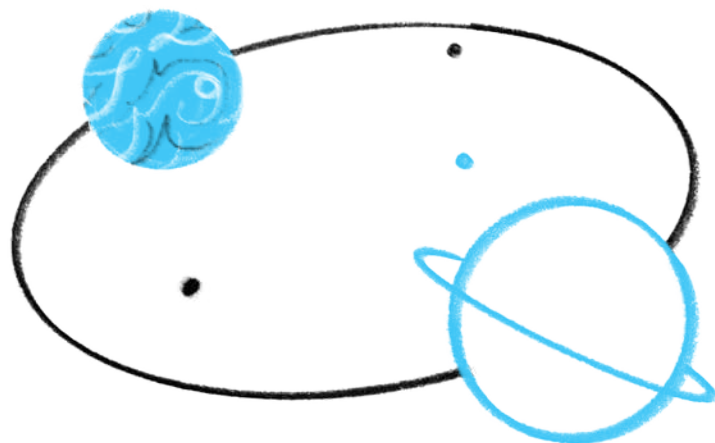




**BENEFIT  
CORPORATION**  
PEOPLE, PLANET & PROFIT

# DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION MANIFESTO



Produced by



**Critical**  
software

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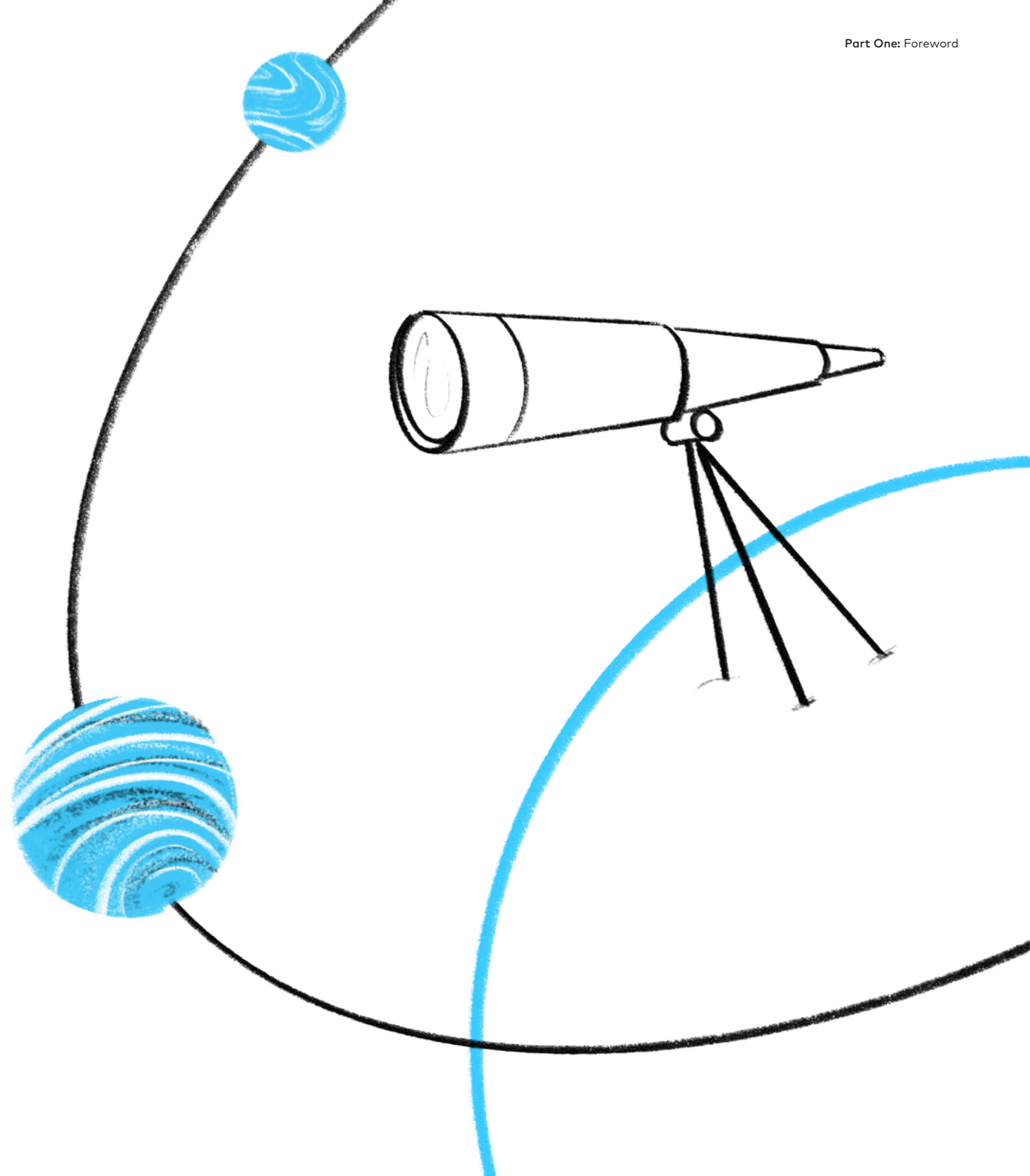
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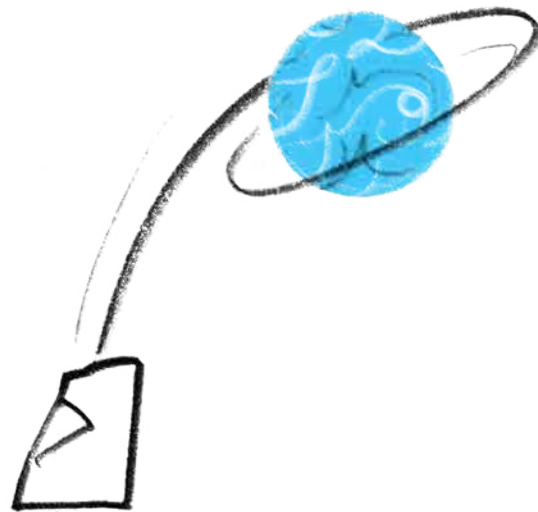
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# Part One

