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10 YEARS OF FEMINUITY
◎ Looking Back,
Leading *Forward*

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LOOKING BACK: 10 YEARS IN THE MAKING

Sarah
Co-Founder and CEO

We've said it from the start: equity doesn't hold innovation back, it *fuels* it.

It's not an add-on. It's the infrastructure that makes innovation *matter*.

Our name, Feminuity, brings together two principles: **feminism**, an equity-based approach that, when done well, benefits everyone, and **ingenuity**, the drive to design boldly and think differently.

As we mark a decade I want to reflect, not just on where we've been, but on what **this work demands now**.

From the start, we've seen what others overlooked. Too often, technologies and innovations meant to solve problems were built on biased assumptions, excluding people, ignoring lived realities, and reinforcing the very inequities they claimed to address. **Innovation that harms people isn't revolutionary. It's regressive.**

We've had the privilege of partnering with over **200 organizations across more than 20 countries**, and we've seen a lot along the way. One thing has always been clear: what happens inside a workplace shapes what that workplace creates. The people doing the work are the ones designing the products, policies, and services. When they are unsupported or excluded from key decisions, their insights often disappear with them. That's why our work focuses on **both the people and the systems, because equitable outcomes start from within.**

We've also seen the cycles: buzzwords that faded, promises made under pressure, quick fixes that didn't last, tools that lacked rigour, and platforms that chased profit over impact.

We didn't follow those paths. And we didn't look to others to decide what to do next, as we know imitation rarely leads to impact. **We chose to lead differently.**

We've also stayed future-focused. Equity work doesn't stand still, and neither do we. We've spent the last decade scanning the horizon, reading the signals, and evolving our work in step with what the world demands. **Foresight, rigour, and adaptation are not side notes, they are the foundation.**

Now, in a time of eroding trust, political pressure, legal risk, and accelerating technological disruption, equity work must evolve. In some jurisdictions, it is being politicized or pushed underground. In others, shifting legal expectations are reshaping what accountability looks like.
Boards, leaders, and organizations must demonstrate not just intent, but integrity, evidence, and compliance.

In this way, **equity isn't a liability. It's how resilient, relevant, and future-ready organizations are built.** Our services are designed for complexity, grounded in rigour, aligned with real operations, and ready for scrutiny.

This report marks ten years for us. More importantly, it reaffirms our commitment to leading with clarity, rigour, and integrity – **no matter what comes next.**

Why Now? 2025 Is a Tipping Point.

Workplace equity efforts are adapting to a new reality. Some of the pressure is legal, some political, and some reactive. But not all change is negative; some is necessary and long overdue.

The question is no longer whether equity efforts matter, but *what works now. What is worth keeping? What needs to evolve? What should we let go of?* The organizations leading now are navigating these questions with care and resolve, while asking even more critical questions to build organizations that are resilient and future-ready.

- *Are our leaders equipped to guide teams through uncertainty?*

- *Do our systems enable people to do their best work?*

- *Are we attracting, developing, and retaining globally diverse talent?*

- *Are we enabling teams to work well together across identities, generations, geographies, and perspectives?*

- *Are our products and services relevant across cultures and global markets?*

- *Are we evolving with political, social, legal, and technological change, or simply reacting to it?*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2025 and beyond, we are helping our clients and community address the challenges of the future.

From Artificial Intelligence (AI) challenges to global crises, organizations need to rethink and reposition equity as a foundational tool for action. As we mark ten years, we are sharing the research, insights, and service strategies that guide our work, along with the trends shaping equity now..

1. A Workforce in Flux

Workforces are evolving fast. From hybrid models to global hiring, new dynamics are reshaping how, where, and with whom we work. Discover what it takes to support multigenerational, distributed teams with systems designed for equity and complexity.

## 2. Global Instability and Workforce Polarization

Trust is fragile, and the pressure is real. Economic disruption, political division, and shifting trade dynamics are testing workplace resilience. Understand how organizations are embedding equity into operations to lead through uncertainty and polarization.

3. Accelerated AI, Lagging Accountability

AI is advancing rapidly, but are we ready? As automation transforms work, many organizations are struggling to keep pace with ethics, governance, and inclusion. Learn what it takes to implement AI equitably and responsibly.

