



Fortune 500 ERG Benchmark Report 2025

Employee Resource Group Data from the World's Largest Enterprises

How the world's largest enterprises structure and scale Employee Resource Groups

A blue-tinted photograph of a group of people in business attire, with a man in the foreground smiling and clapping his hands.

teleskope.io

A Note From **Maneet Sarai**, Chief Product Officer At Telescope

At Telescope, we believe ERGs are one of the most powerful forces shaping the employee experience today. They started as grassroots communities, built on passion and belonging. But in the world's largest enterprises, they've become something more: structured programs that influence culture, retention, and even business strategy.

We created this benchmark report because ERG leaders and executives are asking the same questions: What does great ERG management look like? How are other Fortune 500s structuring and supporting these programs? Where are the gaps, and where is the opportunity?

We're in a unique position to help answer those questions. Telescope partners with dozens of Fortune 500 companies to govern, scale, and measure ERGs. That gives us a front-row seat to both the potential and the pressure these programs face. And it's why we wanted to capture a snapshot - not of theory, but of real practices inside global organizations.

The goal of this benchmark is to provide clarity and spark conversation. ERGs are gaining momentum, but they're also navigating increasing scrutiny and shifting regulations.

By surfacing how enterprises are truly approaching governance, measurement, and support, we hope to provide leaders with both insight and direction. Because when companies invest in ERGs effectively, they build organizations that are more resilient, innovative, and inclusive.



Maneet Sarai,
Chief Product Officer, Telescope



Highlights And Takeaways

ERGs Are Firmly Established Inside Fortune 500s

Every company we surveyed described their ERGs as established programs with defined budgets and active calendars. Most run identity-based ERGs with hundreds of annual events, creating communities that employees actively join and sustain.

Explore program maturity - Page 4

Beyond Belonging, ERGs Drive Engagement, Retention And Innovation

ERGs are delivering measurable ROI: lower turnover, stronger employee engagement, and innovation that shapes products and processes. They're becoming levers for competitiveness.

See retention and innovation outcomes - Page 7

ERGs Leaders Are Stretched Thin

ERG leaders are doing the work of two jobs. Without recognition or support, burnout is inevitable, and so is the risk of programs losing momentum.

Understand leadership challenges - Page 10

Technology Is The Backbone Of Scale

Dedicated platforms are giving ERG leaders back dozens of hours each month, while also creating the visibility executives need. The shift from spreadsheets to structured platforms is what makes enterprise-wide ERGs possible.

See how platforms enable scale - Page 12

Strong Governance Reduces Risk

Policies, audit trails, and approval processes vary widely across companies. Weak or inconsistent governance creates compliance risks and slows down growth. Enterprises that set clear standards and update them regularly give ERGs the structure they need to succeed.

Review measurement trends - Page 14

Measurement Is Improving, But Still Limited

Despite growing evidence that ERGs drive engagement and innovation, formal measurement still lags behind impact.

Review measurement trends - Page 15

Momentum Meets Pressure In 2025

The survey surfaced a dual reality. Investment in ERGs is holding steady, and employee energy remains strong. Yet leaders report rising scrutiny from legal, political, and compliance pressures. Momentum is real, but so is the pressure.

See the 2025 landscape - Page 18

Key takeaway:

ERGs have moved from side initiatives to programs with measurable cultural and business impact. But sustaining them will require stronger governance, fair recognition for leaders, and consistent proof of value. The enterprises that invest here will turn ERGs into engines of resilience, innovation, and competitive advantage.

How We Gathered Insights From Fortune 500 ERG Programs

This report synthesizes insights on how some of the world's largest enterprises are approaching ERGs in 2025.

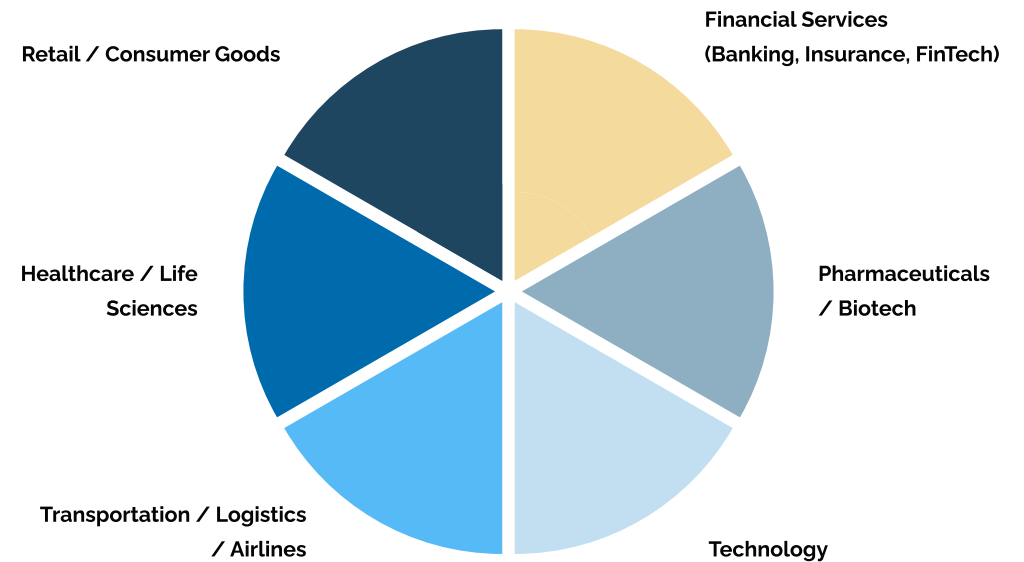
For this benchmark, we surveyed leaders responsible for ERG strategy, governance, and operations across seven Fortune 500 companies through a comprehensive 42-question survey conducted in July–August 2025. Respondents represented a mix of industries, giving us a cross-section of perspectives from global organizations.

The organizations that took part in this research are not at the beginning of their ERG journey. Every one of them has established programs with platforms in place and formal governance structures.

These findings offer directional guidance for enterprises seeking to benchmark their ERG initiatives. They highlight what's working, what's holding programs back, and what it will take to transform ERGs from grassroots communities into true business drivers.



Industries Represented In Survey Responses



Includes responses from multiple Fortune 500 companies



Research Approach:

This benchmark reflects mature, established Fortune 500 programs. The concentrated sample allows for deep qualitative insights rather than broad statistical generalizations. Use these findings as directional guidance to compare and improve your own ERG initiatives.