## Foreword



# A Message From The Founders



*It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences.*

● **Audrey Lorde,**  
*African American  
writer and activist*

This Manifesto is not only a way to recognise, build on and celebrate our differences but - far beyond that - it is a way to say that we cannot be what we want to be, or achieve what we want to achieve, without the power that diversity brings us.

We want to help build a better and safer world. This means, among so many other things, fighting inequalities, providing equal opportunities, and ensuring dignity and a decent life for all. For each and every person, we should stress, and not just for ourselves.

What we do depends on creativity, ingenuity, initiative, and sound decisions – a huge amount of each of those things. This requires collaboration and ideas, and the results are better - much better – when there is a greater number of different backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives collaborating. Diversity matters.

Of course, diversity cannot thrive without inclusion. And all of this is not just about doing the right thing. Fostering and championing diversity and inclusion is about improving our ability to build knowledge, to be creative, to be curious, to think out of the box, adapt and thrive.

*Ultimately, as a company and a community, our ability to be inclusive and to **recognise, accept, and celebrate our diversity** is our most valuable competitive advantage.*

● **Gonçalo Quadros**  
*Chairman*  
● **João Carreira**  
*CEO*

# Introduction

Fostering diversity and inclusion in the workplace is both a business and a moral imperative. Our DEI Manifesto Project gave us the chance to build on our commitments as a citizen company, to look at our data, and to listen to our people to understand their perspectives on inclusion, equity and diversity at Critical Software.

We also reflected on our company's culture and values, took stock of previous DEI initiatives, looked at society as a whole, and identified strengths and improvement opportunities to help us build on our journey so far.

We are confident that the DEI guidelines outlined in this document will help us to continue to promote inclusion, increase our teams' diversity and continue to grow our community's sense of belonging and purpose.

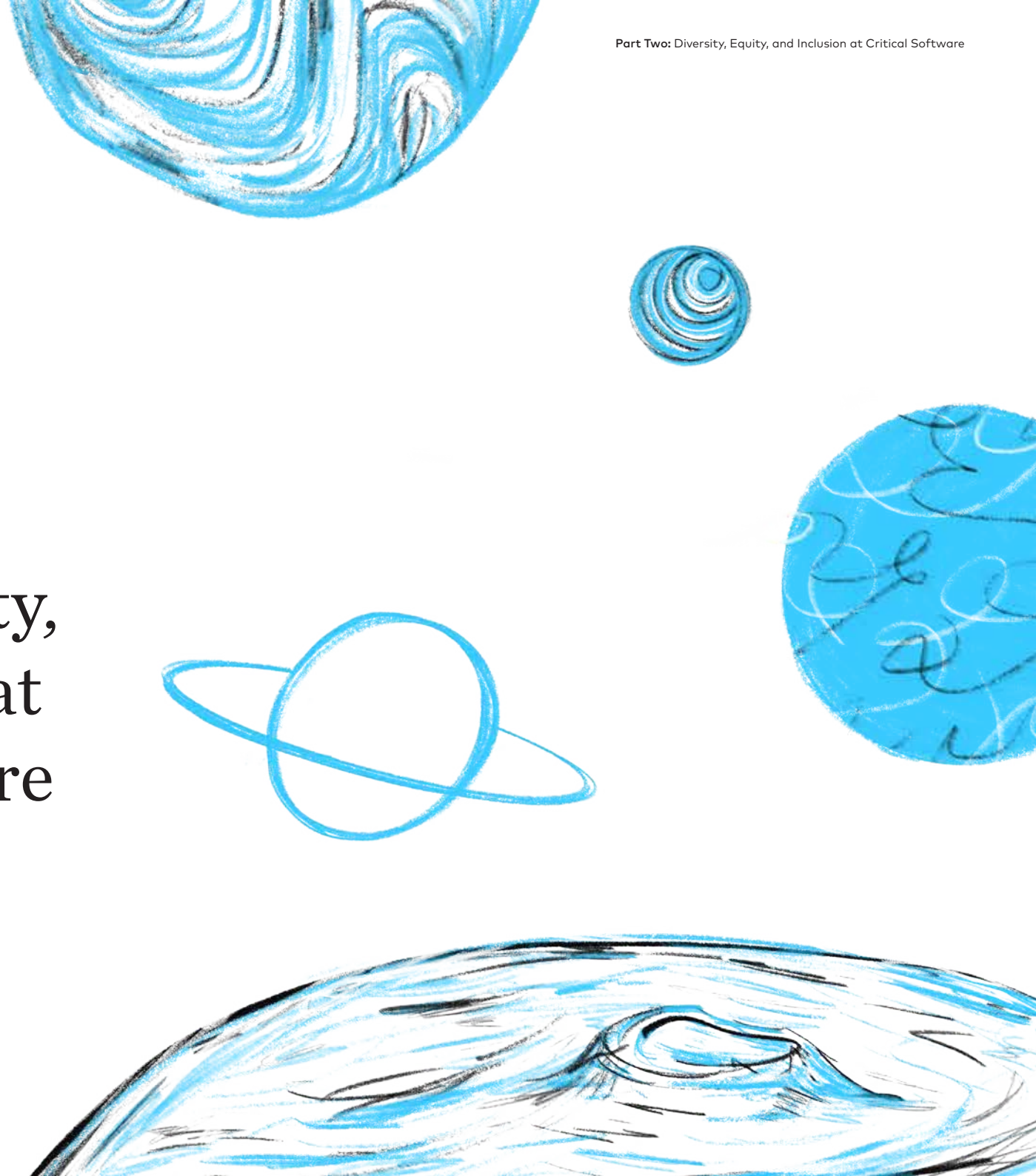
*Society's greatest challenges can't be overcome without businesses playing their part. Tackling topics like diversity, equality, poverty, community inclusion, high-quality education and jobs, and environmental stewardship is an important function of any citizen company.*