4. From Jobs to Skills

Goodbye, job titles. Hello, capabilities. The shift to skills-based work is transforming everything from hiring to leadership. Explore how inclusive, flexible approaches to skill-building can create more adaptive and future-ready teams.

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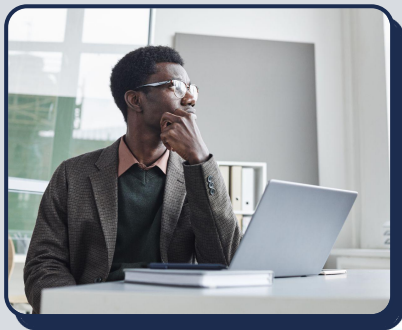
Looking *Ahead*

What Will the Next 10 Years Bring?

We design equity strategies that are researched, data-driven, and aligned with business priorities. Our work is designed for high impact and low risk, grounded in governance, built for complexity, and structured to last.

No acronyms. No fluff. No reactionary pivots, just systems that make workplaces better for everyone.

We've evolved our core services to meet the demands of the moment, and the complexity of what's ahead. These are the strategies we use to help organizations build equity into every part of their work: strategy, operations, leadership, and learning.

Then, in **Leading *Forward*,** we share the foresight that drives these strategies, like the global forces shaping what equity work must become.

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LOOKING AHEAD

1.

Focus on Impact
(Not the Acronym)

Too often, organizations get stuck debating language or chasing the latest DEI trend. These efforts may be well-intentioned, but they often create confusion, stall momentum, and result in surface-level changes that don't hold up.

If you don't know why you're doing this work, don't do it. Equity is not a box to check, a public statement, or a gesture made under pressure. It is a leadership discipline—one that demands clarity, strategy, governance, and accountability.

Whether your starting point is a business case, a theory of change, or a deeper social purpose, your equity strategy must be grounded in real priorities. It should hold up under pressure, respond to real risks, and deliver measurable progress.

We help organizations name what they are solving for, why it matters, and how to build change that lasts.

HOW WE HELP:
Advise Services

- **Crisis Response -** When the pressure is high, we help you stabilize quickly, manage risk, and respond with care and credibility.

- **On Demand -** When uncertainty hits or direction shifts, we provide expert guidance, exactly when you need it, to help you make informed, impact-driven decisions.

- **Retainer -** Build momentum and resilience over time through a steady, strategic partnership. We stay close, adapt as you evolve, and help keep your equity commitments strong and aligned over time.

Sarah   *Co-Founder and CEO*

"We meet you where you are and help you make sense of what's next, from AI to media literacy to global team dynamics."

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2.

Integrate Equity into the Business
(Don't Keep It Siloed)

Equity cannot live on the sidelines.

When equity is treated as a standalone initiative, disconnected from planning, operations, or decision-making, it struggles to take root. It becomes easier to deprioritize, harder to scale, and unlikely to deliver real change.

We are done with strategies that sit on the proverbial shelf. The most resilient efforts are embedded into how an organization *actually* works. Equity must be integrated into strategic planning, governance, performance systems, product development, and day-to-day operations.

Our assessments surface the patterns shaping people's experiences, and reveal the gaps between stated values, systems, and outcomes. They enable teams to act with precision and design strategies that hold under pressure.

That's where the real shift happens: when equity becomes part of how your organization functions, not just what it says it values.

HOW WE HELP:
Assess Services

- **Inclusion Compass** - Get a clear snapshot. This self-guided, research-informed tool helps you assess where inclusion lives and where to focus next.

- **Targeted Review -** Pinpoint what matters. We analyze a specific product, policy, or process to uncover equity gaps and deliver practical, tailored recommendations.

- **Data Foundations -** Build what you can measure. We co-design and implement inclusive data systems so you can track, act, and improve with confidence.

- **Comprehensive Review -** Uncover deep patterns. Through surveys, interviews, and materials analysis, we surface the systems and signals shaping your equity journey.

KT *Director of People Analytics & Insights*

"Good data tells the truth about people's experiences and gives you a clear path to act with purpose."

LOOKING AHEAD

3.

Distribute the Work
(Don't Put the Burden on a Few)

Equity work should not rest on one person, or even one team.

When responsibility is siloed, it creates burnout, bottlenecks, and limited impact. While the Chief Diversity Officer model can be valuable, it was never designed to carry the full weight of today's complexity. Equity must be distributed across roles, functions, and levels in ways that are structured, supported, and sustainable.

