

**Institutional signals of inclusion: Increasing perceptions of possibilities available for the
self and others in STEM**

By

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Abstract

Women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) face systemic barriers due to the prominent masculine culture that has been established within the field. The present research aims to examine strategies for improving the experiences of women in STEM by exploring the benefits that institutional signals of inclusion can have on perceptions of what is possible for the self and others at work. Across four studies, participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions where we manipulated the extent to which the company policies at a fictitious technology development company were gender-inclusive. Studies 1 through 3 assessed the impact of gender-inclusive policies on beliefs regarding how possible the work culture of the described organization would make it to behave inclusively (Study 1), be your authentic self (Study 2), and achieve professional goals (Study 3). Results revealed that gender-inclusive policies led individuals to anticipate a warmer interpersonal climate and possess a stronger belief that it would be possible to behave in an inclusive manner, authentically express themselves, and achieve professional goals. In Study 4, participants rated their preferences between job candidates and selected who they would hire for a position in STEM from an array of candidate profiles. The findings demonstrated that gender-inclusive policies result in a significant preference for qualified women candidates and increase the likelihood of hiring qualified women in STEM. This research suggests strategies to improve experiences in STEM by expanding perceptions of what is possible for the self and others in male-dominated domains.

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Introduction

Pursuing a career in Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math (STEM) presents as an especially lucrative opportunity given the rapid, ongoing development of the field (Ferguson, 2016; Frank, 2019). With the abundance of high-quality job opportunities available within STEM, and the increasing technological advancements within our society, the value and profitability this industry brings is quite evident. However, despite a promising job market, the STEM sector consistently fails to attract and retain qualified women (Fouad et al., 2019; van Veelen et al., 2019). Research has found that men are twice as likely to earn a degree in STEM than women, and female STEM graduates are significantly less likely to pursue a career in their discipline (Ferguson, 2016; Frank, 2019; van Veelen et al., 2019). The underrepresentation of women in STEM is further demonstrated by recent statistics from the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics (2023) that found that women make up roughly half (48%) of the total workforce in the United States; however, they only account for approximately one third (35%) of the workers in STEM. Things are much worse when examining specific sectors within STEM such as computer science and engineering where women make up only 25 and 16 percent, respectively (National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, 2023).

There is evidence to suggest that the gender disparity in STEM may be attributed to the current cultural climate of the field or, more specifically, the masculine workplace culture commonly found in STEM organizations (Cheryan et al., 2017). Workplace culture is shaped by the social environment and can be defined as a socially constructed set of values, beliefs, or attitudes held by the individuals of a particular organization that shape the norms and behaviours within that given workplace (Cole et al., 2014; Manley et al., 2011). Cheryan and colleagues (2017) conceptualized masculine culture as “features of a field (e.g., beliefs, norms, values,

structures, interactions) that can cause women to feel a lower sense of belonging than their male counterparts” (p. 6). Organizations characterized by masculine culture often lack positive female role models (e.g., successful women in leadership roles) and are permeated by stereotypes that do not reflect the way many women typically view themselves (Cheryan et al., 2017). For example, people in computer science are stereotyped to be socially awkward, and highly interested in science fiction and technology (Cheryan et al., 2017). While men are generally attracted to these more masculine stereotypes, women are often deterred by them as they do not fit with their sense of self (Cheryan et al., 2017).

The STEM industry is dominated by men, and organizations within this field evidently place great value on masculine characteristics and behaviour (Berdahl et al., 2018; Cheryan & Markus, 2020). As a result, a prominent masculine culture has been established, leading women to face systemic barriers in the field. Women are frequently met with gender bias, unfair and differential treatment, and discrimination while pursuing or working in a career in STEM (Hughes et al., 2022; Rosser & Lane, 2002; Schmader, 2022; Seron et al., 2015). Because of this, women have pessimistic expectations about their trajectory in STEM (Cadaret et al., 2017; Seron et al., 2015) and often choose to avoid or leave STEM to pursue opportunities in other domains that respect and value their contributions (Fouad et al., 2017; Schmader & Sedikides, 2017).

To promote success, achievement, and satisfaction in STEM, organizations must work to remove the barriers hindering women's advancement in the field by fostering a culture that is characterized by acceptance and inclusion. Previous work has suggested that inclusion can be signaled at the institutional level by establishing inclusive workplace policies and practices (Hall et al., 2022; Schmader et al., 2020). These policies and practices may serve as a resource that team leaders or employees can look to for guidance regarding what is valued, accepted and

normative within the organization. In other words, they may serve as a cue to the social norms that are present within the company and offer insight and direction into how one should behave and engage while at work.

Though research has been conducted on the impact of signals of inclusion on subjective experiences at work (Hall et al., 2018, 2021), the literature is missing a discussion of the impact that institutional signals of inclusion can have on perceptions of what is possible for the self and others at work. By expanding perceptions of what is possible for the self and others, individuals can anticipate greater opportunities and success at work by envisioning an organizational culture that supports and encourages positive behaviours. Anticipating an ideal workplace culture and expanding perceptions of the possibilities available within that context can provide benefits in the present moment by shaping current attitudes and behaviours to align with these positive future ideals (Iyer et al., 2017). As such, the present research aims to expand upon the existing research on inclusive workplace culture by examining the benefits that institutional signals of inclusion can have on individuals' sense of what they can do or what they perceive to be possible for themselves and others in male-dominated domains. In conducting this work, we hope to explore strategies that help to expand perceptions of the opportunities available for individuals belonging to marginalized groups. These strategies could help to create environments where women and other individuals belonging to marginalized groups can feel accepted and valued in their place of work and truly thrive.

Cultural Climate in STEM

The STEM field is permeated with broader, more structural forms of bias that privilege individuals belonging to dominant groups and hinder the advancement and success of those belonging to gender or, racial or ethnic minorities (Dancy et al., 2020; Thoman et al., 2014). The

culture within STEM often reflects atmospheres and environments dominated by White men and biased by masculine stereotypes (Berdahl et al., 2018; Cheryan & Markus, 2020). *Masculine defaults* is a term used by academics to describe these forms of bias commonly found in majority-male industries where traits or behaviours linked to the male gender-role are considered normative, standard, or essential within that particular context, and thus, are more appreciated and valued (Cheryan & Markus, 2020). Masculine defaults can refer to any values, policies, practices, or norms in an organization that may not appear to discriminate against women; however, closer examination shows that more traditionally masculine ways of being are rewarded and privileged. An example of this would be organizations that emphasize meritocracy when hiring or promoting candidates. Although the choice to hire the best, most intelligent and competent candidate does not seem discriminatory towards women, making hiring decisions based on merit places women at a strong disadvantage. Candidates who are viewed as the strongest or best applicants tend to be independent, confident, assertive, and dominant – all traits that are more typically associated with men (Cheryan & Markus, 2020). Therefore, when organizations emphasize merit in the hiring or promotional process, men often come out on top. Organizations in STEM are often structured around masculine defaults, making it difficult for women to enter and succeed in the field (Cheryan & Markus, 2020).

Further, researchers have coined the term *masculinity contest culture* to describe organizations entrenched with masculine defaults, specifically those that value and reward highly competitive and dominating behaviour to gain or demonstrate higher status at work (Berdahl et al., 2018; Matos et al., 2018). Although it is thought that highly competitive environments create greater efficiency and productivity, research demonstrates the opposite. Cultures characterized by dominance and competition lead to disengagement at work resulting in greater absenteeism,

and significantly more accidents and errors (Seppälä & Cameron, 2015). Along with being highly competitive, the culture in STEM also places greater emphasis on individual success and achievement (Thoman et al., 2014). Masculinity contest cultures emphasize self-interest and augmenting personal status above the collective goals of the organization (Cheryan & Markus, 2017). Documentation from Susan Fowler, a former engineer at Uber, illustrates the negative implications of masculinity contest cultures by demonstrating that prioritizing personal status can negatively impact the organization by disrupting business (Berdahl et al., 2018). In a blog post, Fowler reported working alongside colleagues who intentionally withheld critical business information from managers and supervisors in an attempt to sabotage their position within the company to augment their own personal status. This emphasis on self-interest and gaining status within the work culture can evidently have negative consequences for organizations. Moreover, the individualistic nature of STEM culture often deters women who are generally oriented toward work environments that afford more communal goals (Diekman et al., 2018).

Another notable aspect of the STEM culture pertains to its tendency to attribute success within the field to innate intelligence and brilliance (Canning et al., 2019; Leslie et al., 2015; Meyer et al., 2015; Vial et al., 2022). This orientation toward innate genius or brilliance within the field can vastly deter women or other individuals belonging to marginalized groups from pursuing careers in this domain. The belief that some individuals “have it” while others do not, perpetuates negative group stereotypes, undermines success, and decreases interest in the field for those belonging to marginalized groups (Canning et al., 2019; Meyer et al., 2015). Further, past research found that faculty members who possess a fixed mindset in relation to intellectual ability in STEM, that is the belief that intelligence cannot be changed or developed, led to the underperformance of underrepresented minorities in STEM courses (Canning et al., 2019).

Stereotypes relating to intellectual ability suggest that White and Asian men possess an innate aptitude for STEM (Canning et al., 2019; Leslie et al., 2015). The pervasive cultural stereotype that men are inherently intelligent and talented, while women fail to possess such innate ability, greatly impacts women's desire and attraction toward STEM (Meyer et al., 2015).

The current cultural climate in STEM is especially problematic for women, who are stereotyped to be inherently less competent and intellectual than men, and socialized to refrain from exerting agency or demonstrating behaviours that are typically associated with being a man, and penalized if they do so (Heilman, 2001; Leslie et al., 2015; Lombard et al., 2021; Rudman & Glick, 2001; Rudman et al., 2012). Although interventions have been created to address the bias, prejudice, and discrimination commonly found within STEM organizations (Dover et al., 2019), these diversity structures are often superficial or disingenuously implemented (e.g., exaggerating diversity in recruitment advertisements; Kroeper et al., 2020). As a result, these seemingly well-intentioned interventions can at times have negative consequences or be met with resistance (Brady et al., 2015; Dover et al., 2019; Kaiser et al., 2013; Kirby et al., 2015; Kroeper et al., 2020; Leslie, 2019; Van den Brink & Stobbe, 2014). For example, researchers have found that when people are asked to think about an organization that implements diversity training programs (*vs.* general managerial training programs), individuals perceive the company as more procedurally fair; however, this resulted in participants demonstrating decreased support for sexism-related litigation against that company (Brady et al., 2015). Therefore, despite attempts made to reduce gender bias in the workplace by implementing various diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, organizations often fail to implement empirically supported interventions that effectively address more structural or cultural forms of gender-bias that continues to persist in the STEM field.

Consequences of Masculine Culture in STEM

Past work has found that the masculine culture within STEM organizations leads to numerous negative outcomes and consequences. For instance, for both men and women, working in a workplace culture with more norms consistent with a masculinity contest culture is negatively correlated with psychological safety, job satisfaction, organizational dedication, and psychological and physical well-being (Glick et al., 2018). Further, Glick and colleagues (2018) found a positive relationship between masculinity contest culture scores and toxic leadership, bullying, sexual and ethnic harassment, burnout, and turnover intentions. Evidently this masculine work culture harms STEM organizations and those who work within them. However, research by Seron and colleagues (2015) suggests that the male-dominated culture within the STEM sector is established and made apparent prior to stepping foot into the workforce. Women pursuing a STEM degree are socialized through their interactions with faculty and peers to anticipate isolation and gender stereotyping once they enter the workforce (Seron et al., 2015). Women with a background in STEM often avoid opportunities in the industry due to this expectation that they will encounter a hostile work environment (Rosser & Lane, 2002). This expectation and concern that they will not be met with appropriate working conditions or receive fair treatment contributes significantly to the low representation of women in this field.

Furthermore, women in STEM often experience social identity threat, which can be defined as the fear or anxiety of confirming a negative group stereotype typically occurring in situations when one's social identity is devalued (Hall et al., 2018; Steele et al., 2002). The anticipation of being stigmatized or experiencing adverse treatment due to belonging to a particular social group can trigger anxiety and severely undermine an individual's success (Hall et al., 2018; Steele et al., 2002). Social identity threat has been found to be associated with

several harmful outcomes such as heightened feelings of burnout and mental exhaustion, decreased work engagement, lower confidence in attaining professional goals, and overall poor psychological well-being (Block et al., 2018; Casad & Bryant, 2016; Hall et al., 2015; Van Veelen et al., 2019).

Women who choose to remain in a career in STEM often struggle to “fit in” or find a sense of belonging (Fouad et al., 2017; Schmader & Sedikides, 2017; Seron et al., 2015). Women must work to navigate this professional world in a way that will allow the greatest likelihood of succeeding. At times, this means managing their self-presentation and behaviour at work to conform to the masculine culture (Garr-Schultz & Gardner, 2018). However, the misalignment between their personal values and those established within the environment creates the experience of inauthenticity. According to Schmader and Sedikides’ (2017) state authenticity as fit to environment (SAFE) model, feeling authentic in a particular context is a key component of whether individuals believe they fit in that environment. Further, for individuals to feel as though they truly ‘fit in’ and feel like their authentic self, the environment needs to support the pursuit of their goals. This state feeling of authenticity is a driving force in whether someone chooses to approach or avoid various situations and environments. People generally prefer environments that value and reward their authentic selves, as this satisfies their fundamental need to belong. Therefore, it is imperative that organizations in STEM cultivate a culture that allows all individuals, irrespective of their social group, to feel like they can be their authentic selves and belong.

Cultivating Positive Workplace Culture

There are varying ways that organizations could enact positive change in the workplace to foster inclusion; however, capitalizing on the power of social norms should be at the forefront.

The social context and social norms present within an organization have great power in shaping the behaviour of its employees (Kalkstein et al., 2022). While certain contexts can serve to encourage prejudiced attitudes and behaviour, others can act to discourage prejudice and discrimination towards individuals of different social groups (Murphy & Walton, 2013; Murphy et al., 2018). For example, companies that endorse a norm of *colorblindness* can foster prejudiced beliefs and behaviours. By adopting and encouraging a colourblind ideology, organizations, and the individuals working within these places, fail to acknowledge and understand the disadvantages faced by individuals belonging to racial and ethnic minorities. Creating this norm within the organization can be harmful and further perpetuate the inequality these individuals experience (Murphy et al., 2018). In contrast, organizations that hire and promote leaders who embody egalitarian and inclusive norms can create environments that discourage prejudice by modelling the type of positive behaviour that is valued and respected within that organization (Murphy et al., 2018). Individuals will often look to the values and behaviours that are shared among peers, colleagues, and coworkers to help understand the norms of the organization (Canning et al., 2020). Therefore, social norms function by suggesting what is accepted (vs. counter-normative) in a particular context, signalling valued behaviours and providing insight into how others might behave in similar situations (Abrams et al., 1990; Blay et al., 2016; Chatman & Cha, 2003; Cialdini & Trost, 1998).

Work by Vial and colleagues (2019, 2021) suggests that norms can be so influential that individuals may even accommodate relevant others' biases and values when making decisions at work even when they do not align with their own values. Specifically, they found that when human resources professionals receive cues that the CEO of a company holds gender-related prejudiced beliefs and values, they often accommodate this gender bias by choosing to hire more

men than women in traditionally male-dominated domains (Vial et al., 2021). In contrast, signals of inclusion such as gender-inclusive workplace policies may serve as an indication of egalitarian norms within the organization and promote the sense of a shared goal for equity among coworkers, leading to stronger adherence to the egalitarian norms outlined by the organization (Schuster et al., 2022). Moreover, Kalkstein and colleagues (2022) further highlight the power of social norms by providing evidence that not only do social norms guide behaviour by suggesting what is acceptable in a given context, but they actually limit or govern what behaviours come to mind and are viewed as possible in a given situation. Our research intends to build upon this theory of the power of social norms and their ability to govern what behaviours are perceived as possible by examining how institutional signals of inclusion shape perceived norms within organizations and influence what actions and outcomes are perceived to be possible.

Given the strong influential nature of social norms, Hall and colleagues (2022) have suggested that an inclusive workplace culture can be created by signalling that inclusion is valued and normative at the institutional, interpersonal, and individual levels. Organizations can establish positive social norms through inclusive policies and practices such as implementing workshops or programs that encourage and foster positive working relations among individuals of all genders (Hall et al., 2018; Hall et al., 2022; Schmader et al., 2020). Enforcing such policies promotes a sense of inclusion and improves the interpersonal climate for both men and women in STEM (Maranto & Griffin, 2010). This is evidenced by field studies from a sample of STEM employees which found that gender-inclusive policies resulted in more positive interpersonal interactions with male colleagues and reduced social identity threat (Hall et al., 2018). Therefore, these studies demonstrate that positive social norms fostered through inclusive policies can in

turn impact day-to-day interactions by setting a standard for exchanges that is characterized by respect and acceptance. The positive nature of these interpersonal interactions then shapes individuals' beliefs, attitudes, and behaviour at work (Schmader et al., 2020). Thus, by signalling strong institutional support and positive social norms through the implementation of inclusive policies and practices, organizations in STEM should create a work culture that is encouraging, supportive, and inclusive.