● *Critical Software*



## Part Two

# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Critical Software



# Our Culture: Values and Purpose

At Critical Software, we want to help engineer a better and safer world. A world that is sustainable and where everyone has equal opportunities to thrive. We want to be more than a business. We want to use the power of technology and our creative mindsets to help our clients, our communities, our employees and our planet.

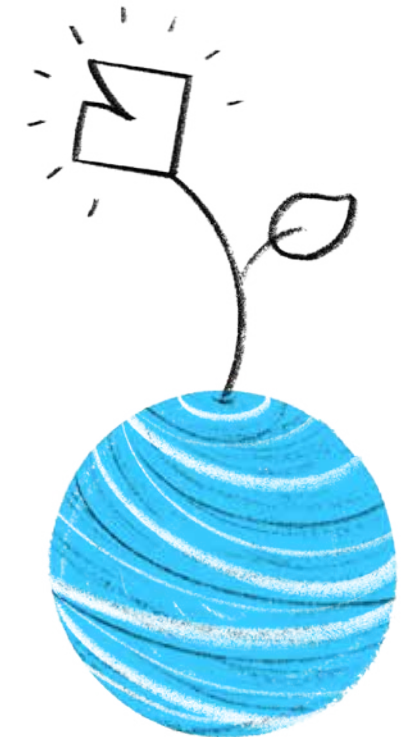
For 25 years, we have developed our expertise and pushed boundaries to create cutting-edge solutions for our clients, with the help of our talented teams. All the while, we have invested our time and resources to support social responsibility initiatives and create an inclusive workplace with a strong sense of community.

We believe that only by opening our doors to people from diverse backgrounds, with different perspectives, will we be able to deliver our best. We want to keep fostering a diverse, inclusive, and dynamic environment where each of our people can reach their full potential.

We believe in finding the best person for the job, avoiding positive discrimination but embracing positive action. To be able to live up to our values, we believe we must actively foster a level playing field by removing barriers and diversifying access pathways for all. This includes making reasonable adjustments to attract and welcome employees from all kinds of backgrounds, embracing differences and growing the talents of a diverse community.

*In 2022, we reinforced our commitment to building a better and safer world by renewing our diversity and inclusion strategy. The outcomes of this journey have been:*

- *A report that showcases our DEI status - obtained from the combined analysis of demographics, our people's inclusion scores, and people management metrics*
- *A solid DEI strategy with clear priorities rooted in the report and our company's values & mission*
- *A monitoring framework to help us measure our actions' impacts and keep us on track to reach our goals*



We want to use our strategy to maximise our positive impacts, inspire communities and show how technology and the full breadth of human endeavour can come together to engineer change.

# Why We Bet on Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) are an integral part of a company's impact on society.

A strong DEI strategy makes good business sense. Multiple studies and reports have shown that increasing diversity within leadership teams is linked to stronger financial performance, that the majority of employees prefer diverse companies, and that inclusive teams make better and faster business decisions.

At Critical, we believe in removing barriers and creating positive actions to improve the diversity of our teams, to guarantee equity in how we do things and to grow our employees' sense of inclusion. This is good for our business, our people and communities, and it is the right thing to do.

*This is why we are committed to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. To become:*

- *A better company for our employees*
- *A better partner for our clients*
- *A better member for our community*





# What's Been Done So Far

## *Socioeconomic inequalities*

Critical's highest salary cannot be more than 10 times greater than the lowest salary per country.

Critical is one of the 50 pioneer companies associated with the pact "More and Better Jobs for Young People" that establishes, among other things, targets for minimum wages for qualified young people, adequate training, and open-ended contracts.

The company also drives programmes tackling inequality from a young age, such as Companhia do Estudo and TUMO.

## *Intercultural/cross-national inclusion*

Critical runs workshops on cultural intelligence & multicultural environments to foster understanding.

Portuguese and English culture and language classes also promote inclusion.

## *Gender equality & representation*

STEM initiatives ("Engenheiras por um dia", "raparigas de código", and "Geek Girls") have helped to grow more women in tech careers, alongside supportive benefits like extended maternity and paternity leaves.

## *Tackling bias and discrimination*

An ombudsperson and a whistleblowing platform allow the anonymous reporting of suspected wrongdoing.

A code of conduct covers anti-discrimination, anti-harassment, anti-bullying and equal opportunities principles.