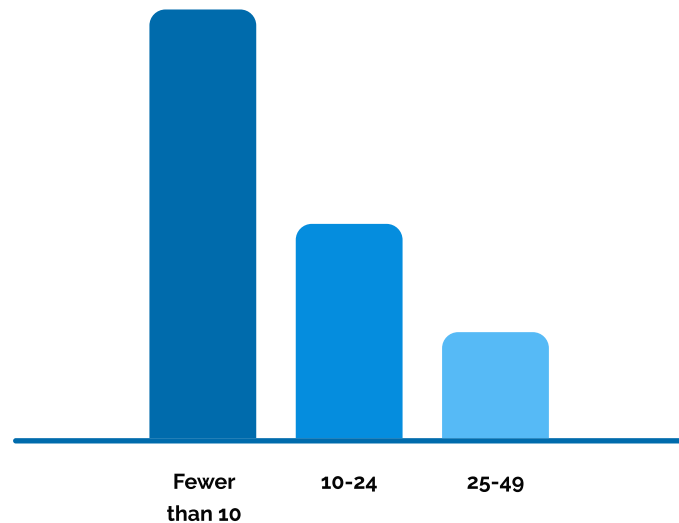
ERG Programs: Established, Growing, And Here To Stay

Our survey reveals a snapshot of how ERGs are currently structured and recognized inside large enterprises. While no two programs look identical, some clear patterns emerge.

The maturity of ERG programs is unmistakable. Every organization in our survey described their ERGs as either **established with consistent programming and governance** or **growing with expanded presence and improving structure**. None reported programs that were early-stage or informal.

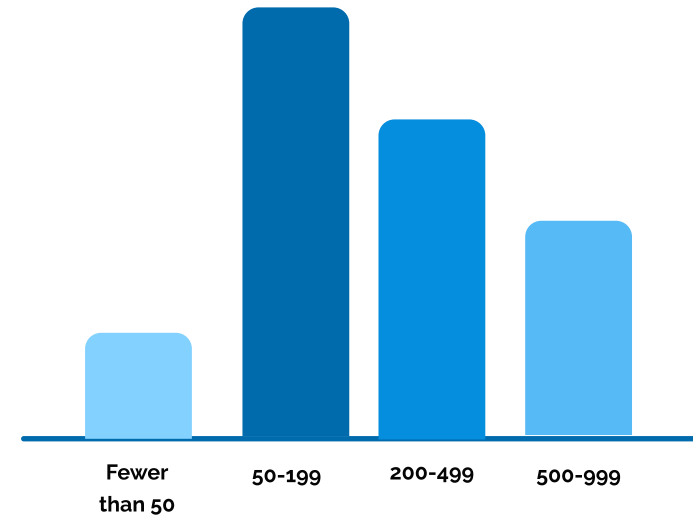
Scale reflects this maturity. Some companies manage fewer than 10 ERGs, while others run 25 or more. This spread highlights different stages of scale, but all point to programs that are intentional and structured.

How Many ERGs Are Currently Active



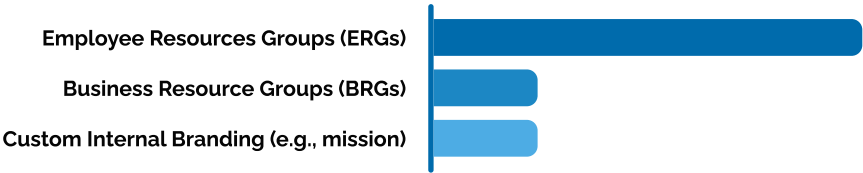
Events happen at volume. Most organizations host between **50 and 200 ERG events a year**, with some reporting numbers in the hundreds.

How Many ERG Events Are Hosted Each Year



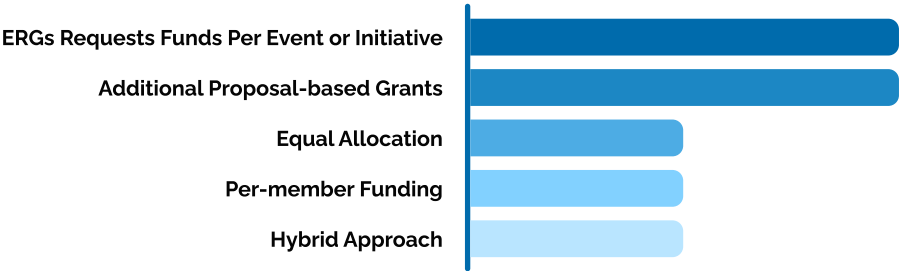
Naming is standardizing. The vast majority still use the term Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), though a few prefer Business Resource Groups (BRGs) or custom internal branding. Whatever the name, the purpose remains the same: to create communities of belonging that align with company values.

Primary Term Used To Refer To ERGs



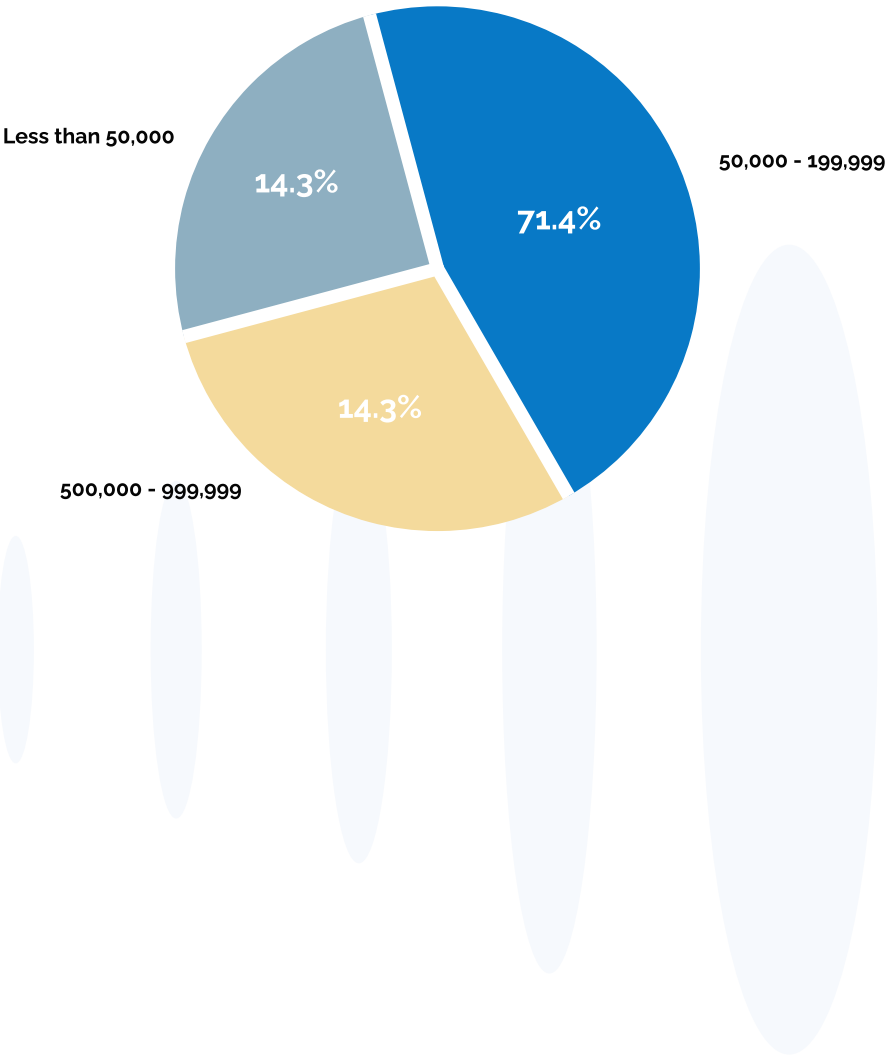
When it comes to money, **there is no single funding model.** The most common approaches are **hybrid systems that combine baseline budgets with proposal-based grants**, and **activity-based funding that provides resources per event or initiative**. A smaller number of companies rely on equal allocation across groups or per-member formulas. This variety highlights both experimentation and a lack of standardization in how enterprises resource ERGs.