Implications of Institutional Signals of Inclusion

Institutional signals of inclusion may act to dismantle the hyper competitive, individualistic, and masculine culture we currently see in STEM and help to create environments where individuals belonging to marginalized groups can feel valued and welcome. Spaces that allow all individuals to feel accepted and free from devaluation based on their social group can be considered *identity safe* environments (Hall et al., 2022). Communicating identity safety through institutional signals of inclusion can foster an environment where people can express their ideas and opinions freely without the concern of repercussions or disrespect (Edmondson, 2019; Hall et al., 2022). Encouraging respectful interactions among colleagues promotes a sense of trust and comfort, enabling individuals, particularly those who belong to marginalized groups, to express their authentic selves (Edmondson, 2019; Hall et al., 2018). The ability for individuals to be their true self at work and feel safe in expressing their identity has been linked to various positive behavioural outcomes such as greater creativity, collaboration, and work engagement (Frazier et al., 2016). Therefore, creating inclusive and safe environments in STEM may provide greater opportunities and possibilities for all individuals.

Past work has discussed psychological mechanisms that may be beneficial for creating these environments that support positive behaviours and help to understand the impact that

institutional signals of inclusion can have on individuals and organizations. Kalkstein and colleagues (2022) demonstrate a cognitive process by which the social norms established within a particular context limit individuals' awareness and consideration of counter-normative behaviour. They argue that the social norms of an environment determine the behavioural options that are psychologically afforded within that space, and impact what behaviours individuals perceive to be possible. Akin to how physical spaces can afford certain behaviours, it is theorized that certain contexts afford various psychological opportunities and perspectives (Walton & Yeager, 2020). To illustrate this idea that specific social contexts can afford certain psychological opportunities, one may consider a scenario in which an employee is starting at a new job. It is common to feel anxious entering a new role; however, if the company offers various opportunities to welcome the new employee, such as inviting them to attend networking or social events and demonstrating an authentic effort to make them feel included, it is likely that the employee will feel a greater sense of belonging and adopt a positive psychological perspective that will help them navigate the new role successfully (Walton & Yeager, 2020). According to previous research, organizations can work to create institutional channels that afford opportunities and facilitate the attainment of goals by constraining what behaviours are available and encouraged within that context (Goyer et al., 2021). With regard to the current research, gender inclusive workplace policies may signal an inclusive workplace culture characterized by positive social norms. As such, this positive work culture could then create a social environment that affords opportunities to engage in behaviours that benefit the self or others. These opportunities afforded by the environment may lead to greater perceptions of what is truly possible for oneself or others.

Understanding what opportunities may be afforded or made possible for the self or others in specific social contexts can be strengthened by the ability to envision the self or others in future scenarios or situations. Markus and Nurius (1986) coined the term *Possible Selves* as a conceptualization of our ability to think about and imagine a future version of the self. Possible selves are a form of self-knowledge about what individuals could become and the potential they hold for the future. Importantly, the socio-cultural context greatly determines what we perceive to be possible for the self (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Institutional signals of inclusion may serve as a cue to the socio-cultural context in the organization and influence perceptions of what could be possible for the future self at work. For a woman in STEM, an inclusive workplace culture may create perceptions of a future self that is capable and supported in reaching goals and achieving success within the organization. In contrast, a woman who is experiencing the negative consequences of the masculine culture in STEM may view her future self as failing to receive the support necessary to be successful within her role. Thus, by conveying a positive work environment, or inclusive socio-cultural context, institutional signals of inclusion may form an optimistic version of the possible self and create more positive perceptions of the opportunities that are afforded and possible within that organization.

Further, research on cognitive alternatives suggests that individuals' ability to imagine a different outcome or future can shape their attitudes and behaviour in the present moment (Iyer et al., 2017). Iyer and colleagues (2017) demonstrated that by introducing the idea of an alternative outcome to the current status quo for socially disadvantaged groups, individuals can begin to think and behave in ways that match the norms associated with a higher status group. In a sample of school-aged children belonging to disadvantaged social groups, they found that simply thinking about a future where they are offered equal opportunities to those belonging to

advantaged social groups led to greater perceived self-efficacy and stronger performance on school related task. Therefore, shifting the cognitive focus to an alternative reality where opportunities for one's in-group are improved in the future can lead to beliefs and behaviour in the present moment that are in accordance with these future ideals. In simpler terms, imagining the opportunity for positive social change can beneficially impact individuals' current attitudes and actions (Iyer et al., 2017). Institutional signals of inclusion, such as gender inclusive policies and practices, could offer individuals a cognitive alternative in which they could imagine a different, more positive workplace culture. This could create expectations or perceptions of possibilities that would be afforded by the inclusive social climate outlined in the workplace policies and help shape current attitudes and behaviours.

Present Research

Guided by the research that suggests that social contexts afford particular behaviours and outcomes (Kalkstein et al., 2022; Walton & Yeager, 2020) and drawing on the concept of the possible selves from Markus and Nurius (1986), this research hopes to extend the field by exploring the benefits that institutional signals of inclusion can have on behaviour and opportunities for the self and others in STEM. In the present work, we examined the process through which gender-inclusive workplace policies influence perceptions regarding possibilities for the self such as how possible it would be to 1) behave inclusively in interpersonal interactions (Study 1), 2) fully and authentically express core aspects of your personal identity (Study 2), and 3) achieve professional goals (Study 3). These outcomes were derived from the work by Schmader and Sedikides (2017) on the importance of experiencing positive social relationships and authenticity, and feeling as though your goals are supported for establishing a sense of belonging and fit in STEM. In addition, we were interested in understanding how gender-

inclusive workplace policies shape perceptions of what is possible for other people, and how they may influence the decision to hire a woman in STEM (Study 4). From these research questions we formulated the following hypotheses:

1. In Study 1, we predicted that participants exposed to a company with more gender-inclusive policies will report that it is more possible to engage in inclusive behaviour compared to those exposed to a company with fewer gender-inclusive policies.
2. In Study 2, we predicted that participants exposed to a company with more gender-inclusive policies will report that it is more possible to fully and authentically express important aspects of their personal identity at work compared to those exposed to a company with fewer gender-inclusive policies.
3. In Study 3, we predicted that participants exposed to a company with more gender-inclusive policies will report that it is more possible to engage in behaviours that demonstrate their competence at work and help them achieve professional goals compared to those exposed to a company with fewer gender-inclusive policies.
4. In Study 4, we predicted that participants exposed to a company with more gender-inclusive policies will show a stronger preference for a qualified female candidate and a greater likelihood of hiring qualified women in STEM compared to those exposed to a company with fewer gender-inclusive policies.
5. Given the influential role of norms in governing behaviours and the expectations social norms elicit with regard to anticipated interpersonal interactions, we predicted that perceived interpersonal norms would mediate the relationship between institutional signals of inclusion and perceptions of what is possible for the self and others across all four studies.

Study 1

Methods

Sample and Recruitment. Our sample was recruited using the online research platform Prolific¹. We recruited a total of 597 participants; however, participants were excluded from analyses if they met the following exclusion criteria: they failed to correctly respond to either one of our two attention check questions, they self-reported that they responded randomly during the study, they provided nonsensical or inappropriate responses (e.g., leaving it blank, entering numbers, entering gibberish, one-word answers, or otherwise failing to adequately answer the question) on key free-response questions (related to our manipulation), or, they did not identify as a male or female². The exclusion criteria were applied across all four studies. In Study 1, 72 participants were excluded for failing an attention check question, 11 participants were excluded for reporting that they responded randomly during the study, and 8 participants who identified as gender non-binary were excluded from analyses. Thus, our final sample consisted of 506 participants (256 women and 250 men).

The majority of our participants reported that they reside in the United Kingdom or the United States (see Table 12 in Appendix J³). Their age ranged from 18 to 75 years, with a mean of 38.44 ($SD = 13.69$). Further, our sample predominantly identified as White (76.7%), heterosexual (83%), and reported having completed a bachelor's degree (40.5%) or high school (30.2%) as their highest level of education (See Table 1). Participants received £2.00 administered through Prolific for completing the study. Our research question, hypotheses, data

¹ Data from all four studies were collected from Prolific; therefore, to eliminate the possibility of participants having previous exposure to similar study materials, they were restricted to only participate in one of our studies.

² Gender was a variable of interest in our studies; therefore, participants who did not identify as a male or a female were excluded from analyses due to an insufficient number of participants identifying with a different gender.

³ In Appendix J, you can find a discussion of the potential for conducting analyses to test for moderation of the effects by country of residence.

collection plan, exclusion criteria, and plan of analysis were pre-registered and can be found on OSF (https://osf.io/ydnqs/?view_only=407da006dc4a41088bf30f183e39fff4).

Table 1.

Sample Demographic Information Study 1

	<i>N</i>	Percent
Ethnicity		
Asian	62	12.3
Black/African American	19	3.8
Hispanic/Latino/South American	6	1.2
Middle Eastern	6	1.2
White/Caucasian	388	76.7
Other	18	3.6
Prefer not to answer	10	2.0
Sexual Orientation		
Asexual	7	1.4
Bisexual	40	7.9
Heterosexual	420	83.0
Homosexual	24	4.7
Other	5	1.0
Prefer not to say	10	2.0
Education		
Some high school	9	1.8
High school	153	30.2
Bachelor's degree	205	40.5
Master's degree	81	16.0
Ph.D. or higher	16	3.2
Graduate Diploma	5	1.0
Post-graduate diploma	17	3.4
Other	16	3.2
Prefer not to say	4	0.8

Design and Procedure. Participants were invited to take part in an online study regarding attitudes and opinions towards workplaces. Participants were first presented with an infographic from a fictitious technology development company called CCB which displayed the company background and policies to provide participants with a sense of the company's culture (See Appendix A). Participants were randomly assigned to one of two experimental conditions, in which we manipulated the information presented in the infographic. In both conditions,

participants were presented with the same information about the company. The manipulation was introduced by varying the company policies participants read.

In both conditions, participants were shown a list of 11 policies, seven were marked as present at the company and four were marked as absent. The extent to which these policies were gender inclusive was manipulated across conditions. In the *high inclusion condition*, five of the seven policies present at the company were gender inclusive (e.g., Supervisors accountable for providing equal support to all genders) and none of those that were marked as absent related to gender inclusion (e.g., Provides employees with discounted fitness centre memberships). In contrast, in the *low inclusion condition*, only two of the seven company policies present were gender inclusive (e.g., Family friendly work programs) while three out of the four policies that were absent from the company were related to gender inclusion (e.g., Work schedules, job titles, and work conditions inclusive of all genders). The number of gender-inclusive policies present in each condition (two in the low inclusion condition and five in the high inclusion condition) reflects one standard deviation above and below the mean number of gender-inclusive policies reported by working engineers to be present at their organization (Hall et al., 2018). See Appendix A for the complete list of company policies.

Dependent Measures.

Interpersonal Norms. Following the manipulation, participants answered one item assessing their beliefs about the interpersonal norms at the company: “At CCB, I believe that interactions among people of different genders would be characterized by respect and trust.” (*1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree*).

Inclusive Behaviour at Work. Next, participants were asked to list three behaviours that they would engage in to make someone feel welcome, respected, and trusted at work (e.g.,

seek their input on decision-making, include them in any afterwork group social activities, provide positive feedback)⁴. The responses provided by the participants were then piped into the following question, where they were asked to rate the degree to which they perceived that the work culture of the described organization would make it possible for them to engage in each behaviour they had listed. The ratings were made on a 5-point scale (*1 = impossible; 5 = extremely possible*). The scale was calculated as the mean of participants' ratings across all three behaviours ($\alpha = .84$)⁵.

Manipulation Check. One manipulation check question was included to ensure participants in the high inclusion condition perceived a significantly larger number of gender inclusive policies and practices at CCB compared to those in the low inclusion condition. Participants rated their agreement to the statement “CCB has a large number of gender inclusive policies and practices.” Ratings were made on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

Attention check. Towards the end of the survey, participants also responded to two attention check questions to ensure that they were attentive to the study materials. These questions included “What was the name of the company you read about at the start of the study?” and “What type of company is CCB?”.

Policies Memory Test. Further, to assess participants' ability to recall the gender-inclusive policies, they were asked to complete a memory test question which asked them to indicate from a list which policies were present at the company (see Appendix H).

⁴ The inclusive behaviours listed by the participants were rated by research assistants for their effectiveness. Analyses based on this coding can be found in Appendix J.

⁵ Participants were excluded from analyses if they did not report three behaviours. This exclusion criteria was utilized in Studies 1 through 3.

Demographics. Lastly, participants provided demographic information such as gender, age, and sexual orientation. See Appendix I for a complete list of demographic questions.

Results

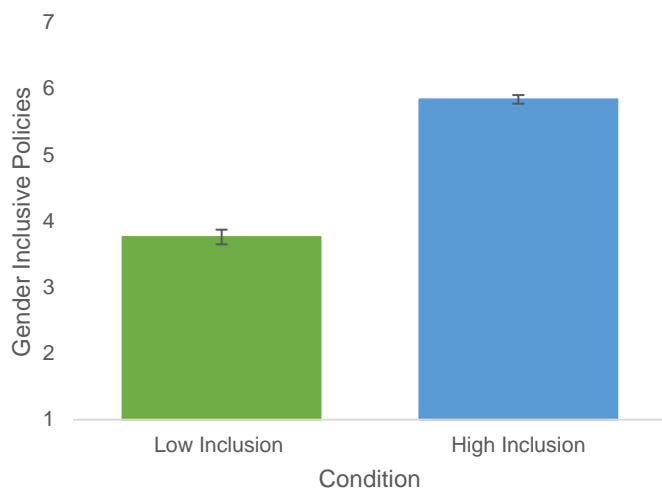
Descriptive Statistics. Descriptive statistics and zero-order correlations were computed for all variables included in key analyses. A summary of these statistics can be found in Table 2.

Table 2.
Study 1 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations of Key Variables

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Skewness	Kurtosis	1	2	3	4	5
1. Condition			-0.04	-2.01					
2. Gender			-0.02	-2.01	.04				
3. Manipulation Check	4.82	1.77	-0.65	-0.69	.59***	.01			
4. Policies Memory Test	76.2	23.0	-0.73	-0.37	.08	.06	.06		
5. Interpersonal Norms	5.27	1.45	-0.92	0.22	.37***	-.05	.67***	.05	
6. Inclusive Behaviour	4.13	0.75	-0.71	0.33	.09*	-.08	.37***	.04	.52***

Note. * $p < .05$; *** $p < .001$

Manipulation Check. First, we assessed whether our manipulation was effective at altering participants' perceptions of the degree of gender inclusion at the described organization. We tested for mean differences in perception of the number of gender-inclusive workplace policies and practices present at CCB between the high and low inclusion conditions. An independent samples *t*-test revealed that on average, participants in the high inclusion condition reported that there were significantly more gender-inclusive policies present at the company ($M = 5.84$, $SE = 0.07$) compared to those in the low inclusion condition ($M = 3.76$, $SE = 0.11$), $t(399.36) = 16.20$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.45$ (refer to Figure 1).

Figure 1.*Study 1 Manipulation Check*

Note. Error bars represent the standard error.

Policies Memory Test. Further, we examined participants' responses to the memory test question. A one-sample *t*-test was conducted with the test value set at 50. The analysis revealed that on average, participants correctly identified 76.23% of the policies that were in place at CCB which is significantly greater than chance, $t(505) = 25.69, p < .001, d = 1.14$. This suggests that on average participants were attentive to the study materials⁶.