## *People with disabilities*

An employee assistance programme helps to look after employees in difficult situations such as unexpected medical conditions, including a gradual return to work, expenses support, flex hours and a salary protection scheme.

## *Neurodiversity*

Critical has hired and integrated more than 10 neurodiverse employees through an inclusion program with Specialisterne, including process adjustments, specialised support for employees, and training for teams.

Awareness sessions have grown understanding of autism and neurodiversity among all employees.

## *Migrants*

Our hiring programme for refugees and foreign citizens includes a relocation package and expenses support. Critical also partners with "Portugal with ACNUR", the UN's agency for refugees.

## *Mental health and wellbeing*

Partnerships with Mind Alliance and Pulso provide mental and wellbeing support to employees.

Managers are trained on mental health support and a first aid support line and wellbeing webinars are available to all.

## *Diversity*

Re-skilling programmes attract people from diverse, unorthodox career backgrounds into the company

Together with the University of Coimbra, Critical created Acertar o Rumo, an innovative programme that opened the way for similar initiatives to be launched (for example, SWitCH and Academia de Código)

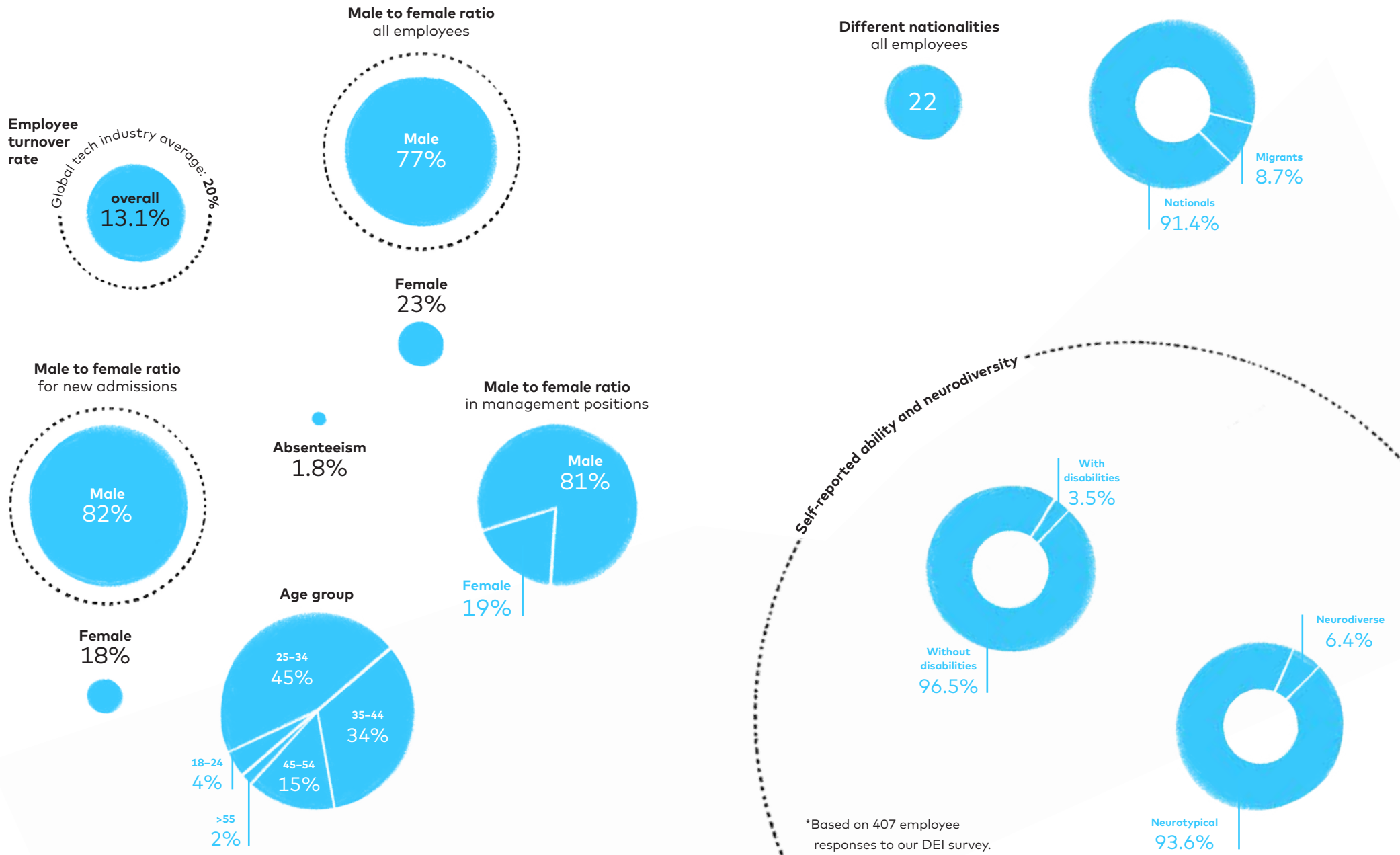


# Part Three

## Stop, Look and Listen



# Snapshot 2022

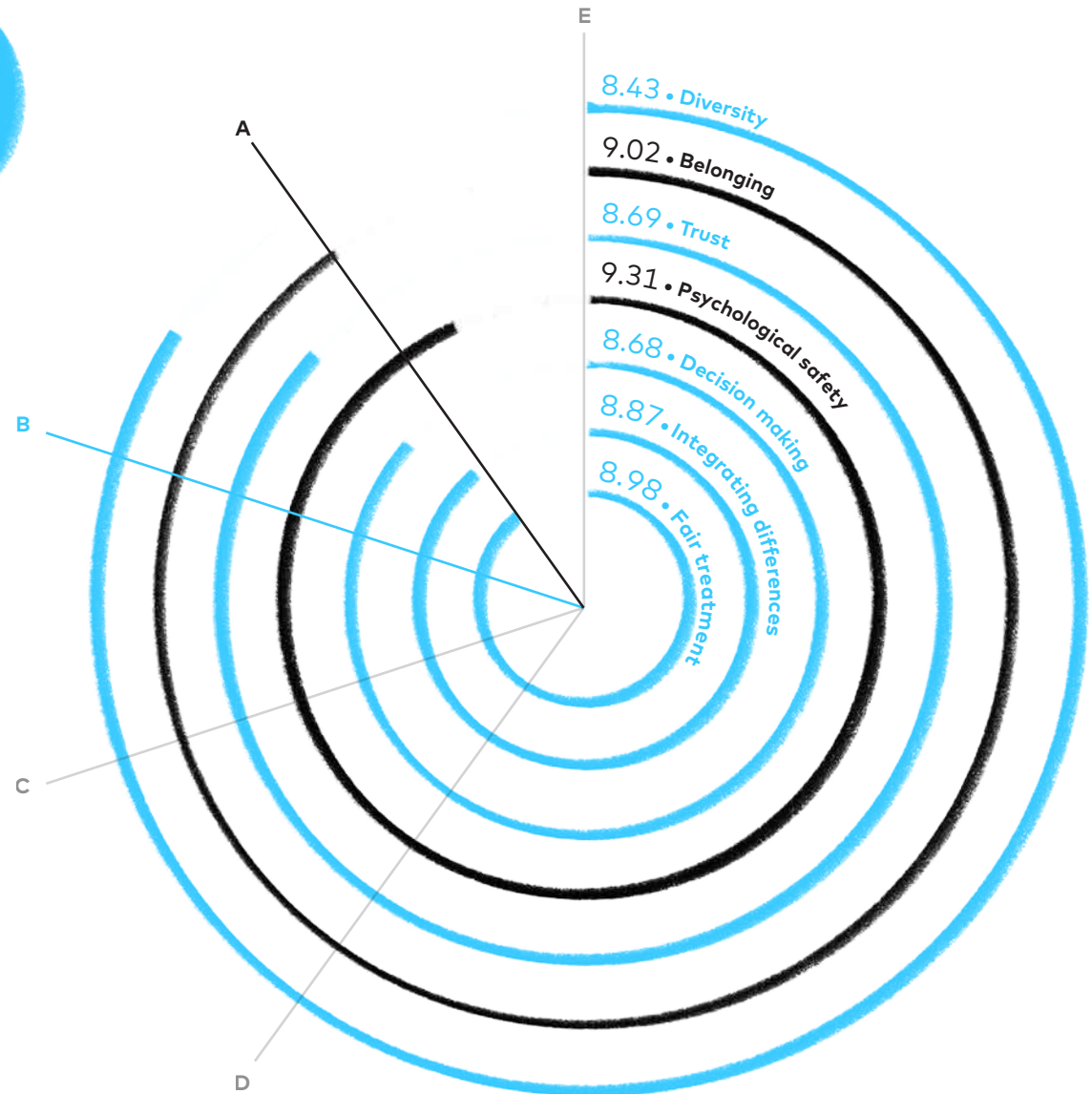


# Snapshot 2022

Our workplace inclusion score measures employees' feelings of across 7 pillars.\*



- *The overall scores are high. The average scores across all pillars fall within the highest categories, between A and B.*