Without standards or accountability, equity work can stall under pressure. Like any critical business function, it requires clear expectations, decision-making authority, and follow-through.

This work cannot be tied to a single identity, ideology, or initiative.
Models that place the burden on a few create fragility and slow progress. Equity is not just for some people. It is for everyone. And it only works when ownership is shared across the organization.

HOW WE HELP:
Design Services

- **Distributed Accountability -** Build systems to share and sustain the work. We embed equity through shared responsibility, empowered teams, and scalable governance.

- **Integrated Strategy -** Align equity with your operations. We connect strategy to planning, performance, and decision-making so equity becomes part of how things work.

- **Foundational Strategy -** Start strong. We help define your purpose, identify key challenges, and develop equity strategies rooted in your operational realities.

- **Solutions Design -** Co-create what fits. We design programs, policies, and products that bring equity into everyday practice, making it practical, relevant, and built to last.

Steph *Director of Design & Strategy*

"An integrated and distributed approach is essential to equity work that's built to last. Without intentional and collaborative design, even well-meaning innovation can reinforce inequities rather than make progress."

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4.

Build Skills That Stick.
(Not One-Off of Generic Training)

Equity is not a concept. It is a competency.

Too many organizations rely on one-off workshops or generic training that check a box but fail to build lasting capability. Most teams are not resistant to equity—they simply haven't been equipped to lead it.

We help organizations move from awareness to action by building role-specific, applied skills that teams can use in their day-to-day work. This isn't about isolated learning moments. It's about developing the capabilities needed for resilient, future-ready teams.

As the workplace continues to shift, equity learning must evolve. What works now is practical, relevant, and directly connected to real-world challenges—like ethical AI, inclusive decision-making, and leading across difference.

This is not extra. It is essential.

HOW WE HELP:
Educate Services

- **Foundational Learning -** Lay the groundwork for change. Our introductory sessions build shared language, challenge assumptions, and create the conditions for meaningful cultural shifts.

- **Capacity Building -** Connect equity to everyday action. These deeper learning experiences are tailored to specific roles, teams, or functions, building practical skills that support real decisions and real change.

- **Skills Framework -** Define what equity looks like in practice. We help you map the competencies that align with your business goals and guide performance with clarity.

- **Learning Roadmap -** Plan for progress. We co-create sequenced learning journeys tied to your goals, priorities, and pace.

- **Learning Impact -** Measure what matters. We help you track progress, identify what is working, and adjust your approach for greater impact.

Natalia *Learning Experience Lead*

"Equity learning begins with understanding the present and builds the courage to imagine a better future."

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Leading *Forward*

Steph
Director of Design & Strategy

Building What's Next

At Feminuity, we do more than stay informed. We anticipate **what's next.**

In this next section, we share the foresight driving our work: the trends, tensions, and design opportunities redefining equity strategy in 2025 and beyond.

As the world of work shifts under the weight of technological disruption, political volatility, and economic uncertainty, equity work must evolve. These forces are not separate from equity. They shape how we live, work, and access opportunity.

This foresight report explores four key drivers we are watching closely. Each one highlights the emerging trends, risks, questions, and opportunities reshaping how equity strategy is designed and delivered.

We share these insights to support equity-centred leaders and teams in navigating what's next with clarity, courage, and care.

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1.

A Workforce in Flux: Rebuilding Equity into How, Where, and With Whom We Work

The structure of work is being rewritten, *again*. Shifting demographics, changing expectations, and increasingly normalized hybrid models are reshaping how, where, and with whom we work. These are not short-term adjustments; they signal a lasting transformation in how organizations operate.

Today's organizations are adapting to increasingly global, multigenerational, and distributed teams, while also facing rising expectations around flexibility, well-being, and inclusion. At the same time, traditional workplace programs, especially those focused on wellness and engagement, are falling short.

One thing is clear: one-size-fits-all approaches no longer work. Organizations that want to remain competitive and human-centred must redesign their systems to be more flexible, equitable, and responsive to complexity.

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What's Driving These Shifts:

Hybrid Work Needs Local Strategy to Succeed:

While 70% of employers report productivity gains under hybrid models (Statistics Canada, 2024), 46% of employees believe in-office staff get more visibility and advancement (Future Skills Centre, 2024). This gap deepens resentment and risks early-career exclusion. Despite 77% naming flexibility as a key retention factor, hybrid work is now entangled in political and legal debates, making localized design, not just access, essential for long-term impact (Future Skills Centre, 2024).