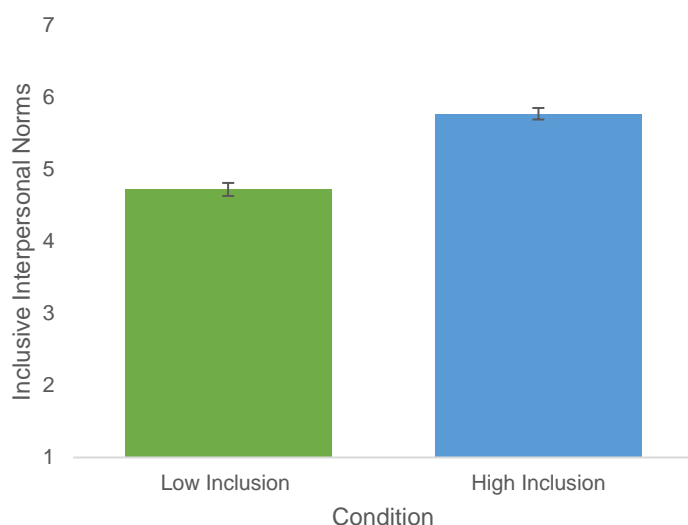
Perception of interpersonal norms. Having established that our manipulation was effective, we conducted a two-way ANOVA to analyze the effect of gender (male vs. female) and condition (high inclusion vs. low inclusion) on participants' perceptions of the interpersonal norms at the company. A statistically significant main effect of condition on perception of interpersonal norms was found such that participants in the high inclusion condition reported significantly stronger perceptions of positive interpersonal norms at CCB ($M = 5.77, SE = 0.08$)

⁶ An independent samples *t*-test was conducted to examine mean differences in the percent of policies correctly recalled by participants in the low and high inclusion condition. The analysis revealed that the means did not significantly differ between the high ($M = 78.13, SD = 22.55$) and low inclusion ($M = 74.25, SD = 23.27$) conditions, $t(504) = -1.90, p = .058$.

compared to those in the low inclusion condition ($M = 4.72$, $SE = 0.09$), $F(1, 502) = 79.09$, $p < .001$ (refer to Figure 2). We found no significant main effect of gender on perceptions of the interpersonal norms, $F(1, 502) = 2.35$, $p = .126$. Further, there was no statistically significant interaction between gender and condition on perceptions of interpersonal norms, $F(1, 502) = 3.21$, $p = .074$. These analyses showed that irrespective of participants' gender, those who were exposed to a company that had more gender-inclusive policies anticipated positive interpersonal norms at the organization.

Figure 2.

Study 1 Effect of Condition on Perceptions of Interpersonal Norms



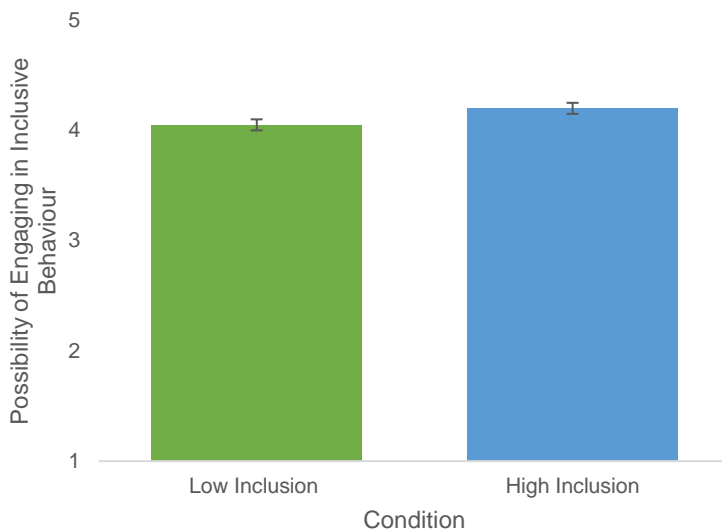
Note. Error bars represent the standard error.

Possibility for inclusive behaviour. Next, we tested our key hypothesis that more gender-inclusive workplace policies would result in a greater perception that behaving in an inclusive manner would be possible at the described organization. To do this, we conducted a two-way ANOVA to examine the effect of gender and condition on participants' perception of how possible it would be to engage in inclusive behaviour at the company. We found a

statistically significant main effect of condition on participants' perception of the possibility of behaving inclusively, $F(1, 501) = 4.56, p = .033$, such that those in the high inclusion condition reported significantly greater perceptions that behaving inclusively would be possible at CCB ($M = 4.20, SE = 0.05$) compared to those in the low inclusion condition ($M = 4.05, SE = 0.05$; see Figure 3). We did not find a significant main effect of gender, $F(1, 501) = 3.63, p = .057$. Similarly, there was no significant interaction between condition and gender, $F(1, 501) = 3.53, p = .061$.

Figure 3.

Effect of Gender-Inclusive Policies on Possibility for Inclusive Behaviour



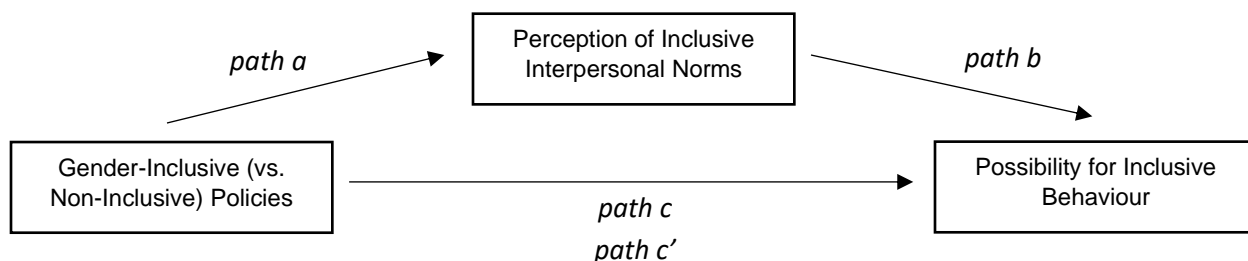
Note. Error bars represent the standard error.

Mediation. A mediation analysis was conducted to test the degree to which gender-inclusive workplace policies impact participants' belief that engaging in inclusive behaviour would be possible through their perceptions of the interpersonal norms at the company (See Figure 4). The analysis was conducted with Hayes' Process Macro (Model 4; Hayes, 2022) using 5000 bootstrap resamples to estimate the direct, indirect, and total effects. Ninety-five percent

bootstrap confidence intervals that do not contain zero are considered statistically significant. The mediation model revealed that participants expected more positive interpersonal norms in the gender inclusive company ($a = 1.06$, 95% CI [0.82, 1.30], $p < .001$), and anticipating a more positive interpersonal context predicted the possibility of engaging in inclusive behaviour ($b = 0.29$, 95% CI [0.25, 0.33], $p < .001$). A significant indirect effect was found such that gender-inclusive policies led to stronger beliefs that engaging in inclusive behaviour would be possible through perceptions of more positive interpersonal norms at CCB, $ab = 0.31$, 95% CI [0.22, 0.40]. To see all of the estimates from these models, refer to Table 3. Additionally, as seen in Table 3, the total effect of gender inclusive policies on the possibility for inclusive behaviour demonstrates a positive association, while the direction is flipped for the direct effect. This is likely the result of a negative suppression effect occurring due to the strong relationship between gender-inclusive policies (independent variable) and perceptions of interpersonal norms (mediator variable), and a relatively much weaker association between gender-inclusive policies and inclusive behaviour (dependent variable). Lastly, a moderated mediation analysis was conducted to assess whether this indirect effect was moderated by gender. Analyses revealed that gender was a significant moderator such that the indirect effect was significantly larger for women than for men, $b_{\text{index of moderated mediation}} = 0.18$, $SE = 0.09$, 95% CI [0.01, 0.38]. The all path moderated mediation model can be found in the supplemental materials (see Appendix J).

Figure 4.

Indirect Effect of Gender-Inclusive Policies on Possibility for Inclusive Behaviour via Interpersonal Norms

**Table 3.**

Mediation Model from Study 1

Path Estimates	Coefficients
Path a	1.06*** [0.82, 1.30]
Path b	0.29*** [0.25, 0.33]
Path c	0.14* [0.01, 0.27]
Path c'	-0.17** [-0.29, -0.05]

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. Coefficients denote the unstandardized beta. Values in the square brackets indicate the 95% confidence interval for each path estimate.

Study 1 provides initial evidence to support our first hypothesis that gender-inclusive workplace policies can lead individuals to gain a greater perception that behaving in an inclusive manner is possible within that workplace culture. We found evidence of significant mediation suggesting that the gender-inclusive policies affect beliefs regarding the possibility for inclusive behaviour indirectly by increasing perceptions of more inclusive interpersonal norms within the company. In Study 2, we tested our second hypothesis pertaining to the possibility for authentic self-expression.

Study 2

Methods

Sample and Recruitment. Six-hundred and two adults were recruited from Prolific to participate in our second study. Eighty-one participants were excluded for failing an attention check question, 11 were excluded for reporting that they responded randomly during the study, one was excluded for providing inappropriate responses on key open-ended questions, and 6 participants were excluded for identifying as gender non-binary or agender. Our final sample consisted of 503 participants (254 women, 249 men). Participants' age ranged from 18 to 81 years, with a mean of 39 ($SD = 14.10$). The sample predominantly identified as White (85.1%), heterosexual (83.3%), and reported having completed a bachelor's degree (43.5%) or high school (30%) as their highest level of education (See Table 4). Participants received £2.00 administered through Prolific for completing the study. Our research question, hypotheses, data collection plan, exclusion criteria, and plan of analysis were pre-registered and can be found on OSF (https://osf.io/c9kb6/?view_only=55bbfab723d3401db44f11d83b010f6c).

Table 4.*Sample Demographic Information Study 2*

	<i>N</i>	Percent
Ethnicity		
Asian	32	6.4
Black/African American	18	3.6
Hispanic/Latino/South American	4	0.8
Middle Eastern	1	0.2
White/Caucasian	428	85.1
Other	11	2.2
Prefer not to answer	4	0.8
Sexual Orientation		
Asexual	10	2.0
Bisexual	43	8.5
Heterosexual	419	83.3
Homosexual	17	3.4
Other	3	0.6
Prefer not to say	11	2.2
Education		
Some high school	8	1.6
High school	151	30.0
Bachelor's degree	219	43.5
Master's degree	79	15.7
Ph.D. or higher	14	2.8
Graduate Diploma	4	0.8
Post-graduate diploma	11	2.2
Other	14	2.8
Prefer not to say	3	0.6

Design and Procedure. In our second study, participants were exposed to the same manipulation as Study 1. Participants were shown an infographic of technology company, CCB, and the degree to which the workplace policies were gender-inclusive was manipulated across conditions.

Dependent Measures.

Interpersonal Norms. Using methods similar to that of Study 1, participants answered one item assessing their beliefs about the interpersonal norms at the company: “At CCB, I believe that interactions among people of different genders would be characterized by respect and trust.” (*1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree*).

Authentic Self-Expression at Work. Following this, participants completed our key dependent measure. Using the same procedure as Study 1, participants were asked to list three core aspects of their personal identity that they hope would be accepted by others at their place of work (e.g., ethnic background, religious beliefs, being a mother). The responses provided by the participants were then piped forward into the next question where they rated the degree to which they perceived that the work culture of the described organization would make it possible for them to fully and authentically express each aspect of their personal identity listed ($1 = impossible$; $5 = extremely possible$). The scale was calculated as the mean of participants' ratings across all three behaviours ($\alpha = .78$).

Manipulation Check. Participants then responded to our manipulation check question to ensure a significantly larger number of gender inclusive policies and practices were perceived by those in the high inclusion condition compared to those in the low inclusion condition. Specifically, they rated their agreement using a 7-point scale to the statement "CCB has a large number of gender inclusive policies and practices" ($1 = strongly disagree$; $7 = strongly agree$).

Attention check. Two attention check questions used in Study 1 were included to ensure that participants were attentive to the study materials ("What was the name of the company you read about at the start of the study?" and "What type of company is CCB?").

Policies Memory Test. Additionally, the same policies memory test described in Study 1 was included (see Appendix H).

Demographics. Finally, participants completed our demographic questionnaire used in Study 1 (See Appendix I for a complete list of demographic questions).

Results

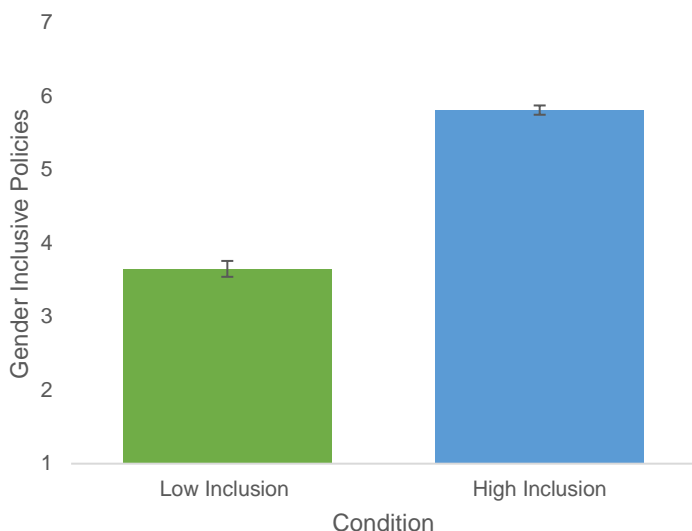
Descriptive Statistics. Descriptive statistics and zero-order correlations were computed for all variables included in key analyses. A summary of these statistics can be found in Table 5.

Table 5.
Study 2 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations of Key Variables

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Skewness	Kurtosis	1	2	3	4	5
1. Condition			-0.04	-2.01					
2. Gender			-0.02	-2.01	.03				
3. Manipulation Check	4.75	1.75	-0.58	-0.76	.61***	.00			
4. Policies Memory Test	76.8	22.3	-0.75	-0.19	.01	.04	.00		
5. Interpersonal Norms	5.28	1.43	-1.00	0.40	.41***	-.05	.65***	.02	
6. Authentic Self-Expression	3.74	0.85	-0.37	-0.32	.12**	-.02	.35***	.00	.53***

Note. ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Manipulation Check. Like Study 1, we first assessed whether our manipulation was effective. We performed an independent samples *t*-test to examine mean differences in perception of the number of gender-inclusive workplace policies and practices present at CCB between the high and low inclusion conditions. We found that participants in the high inclusion condition reported significantly more gender-inclusive policies present at the company ($M = 5.81$, $SE = 0.06$) compared to those in the low inclusion condition ($M = 3.65$, $SE = 0.11$), $t(396.04) = 17.22$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.55$ (refer to Figure 5).

Figure 5.*Study 2 Manipulation Check*

Note. Error bars represent the standard error.

Policies Memory Test. We then conducted a one sample *t*-test to assess participants' responses to the memory test question. We found that participants correctly identified 76.82% of the policies that were in place at CCB which is significantly greater than chance, $t(593) = 29.32$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.20$, suggesting that on average participants were attentive to the study materials⁷.

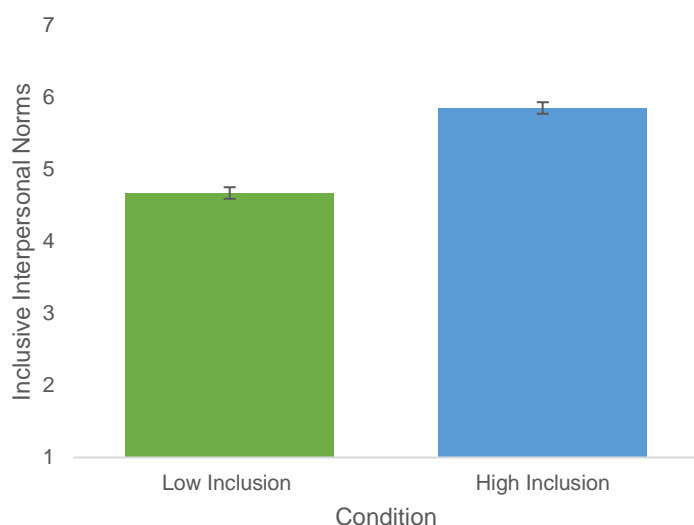
Perception of interpersonal norms. We then examined participants' perception of the interpersonal norms at CCB. Like in Study 1, we conducted a two-way ANOVA to analyze the effect of gender and condition on participants' perception of the interpersonal norms at the company. We found a statistically significant main effect of condition on perception of interpersonal norms, $F(1, 499) = 103.51$, $p < .001$, such that participants in the high inclusion condition ($M = 5.85$, $SE = 0.08$) reported significantly stronger perceptions of positive

⁷ An independent samples *t*-test was conducted to examine mean differences in the percent of policies correctly recalled by participants in the low and high inclusion condition. The analysis revealed that the means did not significantly differ between the high ($M = 79.16$, $SD = 21.05$) and low inclusion ($M = 78.75$, $SD = 20.80$) conditions, $t(501) = -0.22$, $p = .826$.

interpersonal norms at CCB compared to those in the low inclusion condition ($M = 4.67$, $SE = 0.08$; see Figure 6). There was no significant main effect of gender on perceptions of the interpersonal norms, $F(1, 499) = 2.59$, $p = .108$. No statistically significant interaction was found between gender and condition on perceptions of interpersonal norms, $F(1, 499) = 1.10$, $p = .295$. These results revealed that participants exposed to the company with more gender-inclusive policies expected a more positive and inclusive work culture compared to those exposed to a company with fewer gender-inclusive policies regardless of their gender.