ERG Budget Allocation Models In 2025



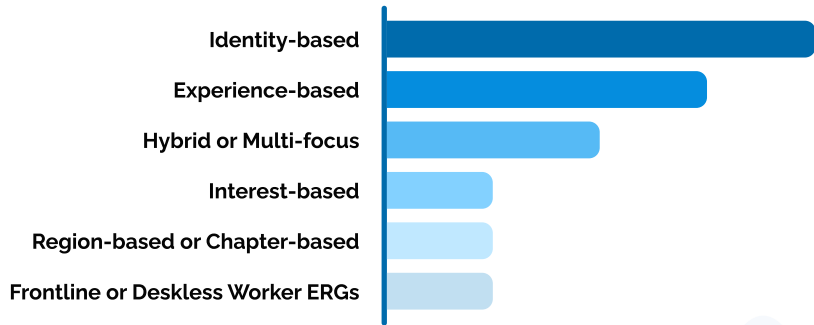
The size of ERG budgets shows a clear pattern. 71% of companies cluster in the **\$50,000 to \$199,999 range**, creating a level of consistency in how programs are resourced. At the same time, there are **a few outliers at both the lower and higher ends of the spectrum**. This suggests that while ERGs are generally funded at a similar scale, some organizations are experimenting with either **leaner or more expansive investment levels**.

Average Annual ERG Program Budget (USD)



Identity remains at the core. Nearly every organization runs identity-based ERGs, often paired with experience-based or hybrid groups that reflect intersectional needs. Participation follows this same pattern, with identity-based groups consistently drawing the highest engagement.

Types Of ERGs Currently Active



Types Of ERGs With Highest Participation



Insight:

The ERG programs from our respondents show a clear level of maturity and consistency across their enterprises. They are established, scaled, and delivering programming at a volume that makes them central to company culture. Most have defined budgets, and there are clear patterns in the types of ERGs they run with identity-based groups consistently drawing the highest engagement.



Beyond Belonging: How ERGs Drive Retention And Innovation

The value of ERGs is often measured in terms of culture, but our survey shows their impact extends well beyond belonging.

Belonging and engagement are the most consistent benefits. Every respondent highlighted them as primary outcomes of ERGs. This reinforces that these programs are not only cultural initiatives but also direct responses to one of today's biggest workforce challenges: employee disengagement. With [Gallup reporting U.S. engagement at a decade-low in 2024](#), ERGs are stepping in to fill a critical gap that traditional HR programs often struggle to address.

Retention is where culture meets cost savings. Most respondents also pointed to improved retention. Retaining employees reduces turnover expenses, protects institutional knowledge, and stabilizes teams. In large enterprises, even a small percentage drop in attrition translates into millions of dollars saved, making ERGs a measurable lever for the bottom line.

The benefits go deeper. Respondents also pointed to ERGs as catalysts for internal collaboration, talent development, stronger employer branding, and surfacing employee feedback directly to senior leaders. These contributions help enterprises break silos, develop future leaders, and stay connected to employee needs.

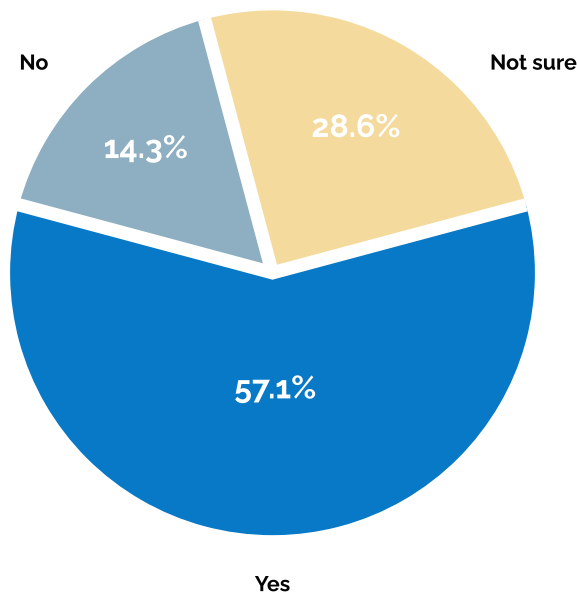


How ERGs Benefit Organizations



Innovation is the next frontier. 57% of companies report that their ERGs have directly influenced business innovation. Examples ranged from process improvements and new product ideas to raising accessibility concerns that led to global product changes. Some described ERGs playing a role in clinical trial design, sustainability initiatives, and mentoring programs that shape leadership pipelines. These stories show ERGs are not only about keeping talent engaged, they are actively helping enterprises adapt, grow, and compete in an increasingly complex market.

Have ERGs Contributed To Business Innovation?