Global Hiring Needs Global Equity:

58% of small and medium-sized businesses now hire internationally to access specialized talent and address local labour gaps (Gusto, 2024). This shift expands innovation and representation, but most organizations aren't built to support global teams equitably. Inadequate infrastructure, limited cross-cultural fluency, and non-inclusive policies can lead to isolation, bias, and missed potential.

One Workforce, Five Generations:

Canada's workforce spans five generations, from the Interwar Generation to Gen Z (Statistics Canada, 2021). Friction around flexibility, job security, and advancement can fuel bias, labelling younger workers as entitled and older ones as inflexible (Disclo, 2024). Without inclusive policy design, open communication, and intergenerational collaboration, these dynamics persist. Equity-centred systems must reflect diverse needs across the employee lifecycle, not just the dominant age group of the moment.

Personalized Doesn't Always Mean Equitable:

Canada's corporate wellness market is projected to reach USD 3.4B by 2030, but employees are asking for more than perks (Grand View Research, 2024). AI-powered platforms promise personalized, accessible care, especially for hybrid teams, with CAD $26M in public funding accelerating adoption (Digital Supercluster, 2025). However, without equity-centred design, these tools risk reinforcing exclusion. True wellness requires more than innovation; it demands safety, trust, and systems that reflect lived realities.

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How Organizations Can Respond with Equity at the Centre:

Localize Hybrid Work to Advance Equity and Inclusion:

Move beyond one-size-fits-all mandates. Empower teams to shape hybrid strategies that reflect how they work best, while ensuring consistency in expectations and equitable access to connection, visibility, and growth.

Build Intergenerational Infrastructure for Equity and Retention:

Design benefits and development programs that support a range of life stages and lived experiences. This includes flexible scheduling, mental health supports, retirement transitions, and reskilling that is aligned with your equity goals.

### Embed Wellness as a Core Equity Practice:

Wellness is not a perk; it's a structural commitment. Move beyond generic programs and address the root causes of burnout, disengagement, and exclusion. Design wellness initiatives that are trauma-informed, culturally grounded, and identity-aware. Ensure responsibility is shared and access is equitable.

Ensure Global Hiring Includes Global Equity:

Hiring across borders demands systems that support it. Adapt benefits and policies to regional realities, embed global fluency into leadership practices, and equip managers to lead inclusively across geographies and cultures.

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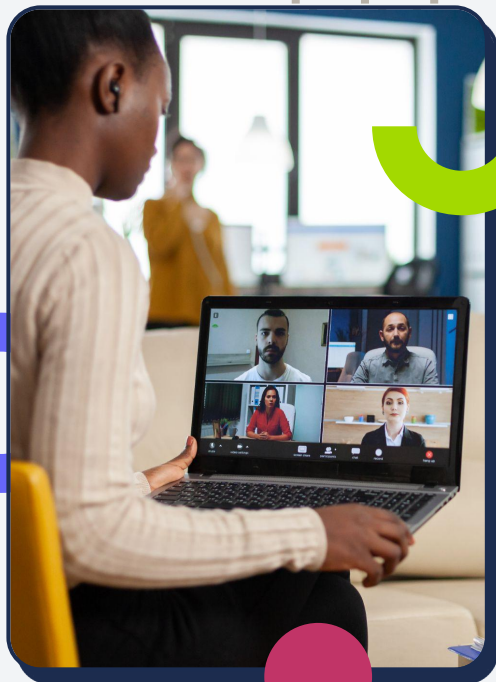
Data isn't just numbers, it's the lived experiences of people. Equity analysis reveals which systems lift people up and which ones let them down: **and that's where transformation begins.**

Chantal
People Data Analyst

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2.

Global Instability and Workforce Polarization: Embedding Equity in a Time of Disinformation, Division, and Disruption

Workplaces today are operating in a context of accelerating disruption. Global conflict, climate crisis, economic volatility, and rising disinformation are generating deep uncertainty across sectors. In Canada, shifting trade dynamics and a resurgence of economic nationalism are influencing everything from supply chains to talent strategies.

In the midst of this turbulence, organizations must navigate external pressures while responding to internal demands for equity, accountability, and adaptability.