Figure 6.

Study 2 Effect of Condition on Perceptions of Interpersonal Norms



Note. Error bars represent the standard error.

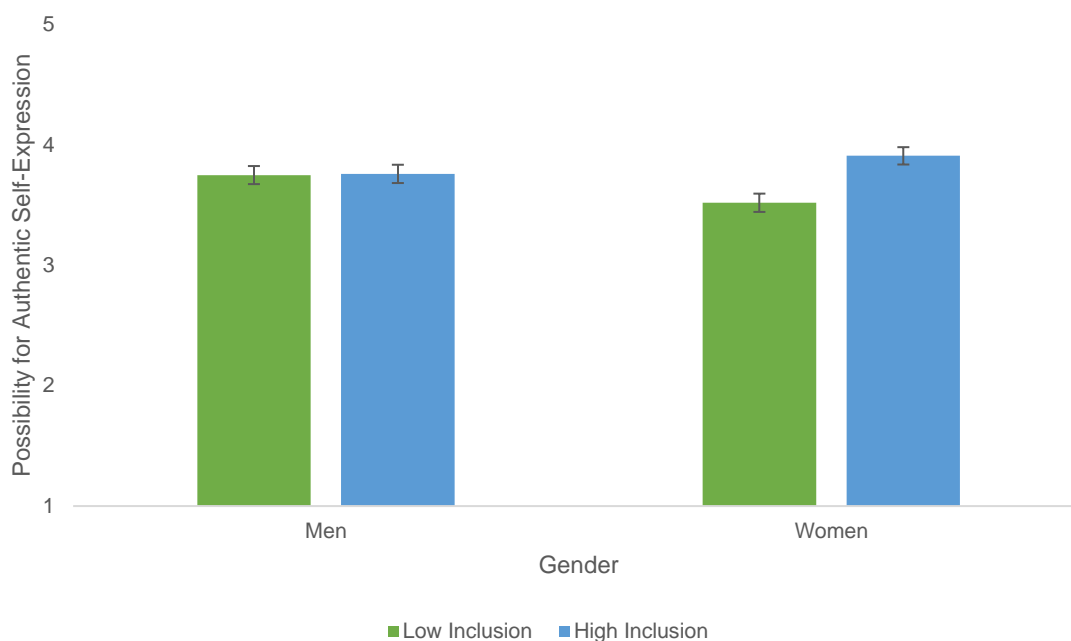
Possibility for authentic self-expression. To examine our key dependent variable, we ran a two-way ANOVA to test the impact of condition and gender on participants' perception of how possible they believed it would be to express core aspects of their personal identity fully and authentically at CCB. Results revealed no significant main effect of gender, $F(1, 499) = 0.31$, $p = .580$, but a significant main effect of condition, $F(1, 499) = 7.20$, $p = .008$, that was qualified by

a significant condition by gender interaction, $F(1, 499) = 6.30, p = .012$ (refer to Figure 7). To be conservative, simple effects analyses were conducted using a Bonferroni correction, adjusting the significance level for the four comparisons being made. This approach means that the p -values below reach statistical significance at $p < .0125$.

These analyses revealed that women expected a significantly greater possibility for authentic self-expression in the high inclusion condition ($M = 3.91, SE = 0.07$) compared to in the low inclusion condition ($M = 3.52, SE = 0.08$), $t(499) = 3.69, p < .001$. In contrast, gender-inclusive policies had no significant effect on men's perception of the possibility for authentic self-expression at CCB (high inclusion condition, $M = 3.76, SE = 0.08$; low inclusion condition, $M = 3.75, SE = 0.08$), $t(499) = 0.14, p = .226$. Further, men and women differed significantly in their perceptions of the possibility for authentic self-expression in the low inclusion condition, such that women reported significantly lower perceptions that authentic self-expression would be possible ($M = 3.52, SE = 0.08$) compared to men ($M = 3.75, SE = 0.08$), $t(499) = 2.14, p = .008$. Whereas there was no significant difference between men ($M = 3.76, SE = 0.08$) and women ($M = 3.91, SE = 0.07$) in their perceptions of the possibility for authentic self-expression in the high inclusion condition, $t(499) = 1.40, p = .041$.

Figure 7.

Effect of Gender-Inclusive Policies on Possibility for Authentic Self-Expression by Gender



Note. Error bars represent the standard error.

Moderated mediation. We tested a moderated mediation model to assess whether the indirect effect of gender-inclusive workplace policies on beliefs regarding the possibility for authentic self-expression via perceptions of positive interpersonal norms was moderated by gender (see Figure 8). Using Hayes Process Macro (Model 59; Hayes, 2022), we assessed the effects of moderation of gender (men coded as 0; women coded as 1) on 1) the relationship between gender inclusive policies and beliefs regarding the possibility for authentic self-expression (path *c*); 2) the relationship between gender-inclusive workplace policies and perceptions of interpersonal norms (path *a*); 3) the relationship between perceptions of interpersonal norms and beliefs regarding the possibility for authentic self-expression (path *b*). The analyses were performed using 5000 bootstrap resamples. Ninety-five percent bootstrap confidence intervals that do not contain zero are considered statistically significant. Analyses

revealed significant indirect effects for both men ($ab = 0.30$, 95% CI [0.20, 0.42]) and women ($ab = 0.50$, 95% CI [0.35, 0.66]). Tests of moderated mediation suggested that the indirect effect for women was significantly larger than for men, $b_{\text{index of moderated mediation}} = 0.20$, $SE = 0.10$, 95% CI [0.004, 0.40]. These findings suggest that more gender-inclusive workplace policies lead to stronger beliefs that authentic self-expression would be possible for both men and women through perceptions of more positive interpersonal norms. However, this effect is stronger for women compared to men. To see all of the estimates from these models, refer to Table 6.

Figure 8.

Indirect Effect of Gender-Inclusive Policies on Possibility for Authentic Self-Expression via Interpersonal Norms Moderated by Gender

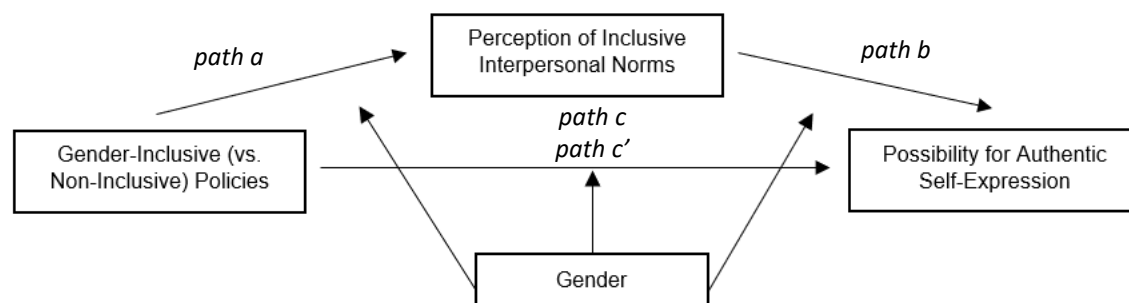


Table 6.

Moderated Mediation Model from Study 2

	Women	Men	Interaction
Path a	1.30*** [0.98, 1.63]	1.06*** [0.74, 1.39]	0.24 [-0.21, 0.70]
Path b	0.38*** [0.32, 0.45]	0.29*** [0.22, 0.36]	0.10** [0.001, 0.19]
Path c	0.39*** [0.18, 0.60]	0.01 [-0.20, 0.22]	0.38* [0.08, 0.67]
Path c'	-0.11 [-0.31, 0.08]	-0.29** [-0.48, -0.10]	0.18 [-0.10, 0.45]

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. Coefficients denote the unstandardized beta. Values in the square brackets indicate the 95% confidence interval for each path estimate.

Findings from Study 2 support our second hypothesis that more gender-inclusive policies would lead to higher perceptions that expressing oneself fully and authentically would be possible within the work culture. However, unlike Study 1, there were significant gender differences such that the main effect of gender-inclusive policies on the possibility for authentic self-expression was only significant for women. Moreover, the tests of moderated mediation further illustrates these gender differences by indicating that the indirect effect of gender-inclusive policies on authentic self-expression via perceived interpersonal norms was larger for women compared to men. As discussed by Schmader and Sedikides (2017), women's underrepresentation in STEM may make them particularly vigilant to cues that facilitate authenticity. It is possible that due to this emphasis placed on authenticity, women's perceptions of the possibility for authentic self-expression were more influenced by the institutional signals of inclusion, resulting in a larger effect being found for women compared to men in this study.

Study 3

Methods

Sample and Recruitment. We recruited a total of 600 participants from Prolific to take part in our third study. Eighty-six participants were excluded for failing an attention check question, 16 participants were excluded for reporting that they responded randomly during the study, and eight were excluded for reporting that they identified as non-binary or agender. This left us with a final sample of 490 participants (245 women, 245 men). Participants' age ranged from 18 to 80 years, with a mean of 36.20 ($SD = 12.26$). We had a predominantly White (76.7%) and heterosexual (85.3%) sample. Also, participants reported having completed a bachelor's degree (43.3%) or high school (29.4%) as their highest level of education (See Table 7). Participants received £2.00 administered through Prolific for completing the study. Our research

question, hypotheses, data collection plan, exclusion criteria, and plan of analysis were pre-registered and can be found on OSF

(https://osf.io/yvj3r/?view_only=0dcc3fbbb4704d92821f750a0e85f499).

Table 7.

Sample Demographic Information Study 3

	<i>N</i>	Percent
Ethnicity		
Asian	53	10.8
Black/African American	26	5.3
Hispanic/Latino/South American	12	2.4
Middle Eastern	4	0.8
White/Caucasian	376	76.7
Other	6	1.2
Prefer not to answer	4	0.8
Sexual Orientation		
Asexual	9	1.8
Bisexual	28	5.7
Heterosexual	418	85.3
Homosexual	17	3.5
Other	4	0.8
Prefer not to say	14	2.9
Education		
Some high school	7	1.4
High school	144	29.4
Bachelor's degree	212	43.3
Master's degree	73	14.9
Ph.D. or higher	15	3.1
Graduate Diploma	10	2.0
Post-graduate diploma	10	2.0
Other	15	3.1
Prefer not to say	4	0.8

Design and Procedure. Participants were exposed to the same manipulation as described in the previous two studies (Refer to Appendix A for manipulation materials).

Dependent Measures.

Interpersonal Norms. Participants were first assessed on their beliefs about the interpersonal norms at the company. They responded to the statement, “At CCB, I believe that

interactions among people of different genders would be characterized by respect and trust” on a 7-point Likert scale (*1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree*).

Professional Goals. Next, adopting the same procedure as Studies 1 and 2, participants were asked to list three behaviours, actions, or tasks they might perform in an office setting to demonstrate that they are a competent employee and would help them move towards professional goals (e.g., strong networking to improve business connections and opportunities, pursue training and professional development opportunities, mentor other team members)⁸. Again, the responses provided were piped into the following question. Using a 5-point scale (*1 = impossible; 5 = extremely possible*), participants rated the degree to which they perceived that the work culture of the described organization would make it possible for them to engage in the behaviours, actions or tasks they previously listed. The scale was calculated as the mean of participants’ ratings across all three behaviours ($\alpha = .81$).

Manipulation Check. Participants then completed our one-item manipulation check measure described previously that assessed their perception of the number of gender inclusive policies at CCB (“CCB has a large number of gender inclusive policies and practices” *1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree*).

Attention check. Remaining consistent with our first two studies, participants responded to two attention check questions that asked them about the name of the described company and the industry to ensure participants were attentive to the study materials (See Appendix H).

⁸ The behaviours listed by the participants were rated by research assistants for their effectiveness. Analyses based on this coding can be found in Appendix J.

Policies Memory Test. Again, participants were assessed on their ability to recall the gender-inclusive policies present at the company using the memory test question from Studies 1 and 2 (See Appendix H).

Demographics. At the end of the survey, participants completed the same demographic questionnaire as our first two studies (See Appendix I).

Results

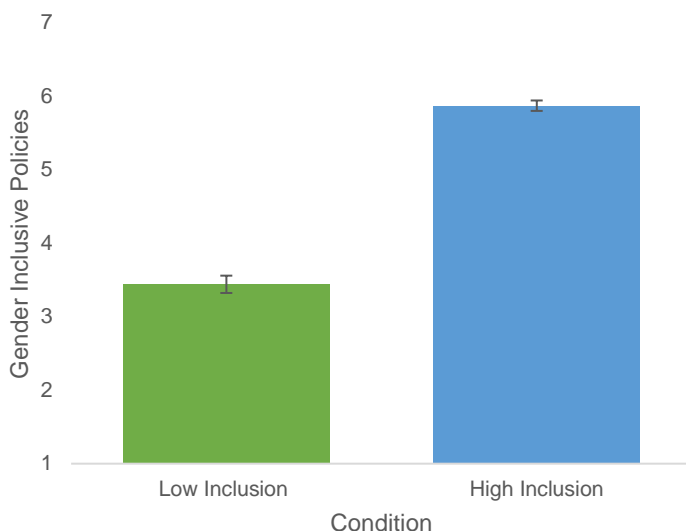
Descriptive Statistics. Descriptive statistics and zero-order correlations were computed for all variables included in key analyses. A summary of these statistics can be found in Table 8.

Table 8.
Study 3 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations of Key Variables

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Skewness	Kurtosis	1	2	3	4	5
1. Condition			-0.05	-2.01					
2. Gender			0.00	-2.01	.01				
3. Manipulation Check	4.68	1.94	-0.54	-1.01	.63***	-.05			
4. Policies Memory Test	79.0	21.1	-0.86	0.16	.13**	.03	.15***		
5. Interpersonal Norms	5.10	1.56	-0.82	-0.22	.45***	-.07	.77***	.21***	
6. Professional Goals	4.15	0.73	-0.68	0.07	.14**	-.08	.37***	.11*	.46***

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Manipulation Check. We first assessed the effectiveness of our manipulation by performing an independent samples *t*-test to examine mean differences in perception of the number of gender-inclusive workplace policies and practices present at CCB between the high and low inclusion conditions. We found that participants in the high inclusion condition reported that there were significantly more gender-inclusive policies present at the company ($M = 5.87$, $SE = 0.07$) compared to those in the low inclusion condition ($M = 3.44$, $SE = 0.12$), $t(391.36) = 17.65$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.61$, suggesting that our manipulation was effective (refer to Figure 9).

Figure 9.*Study 3 Manipulation Check*

Note. Error bars represent the standard error.

Policies Memory Test. We then conducted a one sample *t*-test to assess participants' ability to correctly identify from a list which policies were present at CCB. We found that on average, participants correctly identified 79.04% of the policies that were in place at CCB which is significantly greater than chance, $t(489) = 30.45, p < .001, d = 1.38$, suggesting that on average participants were attentive to the study materials⁹.

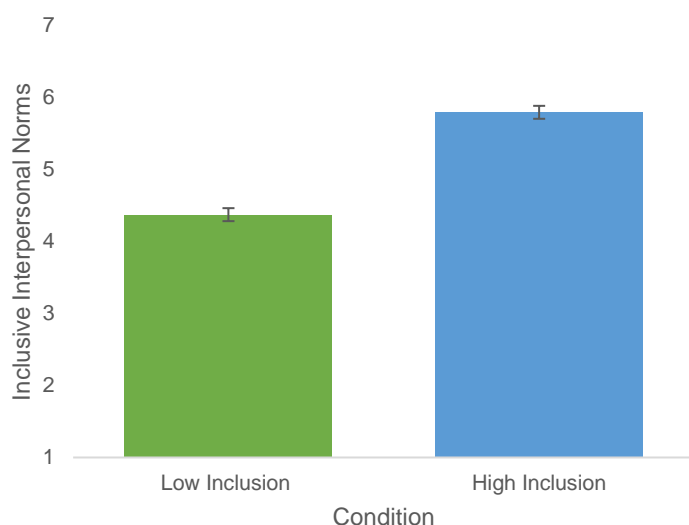
Perception of interpersonal norms. Next, we examined participants' perceptions of the interpersonal norms at CCB. Like Studies 1 and 2, we conducted a two-way ANOVA to analyze the effect of gender and condition on participants' perception of the interpersonal norms

⁹ An independent samples *t*-test was conducted to examine mean differences in the percent of policies correctly recalled by participants in the low and high inclusion condition. The analysis revealed that on average participants in the high inclusion condition recalled a significantly greater percentage of policies correctly ($M = 81.73, SD = 19.85$) compared to those in the low inclusion condition ($M = 76.20, SD = 22.05$), $t(488) = -2.92, p = .004$. Given this significant difference in the percentage of policies correctly recalled between conditions, we re-ran our two-way ANOVAs predicting interpersonal norms and the possibility for achieving professional goals with the policies memory test scores included as a covariate to ensure the main effect of condition remained significant. We found that the effect of the gender-inclusive policies on interpersonal norms and the possibility for achieving professional goals remained significant after controlling for participants scores on the policies memory test.

at the company. We found a statistically significant main effect of condition on perception of interpersonal norms, $F(1, 486) = 127.29, p < .001$, such that participants in the high inclusion condition reported significantly stronger perceptions of positive interpersonal norms at CCB ($M = 5.79, SE = 0.09$) compared to those in the low inclusion condition ($M = 4.37, SE = 0.09$; see Figure 10). There was no significant main effect of gender on perceptions of the interpersonal norms, $F(1, 486) = 3.64, p = .057$. Likewise, no significant interaction between gender and condition on perceptions of interpersonal norms was found, $F(1, 486) = 0.56, p = .457$.

