



# INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT GUIDE

## Goal

To identify both inclusive and exclusive characteristics of the physical environment (workplace, office, campus department, etc.) in order to make changes that increase the sense of belonging for a broader range of people.

## Background

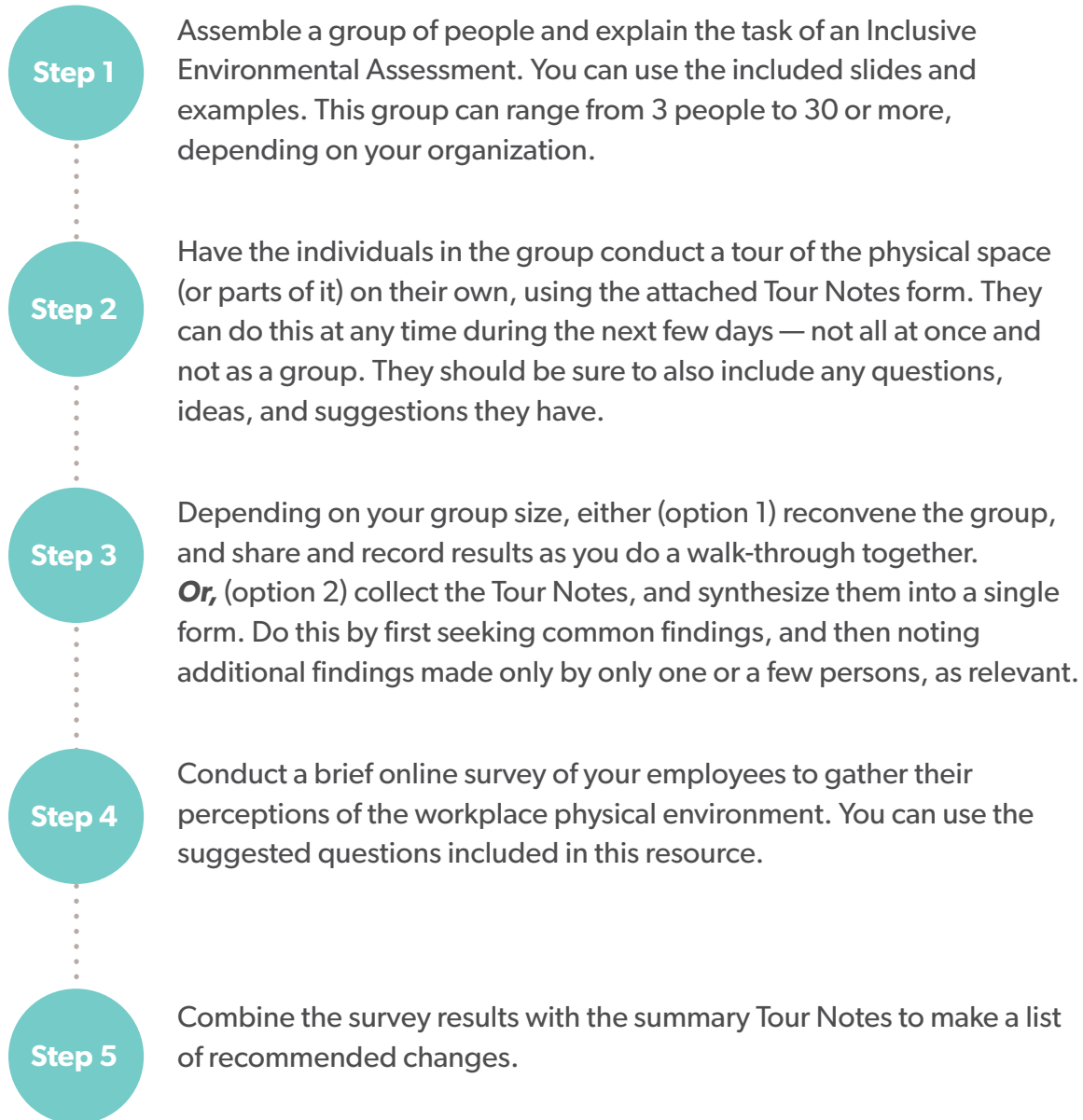
The design and décor of the physical spaces where people work contain signals about who does and who does not belong there. When we view these spaces through a diversity of perspectives, we can reveal features that signal exclusion to many people in subtle or overt ways — as well as opportunities where we can intentionally signal inclusion for a broad range of people. Research has demonstrated that masculine stereotypes about computing are communicated via cues in the physical environment, measurably reducing women's sense of belonging (Cheryan, Plaut, Davies, & Steele, 2009).

# WALK-THROUGH TOUR

## Purpose

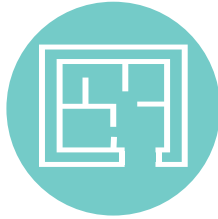
To conduct a tour of the physical environment to identify signals of exclusion (red flags) as well as signals of inclusion (green flags).

