



## Diversity Works for London

### Siemens supplier diversity event



In June 2008, Siemens Traffic Controls (STC) launched a 'Diversity in the Supply Chain' programme. The aim of the programme is to have all its key suppliers consider and embrace equality and diversity within their organisations.

The drivers behind this type of initiative include:

- **Business case** – spreading business benefits of diversity to suppliers brings performance enhancement to the client company
- **Public sector contracts** – supplier diversity is a requirement in tendering for some of these contracts
- **Corporate social responsibility** – strong ethical policies and practices and positive impact on reputation

The STC launch event was attended by close to 50 suppliers over two days. These companies came from a variety of sectors including manufacturing, design, communication, computing, and transport, and ranged in size from small companies of 10 employees to large businesses employing thousands of staff.

The event took the form of a workshop with speakers drawn from Siemens, Diversity Works for London, TFL, and other supplier diversity organisations. The subjects covered included the business benefits of diversity, why and how clients include E&D in procurement processes, what makes a company 'fit to supply' from an E&D perspective, and the actions that companies could take to improve business performance through E&D good practices. All the participants made use of the Diversity Works for London Gold Standard Diversity Tool either online beforehand as requested by STC or in paper form on the day.

A key benefit of the workshop was that it enabled participants to discuss and clarify what is meant by E&D, what it is they should be doing, what constitutes good practice, and the practical steps they could take. It served to alleviate many fears and misconceptions, and to spread the business case benefits of diversity.

STC requested that all the participants developed Diversity Action Plans to improve and enhance diversity practices in their respective businesses. The types of actions raised in the discussions included the documenting of existing good practices and writing of appropriate policies, the establishment and monitoring of workforce diversity data, and changes in recruitment strategies to widen the pool of applicants. STC will be monitoring each business' progress against these agreed actions.

The workshop was judged a huge success by all involved and a good practice model that other companies could follow.

*“Extending our commitment to Diversity in the supply chain is a key component of the business' diversity agenda and our supplier diversity event was the first step in that process. The DWfL diversity tool enabled suppliers to highlight their individual diversity issues and help design their own Diversity Action Plans for the future. The tool has greatly supported our supply chain initiative.”*

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