Figure 10.

Study 3 Effect of Condition on Perceptions of Interpersonal Norms



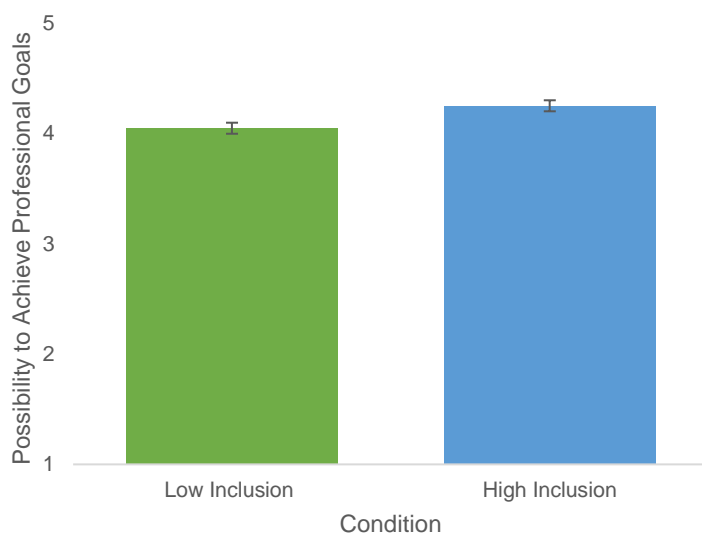
Note. Error bars represent the standard error.

Possibility for attaining professional goals. Next, we conducted a two-way ANOVA to examine the effects of condition and gender on participants' ratings of how possible they believed it would be to engage in behaviours that would help them reach their professional goals at CCB. A significant main effect of condition was found, $F(1, 486) = 9.79, p = .002$ (see Figure 11). Participants in the high inclusion condition reported significantly stronger beliefs that

achieving professional goals would be possible at CCB ($M = 4.25$, $SE = 0.05$) compared to those in the low inclusion condition ($M = 4.05$, $SE = 0.05$). We did not find significant main effect of gender, $F(1, 486) = 3.52$, $p = .061$. Similarly, results revealed no significant gender by condition interaction, $F(1, 486) = 1.68$, $p = .195$.

Figure 11.

Effect of Gender-Inclusive Policies on Possibility for Achieving Professional Goals



Note. Error bars represent the standard error.

Mediation. A mediation analysis was conducted to test the degree to which gender-inclusive workplace policies impact participants' belief regarding how possible it would be to achieve professional goals at CCB through their perceptions of the interpersonal norms at the company (see Figure 12). The analysis was conducted with Hayes' Process Macro (Model 4; Hayes, 2022) using 5000 bootstrap resamples to estimate the direct, indirect, and total effects. Ninety-five percent bootstrap confidence intervals that do not contain zero are considered statistically significant. The mediation model revealed that participants expected more positive interpersonal norms in the gender inclusive company ($a = 1.42$, 95% CI [1.17, 1.66], $p < .001$),

and anticipating a more positive interpersonal context predicted the possibility of achieving professional goals ($b = 0.24$, 95% CI [0.20, 0.28], $p < .001$). A significant indirect effect was found whereby gender-inclusive policies predicted stronger beliefs that achieving professional goals would be possible through more positive perceptions of the interpersonal norms at CCB, $ab = 0.34$, 95% CI [0.25, 0.43]. To see all of the estimates from these models, refer to Table 9. Similar to Study 1, we can see in Table 9 that the total effect of gender inclusive policies on the possibility of achieving professional goals demonstrates a positive association, while the direction is flipped for the direct effect. Again, this is likely the result of a negative suppression effect occurring due to the strong relationship between gender-inclusive policies (independent variable) and perceptions of interpersonal norms (mediator variable), and a relatively much weaker association between gender-inclusive policies and achieving professional goals (dependent variable). A moderated mediation analysis was conducted to assess whether this indirect effect was moderated by gender. Analyses revealed that the indirect effect was not moderated by gender, $b_{\text{index of moderated mediation}} = 0.07$, $SE = 0.09$, 95% CI [-0.11, 0.25]. The all path moderated mediation model can be found in the supplemental materials (see Appendix J).

Figure 12.

Indirect Effect of Gender-Inclusive Policies on Possibility of Achieving Professional Goals via Interpersonal Norms

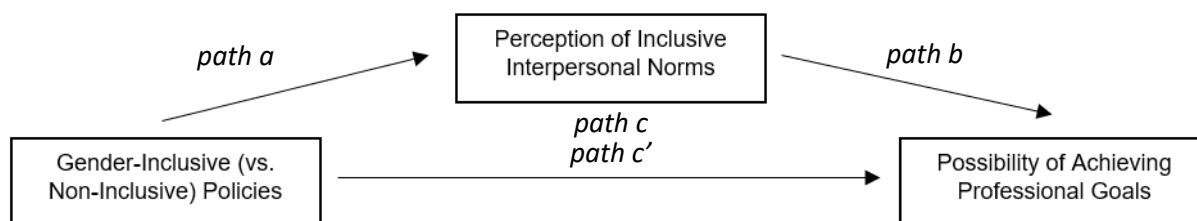


Table 9.*Mediation Model from Study 3*

Path Estimates	Coefficients
Path a	1.42*** [1.17, 1.66]
Path b	0.24*** [0.20, 0.28]
Path c	0.20** [0.07, 0.33]
Path c'	-0.13* [-0.26, -0.002]

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. Coefficients denote the unstandardized beta. Values in the square brackets indicate the 95% confidence interval for each path estimate.

Like Studies 1 and 2, Study 3 found support for our hypothesis that more gender-inclusive policies would lead to stronger beliefs that it would be possible to behave in ways that would help achieve professional goals. Similarly, this relationship was mediated by increased perceptions of positive interpersonal norms within the company.

Interim Discussion

Across Studies 1 to 3, we found evidence to suggest that individuals look to the culture of the organization to gain a sense of what is possible for the self. A consistent pattern of results revealed that gender-inclusive workplace policies led to the expectation of an inclusive interpersonal climate resulting in stronger beliefs that it would be possible to behave in an inclusive manner, express oneself fully and authentically, and successfully work towards achieving professional goals. These findings support the idea that institutional signals of inclusion (i.e., gender-inclusive policies) help create a space where women can feel as though they can thrive. Creating spaces where women feel as though it is possible to succeed may lead others to feel more comfortable bringing other women into that context. Just as Vial and colleagues (2019, 2021) found that individuals will accommodate the gender bias of relevant

third parties when making hiring decisions in male-dominated domains, it is possible that individuals will accommodate the inclusive values of the organization when making hiring decisions in STEM. Establishing effective strategies to increase the likelihood of hiring qualified women in STEM would have significant implications for organizations given the existing research demonstrating that a diverse workforce offers a competitive edge by providing a more extensive knowledge base, leading to more creativity and cognitive flexibility (Haine-Bennett et al., 2020). Therefore, the goal of Study 4 was to examine the impact that institutional signals of inclusion, or more specifically gender-inclusive policies, can have on hiring decisions in STEM. As previously stated, we expected that more gender-inclusive policies would lead participants to demonstrate a stronger preference for qualified women, and result in a greater likelihood of choosing to hire qualified women for a position in STEM.

Study 4

Methods

Sample and Recruitment. Six-hundred and one participants were recruited for this online study through Prolific. Following the exclusion criteria from Studies 1 to 3, 15 participants were excluded for failing an attention check question, nine participants were excluded for reporting that they responded randomly during the study, and five participants who identified as non-binary were excluded from analyses. Furthermore, adopting an approach used by Vial et al. (2019, 2021), we also excluded seven participants that chose the candidate acting as a foil when selecting who should be hired for a position in STEM in our key dependent measure as this was taken as an indication of being inattentive to the candidates' credentials. Our final sample after exclusions was 565 participants (285 women, 280 men). Participants' age ranged from 18 to 78 years, with a mean of 40.79 ($SD = 12.26$). The sample was predominantly

White (85.7%), heterosexual (84.8%), and reported having obtained a bachelor's degree (39.6%) or high school diploma (34.5%) as their highest level of education (See Table 10). Participants received £1.25 administered through Prolific for completing the study. Our research question, hypotheses, data collection plan, exclusion criteria, and plan of analysis were pre-registered and can be found on OSF (https://osf.io/3zdbx/?view_only=1855b18a2a944886b9c919cf89933fa8).

Table 10.

Sample Demographic Information Study 4

	<i>N</i>	Percent
Ethnicity		
Asian	37	6.5
Black/African American	18	3.2
Hispanic/Latino/South American	3	0.5
Middle Eastern	0	0
White/Caucasian	484	85.7
Other	17	3.0
Prefer not to answer	12	2.1
Sexual Orientation		
Asexual	8	1.4
Bisexual	39	6.9
Heterosexual	479	84.8
Homosexual	21	3.7
Other	3	0.5
Prefer not to say	14	2.5
Education		
Some high school	8	1.4
High school	195	34.5
Bachelor's degree	224	39.6
Master's degree	73	12.9
Ph.D. or higher	17	3.0
Graduate Diploma	12	2.1
Post-graduate diploma	20	3.5
Other	11	1.9
Prefer not to say	5	0.9

Design and Procedure. Like in Studies 1-3, participants were invited to take part in an online study regarding attitudes and opinions towards workplaces. Participants were exposed to the same policy manipulation (See Appendix A).

Dependent Measures.

Interpersonal Norms. After exposure to the manipulation, participants responded to one item assessing their beliefs about the interpersonal norms at the company: "At CCB, I believe that interactions among people of different genders would be characterized by respect and trust" (*1 = strongly disagree; 7 = strongly agree*).

Hiring Selection. Participants then completed a measure, adapted from Vial and colleagues (2021), to assess the likelihood of hiring a highly qualified female candidate over a male candidate with equal credentials. Participants first read a vignette in which they were asked to imagine that they are the hiring manager at CCB and are looking to fill the role for a software developer. It stated that the software developer will be working closely with various team members within the organization, so it is crucial that they are a good fit within the work culture. The passage emphasized that the applicant who is hired truly needs to be successful in the company or the hiring manager will experience personal consequences such as a poor reputation or loss of a promotion.

After reading the vignette, participants were presented with three profiles of potential job candidates. These profiles listed the candidates' name, previous work experience, and their educational background (See Appendix F for complete candidate profiles). Two of the three candidates were highly and equally qualified while the third was relatively unqualified (i.e., had the fewest years of relevant work experience) acting as a foil. The names of the two qualified applicants reflected stereotypically feminine and masculine names to convey their gender (e.g., "Mary" and "Brian"). The gender of the applicant acting as a foil was counterbalanced, and the order in which the profiles were presented to participants was randomized. Once the three profiles were presented to the participants, they were asked to rate their preference between each

set of candidates on a 9-point scale (e.g., “Between Mary and Brian, who would you select as the new software developer?”; $1 = \textit{Definitely Mary}$, $9 = \textit{Definitely Brian}$). After rating their preferences between the candidates, they were finally asked to select which of the candidates should be chosen as the new software developer at CCB.

Manipulation Check. After completing the key dependent measure, participants responded to the same manipulation check question used in Studies 1-3 to ensure the manipulation was effective in altering participants' perceptions of the gender-inclusive policies at CCB across conditions (i.e., “CCB has a large number of gender inclusive policies and practices.”).

Attention check. Participants then responded to two attention check questions: “What was the name of the company you read about at the start of the study?” and “What type of company is CCB?”. They then completed the memory test question used in Studies 1-3 to assess their ability to recall the gender-inclusive policies.

Demographics. Like our first three experiments, participants also provided demographic information (e.g., gender, age, ethnicity, etc.). A full list of the demographic questions can be found in Appendix I.

Results

Descriptive Statistics. Descriptive statistics and zero-order correlations were computed for all variables included in key analyses. A summary of these statistics can be found in Table 11.

Table 11.
Study 4 Descriptive Statistics and Correlations of Key Variables

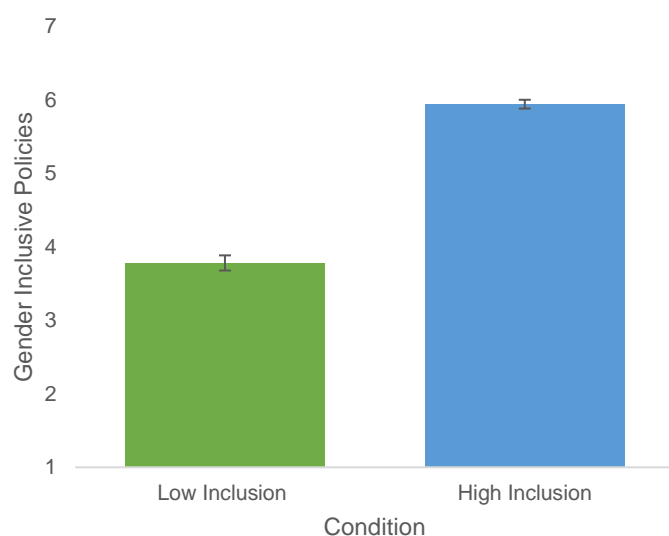
Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Skewness	Kurtosis	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Condition			-0.03	-2.01						
2. Gender			-0.02	-2.01	.04					
3. Manipulation Check	4.88	1.77	-0.66	-0.73	.61***	-.01				
4. Policies Memory Test	75.1	23.5	-0.76	-0.13	.09*	.05	.08			
5. Interpersonal Norms	5.16	1.52	-0.98	0.20	.34***	-.03	.68***	.10*		
6. Candidate Preference	5.82	2.44	-0.45	-0.88	.11**	.09*	.05	.02	.06	
7. Final Hiring Selection			-0.69	-1.53	.10*	.07	.05	.09*	.06	.76***

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Manipulation Check. First, we tested whether our manipulation was effective at altering participants' perceptions of the number of gender-inclusive policies present at the company. We performed an independent samples *t*-test to examine mean differences between the high and low inclusion conditions. Participants in the high inclusion condition reported significantly more gender-inclusive policies present at the company ($M = 5.94$, $SE = 0.06$) compared to those in the low inclusion condition ($M = 3.78$, $SE = 0.10$), $t(450.35) = 18.15$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.54$ (refer to Figure 13).

Figure 13.

Study 4 Manipulation Check



Note. Error bars represent the standard error.

Policies Memory Test. We then conducted a one sample *t*-test to assess participants' responses to the memory test question. We found that on average, participants correctly identified 75.07% of the policies that were in place at CCB which is significantly greater than chance, $t(564) = 25.37$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.07$, suggesting that participants were attentive to the study materials on average¹⁰.

Perception of interpersonal norms. Next, we examined participants' perception of the interpersonal norms at CCB. We performed a two-way ANOVA to analyze the effect of gender and condition on participants' perception of the interpersonal norms at the company. Results revealed that there was no main effect for gender, $F(1, 561) = 1.21$, $p = .273$; however, there was a significant main effect of condition, $F(1, 561) = 75.61$, $p < .001$, that was qualified by a significant condition by gender interaction, $F(1, 561) = 6.24$, $p = .013$ (refer to Figure 14). To be conservative, simple effects analyses were conducted using a Bonferroni correction, adjusting the significance level for the four comparisons being made. This approach means that the *p*-values below reach statistical significance at $p < .0125$.