Reported Innovations Emerging From ERGs



Product & Process Innovation

- ✓ Feedback on company issues
- ✓ Submission of process improvements and new product ideas
- ✓ Tested new product prototypes with ERG leaders



Cultural Awareness & Inclusion

- ✓ Language inclusion programs
- ✓ Multicultural and multinational employee support
- ✓ Allyship and cultural connection initiatives



Business Impact

- ✓ Inclusive clinical trial design
- ✓ Think Tank collaborations with sustainability teams



Accessibility & Technology

- ✓ Accessibility improvements in Microsoft Teams for lip reading



Networking & Development

- ✓ Monthly leadership dialogues
- ✓ Job shadowing programs
- ✓ Mentoring programs
- ✓ Partnership with Toastmasters



Social Impact

- ✓ Fundraising campaigns
- ✓ Community-focused programs



Multigenerational Engagement

- ✓ Cross-generational collaboration initiatives



Insight:

ERGs are proving their ROI in ways that go far beyond belonging. They are helping enterprises save money, build culture, and spark innovation that drives long-term competitiveness.

ERG Leaders: Managing Double Duty Without Double Pay

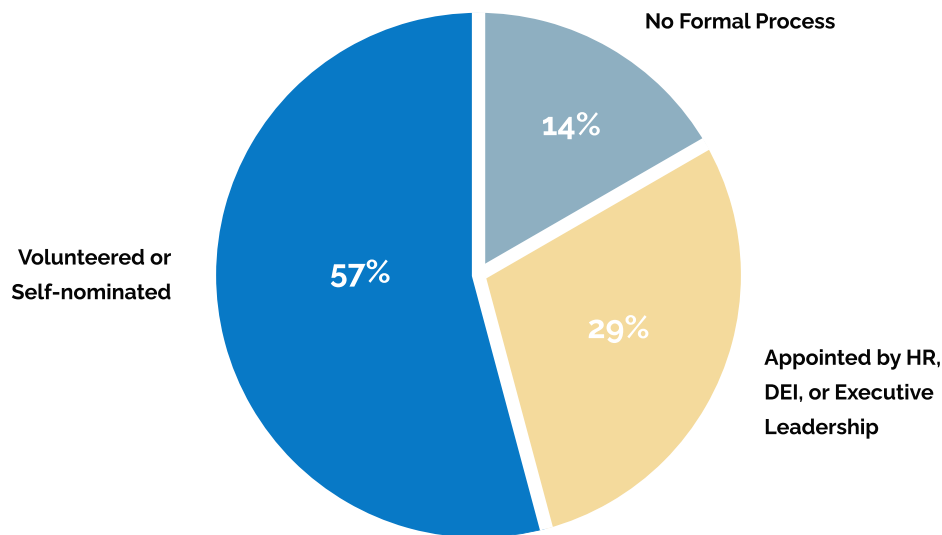
If ERGs are the backbone of enterprise inclusion strategies, ERG leaders are the ones holding that backbone upright.

But our survey makes it clear: **the role comes with significant strain.**

57% of ERG leads in our survey are **volunteers or self-nominate**, while a smaller share are **appointed by HR or executive leadership**. A few organizations report no formal process at all.

This shows that ERG leadership is most often taken on **out of passion and commitment** rather than assignment.

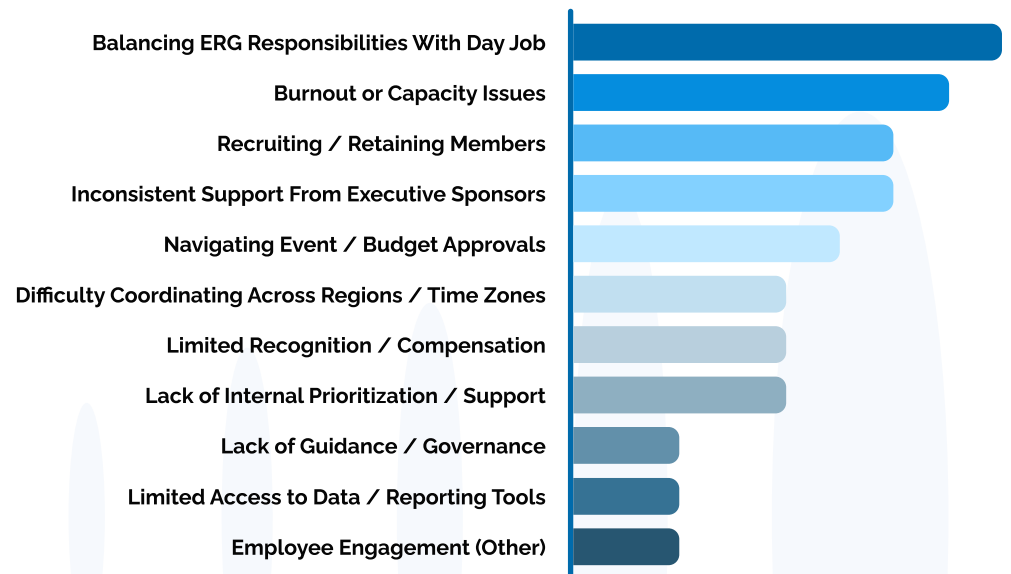
How ERG Leads Are Selected



The biggest challenge cited by every respondent is **balancing ERG responsibilities with a full-time job**. On top of this, leads face a long list of compounding pressures: burnout, inconsistent support from executive sponsors, difficulty recruiting members, navigating event or budget approvals, and limited recognition for their work. In some cases, leaders are also challenged by lack of governance, unclear priorities, or difficulty coordinating across global regions.

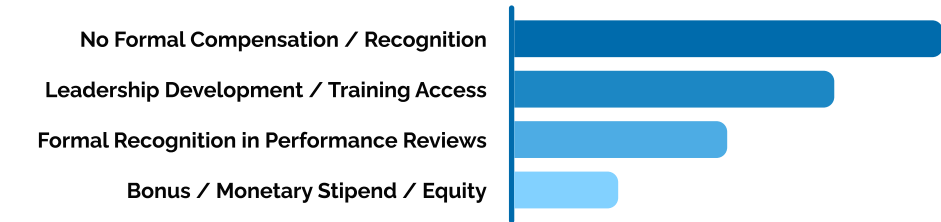
The time commitment reflects this load. While some leads dedicate fewer than five hours a month, most spend 5–20 hours on ERG tasks, the equivalent of adding an extra part-time role to their calendars. Unsurprisingly, many reported feeling stretched thin or overwhelmed.

Biggest Challenges For ERG Leads Face



Despite the demands, formal compensation is rare. A handful offer leadership development opportunities, training access, or recognition in performance reviews, but the majority provide no official rewards. This creates a disconnect: enterprises expect ERG leaders to drive measurable impact, yet they rely on unpaid and often invisible labor to do so.