- *The pillar with the lowest score is diversity, reflecting the fact that some respondents feel it should continue to be nurtured across all hierarchies of the organisation.*
- *Psychological safety is the highest scoring pillar, followed by fair treatment and belonging. All of which are very strongly tied with employee satisfaction, motivation and engagement.*



\* These 7 pillars are based on Gartner's inclusion framework.

**Note:** Critical Software measures employee inclusion regularly through surveys on Peakon.

# DEI Assessment

In order to improve our DEI practices, we set out on a journey to better know and understand our employees. Through a company-wide survey and a series of interviews and focus groups, we listened to our employees' perspectives and challenges. As a result, we were able to collect key information about their wellbeing and feelings of inclusion.

Some of the conclusions were:

- Feelings of inclusion are high overall, and do not present significant differences across gender or parenthood.
- Feelings of Inclusion are also high for people with disabilities, with only a slight deviation from the average. Employees also reported valuing the company's efforts towards including people with disabilities and people on the neurodiversity spectrum. The neurodiversity programme was mentioned by some employees as a point of pride.
- Notwithstanding Critical's inclusion efforts and reasonable accommodations, it can still improve its offices' infrastructure to ensure full accessibility for people with different disabilities.

- We provide a high level of psychological safety for people in the LGBTQAI+ community, with an average score above 8.