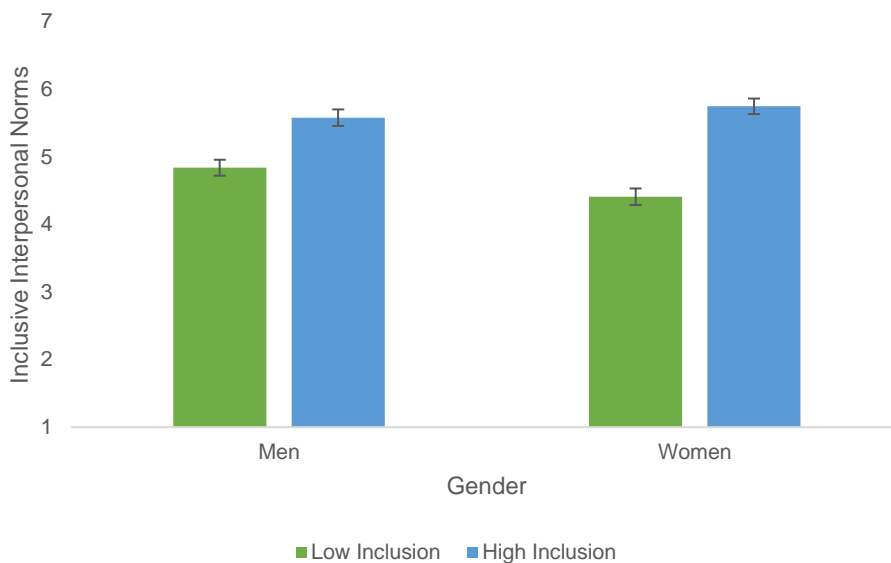
These analyses revealed that both women and men anticipated more positive and inclusive interpersonal norms at a company with more rather than fewer gender-inclusive policies. However, women (low inclusion condition, $M = 4.41$, $SE = 0.12$; high inclusion condition, $M = 5.75$, $SE = 0.12$) were more strongly impacted by the manipulation, $t(561) = -$

¹⁰ An independent samples *t*-test was conducted to examine mean differences in the percent of policies correctly recalled by participants in the low and high inclusion condition. The analysis revealed that on average participants in the high inclusion condition recalled a significantly greater percentage of policies correctly ($M = 77.05$, $SD = 22.64$) compared to those in the low inclusion condition ($M = 73.02$, $SD = 24.21$), $t(563) = -2.05$, $p = .041$. Given this significant difference in the percentage of policies correctly recalled between conditions, we re-ran our primary analyses (i.e., the two-way ANOVAs predicting interpersonal norms and candidate preferences, and logistic regression predicting final hiring selection) with the policies memory test scores included as a covariate to ensure the main effect of condition remained significant. We found that the effect of the gender-inclusive policies on interpersonal norms, candidate preferences, and final hiring selection remained significant after controlling for participants scores on the policies memory test.

7.95, $p < .001$, compared to the men (low inclusion condition, $M = 4.84$, $SE = 0.12$; high inclusion condition, $M = 5.58$, $SE = 0.12$), $t(561) = 4.37$, $p < .001$. Further, men and women differed significantly in their perceptions of the interpersonal norms in the low inclusion condition, such that women reported significantly lower perceptions of positive interpersonal norms ($M = 4.41$, $SE = 0.12$) compared to men ($M = 4.84$, $SE = 0.12$), $t(561) = 2.52$, $p = .003$. In contrast, there was no significant difference between men ($M = 5.58$, $SE = 0.12$) and women ($M = 5.75$, $SE = 0.12$) in their perceptions of the interpersonal norms in the high inclusion condition, $t(561) = 1.00$, $p = .080$.

Figure 14.

Effect of Gender-Inclusive Policies on Perceptions of Interpersonal Norms by Gender



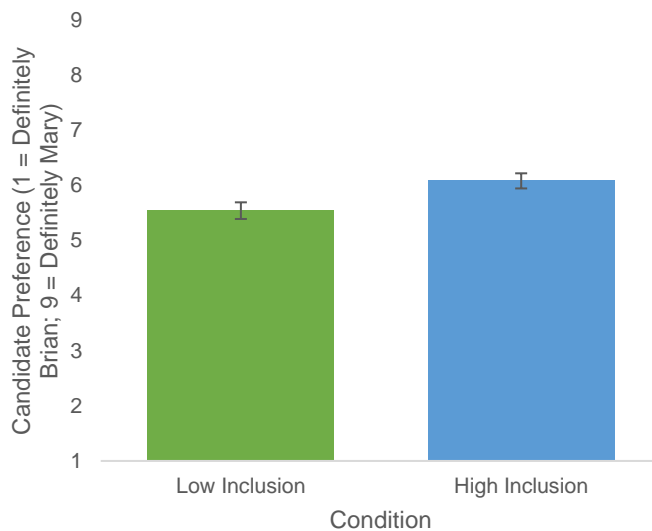
Note. Error bars represent the standard error.

Candidate preferences. To test our predictions for participants' preferences between candidates, we ran a two-way ANOVA to examine the impact of condition and gender. We found a significant main effect for both condition, $F(1, 561) = 6.98$, $p = .008$, and gender, $F(1, 561) = 4.15$, $p = .042$. Results revealed that participants in the high inclusion condition reported

a significantly stronger preference for the qualified female candidate ($M = 6.08, SE = 0.14$) compared to those in the low inclusion condition ($M = 5.54, SE = 0.15$; see Figure 15). Further, it was found that women reported a stronger preference for the qualified female candidate ($M = 6.02, SE = 0.14$) compared to men ($M = 5.60, SE = 0.15$) We did not find a significant condition by gender interaction, $F(1, 561) = 1.38, p = .241$.

Figure 15.

Effect of Condition on Candidate Preference



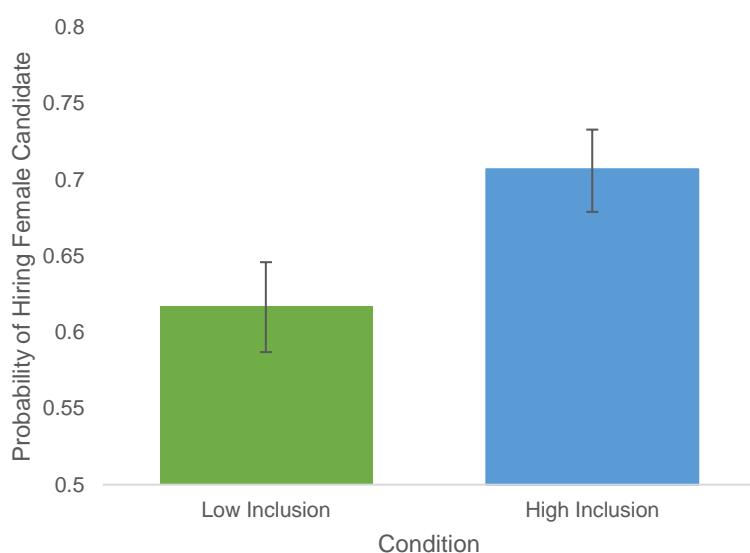
Note. Error bars represent the standard error.

Final hiring selection. To examine the likelihood of participants choosing to hire the qualified female candidate in their final hiring selection, we conducted a 2-step hierarchical logistic regression on participants' final selection of a female candidate, which is a binary outcome. Condition and participants' gender were entered at step 1, followed by the condition by gender interaction term in step 2 of the regression model. We found a significant main effect of condition such that participants in the high inclusion condition were 1.5 times more likely to choose a female candidate as their final hiring selection compared to participants in the low

inclusion condition, $b = 0.40$, $SE = 0.18$, $p = .025$, $OR = 1.50$, 95% CI [1.05, 2.13]. On average, participants in the low inclusion condition had a probability of 0.62 of choosing to hire the qualified woman, while those in the high inclusion condition had a probability of 0.71 (See Figure 16). Gender did not significantly predict the probability of choosing to hire a qualified female candidate, $b = 0.28$, $SE = 0.18$, $p = .117$, $OR = 1.33$, 95% CI [0.93, 1.88]. We did not find a significant condition by gender interaction in predicting the probability of selecting the qualified female candidate in their final hiring decision, $b = 0.52$, $SE = 0.36$, $p = .148$, $OR = 1.68$, 95% CI [0.83, 3.41].

Figure 16.

The Effect of Condition on Probability of Hiring a Qualified Female Candidate



Note. Error bars represent the standard error.

Mediation. A mediation analysis was conducted to test the degree to which gender-inclusive workplace policies impact participants' candidate preferences via their perceptions of the interpersonal norms at the company (see Figure 17). The analysis was conducted with Hayes' Process Macro (Model 4; Hayes, 2022) using 5000 bootstrap resamples to estimate the direct,

indirect, and total effects. It was found that participants expected more positive interpersonal norms in the gender inclusive company ($a = 1.04$, 95% CI [0.80, 1.27], $p < .001$); however, anticipating a more positive interpersonal context did not predict candidate preferences ($b = 0.04$, 95% CI [-0.10, 0.18], $p = .543$). Further, the mediation model revealed no significant indirect effect of gender-inclusive policies on candidate preferences through perceptions of the interpersonal norms at CCB, $ab = 0.04$, 95% CI [-0.11, 0.20]. To see all of the estimates from these models, refer to Table 12. A moderated mediation analysis was conducted to assess whether there might be gender differences leading to this insignificant indirect effect. However, analyses revealed that gender was not a significant moderator, $b_{\text{index of moderated mediation}} = -0.16$, $SE = 0.16$, 95% CI [-0.48, 0.15]. The all path moderated mediation model can be found in the supplemental materials (see Appendix J).

Figure 17.

Indirect Effect of Gender-Inclusive Policies on Candidate Preferences via Interpersonal Norms

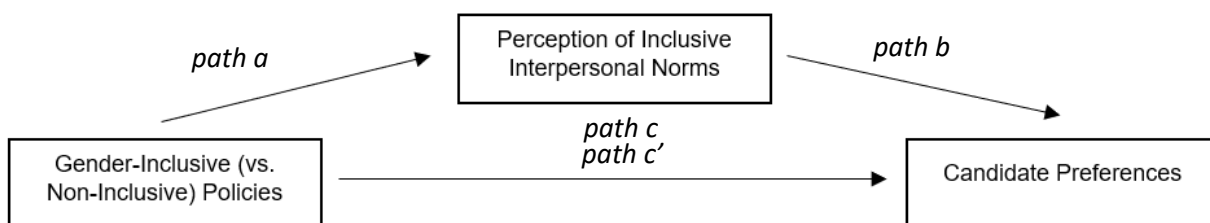


Table 12.*Mediation Model for Study 4*

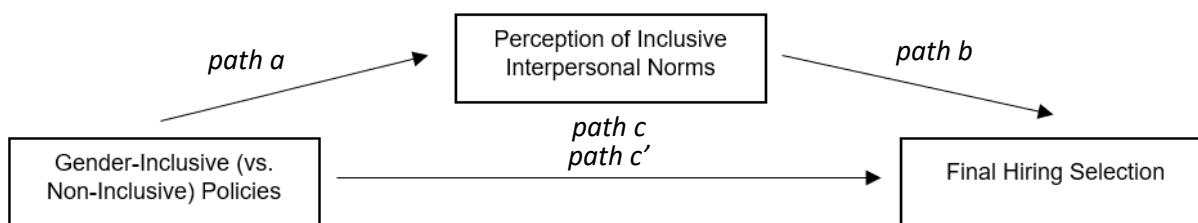
	Candidate Preferences	Final Selection
Path a	1.04*** [0.80, 1.27]	1.04*** [0.80, 1.27]
Path b	0.04 [-0.10, 0.18]	0.04 [-0.08, 0.16]
Path c	0.56** [0.16, 0.96]	0.41* [0.06, 0.76]
Path c'	0.52* [0.09, 0.94]	0.37* [0.001, 0.75]

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. Coefficients denote the unstandardized beta. Values in the square brackets indicate the 95% confidence interval for each path estimate.

Finally, we conducted a mediation analysis to test the degree to which gender-inclusive workplace policies impact participants' final hiring selection via their perceptions of the interpersonal norms at the company (see Figure 18). Like our candidate preferences variable, we found that participants expected more positive interpersonal norms in the gender inclusive company ($a = 1.04$, 95% CI [0.80, 1.27], $p < .001$); however, anticipating a more positive interpersonal context did not predict final hiring selections ($b = 0.04$, 95% CI [-0.08, 0.16], $p = .536$). The model revealed no significant indirect effect of gender-inclusive policies on final hiring selections through perceptions of the interpersonal norms at CCB, $ab = 0.04$, 95% CI [-0.09, 0.17]. To see all of the estimates from these models, refer to Table 8. Again, a moderated mediation analysis was conducted to assess whether there might be gender differences leading to this insignificant indirect effect; however, gender was not found to be a significant moderator, $b_{\text{index of moderated mediation}} = -0.12$, $SE = 0.14$, 95% CI [-0.41, 0.15]. The all path moderated mediation model can be found in the supplemental materials (see Appendix J).

Figure 18.

Indirect Effect of Gender-Inclusive Policies on Final Hiring Selection via Interpersonal Norms



Discussion

The goal of the present research was to 1) explore the benefits that institutional signals of inclusion can have on behaviour and opportunities for the self and others in STEM, and 2) understand the mechanism through which gender-inclusive workplace policies influence various organizational outcomes. In Studies 1-3, we aimed to understand the benefits that gender-inclusive workplace policies can have for the self by examining their impact on perceptions of how possible it would be to behave inclusively in interpersonal interactions, fully and authentically express core aspect of your personal identity at work, and achieve professional goals. Across these three studies, we found that gender-inclusive workplace policies shape perceptions of the interpersonal norms within the company and create the expectation that interpersonal relationships and interactions will be characterized by respect, acceptance, and trust. This perception of a positive work culture led to stronger beliefs that it would be possible to behave inclusively, be your true authentic self at work, and successfully work towards achieving professional goals. Thus, our findings suggest that this relationship operates indirectly via positive perceptions of the interpersonal norms present within organizations. These three studies offer evidence to suggest that institutional signals of inclusion have significant benefits

for the self by shaping people's sense of what they can do at work and expanding individuals' beliefs about what is truly possible for themselves.

In Study 4, we tested whether these findings could extend to perceptions of what is possible for other people. We examined the benefit that gender-inclusive policies could have on hiring decisions in STEM. Specifically, we hypothesized that more gender-inclusive policies would result in a greater likelihood of hiring qualified women in STEM. We found that strong institutional signals of inclusion such as gender inclusive workplace policies led people to show a significant preference for hiring a qualified female candidate and significantly increased the probability of choosing to hire a qualified female candidate in the final decision of who should be selected for a position in STEM. This study demonstrated that institutional signals of inclusion can also shape perceptions of what is possible for other people.

The present research expands on the theoretical ideas from Kalkstein and colleagues (2022) which suggests that social norms within a particular context can constrain or facilitate certain behaviours by altering what is perceived to be possible in specific environments. Our work demonstrates that institutional signals of inclusion, or gender-inclusive policies, can serve as a cue to the social norms present within an organization and indeed shape perceptions of what behaviours are perceived to be possible given the constraints of the workplace culture. The state of the workplace culture determines the socio-cultural climate of that organization and suggests what behaviours are afforded in that environment (Walton & Yeager, 2020). Thus, a more positive cultural climate expands individuals' perceptions of the behaviours that are afforded within that environment and offers opportunities to engage in behaviours that benefit the self and others. This work demonstrates that the theoretical ideas from Kalkstein and colleagues (2022), and Walton and Yeager (2020) on the influence of social norms and the socio-cultural context on

perceptions of what behaviours are possible or afforded within a particular context can be applied within an organizational setting to help cultivate spaces and environments in male-dominated domains where individuals from traditionally marginalized groups can feel a greater sense of possibility and opportunities available for themselves and others.