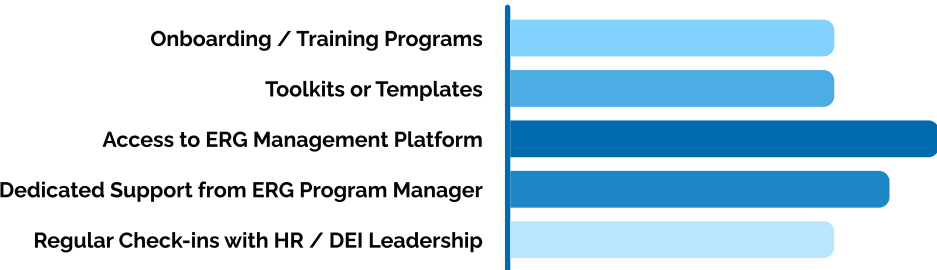
Compensation And Recognition For ERG Leads



Support structures are somewhat stronger. Every respondent highlighted **access to an ERG management platform as a key form of support.** This shows that technology has become essential to running ERGs at scale. Dedicated platforms streamline event planning, budget tracking, and reporting, making an otherwise overwhelming role far easier to manage.

Beyond platforms, most organizations provide onboarding and training, toolkits and templates, and in some cases dedicated program manager support or regular check-ins with HR or DEI leaders.

Support ERG Leads Receive



Insight:

Passion has carried ERGs this far, but if enterprises want these programs to endure and scale, they need to treat ERG leadership as real, valued work with the support, compensation, recognition, and career pathways to match.



Executive leadership support is critical to the success of ERGs, ensuring alignment with broader organizational goals. Additionally, creating clear pathways that link ERG contributions to performance evaluations and career advancement serves as a powerful motivator for engaging and retaining ERG leaders.

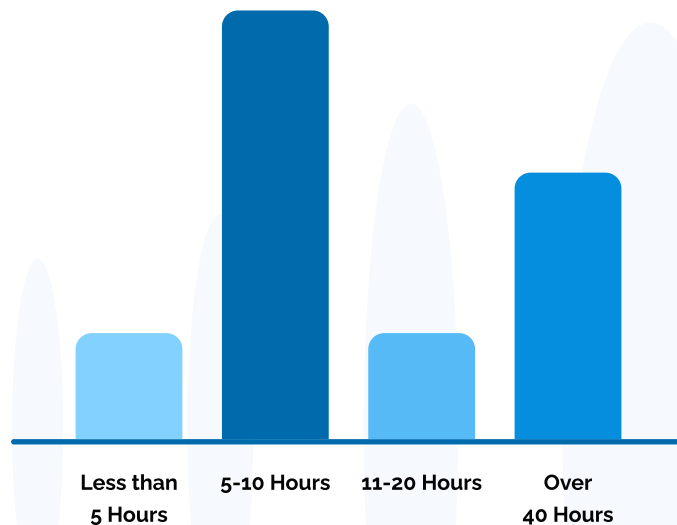
ERG Program Manager at Global Fortune 500 Pharmaceutical Company

ERG Platforms: Less Time On Admin, More Clarity On Results

Our survey confirms what ERG leads have long felt: the work of managing an ERG on top of a full-time role is unsustainable without the right support. This is where **dedicated ERG management software makes a measurable difference**.

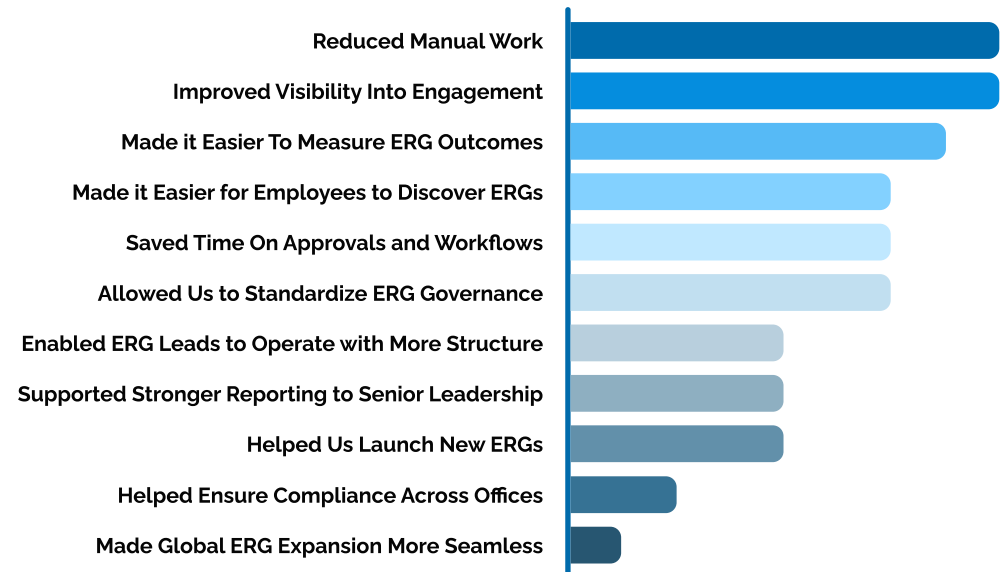
Time savings are real. Most respondents reported saving **5–10 hours per month** by using a dedicated platform, while some said they saved more than **40 hours monthly**. The range may vary, but the message is clear: technology is giving time back to ERG leaders and program managers. It allows them to focus less on admin and more on strategy and impact.

Monthly Time Saved With A Dedicated ERG Platform



The biggest impact is on **efficiency and visibility**. Reduced manual work was the most consistent outcome, with leaders no longer relying on spreadsheets and email threads to run programs. Just as important, platforms provide improved visibility into participation and engagement, making it easier to understand how ERGs are performing and where they need support. This shift from guesswork to data-backed visibility is critical for proving ERG value to executives.

Impact Of ERG Platforms On Managing And Scaling EGRs



Platforms are also enablers of scale. Respondents said software made it easier for employees to discover and join ERGs, standardized governance and operations, supported stronger reporting to senior leadership, and even enabled global ERG expansion. These are structural shifts that allow ERGs to move from grassroots groups to enterprise-wide programs.

The Telescope platform has significantly improved operational efficiencies within our ERGs. We are currently finalizing surveys to measure the employee impact of ERGs compared to membership growth. Our goal is to gather more quantitative and actionable data, moving away from anecdotal and subjective information.