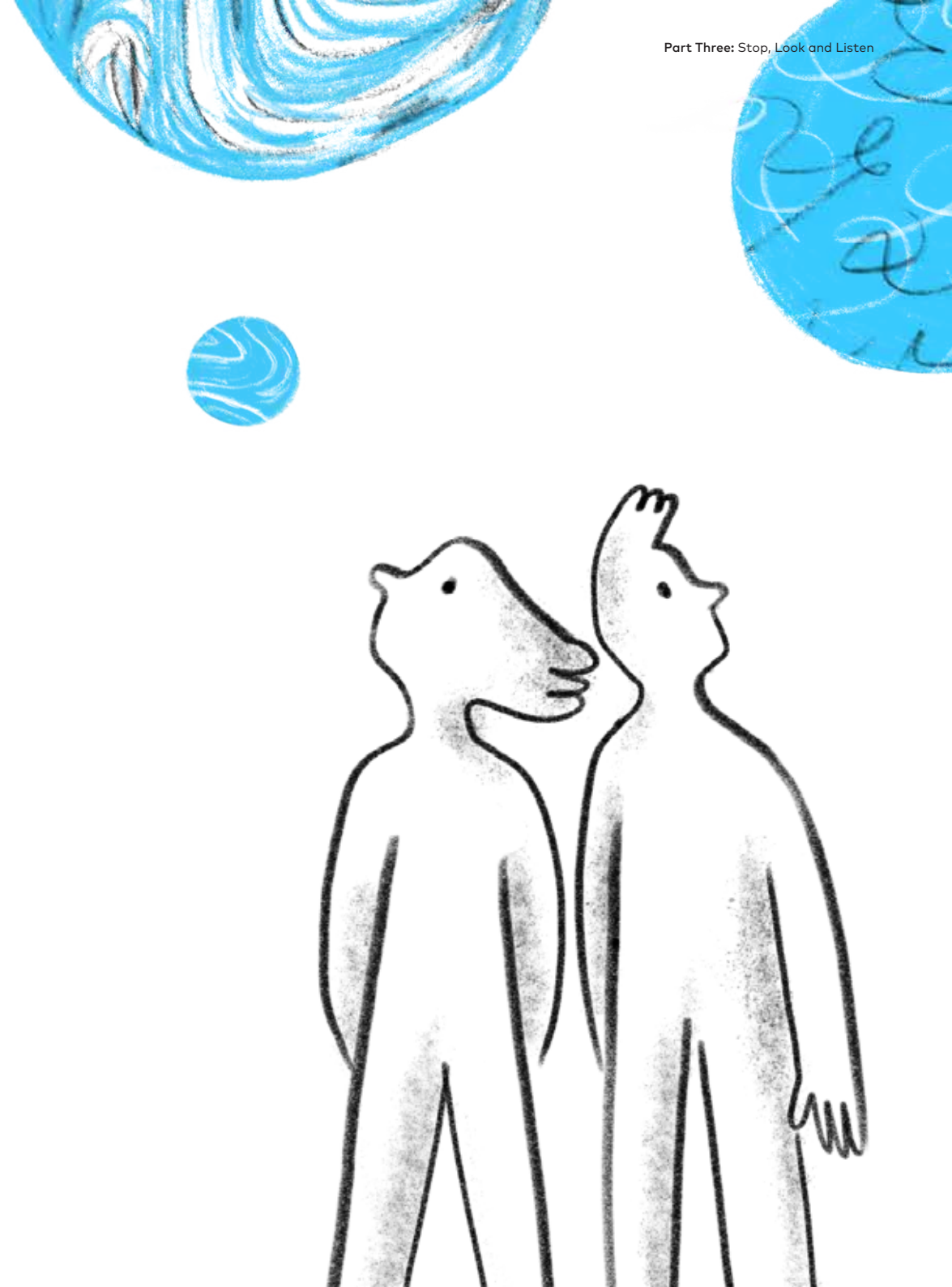
- Employees recognise there is a focus on career development and progression, with managers regularly providing feedback and with company support for those who want career shifts.

- The general employee perception is that Critical Software is focused on being fair and that there is a cultural commitment to fight discrimination.

- Most employees recognise an open culture and agree that they are heard, their opinions are valued, and that there's openness to criticism.

