

Networks connect

Are you young, or African, or handicapped, or an experienced hire? Or are you female or gay, or do you come from the Asia/Pacific region? If so, there's a Shell network you can join. As from this year there are clear guidelines for employee networks, based on Shell's Global Directives.

These instructions for employee networks are clear. Such networks must be active nationwide in a particular country. They are to focus on specific under-represented aspects such as ethnicity, gender, age, disability and sexual orientation (if permitted by law). They are to be voluntary groups of employees who support the shared goals and interests of the business. They also need to be inclusive and accessible for all staff, but must not have a social, political or religious bias. Their existence is subject to Country Chair approval, and the countrywide Personnel Director acts as sponsor.

In view of this Shell Directive, the landscape of networks in the Netherlands has been restructured to some extent. For instance, there used to be a few other network-like groups focusing on young people in the company,

operating alongside Young Shell. They have now all been merged with Young Shell. The networks' terms of reference are now better co-ordinated and their activities distributed. Furthermore, the Shell African Network, Asia-Pacific Network and (soon) the Middle East North Africa Network will be merged, as sub-networks, into one over-arching cultural network. They too will consequently co-ordinate their terms of reference and activity programmes, while still having separate events focusing on each region or continent.

This nationwide structure doesn't mean that less importance is being attached to networks. On the contrary, says HR in the Netherlands; in this way, groups that are under-represented in the organisation will acquire a clearer face and voice, so that they can contribute even

more towards greater inclusiveness within Shell. The networks are meant to be recognisable both for minority groups within the company, and for all other staff.

Within the new structure there's still room for groups of colleagues to meet up or organise activities outside the official networks, but under the Global Directive they're not allowed to call themselves nationwide Shell networks. At Pernis, for instance, there's a local initiative called the Young Operations/Young Maintenance Network to bring together the young generation of refinery staff. [CvL/GK](#)

AGE

PROFESSIONAL

ROLE

CLEAR DIRE

SEXUAL

The networks in the Netherlands briefly introduce themselves

AFRICAN NETWORK

For whom: Employees from African countries, employees of African descent and employees with some affinity with Africa.

Purpose: The African Network supports the professional development and productivity of its members and encourages workforce diversity. The Network aims to promote Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) within Shell by discussing issues from a cultural perspective.

How: The Network has a programme of personal development workshops, mentoring circles, and talks by senior leaders on professional behaviour, role models and leadership development.

Since: October 2008

Membership: over 80

Plus ... The African Network in the Netherlands forms part of the Shell-wide Shell African Network launched in the U.K. in 2000. The various chapters aim to unify the D&I agenda within Shell.

DISABILITY NETWORK

For whom: Employees with visual, physical, mental or hearing disabilities, as well as those who sympathise with the Network by contributing to its activities.

Purpose: The disABILITY Network aims to create an inclusive work environment for colleagues with visible or hidden disabilities, and to promote D&I by helping them to be full participants. The Network also provides support and advice on Shell facilities and services for employees with disabilities.

How: The Network takes part in various core group events such as Safety Day and organises annual workshops with outside speakers on topics such as Accessibility, Awareness and Onboarding/Recruitment.

Since: September 2005

Membership: over 185

Plus ... Talented people with disabilities are often additionally handicapped by other people's attitudes and prejudices. The disABILITY Network is dedicated towards changing this.

ASIA-PACIFIC NETWORK (APN)

For whom: All employees with an Asia-Pacific background and employees taking an interest in Asia and the Pacific.

Purpose: APN assists its members to achieve their professional goals by emphasising diversity and a culture of inclusion and leadership. The Network also provides learning and development opportunities for its members to enhance their growth and performance within Shell.

How: The Network organises meetings on topics such as leadership, career development and cultural differences. APN also has a mentoring programme, book club and annual barbecue.

Since: 2010

Membership: 150

Plus ... the Asia Pacific Network was launched in 2010. This is APN's first year as an official Shell Network in the Netherlands.

YOUNG SHELL

For whom: The new generation employed at Shell in the Netherlands. There is no age limit.

Purpose: To support Young Shellers in building up their personal networks, integrating within the company, enhancing their know-how and entering the world of work.

How: The Network focuses on personal development by sharing best practices, arranging learning events and bringing colleagues together outside the workplace. Each of the eight YS locations has regular lunch and learns, (inter) active sessions and monthly get-togethers. Major events are YS Conference, YS Ball, AMS TechDay, Pernis Site Visit and NPN AwayDay.

Since: 1998

Membership: 2,500 (1,200 active)

Plus ... Young Shell is an energetic Network, thanks to its members' enthusiasm for Shell. Young and old are welcome to its activities in 2011.

GENDER

DISABILITY

ETHNICITY

DEVELOPMENT

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

CLEARER FACE AND VOICE

MODELS

WORKFORCE DIVERSITY

ACTIVITIES

MINORITY GROUPS

ORIENTATION

UNDER-REPRESENTED

EXPERIENCED HIRE NETWORK (EHN)

For whom: Employees who were with an external employer for at least five years before joining Shell.

Purpose: Experienced hires may find it more difficult than Shell lifers to find their way around Shell. The Network helps them in this respect, in addition to the onboarding arranged for all new joiners. EHN also supports its members in building up their own networks within Shell.

How: Four times a year, the Network organises an event with a guest speaker on various business themes. There are also lunch and learns to explain HR processes and career development.

Since: 2004

Membership: 300

Plus ... This year EHN is working on a pilot scheme on how Shell as a company can benefit from the outside experience of seasoned staff.

LESBIAN GAY BISEXUAL TRANSGENDER NETWORK (LGBT/PINK PEARL)

For whom: Homosexual, bisexual and transgender employees, as well as colleagues keen to support the goals of the LGBT Network.

Purpose: LGBT advises and supports its members in their Shell careers by introducing them to role models, encouraging visibility and fostering D&I. It also informs senior managers, HR and colleagues about the challenges faced by LGBT employees, such as international assignments to countries where homosexuality is illegal.

How: The Network organises conferences for members and non-members alike on LGBT issues, working together with the Company Pride Platform on which companies such as TNT, KPMG and ING are also represented. The Network also takes part every year in the Amsterdam Canal Parade and arranges an annual dinner for its members.

Since: 2000

Membership: 125

Plus ... Shell came ninth in the IGLCC Business Equality Index, which ranks the effectiveness of corporate LGBT activities, in 2010. IBM was No.1.

WOMEN'S NETWORK (SWN-NL)

For whom: The focus is on female colleagues, but men are equally welcome.

Purpose: By encouraging personal development, highlighting role models and offering its members networking opportunities, the Women's Network aims to contribute towards a more inclusive working environment within Shell. The Network helps its members to develop their talents to the full, thereby achieving Shell's business goals.

How: SWN-NL has five chapters at different locations and works with more than 100 volunteers. The Network organises events with senior leaders, get-togethers on and for working parents, and mentoring circles.

Since: 2001

Membership: 1,500

Plus ... The Network is currently looking for a new chairperson and vice-chairperson for the next two years (see advertisement on the intranet: www.shell.com/nl/).

Read more about the Shell Netherlands networks and visit their websites on: www.shell.com/nl/employee_networks/index.html