed to building and sustaining an increasingly diverse workforce, ensuring equitable experiences, and culture of inclusion and belonging for each of our employees. ESB is committed to ensuring all our employees feel psychologically safe and supported to bring their whole selves to work.

ESB is committed to ensuring accessibility for all employees, covering the full range of visible and invisible disabilities and medical conditions, whether permanent or temporary through:

- **Providing accessible physical and digital work environments.**
- **Having inclusive recruitment and selection processes in attraction, retention, and progression.**
- **Equitable opportunities for personal development and training.**
- **Ensuring reasonable accommodations in line with Employment Equality Acts.**

At ESB, we have a dedicated Access Officer, who is a member of our Diversity Equity and Inclusion Team. The role of the Access Officer is to support our employees, prospective employees, and customers with disabilities to access ESB services and information and to support employees and managers to support the implementation of reasonable accommodations as required.

ESB's Accessibility and Reasonable Accommodations policy sets out our commitment to:

- **Ensuring accessibility.**
- **Support for employees and managers by fostering awareness of disabilities.**
- **Disclosure and reasonable accommodations in the workplace.**



Caroline McGrotty
Accessibility Specialist and Access Officer

“Having recently joined as ESB’s Access Officer and Accessibility Specialist, I believe that true accessibility and inclusion goes beyond compliance. It’s about creating an environment where everyone feels respected, valued and empowered. By embedding accessibility into our everyday practices, we can harness the diverse talents and perspectives that drive innovation and ensure our community is better served.”



Niall O'Hanlon
Former Access Officer and Accessibility ERG Lead

“I am passionate about ensuring ‘Accessibility for All’ for all ESB employees. We all need to better understand the lived experience of all our people working at ESB, potential employees, customers and the communities that we serve. Increasing awareness, removing barriers, and understanding of how bias, conscious or unconscious, impacts our behaviours, attitudes, actions and experience for ourselves and others.”

Accessibility Employee Resource Group

Our Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) allow us to ensure the voice of our employees is at the heart of ESB's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategy. The purpose and benefits of Employee Resource Groups include having the diversity of employee voice, helping to build on representation and visibility, providing a sounding board as we evolve our strategy, creating more inclusive work environments, enhancing the people experience, increasing engagement, morale, innovation, and diversity of thought, increasing attraction, retention and progression of diverse talent and key capabilities, and more.

Following a series of employee focus groups to learn and understand challenges, experiences, barriers to employment and progression for people with disabilities, we established ESB's Accessibility Employee Resource Group, supported by Executive Sponsor. Our Accessibility ERG is one of four ERGs established at ESB which include Cultural Diversity & Ethnicity, Gender, and LGBT+.



Marie Sinnott

Company Secretary, Member of ESB Executive Committee and Executive Sponsor, Accessibility ERG

"At ESB, fostering an equitable, inclusive and accessible workplace is essential for sustaining our increasingly diverse company. We prioritise equitable experiences, in a strong values-based and inclusive culture. We take pride in our achievements to date, while recognising that there is more work ahead to enhance accessibility for all. Working with our Accessibility Employee Resource Group, allows us to gain deeper insights into the lived experiences and barriers facing individuals with disabilities, in the workplace and in society."



Grainne Burns

Digital Content and Website Manager, Corporate and Regulatory Affairs and Accessibility ERG Member

"I joined our Accessibility Employee Resource Group to gain a greater understanding and appreciation of the obstacles in place for our colleagues, customers and communities. Through learning opportunities, undertaking internal research and sharing of stories, we hope to create positive change by raising awareness and taking actions to make a big difference for all. This has helped my own role as we work hard to make our digital assets more accessible including our website."

Positive actions in place to enhance experiences for people with disabilities in ESB

- ESB's Annual Employee Engagement Survey 'Our Voice' includes a range of voluntary, anonymous Self-ID demographic questions, including disability status. In 2023, 2.6% of respondents voluntarily identified as having a disability.
- We've updated our 'Respect and Dignity for the Individual Policy' and 'Accessibility and Reasonable Accommodations Policy' (previously Code of Practice for People with Disabilities). To ensure understanding of the policies and key changes, we introduced required web-based training for all employees which includes awareness training on disability, accessibility, and neurodiversity.
- Our internal Diversity, Equity and Inclusion 'Hub' has been refreshed, to include a suite of resources, toolkits, and our video on ESB's commitment to Diversity Equity and Inclusion.
- ESB's commitment to 'SMART Working' enables and expands the reach for diverse talent.
- To support ESB's commitment to accessibility and employment of people with disabilities, we engage with strategic partners including AHEAD, AslAm and Open Doors Initiative.
- Job description templates for all vacancies, both internal and external, now include a note which reads: *Applicants who anticipate needing assistance for any part of the application process may contact, in confidence, recruitment@esb.ie*
- Braille signage introduced at entrances and exits scanning at ESB Head Office.
- Employees are encouraged to raise accessibility issues.
- ESB's Accessibility Statement can be viewed on www.esb.ie