Overall, when considering all four studies, it is evident that there is support for the hypothesis that institutional signals of inclusion can influence perceptions of what is possible for the self and others. Studies 1 through 3 demonstrate that gender-inclusive policies create expectations of a positive work culture characterized by inclusive interpersonal norms that expand individuals' perceptions of what is possible for the self such as behaving in an inclusive manner, being your true self, and achieving professional goals. Study 4 offers additional evidence that these signals of inclusion also impact perceptions of what is possible for other people and shape beliefs about who could be successful in STEM. Our research highlights the positive impact that institutional signals of inclusion can have on organizations by demonstrating the benefits of gender-inclusive policies on various workplace outcomes.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

While our work offers initial evidence for the benefits that institutional signals of inclusion could have on workplaces in STEM, there are limitations that future research should address. First, as previously mentioned, across all four studies we recruited a sample of adults from Prolific. We did not limit our sample to individuals that work in STEM. As such, many of our participants reported that they do not work in STEM and thus, may not have had experience working in a male-dominated domain. Individuals without personal experience working in a male-dominated domain may perceive the STEM context or workplace culture differently than someone who has this experience and thus may respond differently to our study. Further, they

may be less aware or conscious of the prejudice or discrimination that may occur towards individuals belonging to marginalized groups within these types of settings and may not fully grasp the benefit of having workplace policies to combat these issues. This may have impacted the external validity of our studies as we cannot be sure that our sample of participants accurately reflects the STEM workers demographic. Although, it is important to note that in each of our studies participants were introduced to a fictitious technology development company. Therefore, regardless of their current employment, the manipulation allowed participants to imagine that they were working within the STEM industry and provide answers based on working within a STEM context. Nevertheless, because our interest is in understanding the benefits that gender-inclusive policies have on the work culture in STEM and related workplace outcomes, future research should attempt to replicate these findings in a sample of STEM workers. Additionally, future work could measure participants' specific educational background and program of study. There are likely several individuals that completed a STEM degree but chose to pursue careers in a different domain. Despite not currently working in the STEM sector, these individuals may still have unique insight into the research questions we aim to address. Collecting data from those who have experienced the masculine STEM culture first-hand would allow us to confirm that the effects we found generalize to those directly affected by the issues we study.

Another limitation of the present research is with regard to the country in which our sample of participants reside. As stated, we collected data from participants registered with Prolific. These individuals typically reside in the United States (US) and the United Kingdom (UK). However, there are differences in the family leave policies between these countries, with the UK being more progressive than the US (Elser et al., 2022; Raub et al., 2018). Therefore, it is possible that there may be systematic differences between these subsamples of participants.

Those that live in the US may be less impacted by our low inclusion condition, as it may be more common or normative for companies to be lacking in gender-inclusive policies, whereas individuals living in the UK may perceive the low inclusion company to be especially bad given that it is more standard to have these progressive, gender-inclusive policies in the UK. Although we used random assignment to help reduce the likelihood of systematic differences existing between conditions, including participants' country of residence as a moderating variable in our analyses could allow for a better understanding of the effect. An analysis of the demographic information across all four studies revealed that majority of our participants resided in the UK; therefore, we were unable to test this interaction (see Appendix J). Further, given that our sample was predominantly individuals from the UK, it would be beneficial for future research to recruit a sample of only US participants to determine whether the effects found in the current research replicate. In addition, in a sample of all US participants, it would be interesting to examine potential differences between participants living in different states given the state level variability in family leave policies within the United States (Han et al., 2009).

Moreover, as reported in Study 4, we did not find a significant indirect effect of gender-inclusive policies on candidate preferences or final hiring selections via perceived interpersonal norms. It may be the case that participants were more focused on making a hiring decision that resulted in selecting the candidate that would be the most successful within the company given that our study materials emphasized that failing to hire a candidate that was a good fit would result in personal consequences. With a greater focus being placed on hiring a candidate that would succeed within the company culture, participants may not have been thinking directly about the company's norms for interpersonal interactions between colleagues, but rather how successfully the candidate would integrate into their new role. Therefore, due to a lack of finding

significant mediation in this study we are interested in further exploring other potential mechanisms involved in the relationship between institutional signals of inclusion and hiring decisions to gain better insight into how these inclusive signals benefit the hiring process. In future studies, we intend to explore other possible mediators, such as perceived success of the candidates or, individuals' desire to enact the values of the organization in their decision-making as potential mechanisms through which organizational policies impact candidate selection when hiring for a role in the STEM sector. We did not measure participants' perceived success of the candidates; however, it is possible that the degree to which the participant believed the candidate will succeed within the company could influence their preferences toward that candidate and their choice to hire them. Vial and colleagues (2019) offer support for perceived success as a possible mediator of this relationship. In their work on accommodating biases of relevant third parties in the hiring process, they found that participants' perceptions of how likely a candidate would be at getting along with others and completing tasks successfully significantly mediated the relationship between third party prejudice towards women and preferences toward hiring women in STEM. Therefore, it is likely that these findings may extend to our own research such that institutional signals of inclusion may suggest to participants that a woman could succeed in that environment, leading individuals to feel more comfortable and confident hiring a woman in STEM. Alternatively, it is possible that participants' desire to enact the inclusive values of an organization may influence hiring decisions. From our research and the body of existing literature on the power and influence of social norms, it is fair to assume that institutional signals of inclusion such as gender-inclusive policies signal the social norms present within an organization. Given that individuals generally adhere to norms and allow them to guide their behaviour, it is possible that individuals will choose to hire a woman candidate so that their

behaviour aligns with the inclusive values of the organization. Therefore, this desire to conform to the norms and behave in accordance with the presumed values of the organization may have strong implications for hiring decisions in STEM. Further research is evidently needed to determine the mechanism through which this relationship operates.

Lastly, the present work relied on self-report measures. Although our measures aimed to target participants' responses to hypothetical behaviours or anticipated experiences, we did not measure actual observable behaviour. Future research should employ methods that go beyond self-report to obtain data on real behaviour in a lab or field setting. For example, future studies could be conducted in a lab setting in which STEM majors are invited to participate in a collaborative task after reviewing an inclusive policies handbook or code of conduct. The interactions between the participants while completing the task would be coded for inclusive behaviours such as expressing interest in others' opinions and ideas, asking for input from others, and listening to others' concerns. A study of this nature would allow us to verify that our findings translate into real observable behaviour.

Conclusion

In the present work, we found evidence to suggest that signals of inclusion at the institutional level, such as inclusive workplace policies can have benefits for individuals. Signals of inclusion operate by creating expectations of a positive work culture that is characterized by inclusive interpersonal norms, which not only expand individuals' perceptions of what is possible for the self but can also open opportunities for other individuals of marginalized groups by expanding perceptions of what is possible for other people in male-dominated domains. Our work contributes to the existing body of literature on the power of social norms in shaping perceptions of possible future outcomes and behaviour. The findings from the current studies

have important implications for the attraction, retention, and success of women in STEM by offering empirical evidence to support strategies that can be implemented at the institutional level to create inclusive spaces that encourage positive interpersonal relationships within organizations. These results suggest that companies and businesses in STEM may benefit from demonstrating and encouraging inclusive values from the highest structures within the organization such as company wide policies and practices. Organizations that work to signal inclusion at the institutional level can demonstrate greater support for women in STEM and offer greater opportunities by shifting individuals' perspective of the possibilities available to themselves and others at work.

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Appendix A: Company Policies

High Inclusion Condition



COMPANY BACKGROUND

CCB Development is a technology company located in Mount Vernon. The company also employs tech developers in its other two locations across the greater Seattle area. CCB has over 20 years of experience providing tech development services to a wide range of clients.

CLIENT GROWTH



COMPANY POLICIES

Catalyst identifies policies and practices that conform to industry standards and best practices. Below you will see a summary of Catalyst's findings involving best practices in the industry that are currently in place at CCB (as indicated by the check mark), as well as optimal policies and programs that are currently missing (as indicated by the X).

- Work-abroad programs
- Supervisors accountable for providing equal support to all genders
- Family friendly work programs (e.g., paid parental leave)
- Work schedules, job titles, and work conditions inclusive of all genders
- Reimbursement for relevant classes or degree programs
- Equipment and facilities are gender appropriate
- Programs and workshops to create cultural norms for positive working relations among all genders
- Provides employees with discounted fitness center memberships
- Employees can customize the ergonomics of their workspace
- Has a whistleblower policy to protect employees
- Has regular company retreats

Low Inclusion Condition



CCB DEVELOPMENT

COMPANY BACKGROUND



CCB Development is a technology company located in Mount Vernon. The company also employs tech developers in its other two locations across the greater Seattle area. CCB has over 20 years of experience providing tech development services to a wide range of clients.



CLIENT GROWTH

2018: 53 Clients



2019: 61 Clients



2020: 74 Clients



COMPANY POLICIES

Catalyst identifies policies and practices that conform to industry standards and best practices. Below you will see a summary of Catalyst's findings involving best practices in the industry that are currently in place at CCB (as indicated by the check mark), as well as optimal policies and programs that are currently missing (as indicated by the X).

- Supervisors accountable for providing equal support to all genders
- Family friendly work programs (e.g., paid parental leave)
- Provides employees with discounted fitness center memberships
- Reimbursement for relevant classes or degree programs
- Employees can customize the ergonomics of their workspace
- Has a whistleblower policy to protect employees
- Has regular company retreats
- Equipment and facilities are gender appropriate
- Work abroad programs
- Work schedules, job titles, and work conditions inclusive of all genders
- Programs and workshops to create cultural norms for positive working relations among all genders

Appendix B: Measure of Perceived Interpersonal Norms

Perceived Interpersonal Norms

At CCB, I believe that interactions among people of different genders would be characterized by respect and trust.

Item will be rated on a 1-7 scale (1 = Strongly disagree; 7 = Strongly agree)

Appendix C: Key Dependent Measure for Study 1

Measure of Possibility for Inclusive Behaviour

You have probably had the experience of working with other people and wanting to make sure that they feel welcome.

We are interested in understanding the things you do at work to help people feel like they are trusted, respected, and welcome.

Take a moment and come up with three behaviours you might engage in to help someone you are working with feel trusted, respected, and welcome.

Behaviour #1 _____

Behaviour #2 _____

Behaviour #3 _____

To what degree would CCB's work culture make it possible for you to engage in each of these behaviours? (*1 = Impossible; 5 = Extremely Possible*)

1. Behaviour #1
2. Behaviour #2
3. Behaviour #3

Appendix D: Key Dependent Measure for Study 2

Measure of Possibility for Authentic Self-Expression

You may have had the experience of working in an environment where you felt that you could be your true authentic self. Or, you may have had the opposite experience where you felt you needed to hide who you truly are.

We are interested in understanding what is important to you in terms of expressing yourself authentically at work.

Please list three core aspects of your personal identity that you hope would be accepted by others at your place of work.

Core Identity Aspect #1 _____

Core Identity Aspect #2 _____

Core Identity Aspect #3 _____

Please rate the degree to which you think CCB's work culture would make it possible for you to fully and authentically express each aspect of your personal identity. (*1 = Impossible; 5 = Extremely Possible*)

1. Core Identity Aspect #1
2. Core Identity Aspect #2
3. Core Identity Aspect #3

Appendix E: Key Dependent Measure for Study 3

Measure of Possibility for Professional Goals

We are interested in understanding the things you do at work to demonstrate competence..

Please list three behaviours, actions or tasks you might perform in an office setting that would demonstrate that you are a competent employee and help you move towards professional goals.

Behaviour #1 _____

Behaviour #2 _____

Behaviour #3 _____

Please rate the degree to which you think CCB's work culture would make it possible for you to engage in each of these behaviours, actions, or tasks. (*1 = Impossible; 5 = Extremely Possible*)

1. Behaviour #1
2. Behaviour #2
3. Behaviour #3

Appendix F: Key Dependent Measures for Study 4

Hiring Selection Instructions and Materials

Now, we would like you to imagine that YOU are the hiring manager at CCB and looking to fill the position of a software developer.

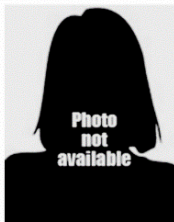
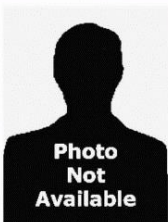

As part of the role, the software developer will work closely with team members at various levels within the corporation to design, program and test software for the company and their clients. The software developer will also be responsible for leading team meetings and supervising the junior level developers. As CCB is still in the process of growing their clientele, the future of the organization will depend on whether the software developer succeeds.


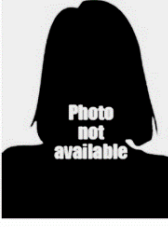

You are currently in the running for a promotion. However, YOUR success in attaining this promotion, depends critically on the success of the software developer you select.

Next, you will see the profiles of 3 candidates for you to consider for the position of a software developer at CCB. The candidate you select must be a good fit for CCB. If the candidate you hire does not perform well, or does not fit within the work culture, your reputation could be at stake, and your promotion may be in jeopardy.

Please review the profiles carefully to ensure you can make an informed decision. You will be asked to rate your preference between the candidates and make a final selection as to which of the candidates should be appointed to the position.

[Depending on counterbalancing condition, participants will see ONE of the following candidate lineups – the order of presentation will be counterbalanced, as well as which set of credentials belonged to “Mary R.” and to “Brian N.”]:

Mary R.	Brian N.	John S.
		
<p>Last position: Tech Industry</p> <p>Experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project Management: 3 years - Software Development: 6 years <p>Degree: MSc in Computer Science</p>	<p>Last position: Tech Industry</p> <p>Experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project Management: 4 years - Software Development: 5 years <p>Degree: MEng in Software Engineering</p>	<p>Last position: Tech Industry</p> <p>Experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Software Development: 2 years <p>Degree: BSc in Computer Science</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">Brian N.</p>  <p>Photo Not Available</p> <p>Last position: Tech Industry</p> <p>Experience: - Project Management: 3 years - Software Development: 6 years</p> <p>Degree: MSc in Computer Science</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Mary R.</p>  <p>Photo not available</p> <p>Last position: Tech Industry</p> <p>Experience: - Project Management: 4 years - Software Development: 5 years</p> <p>Degree: MEng in Software Engineering</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Ann S.</p>  <p>Photo not available</p> <p>Last position: Tech Industry</p> <p>Experience: - Software Development: 2 years</p> <p>Degree: BSc in Computer Science</p>
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Measure of Candidate Preferences

Imagine that YOU are the hiring manager at CCB and are looking to fill a software developer position.

The following questions ask who you would choose to fill a software developer position at CCB.

Between MARY R. and BRIAN N. who would you select as the new software developer?

(1 = Definitely MARY R.; 7 = Definitely BRIAN N)

Between MARY R. and JOHN S. (ANN S.) who would you select as the new software developer?

(1 = Definitely MARY R.; 7 = Definitely JOHN S. (ANN S.))

Between BRIAN N. and JOHN S. (ANN S.) who would you select as the new software developer?

(1 = Definitely BRIAN N.; 7 = Definitely JOHN S. (ANN S.))

Measure of Candidate Final Selection

Now, please make your final selection.

Which of the candidates should be chosen as the new software developer at CCB?

(1 = MARY R.; 2 = BRIAN N.; 3 = JOHN S. (ANN S.))

Appendix G: Manipulation Check

Perception of Gender Inclusive Policies

At CCB, I believe that interactions among people of different genders would be characterized by respect and trust (*1=Strongly Disagree; 7 = Strong Agree*).

Appendix H: Attention Check

Policies Memory Test

The following question is designed to test your memory for the policies and practices present at CCB. Please select the boxes to indicate if a policy/practice was listed as present at CCB on the infographic that you read.

Policy	Present at CCB
Equipment and facilities are gender appropriate Supervisors accountable for providing equal support to both genders Work schedules, job titles, and work conditions inclusive of both genders Family friendly work programs (e.g. paid parental leave) Programs and workshops to create cultural norms for positive working relations between genders Reimbursements for relevant classes or degree programs Work- abroad program Discounted fitness center memberships Customized ergonomics of workspace Whistleblower policy to protect employees Regular company retreats.	

Attention Check Questions

What was the name of the company you read about at the start of the study?

- CCB
- GGC
- AOM
- SPS

What type of company is $\{q://QID96/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoices\}$?

- Finance
- Marketing
- Tech
- Construction

Appendix I: Demographic Questions

Finally, we would like to know some basic information about you. Please answer the following questions.

Your age: ____ yrs.

Your gender: Male / Female/ I identify as _____

Ethnic Background (please tick any that apply):

- Aboriginal/Indigenous Peoples of Canada
- Asian
- Black/African-American
- Hispanic/Latino/South American
- Middle Eastern
- White/Caucasian/European Immigrant to Canada
- Other (please specify): _____
- Prefer not to answer

Sexual Orientation (please tick any that apply):

- Asexual
- Bisexual
- Don't know
- Heterosexual
- Homosexual
- Other (please specify): _____
- Prefer not to answer

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Some High School
- High School
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Ph.D. or higher
- Graduate Diploma
- Other: _____
- Prefer not to say

Are you currently employed?

- Yes
- No

Do you work in STEM?

- Yes
- No

Do you work in an office setting?