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What's Driving These Shifts:

Disinformation and the Erosion of Trust:

64% of people distrust traditional media (Edelman, 2024), and disinformation is entering workplaces through internal chat networks and AI-generated content. Leadership's approach during crises, such as their messaging, can erode credibility further. Edelman warns: "Innovation is in peril" when change outpaces trust. Without clear, equity-aligned communications, polarization deepens, inclusion weakens, and even well-intended strategies can fail under the weight of distrust.

Economic Nationalism and Local Resilience:

As "Made in Canada" has surged, local goods sales have risen 8% from 2024 to 2025 (Retail Council of Canada & Caddle, 2025), and 150 Canadian tech CEOs are calling for stronger economic sovereignty amidst global instability and trade tensions (BetaKit, 2024). While this can boost job creation and supplier diversity, it can also constrain cross-border hiring and cultural inclusion. Without intentional design, national pride can quietly become a barrier to global belonging and equity.

Evolving Equity Commitments in a Shifting Legal Landscape:

Legal and political pressure is pushing organizations to hide diversity-related targets; in the United States (U.S.), 92% no longer share representation goals publicly (Paradigm, 2025). Yet, most continue the work; 96% offer transgender-inclusive healthcare, 95% provide mental health and wellness support, 94% go beyond legal accessibility requirements, and 89% embed equity into hiring, promotions, and performance systems (Paradigm, 2025). Still, a lack of transparency risks eroding trust, especially for those most impacted. When equity shifts underground, what gets embedded and what gets quietly abandoned, matters deeply.

How Organizations Can Respond with Equity at the Centre:

Embed Equity to Withstand Political and Legal Shifts:

Rather than retreat, organizations can build resilience by embedding equity into core business systems, such as talent development, vendor partnerships, and benefits policies. Integration, not publicity, is the key to long-term impact.

Equip Teams to Navigate Misinformation:

Media and information literacy are emerging leadership capabilities. Training teams to assess sources, think critically, and engage in nuanced dialogue helps preserve trust and reduce polarization at work.

Use Inclusion as a Tool for Risk Management:

From supply chain disruption to evolving workforce expectations, equity-informed strategies reduce risk and strengthen decision-making. Supplier diversity, inclusive benefits, and bias-aware leadership development are no longer "nice to haves;" they are pillars of operational resilience.

At a time when trust, reputation, and legal compliance are under strain, equity is emerging as a core risk mitigation strategy, not a reputational side effect.

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What we say, and how we say it, shapes how others feel, belong, and contribute at work. In a time of **rising misinformation and online hate**, intentional and accurate communication helps build **trust**. While we won't always get it right, **staying open to feedback and learning** is part of creating a workplace where people feel respected.

Rebecca
Inclusive and Accessible Communications Lead

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3.

Accelerated AI, Lagging Accountability:
Building Equity into the Systems We Automate and the Decisions We Delegate

AI is transforming industries quickly, but its deployment often outpaces organizations' capacity to govern it ethically or equitably. Without cohesive governance frameworks and inclusive design principles, AI risks amplifying inequities. As these tools become more deeply embedded in decision-making, organizations face a critical choice: automate with intention or replicate existing harms at scale.

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What's Driving These Shifts:

➡ Automation Without Oversight:

AI is reshaping how work gets done, but often without clarity, strategy, or care. In 2025, 42% of companies abandoned most AI initiatives, up from 17% in 2024, citing rushed rollouts and poor fit (S&P Global, 2025). Under pressure to "adopt or fall behind," organizations might risk sidelining job roles, decision-making power, and human oversight, particularly in equity-sensitive areas like hiring, evaluation, and accessibility.

➡ Trust, Reliability, and Ownership Gaps:

Employees remain uncertain about how to collaborate with AI and who is accountable when things go wrong. A reported 40% of workers feel uncomfortable submitting AI-generated work, particularly when concerns about accuracy, authorship, or job security were present (Pegasystems, 2025). Without clear frameworks, AI risks becoming a compliance shortcut rather than a capacity-building tool.

➡ Bias by Design, Governance by Default

Large-scale AI models, like DeepSeek V3 with 671 billion parameters (Analytics Insight, 2025), are advancing faster than the law. Jurisdictions diverge: the European Union (EU) enforces protections (such as the EU AI Act), while others, like the U.S., rely on voluntary codes (Forbes, 2025). Without binding oversight, the risks increase. Algorithmic bias, privacy violations, and surveillance disproportionately harm continually over-policed communities. In this vacuum, equity is an afterthought, and structurally excluded groups bear the consequences first.