## Description



# PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT TOUR NOTES

## Things to look for:



### The space design itself

(offices, community, cubicles, closet, hallways)



### Colors

(wall, ceiling, floor)



### Décor

(pictures, art, statues, toys, plants)



### Lighting

(dark vs. light, sunlight vs. fluorescent, fixed vs. adjustable in individual workspaces)



### Furniture



### Signage and Messaging



### Other

(product displays, games, kegs, room name, visitor areas)



### Accessibility

(ADA compliance steps, uneven floors, tight spaces, high desks, or countertops)



## Sample Tour Notes

<b>Space:</b> <u>Community Room</u>		
<b>Exclusion Signals:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beer kegs and taps, beer smell</li> <li>• Combat video games</li> <li>• Pool table</li> <li>• Hyper-masculine posters of heavily muscled superheroes</li> <li>• Sexualized images of women</li> </ul>	<b>Inclusion Signals:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elevator and stairs to outside deck with colorful chairs and tables</li> <li>• Two unisex bathrooms</li> </ul>	<b>Neutral Signals:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender neutral décor (paintings, plants, coffee maker)</li> </ul>
<b>Notes:</b> <p>Space reflected a male-dominated fraternity culture, complete with a priority on beer drinking, pub-style entertainment, and overall untidiness.</p> <p>Apart from a tiny sign listing the values of the company, the physical environment does not signal a value of diversity or inclusion for people who may not identify with the male-dominated, sci-fi/fantasy stereotypes.</p>		
<b>Changes:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean</li> <li>• Replace or complement kegs with food prep counters, microwaves, and refrigerators.</li> <li>• Replace or complement décor with nature imagery.</li> <li>• Replace or complement pool table and video games with rugs, green plants, comfy chairs, and coffee tables.</li> </ul>		

## Tour Notes Form

Space: _____		
<b>Exclusion Signals:</b>	<b>Inclusion Signals:</b>	<b>Neutral Signals:</b>
<b>Notes:</b>		
<b>Changes:</b>		

Space: _____		
<b>Exclusion Signals:</b>	<b>Inclusion Signals:</b>	<b>Neutral Signals:</b>
<b>Notes:</b>		
<b>Changes:</b>		

# EMPLOYEE PERCEPTION SURVEY

## Purpose

To collect feedback from employees (and others who use these spaces) on their perceptions of the physical environment.

## Description

This is intended to be a quick online survey, requiring no more than 5 minutes. Rather than asking about specific characteristics of the physical space, the aim of this survey is to assess how much people feel they belong or do not belong in the space. Additionally, this tool can be used to assess whether any changes in the physical environment made positive or negative differences for people. The surveys should be kept anonymous, be administered periodically, and include a combination of ratings and open-ended suggestions. The following survey items are only suggestions.

1. Please rate how comfortable you feel in the following physical environments (1 = not comfortable, 5 = comfortable):

	1	2	3	4	5
Lobby/ entrance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your office/ cubicle	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conference room(s)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community break room	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hallways	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Auditorium	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cafeteria	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Courtyard	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. Other than your own workspace, where would you choose to get some work done for a change of scenery? (Choose from list, or other.) Why?

3. In which area(s) do you feel least like you belong? (Choose from list, or other.) Why?

4. In which area(s) do you feel you most belong? (Choose from list, or other.) Why?

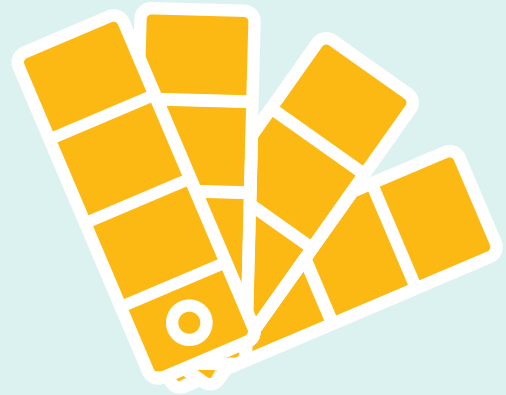
5. Please rate your overall impression of the décor of the office (1 = dislike, 5 = like).  
(You can do this by area as well.)

6. If you could make one change to our physical space, what would it be, and where?

# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Here are some complementary NCWIT resources relevant to physical spaces:

- » How Does the Physical Environment Affect Women's Entry and Persistence in Computing?  
[ncwit.org/physicalspaceuw](http://ncwit.org/physicalspaceuw)
- » Design Physical Space that Has Broad Appeal (Case Study 1)  
[ncwit.org/physicalspacecasestudy](http://ncwit.org/physicalspacecasestudy)
- » Strategic Planning for Increasing Women's Participation in the Computing Industry  
[ncwit.org/industryworkbook](http://ncwit.org/industryworkbook)



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