- Yes
- No

Appendix J: Supplemental Materials

Study 1

Additional Analyses

Effectiveness of inclusive behaviour responses. To ensure there was not a significant gender or condition discrepancy in the effectiveness of the behaviours participants provided, we had two research assistants, blind to participants gender and condition, code how effective the behaviours would be at making someone feel trusted, respected, and welcome at work. The ratings were made on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 = very ineffective to 7 = very effective. We calculated a composite score for the two sets of ratings provided by the research assistants ($ICC = .68$) and ran a two-way ANOVA to examine the effect of gender and condition. Results revealed no significant main effect of condition, $F(1, 501) = 0.39, p = .533$, or gender, $F(1, 501) = 0.65, p = .420$. Further, no significant interaction was found between gender and condition on ratings of the effectiveness of the behaviours provided by the participants, $F(1, 501) = 0.02, p = .904$. These results suggest that the effectiveness of the behaviours provided by participants on our key dependent measure were not significantly impacted by gender, condition or the interaction.

Moderated Mediation. We tested a moderated mediation model to assess whether the indirect effect of gender-inclusive workplace policies on beliefs regarding the possibility of engaging in inclusive behaviour via perceptions of positive interpersonal norms was moderated by gender (see Figure 19). Using Hayes Process Macro (Model 59; Hayes, 2022), we assessed the effects of moderation of gender (men coded as 0; women coded as 1) on 1) the relationship between gender inclusive policies and beliefs regarding the possibility of engaging in inclusive behaviour (path *c*); 2) the relationship between gender-inclusive workplace policies and perceptions of interpersonal norms (path *a*); 3) the relationship between perceptions of

interpersonal norms and beliefs regarding the possibility of engaging in inclusive behaviour (path *b*). Analyses revealed significant indirect effects for both men ($ab = 0.22$, 95% CI [0.12, 0.33]) and women ($ab = 0.40$, 95% CI [0.27, 0.56]). Tests of moderated mediation suggested that the indirect effect for women was significantly larger than for men, $b_{\text{index of moderated mediation}} = 0.18$, $SE = 0.09$, 95% CI [0.01, 0.38]. To see all of the estimates from these models, refer to Table 13.

Figure 19.

Indirect Effect of Gender-Inclusive Policies on Possibility for Inclusive Behaviour via Interpersonal Norms Moderated by Gender

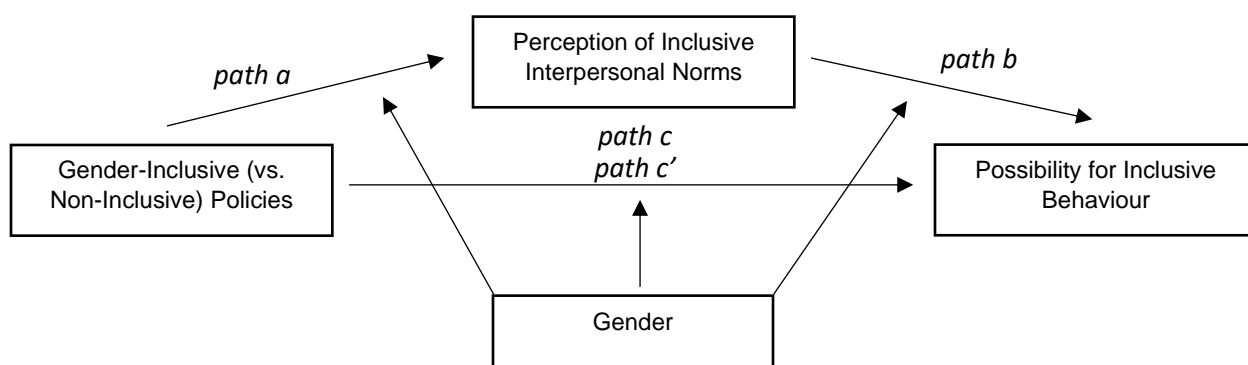


Table 13.

Moderated Mediation Model from Study 1

	Women	Men	Interaction
Path a	1.28*** [0.95, 1.61]	0.85*** [0.52, 1.18]	0.43 [-0.04, 0.90]
Path b	0.31*** [0.26, 0.37]	0.26*** [0.20, 0.32]	0.06 [-0.03, 0.14]
Path c	0.27** [0.08, 0.45]	0.02 [-0.17, 0.20]	0.25 [-0.01, 0.51]
Path c'	-0.14 [-0.31, 0.04]	-0.20* [-0.39, -0.03]	0.07 [-0.18, 0.31]

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. Coefficients denote the unstandardized beta. Values in the square brackets indicate the 95% confidence interval for each path estimate.

Study 2

Additional Analyses

Extent to which identities could experience marginalization. To examine the possible gender or condition effects on the types of identities listed by participants, we had two research assistants, blind to participants' gender and condition, code the extent to which the identities could experience marginalization. The ratings were made on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 = Definitely could not experience marginalization to 7 = Definitely could experience marginalization. We calculated a composite score for the two sets of ratings provided by the research assistants ($ICC = .87$) and ran a two-way ANOVA to examine the effect of condition and gender on the extent to which the identities listed could experience marginalization. We found no statistically significant interaction between gender and condition on ratings of the extent to which the identities could experience marginalization, $F(1, 499) = 0.10, p = .755$. Likewise, there was no significant main effect of condition, $F(1, 499) = 3.05, p = .081$; however, we did find a significant main effect of gender on the extent to which the identities listed by participants could experience marginalization, $F(1, 502) = 9.71, p = .002$. The analyses revealed that on average, women ($M = 1.82, SE = 0.11$) were listing identities that had a greater likelihood of experiencing marginalization compared to men ($M = 1.34, SE = 0.11$).

Study 3

Additional Analyses

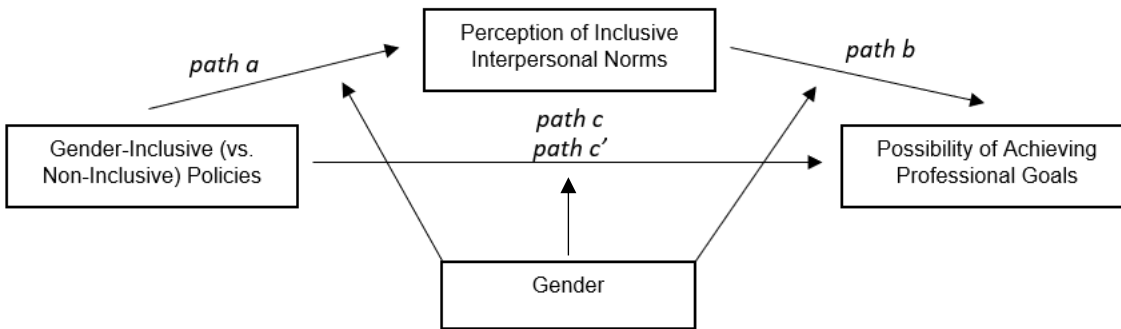
Effectiveness of Professional Goal Behaviours. To examine the effectiveness of the behaviours provided by the participants, two research assistants, blind to participants gender and condition, coded how effective the behaviours would be at demonstrating competence in an

office setting and help achieve professional goals. The ratings were made on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 = very ineffective to 7 = very effective. We calculated a composite score for the two sets of ratings provided by the research assistants ($ICC = .73$) and ran a two-way ANOVA to examine to effect of gender and condition. Results revealed no significant main effect of condition, $F(1, 486) = 1.65, p = .199$, or gender, $F(1, 486) = 2.05, p = .153$. Further, no significant interaction was found between gender and condition on ratings of the effectiveness of the behaviours provided by the participants, $F(1, 486) = 0.03, p = .864$. These results suggest that the effectiveness of the behaviours provided by participants on our key dependent measure were not significantly impacted by gender, condition, or the interaction.

Moderated Mediation. We tested a moderated mediation model to assess whether the indirect effect of gender-inclusive workplace policies on beliefs regarding the possibility of achieving professional goals via perceptions of positive interpersonal norms was moderated by gender (see Figure 20). Using Hayes Process Macro (Model 59; Hayes, 2022), we assessed the effects of moderation of gender (men coded as 0; women coded as 1) on 1) the relationship between gender inclusive policies and beliefs regarding the possibility of achieving professional goals; 2) the relationship between gender-inclusive workplace policies and perceptions of interpersonal norms; 3) the relationship between perceptions of interpersonal norms and beliefs regarding the possibility of achieving professional goals. Analyses revealed significant indirect effects for both men ($ab = 0.29, 95\% CI [0.19, 0.42]$) and women ($ab = 0.37, 95\% CI [0.24, 0.52]$). However, tests of moderated mediation revealed that the indirect effect was not moderated by gender, $b_{\text{index of moderated mediation}} = 0.07, SE = 0.09, 95\% CI [-0.11, 0.25]$. To see all of the estimates from these models, refer to Table 14.

Figure 20.

Indirect Effect of Gender-Inclusive Policies on Possibility of Achieving Professional Goals via Interpersonal Norms Moderated by Gender

**Table 14.**

Moderated Mediation Model from Study 3

	Women	Men	Interaction
Path a	1.51*** [1.16, 1.86]	1.33*** [0.98, 1.68]	0.19 [-0.31, 0.68]
Path b	0.24*** [0.19, 0.30]	0.22*** [0.16, 0.28]	0.02 [-0.07, 0.10]
Path c	0.29** [0.11, 0.47]	0.12 [-0.06, 0.30]	0.17 [-0.09, 0.43]
Path c'	-0.08 [-0.26, 0.11]	-0.18 [-0.36, 0.01]	0.10 [-0.16, 0.36]

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. Coefficients denote the unstandardized beta. Values in the square brackets indicate the 95% confidence interval for each path estimate.

Study 4

Additional Analyses

Moderated mediation of candidate preferences. We tested a moderated mediation model to assess whether there might be gender differences leading to the insignificant indirect effect of gender-inclusive policies on participants candidate preferences via perceptions of interpersonal norms (see Figure 21). Using Hayes Process Macro (Model 59; Hayes, 2022), we

assessed the effects of moderation of gender (men coded as 0; women coded as 1) on 1) the relationship between gender inclusive policies and participants preferences between the candidates (path *c*); 2) the relationship between gender-inclusive workplace policies and perceptions of interpersonal norms (path *a*); 3) the relationship between perceptions of interpersonal norms and candidate preferences (path *b*). Analyses revealed no significant indirect effects for men ($ab = 0.10$, 95% CI [-0.06, 0.29]) or women ($ab = -0.06$, 95% CI [-0.33, 0.21]). Further, tests of moderated mediation revealed that gender was not a significant moderator, $b_{\text{index of moderated mediation}} = -0.16$, $SE = 0.16$, 95% CI [-0.48, 0.15]. To see all of the estimates from these models, refer to Table 15.

Figure 21.

Indirect Effect of Gender-Inclusive Policies on Candidate Preferences via Interpersonal Norms Moderated by Gender

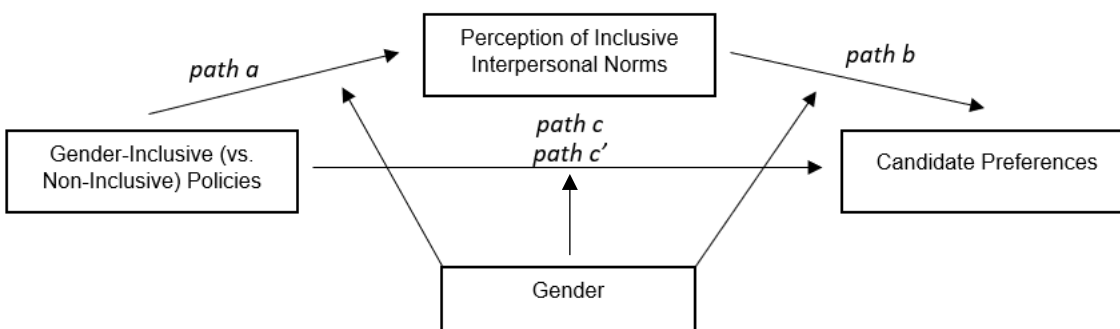


Table 15.*Moderated Mediation Model for Study 4*

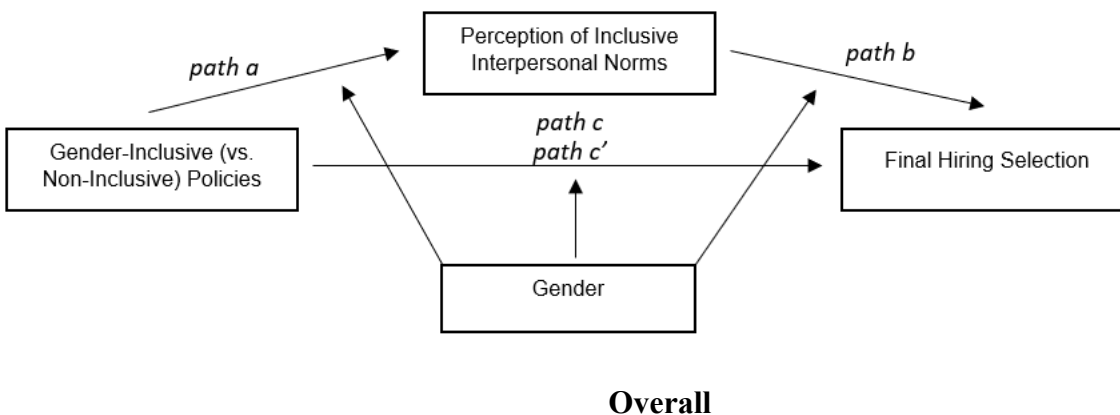
	Women	Men	Interaction
Candidate Preferences			
Path a	1.34*** [1.01, 1.67]	0.74*** [0.41, 1.07]	0.60* [0.13, 1.07]
Path b	-0.05 [-0.24, 0.15]	0.13 [-0.08, 0.34]	-0.18 [-0.46, 0.11]
Path c	0.78** [0.21, 1.34]	0.30 [-0.27, 0.87]	0.48 [-0.32, 1.28]
Path c'	0.84** [0.22, 1.46]	0.20 [-0.39, 0.79]	0.64 [-0.22, 1.49]
Final Hiring Selection			
Path a	1.34*** [1.01, 1.67]	0.74*** [0.41, 1.07]	0.60* [0.13, 1.07]
Path b	-0.03 [-0.21, 0.15]	0.11 [-0.07, 0.27]	-0.14 [-0.38, 0.11]
Path c	0.67* [0.16, 1.18]	0.15 [-0.34, 0.64]	0.52 [-0.19, 1.23]
Path c'	0.72* [0.16, 1.28]	0.08 [-0.43, 0.58]	0.64 [-0.11, 1.39]

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. Coefficients denote the unstandardized beta. Values in the square brackets indicate the 95% confidence interval for each path estimate.

Moderated mediation of final hiring selection. Again, Hayes Process Macro (Model 59; Hayes, 2022) was used to assess the effects of moderation of gender (men coded as 0; women coded as 1) on 1) the relationship between gender inclusive policies and participants final hiring selection (path *c*); 2) the relationship between gender-inclusive workplace policies and perceptions of interpersonal norms (path *a*); 3) the relationship between perceptions of interpersonal norms and participants final hiring selection (path *b*; see Figure 22). Analyses revealed no significant indirect effects for men ($ab = 0.08$, 95% CI [-0.05, 0.24]) or women ($ab = -0.04$, 95% CI [-0.28, 0.19]). Further, tests of moderated mediation revealed that gender was not a significant moderator, $b_{\text{index of moderated mediation}} = -0.12$, $SE = 0.14$, 95% CI [-0.41, 0.15]. To see all of the estimates from these models, refer to Table 15.

Figure 22.

Indirect Effect of Gender-Inclusive Policies on Final Hiring Selection via Interpersonal Norms Moderated by Gender



Participants' Country of Residence. Given the discrepancies on family leave policy between the US and UK (Elser et al., 2022; Raub et al., 2018), we were interested in performing exploratory analyses to examining the potential differences in the effect of condition on our key outcomes between participants currently residing in the United States vs. the United Kingdom. However, as shown in Table 16, there was a large imbalance of participants recruited from each country, with majority of participants residing in the UK (UK participants, $M = 90.6\%$; US participants, $M = 8.8\%$). Due to this limitation, we were unable to adequately test for moderation by country. In the future, we plan to collect a sample of US participants to verify that the key findings from our studies replicate.

Table 16.*Participants' Country of Residence*

	<i>N</i>	Percent
Study 1		
United Kingdom	436	86.2
United States	64	12.6
Australia	1	0.2
Hungary	1	0.2
Japan	1	0.2
No Data Available	3	0.6
Study 2		
United Kingdom	480	95.4
United States	21	4.2
No Data Available	2	0.4
Study 3		
United Kingdom	407	83.1
United States	83	16.9
Study 4		
United Kingdom	552	97.7
United States	9	1.6
No Data Available	4	0.7