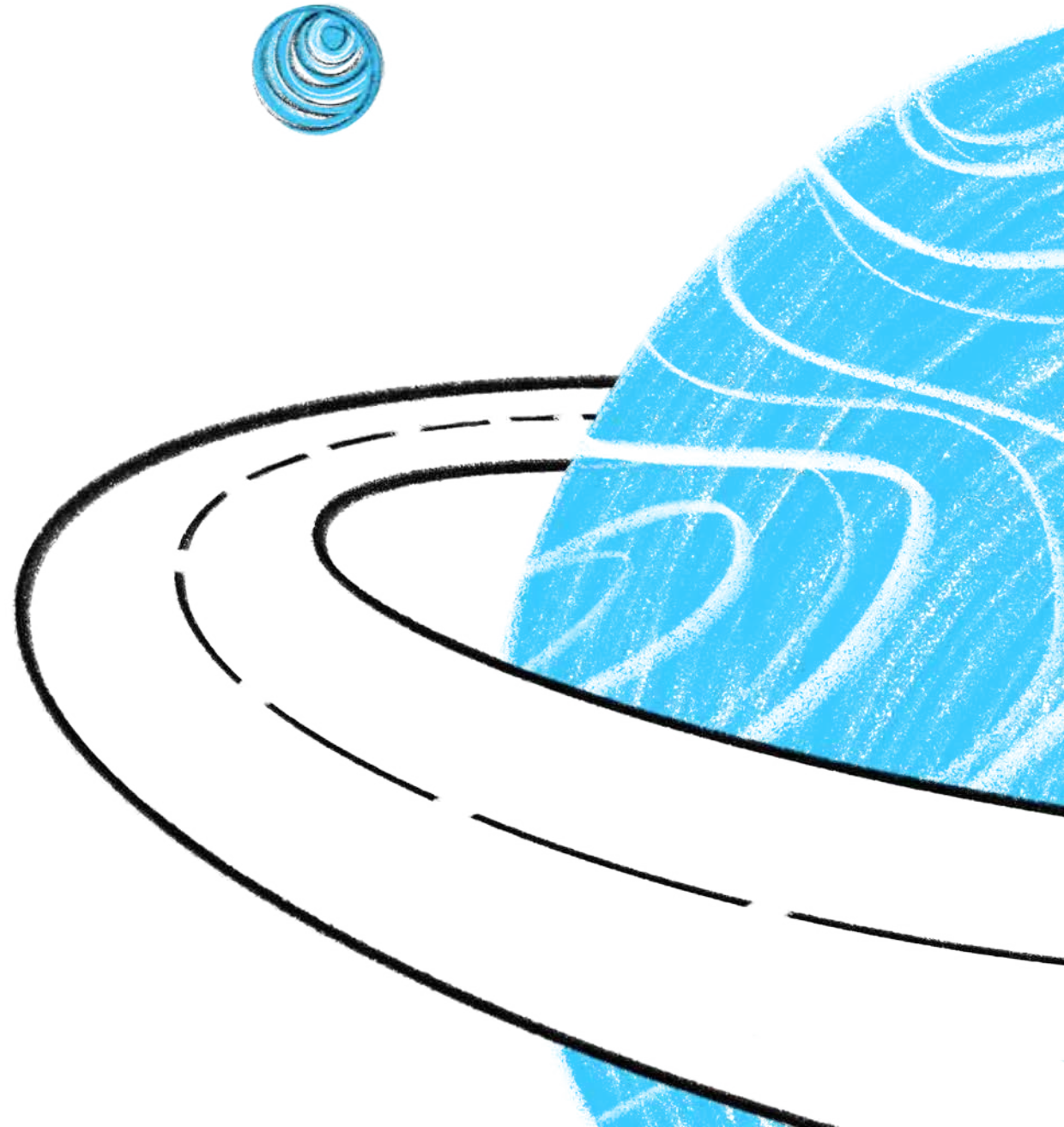
- Critical's efforts to promote employees' mental health and wellbeing are well received and acknowledged.

- With the support of employees, Critical has identified areas of improvement including: the representation of women and people with disabilities in our overall workforce, the disclosure of our anti-discrimination policy, the improvement of our training offer to better prepare our employees to work in multicultural environments and to leverage diversity, improving belonging for employees who are outsourcers or client-based, and improving equity through positive action to narrow any current gap.



# Part Four

## The Road Ahead



# Our Commitments

Every day, we strive to be better than we are today. We want to support minorities and people from diverse backgrounds — including women, the LGBTQAI+ community, migrants, people from vulnerable socioeconomic backgrounds, neurodiverse people, people with disabilities and beyond — with the inclusive and respectful work environment everyone needs to feel engaged and fully integrated.

We work in a very demanding and competitive market and we are living exciting and transformative times. We believe diversity of identities and perspectives breed the best ideas. That is one of the reasons why we aim to foster an inclusive workplace where everyone's voice is heard, and diversity is cherished so people can bring their full selves to work and reach their maximum potential. At Critical, our people come together to use tech for good and create a better and safer world for all.

*Diversity, equity and inclusion have always been at the center of our culture. We are aware this demands a collective and continued effort in a company as big as ours. With the support and involvement of each employee, we are committed to continuing to push our journey forward.*



Fostering equal opportunities in all our policies and processes, and promoting a culture based on respect for people.

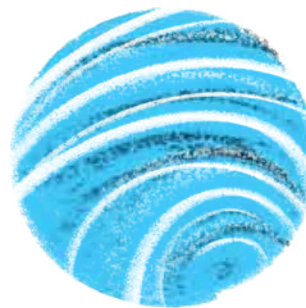
Encouraging the creation of diverse, transversal, and inclusive teams, recognising people's individuality and differences and ensuring no discrimination.



Breaking stereotypes and ideas that get in the way of progress and innovation.



Disseminating the value of diversity among all our people, stakeholders and partners with whom we are connected.



Backing actions to foster awareness and social change through training, networking, mentoring, debates, talks, awards and sponsorships.



# Priorities & Strategic Goals

## *1. Ensuring Transparency & Accountability*

- 1.1 Publish our DEI commitments and a non-discrimination disclosure.
- 1.2 Measure core DEI metrics.

## *2. Employee Diversity*

- 2.1 Increase employees' awareness on disabilities and neurodiversity in the workplace.
- 2.2. Promote gender balance and female leadership.
- 2.3 Continue to have skills-based recruitment to keep hiring people from different backgrounds to our engineering teams, including people from socially disadvantaged backgrounds.

## *3. Employee Belonging*

- 3.1. Increase the sense of belonging for employees in outsourcing and client-based work models.
- 3.2. Reinforce belonging for migrant employees and employees from minority cultural backgrounds.