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How Organizations Can Respond with Equity at the Centre:

Build Guardrails Before AI Becomes the Default:

Design governance systems proactively. Don't wait until something goes wrong. Effective AI governance includes cross-functional oversight, clear escalation paths, accountability for bias remediation, and structured review processes for high-impact decisions.

Address privacy, consent, bias, and safety through transparent and enforceable frameworks. Help employees understand their rights, responsibilities, and how AI-driven decisions are made, challenged, and reviewed.

Normalize Ethical Use, Not Just Fast Use:

Cultural readiness matters as much as technical deployment. When AI becomes a default without examining who has the opportunity to experiment, learn, or fail safely, inequities grow. AI is not just a technical issue; it's a leadership one. Human Resources (HR) and equity leaders must shape how AI is introduced, governed, and communicated. Equip managers to identify ethical risks and ensure adoption aligns with organizational values.

Embed Inclusive Design into AI Development:

As AI shapes more workplace decisions, organizations must ensure these systems serve all users, particularly those who have historically been excluded or underserved by technology. Train teams in inclusive design principles. Encourage them to question assumptions, assess impact, and centre user value. Equity must be part of the blueprint, not added as an afterthought.

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4.

From Jobs to Skills: Designing Relevant Skill-Building for a More Flexible, AI-Shaped Economy

Work is no longer defined solely by static roles. As automation and generative AI reshape tasks, organizations are moving toward fluid, skills-based models that prioritize adaptability, collaboration, and human-centred capabilities. Skills like empathy, critical thinking, and ethical judgment are increasingly valued, but access to reskilling, recognition, and support remains uneven. Without intentional design, these shifts risk deepening inequities, even as it promises greater inclusion.

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What's Driving These Shifts:

➡️ The Rise of Skills-Based Work:

AI is prompting 63% of executives to now organize work around skills, not static roles (Mercer, 2025). McKinsey finds that hiring for skills is five times more predictive of success than education, and twice as predictive as experience (McKinsey & Company, 2023). Human capabilities such as empathy, creativity, and ethical judgment remain difficult to automate, reinforcing their value in an increasingly AI-augmented workplace (MIT Sloan School of Management, 2025).

➡️ Efficiency Without Care Isn't Innovation:

In 2025, Shopify's CEO issued an internal memo instructing staff to "prove a human is necessary" before requesting resources, underscoring the growing pressure to adopt AI-first mindsets (Lütke, 2025). While this approach may boost short-term efficiency, it risks sidelining employee development unless paired with the human infrastructure needed for long-term inclusion, retention, and well-being (MAIE AI Ethics Brief, 2024).

➡️ Unequal Access to Reskilling Opportunities:

AI-driven automation is expected to displace roles across sectors, but the impact will not be evenly distributed. In the U.S., women are 1.5 times more likely than men to be displaced by AI and automation by 2030, according to recent labour market projections (McKinsey & Company, 2023). Across geographies, groups experiencing underrepresentation continue to face systemic barriers to tech literacy, digital access, and representation in the sector, compounding the risk of exclusion in an AI-driven economy.

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How Organizations Can Respond with Equity at the Centre:

Invest in Equity-Centred Upskilling:

Generic training is not enough. Organizations should identify their most pressing equity challenges and build skill development models that address them. This could include bias mitigation in AI design or inclusive leadership in hybrid teams.

Embed Human Skills into AI-Driven Workplaces:

As automation expands, the demand for human skills increases. Skills such as emotional intelligence, critical thinking, and inclusive collaboration are more than just soft skills; they are essential for navigating complexity, building trust, and driving innovation.

Shift to Skills-Based Development and Hiring:

Moving beyond job titles to focus on core capabilities allows for more flexible and inclusive career pathways. Skills-based approaches help organizations recognize talent that may be excluded by traditional hiring filters.

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True learning is participatory, relevant, and actionable. At Feminuity, we focus on impact, offering tools you can use and perspectives that evolve with the field.

Maeve
Former Director of Research & Learning

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Thank You.

→ hello@feminuity.org

Schedule Time With Our Team

www.feminuity.org

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