ERG Program Manager, Fortune 500 Transportation Company

Certain capabilities stand out. Event planning, membership tracking, and automated communications were cited most often as game-changers. Together, these features take the friction out of day-to-day management while ensuring employees stay connected and engaged. Other capabilities, like role-based governance controls, HRIS integrations, and approval workflows, further reduce compliance risks and support leadership confidence in ERG programs.

Platform Capabilities With Greatest Impact On ERG Outcomes



Insight:

ERG platforms cut through administrative work and give leaders the clarity and structure they need. They also make it possible to scale globally, transforming ERGs into programs that are easier to run and powerful drivers of business impact.

Telescope Affinities, our ERG management platform, reduces manual work, standardizes governance, and makes it easier to track outcomes in real time.

That's why more than 40 Fortune 500 companies use Telescope to scale ERGs with structure and proven impact.

Book a demo to learn how Telescope Affinities can support your ERG programs.

[Book a free demo](#) ➔



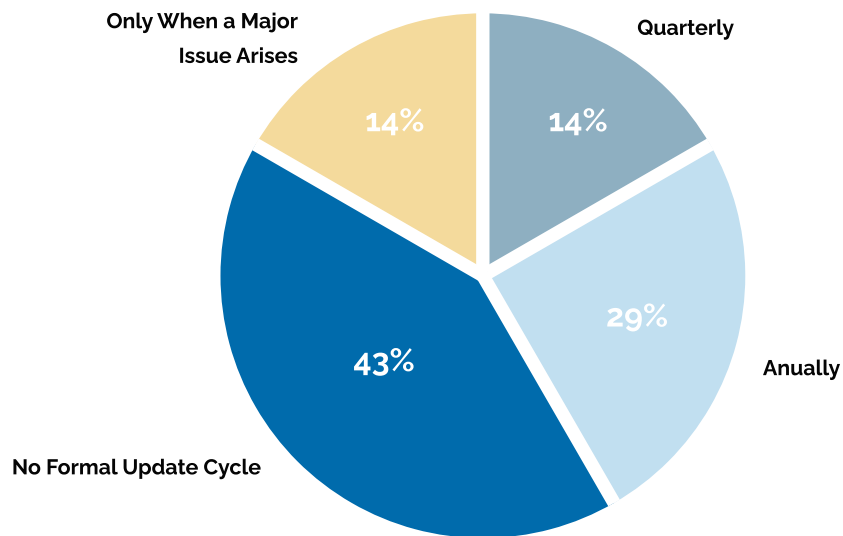
Strong Governance: The Key To Compliant And Sustainable ERGs

As ERGs scale across global enterprises, the question of governance and compliance becomes increasingly important. Our survey shows that while policies and processes exist, their consistency and rigor vary.

Region-specific guidance is uneven. About a third of companies apply a single global standard, and another third provide some guidance but not consistently. A similar share says this question does not apply because they only operate ERGs in one country. Only a small minority provide true region-specific protocols, showing that tailored governance is still the exception rather than the rule.

Policies are not always updated regularly. 42% of companies admit they don't have a formal update cycle for ERG policies and event guidelines. Others update annually or quarterly, while some only act when a major issue arises. This suggests that while policies exist, they may not always keep pace with evolving organizational or legal requirements.

Frequency Of ERG Policy / Event Guideline Updates



Auditability is mixed. About half of companies automatically track and store audit trails of ERG decisions, ensuring transparency and compliance. The rest are split between those that rely on partial manual tracking and those with no formal audit process at all. This shows that while enterprises value compliance, not all have invested equally in making ERG governance fully auditable.

Approval processes vary in complexity. Most respondents described a moderate process requiring multiple approvals. Others reported simple or no formal approval structures. The balance reflects two different priorities: minimizing risk versus empowering ERGs to move quickly.

ERG Event Approval Process

Moderate - Events Require Few Approvals (5-10 People)

Simple - Events Require Minimal (1-2 People)

No Formal Approval Process



Insight:

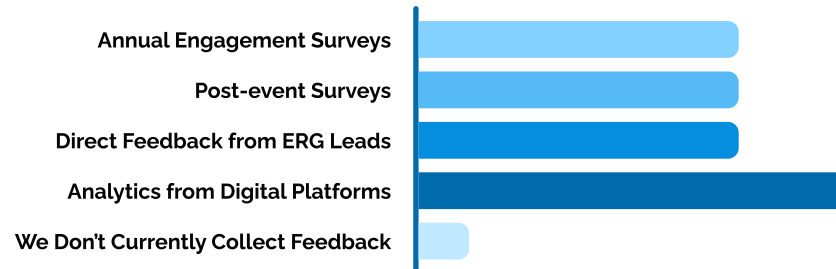
Strong governance and compliance give ERGs the structure they need to thrive. Clear policies, consistent approval processes, and reliable audit trails reduce risk and increase transparency. Yet our findings show that not every enterprise has these practices in place. When governance is done well, ERGs are easier to scale, easier to measure, and easier for executives to champion.

Proving Value: The Challenge Of Tracking ERG Impact

Enterprises are getting more intentional about measuring ERG success, but practices are still maturing. Some organizations define success metrics and track KPIs across all ERGs, while others are still experimenting with different approaches. **The trend is clear: measurement is moving from ad hoc reporting to more structured, consistent practices.**

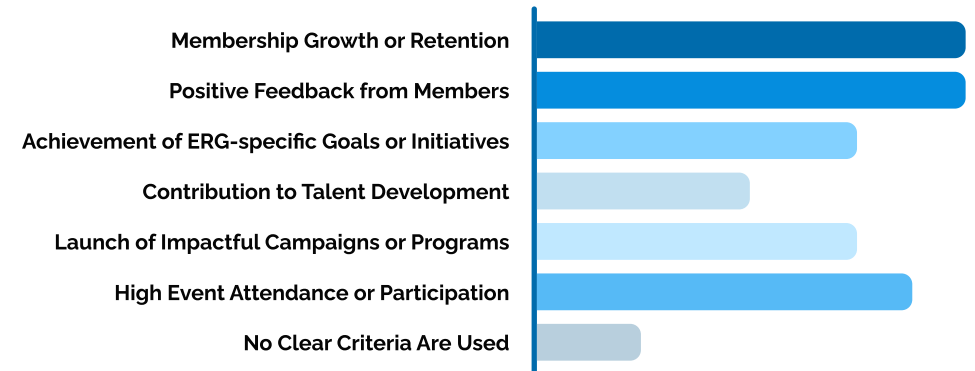
Data collection is becoming more systematic. Analytics from digital platforms, engagement surveys, and post-event feedback are widely used, giving leaders more visibility into ERG activity and outcomes.