Brian Roche

HR Business Partner, ESB Networks and Accessibility ERG Member

"As a HR Business Partner, accessibility for all our people is a key feature of my role. On a personal level, I'm profoundly deaf and hear with the help of a cochlear implant. I joined the Employee Resource Group to continue the fantastic work done by ESB to date. Accessibility means eliminating barriers, ensuring that the workplace is accessible and inclusive to all. Accessibility is really important for ESB as it creates an inclusive and accessible workplace for all individuals where they can perform to their full potential in their roles"

Disability Act Reporting and Data

As ESB is an independent public body, Part 5 of the Disability Act 2005 sets out specific expectations for ESB to promote and support the employment of persons with disabilities. This includes employing a minimum of 3% of total employees with a disability. This minimum target increases to 4.5% by end 2024, and 6% by end 2025. ESB's strategy aims to achieve these targets at a minimum.

The National Disability Authority (NDA) has overall responsibility for monitoring public bodies to ensure compliance with the Act and to provide this information, for each Government Department, to the relevant Minister. ESB submits a report to the NDA annually on the number of employees with disabilities and the actions we have taken, or are in place, to create a more accessible, equitable and inclusive working environment for employees with disabilities.

To improve our data, in 2023, ESB introduced a confidential, anonymous, and voluntary Employment Survey which was issued to employees working in the Republic of Ireland. It asked them to indicate whether they considered themselves as having a disability as defined in the Disability Act 2005.

This survey helped us to:

- **Understand how many people with a disability currently work at ESB.**
- **Shape our plans and next steps to further attract, retain and develop an increasingly diverse workforce.**

We received a 38% response rate to the 2023 Employment Survey, where 10% of respondents indicated they had a disability. When submitting the returns to the NDA, this equates to 3.8% of total ROI employees. This information is also reported each year in ESB's Annual Report. See the People section - page 88 - of our [2023 Annual Report](#).

At ESB, we recognise and understand that when it comes to an employee's decision to disclose or share information about their disability, it is a personal one and may be a complex and sensitive decision. As a result, we may not have complete visibility into the total number of employees with disabilities.

We encourage our employees, and prospective employees, to share information regarding their disability, whether visible or invisible, or their medical condition with ESB. This allows us the opportunity to put in place reasonable accommodations and workplace supports, if required, and most importantly, enable the employee to be their best and bring their whole selves to work.

External Partnerships



ESB is a signatory to the AsIAM Same Chance Commitment – to create more autism-inclusive workplaces. This includes embedding autism-friendly practices, working to make our recruitment processes more inclusive for everyone, availing of training support, and participating in the AsIAM and Irish Jobs Community of Practice to promote and develop autism-friendly employment in Ireland.

- Autism Inclusive Workplace Webinar - 2023.
- Members of AsIAM's Community of Practice – sharing and learning network.
- Throughout 2023-2024, Sensory Environmental Audits were conducted in three major ESB premises across Ireland. The purpose of these audits was to assess the sensory aspects of an environment, considering factors such as noise levels, lighting, air quality, and overall ambiance, to assess how they impact people's experiences and wellbeing within that space. Actions identified during the audits will now be actioned across each of the premises. Learning from the audits will also form part of our communications and guidance to increase awareness of autism inclusive workplaces.



ESB have worked with AHEAD's WAM (Willing, Able, Mentoring) Programme since 2008 to target and recruit people with disabilities. This is done through ESB's Traineeship Programme for People with Disabilities, where people get the opportunity to undertake paid employment for a duration of 6 to 9 months. In 2024, we expanded this initiative into our three-year IT and Engineering Graduate Programme.

- To date, over 160 people participated in ESB's Traineeship Programme for People with Disabilities. Over 20% of trainees progressed to full time and contract employment at ESB, while others have gained employment externally.
- ESB welcomed other WAM employers to ESB's Head Office by hosting AHEAD's WAM event on Digital Accessibility in December 2023.
- We hosted a stand at AHEAD's Building the Future annual careers event, specifically aimed at students and graduates with disabilities, in May 2024.
- ESB received a WAM Leader Award in recognition of our commitment to the promotion of the employment of graduates with disabilities.



ESB has a strong relationship with the Open Doors Initiative. ESB's Chief Executive, Paddy Hayes, is the current Chair of Open Doors Initiative and through this partnership, ESB employees have participated in a number of targeted initiatives, such as:

- Disability Awareness Training.
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Awareness Training - ESB Networks Apprentice Mentors.
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Workshop - Engineering & Major Projects.
- Webinars on: Inclusive Recruitment, Disclosure, Reasonable Accommodations, Diversity Equity and Inclusion Toolkits.

Disability and Accessibility Awareness

- Training and awareness programmes and webinars are delivered throughout the year including topics such as:
 - Creating an Autism Inclusive Workplace.
 - Inclusive Recruitment.
 - Disability Confident.
 - Accessible Communications.
 - Willing Able Mentoring Programme - Mentor Training.
 - One Hour Disability Challenge hosted by Accessibility ERG.
 - Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans.



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