

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

IHG centers neurodivergent communities with new DEI initiative

April 7, 2023



The group is partnering with Steps, a local firm specializing in employee advocacy, to introduce a more inclusive employment model in Bangkok before bringing the blueprint worldwide. Image credit: IHG

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

InterContinental Hotels & Resorts is strengthening DEI efforts by introducing a new corporate collaboration in an important global market.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**
Plus: Just released
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

The hospitality group has announced that, throughout the year, five of its properties based in Bangkok will implement a workplace inclusion program aimed at alleviating the experiences of neurodivergent individuals, with the help of local employee advocacy organization Steps. Findings from this trial round will be assessed by the [Neurodiversity at Work Research Centre \(NWRC\)](#) – the exercise will help to inform NWRC's evidence-based research on the business value of related hiring practices, as well as the conglomerate's next moves, as the group seeks to apply the approach to other IHG locations across Thailand.

"Our goal is to have every IHG hotel in Thailand employing people with disabilities," said Rajit Sukumaran, managing director of South East Asia and Korea at [IHG](#), in a statement.

"We already have 70 percent of our properties achieving this and now, through this fantastic partnership with [Steps](#), we can bring about long-term, sustainable change and provide equal and meaningful opportunities for people in an environment that is truly understanding of others," Mr. Sukumaran said. "Diverse, equitable and inclusive workplaces are a wonderful way to support the communities in which we operate as we strive to make a difference every day by delivering our purpose of True Hospitality for Good.

"This partnership and many other initiatives, across the region and globally, support our Journey to Tomorrow 2030 responsible business plan commitments which includes improving the lives of 30 million people."

Driving diversity

Thailand's IHG Hotel count has now reached 30, with 35 to come, for a total of 65 potential neurodiversity-friendly workplaces with future actualization potential. The group's newly-established program, which features disability training, accessibility plans and consultations, neurodiverse recruitment and onboarding drives, is helping the company move toward this goal.

IHG's program also puts into place an employment structure outlining a workplace culture that is welcoming of those who are neurodiverse.

The hotel group's partner, Steps, is to provide education for the effort. The organization works to aid neurodivergent-identifying individuals in finding and keeping employment by educating corporate leaders on the topic, one of great interest among luxury circles at the moment ([see story](#)).



Locations like the Six Senses Yao Noi in Thailand may soon be home to a more inclusive workforce, thanks to IHG's program. Image credit Basil Childers/Six Senses

"We are delighted to work with IHG Hotels & Resorts on becoming part of a larger movement to build an inclusive community across the country," said Max Simpson, CEO of Steps, in a statement.

"At Steps, we are on a mission to change lives and for all neurodivergent people to be seen, heard, respected and empowered," Mr. Simpson said. "Only one in four people with disabilities of working age are employed and even less within the neurodivergent population we need to increase this through meaningful partnerships, such as our fantastic new collaboration with IHG."

© 2023 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.