How Companies Collect Data On ERG Impact



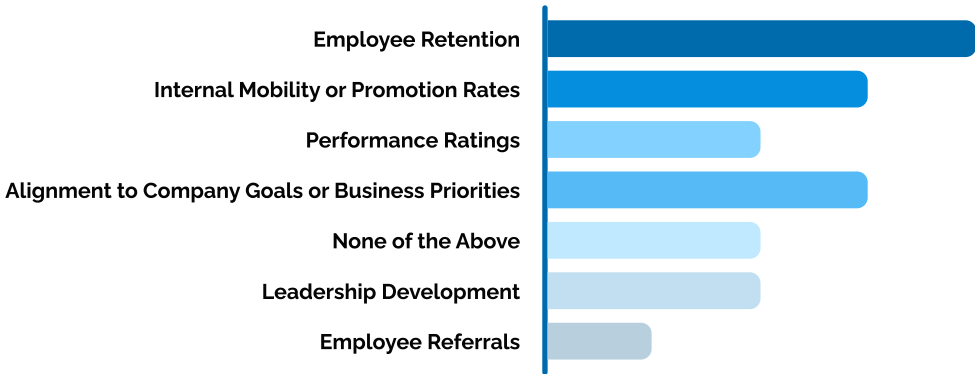
Success measures are expanding. Membership growth, event participation, and positive feedback remain the most common markers. Increasingly, companies are also looking at talent development, leadership pipelines, and campaign outcomes, reflecting a shift toward linking ERGs to broader business goals.

How Companies Define ERG Success



ROI tracking is gaining traction. Many companies now examine retention, internal mobility, and alignment to business priorities. While this is an encouraging step, fewer organizations measure outcomes like innovation, referrals, or performance — areas that could strengthen the business case even further.

ERG-Linked ROI Outcomes Tracked



Executive reporting is strengthening. Most companies now share ERG outcomes with senior leadership, often annually or quarterly. Still, more consistent and comprehensive reporting would help elevate ERGs from employee programs to recognized business drivers.

ERG Outcomes Reported To Executive Leadership



Insight:

Current measurement practices are limited. Enterprises that track outcomes like retention, mobility and innovation, and present these results regularly to executives, will be best positioned to show ERGs as strategic assets that deliver lasting business value.

Case Study

A Fortune 500 Consulting Firm Scales ERGs with Telescope

One of Telescope's Fortune 500 clients, a **global consulting firm with 700,000+ employees worldwide and 80,000 employees in North America**, needed stronger governance, compliance, and visibility into the impact of its ERGs.

With more than **35,000 employees already participating** in North America, manual processes made it difficult to track results and scale effectively. By supporting their ERGs with a dedicated management platform, the company has been able to structure programs and measure outcomes more effectively.

- ✓ **Employee Retention:** ERG members had, on average, a 50% longer length of service than non-members.
- ✓ **Employee Performance:** ERG members were rated as high performers 89% more often, while ERG leaders were rated 153% more often than non-ERG leadership peers.
- ✓ **Employee Referrals:** ERG members were 153% more likely to refer quality hires, and ERG leaders were 454% more likely.
- ✓ **Community Volunteering:** ERG members were 346% more active in volunteering, with leaders nearly 700% more active.

These results reflect what we see across large enterprises: when ERGs are structured, visible, and supported by technology, they deliver meaningful impact on culture, performance, and retention.

[Read the full case study here](#)

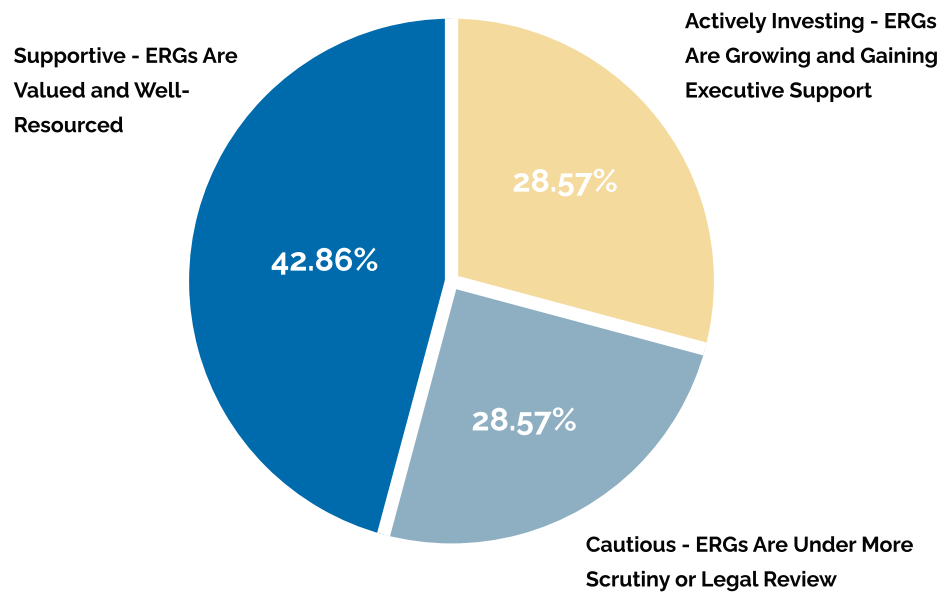


ERGs In 2025 Balancing Momentum And Pressure

The story of ERGs in 2025 is one of dual realities: **momentum and investment on one side, scrutiny and uncertainty on the other.**

43% of companies still describe their stance as **supportive or actively investing**, showing that ERGs remain a valued part of the employee experience. Yet a significant share reported being **cautious**, with legal or political pressures shaping how these groups operate.

Organization's Stance On ERGs In 2025

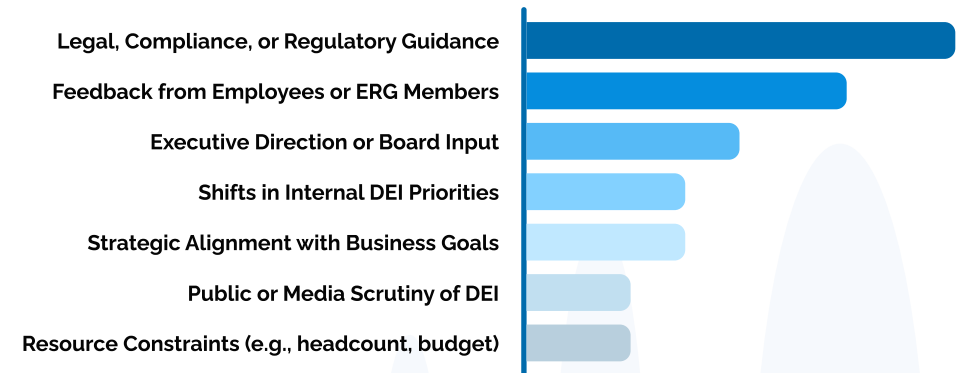


What's Driving ERG Strategy

The top influence on ERG strategy is legal and compliance guidance, reflecting the growing weight of governance and regulatory oversight. Close behind is employee feedback, showing that organizations are still listening to what ERG members want and adapting in response.