## *4. Employee Equity & Inclusion*

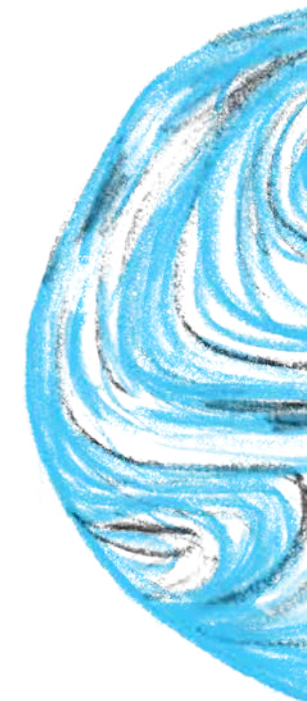
- 4.1. Decrease workplace inclusion score gaps between demographic groups.
- 4.2. Ensure continued readiness of teams and reasonable adjustments to include neurodiverse employees.
- 4.3. Ensure continued readiness of teams and reasonable adjustments to include people with disabilities.
- 4.4. Ensure continued readiness of teams to include people from different races, religions, genders, nationalities, and sexual orientations.

## *5. Promoting Mental Health*

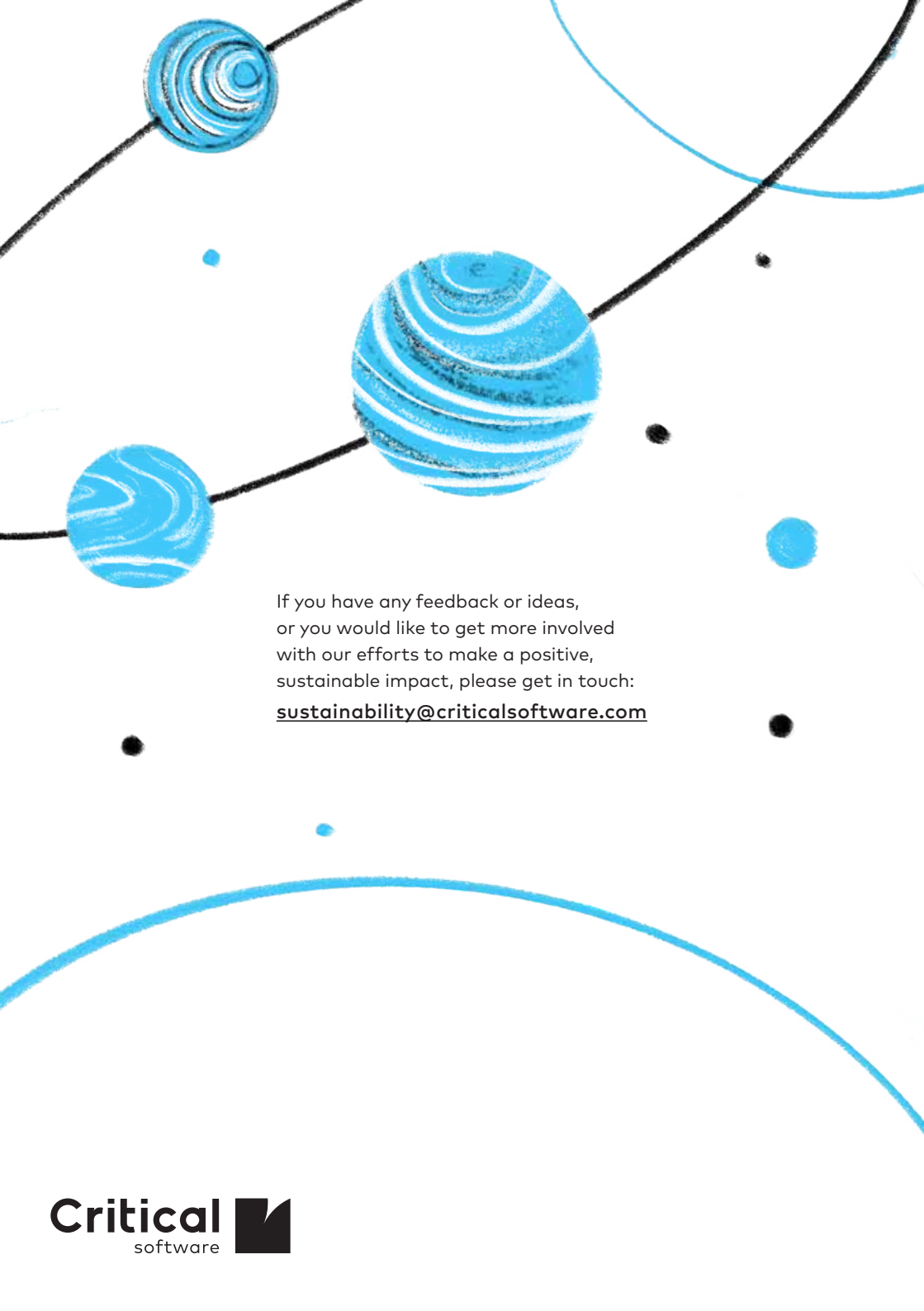
- 5. 1. Grow further awareness and team/manager readiness to support employees with mental health conditions.

## *6. Social Impact*

- 6.1 Continue to support neurodiversity & requalification programmes, bringing together other IT companies to increase our collective impact.
- 6.2 Continue to support TUMO & Women in Tech related events and reinforce our commitment to actively contribute to increasing the representation of women in STEM careers.







If you have any feedback or ideas,  
or you would like to get more involved  
with our efforts to make a positive,  
sustainable impact, please get in touch:  
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