In other words, ERGs are being pulled in two directions: bottom-up energy from employees and top-down oversight from leadership and regulators.

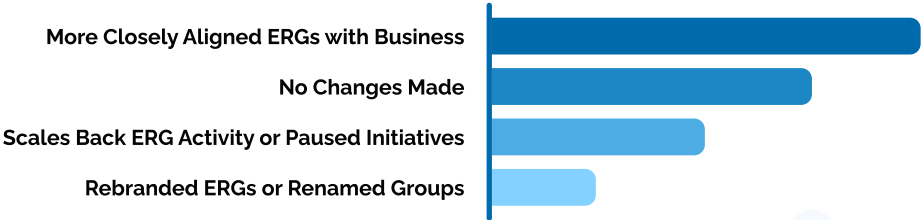
Factors Influencing ERG Strategy In 2025



Shifts And Adjustments In ERG Programs

Change is happening, but unevenly. Several companies reported aligning ERGs more closely with business or talent strategy, signaling an effort to prove impact in business terms. Others, however, noted no changes at all, while a smaller but telling group admitted to scaling back activity or rebranding groups for neutrality.

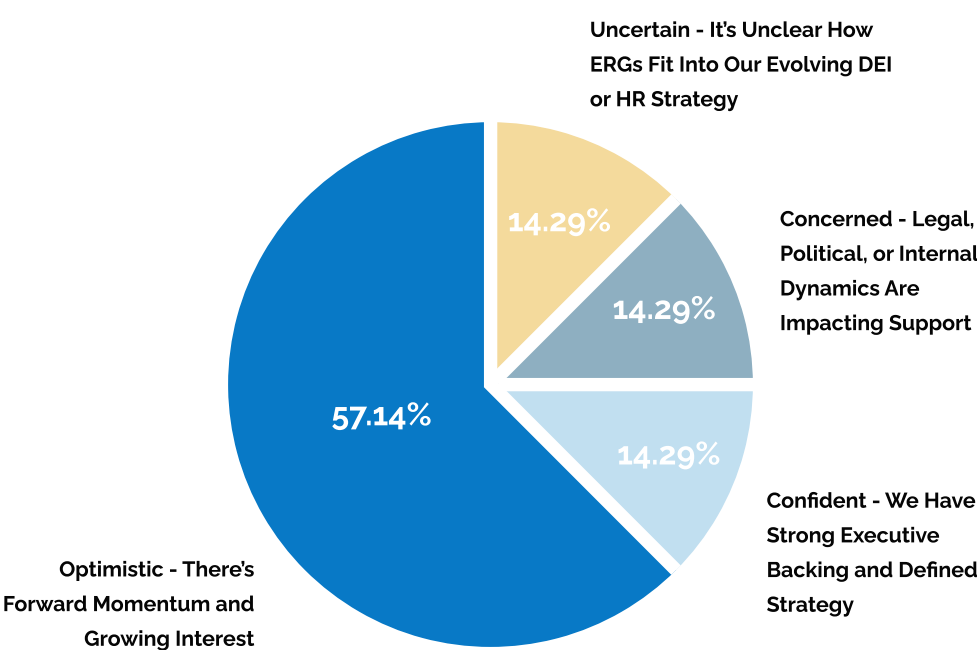
Changes To ERG Programs In 2025



What It Feels Like To Lead An ERG In 2025

For ERG leaders, the personal experience is still largely optimistic — 57% describe their outlook as positive, with forward momentum and visible interest across the workforce. Yet some feel concerned or uncertain, underscoring the tension between passion for these communities and the realities of today's corporate and political climate.

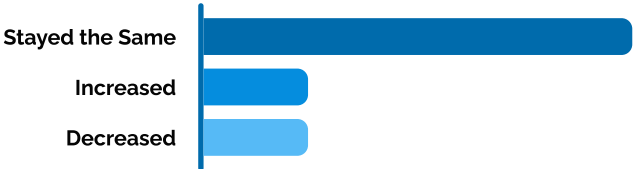
Experience Overseeing ERGs In 2025



Investment Trends: Stability Over Growth

Finally, when asked how their ERG investment in 2025 compared to 2024, most companies said it remained steady. A few noted changes in either direction, but the overall picture points to stability rather than rapid expansion. ERGs are holding their ground, with investment marked by caution instead of aggressive growth.

ERG Investment In 2025 Vs 2024



Insight:

In 2025, ERGs sit at the intersection of support and scrutiny. They are still viewed as vital for culture and engagement, but their future depends on proving strategic alignment, navigating external pressures, and securing consistent investment. The challenge for enterprises is to ensure that ERGs don't just survive this moment of heightened oversight but evolve into sustainable, measurable drivers of business value.



Where Do ERGs Go From Here?

There's no single playbook for building ERGs inside a Fortune 500 company. Some programs are lean, with fewer than ten groups. Others manage dozens of ERGs, each with hundreds of events a year. But one thing is clear: the days of informal, grassroots-only programs are over.

Today's ERGs are structured, governed, and resourced at a level that makes them central to company culture. They are creating belonging, strengthening retention, and even shaping important business outcomes.

Still, the work is not done. ERGs continue to face internal and external challenges. The passion is there, but passion alone will not carry them forward. What will? Clearer systems, smarter governance, stronger investment in both the programs and the people who lead them.

The future of ERGs is already taking shape and it's promising. These groups are engines of inclusion, retention, innovation, and leadership development at scale.

The real opportunity is building sustainable systems that allow them to thrive, endure, and prove measurable value. That's where the next chapter begins.

Belonging may be where ERGs begin, but it is not where they end. Their true potential lies in helping enterprises adapt, compete, and create workplaces where every employee can thrive.

Maneet Sarai, Chief Product Officer, Telescope

Fortune 500 companies, many with over 100,000 employees, trust Telescope to power their employee experience programs.

[Schedule a free demo](#) ➔

