



Eranauts around the World



Welcome

Embracing cultural diversity is essential for creating a more accepting and compassionate world.

By acknowledging and celebrating our unique perspectives, we can learn from each other and build bridges of understanding that connect us all. World Day for Cultural Diversity is a reminder that diversity should be celebrated; not just tolerated, and that we can all benefit from listening and learning from others. When we embrace cultural diversity, and choose to ask 'what's possible', we open the door to creating a truly harmonious and welcoming environment for all.



Jason Wojahn
Chief Executive Officer, Thirdera

Strength in unity: Embracing cultural diversity for success

At Thirdera, we recognize the vital importance of cultural diversity in the workplace.

A culturally supportive environment leads to healthier teamwork, more productive projects, a more resilient market position, and countless other benefits. But beyond the professional benefits, we believe in the direct positive impact on individuals. Embracing diversity is a way to celebrate the unique experiences and perspectives that each of us brings to the table.

That's why we created this book. We asked one team member from each country Thirdera operates in to share their cultural heritage and experience. Our intention was to provide a platform for individuals to share what cultural diversity means to them. Instead of taking a clinical, anthropological lens to the wider global impact of racial, ethnic, national, religious, and cultural diversity, we wanted to explore our personal relationships with our own lived experiences and how they've helped shape us.

Through this book, we hope to connect with you on a personal level and demonstrate the value of cultural diversity in the workplace. We believe that embracing diversity is not only the right thing to do, but it's also essential for building a thriving and successful company.

The Faces of Diversity



Pablo Valentinuzzi
Senior Developer
ARGENTINA



Gilly Celis
Technical Consultant II
PHILIPPINES



Francois Biccard
Director of PMO-APAC
AUSTRALIA



Cristina de Vega
People Generalist
SPAIN



Navya Sree
Senior Technical Consultant
INDIA



Zina Naghmouchi
Technical Consultant
UNITED KINGDOM



Ronan Kevitt
Chief People Officer
IRELAND



Meryem Taouach
People Generalist
NETHERLANDS



Diego Mendoza
Technical Trainer
MEXICO



Edrienne Manalastas
Senior Business Process Consultant
CANADA



Silvia Bonilla
Talent Development Manager
COLOMBIA



Nicole Donaldson
Global Services Operations Manager
UNITED STATES



Nestor Padilla
Senior Developer
PANAMA

ARGENTINA

Pablo Valentinuzzi

Senior Developer, Thirdera

My name is Pablo, I am an Argentinian ServiceNow developer currently based in Mar del Plata, a coastal city 400 km from the federal capital. I am the fourth generation of my family living in the country, with the particularity that each one of the genealogical branches has been born in different cities of the country.

Since I was little, I have always been interested in the culture, and upholding the traditions that they have transmitted to me.

How is this story related to being an Eranaut? Well, it could well be said that from the first contact with the company, I found a safe space where I can learn something new every day from incredible colleagues from different cultures and geographies. This drives me to grow not only as a professional, but as a person too.



AUSTRALIA

Francois Biccard

Director of PMO – APAC, Thirdera

My heritage is German, with my ancestors immigrating to South Africa from Germany in the early 1800's, settling in the Dutch Cape Colony (Cape Town). I grew up in apartheid South Africa and have now lived in Australia as an Australian Citizen for almost 20 years. During apartheid, separation, racism and discrimination was normalised under a government where the State, Church and Media relationship was compromised and controlled. The state didn't just oppress 'people of colour', but any 'colour' that didn't align to their narrative. I distinctly remember as a young child always being uncomfortable with 'normal' – always feeling something was wrong. I am fortunate to have seen and experienced the fall of apartheid, and watch a nation find a new identity, standing under a new flag and anthem.

There is so much to say about what happened and is still happening, not just in South Africa but also Australia and other countries around the world. Just like South Africa, Australia is a truly multi-cultural society. I am fortunate that my children can grow up in such a society; it creates such a richness in their upbringing. At Thirdera we are fortunate to work in an organisation with an appreciation for a culturally diverse team. There is so much richness and strength in a work culture where there is a respect and appreciation for our differences. (Don't tell my fellow Aussies but I will always support the Springboks – my blood is still green...)



INDIA

Navya Sree

Senior Technical Consultant, Thirdera

Known for its diversity, I come from a land that is home to over a billion people with different languages, religious traditions, and social stratifications. I can't think of a single month without festivities, sweets, and celebrations with a different story associated. I take a strong sense of pride in the cultural diversity and uniqueness that expands to and is not limited to, the technological advancements in various areas. India has a rich assortment of traditional music, fine arts, literature, and spirituality (especially the practice of yoga).

With a vast linguistic spread accounting for 22 major languages across hundreds of regions, most Indians tend to be bilingual or multilingual, speaking an official language along with their regional language. Being brought up in Bengaluru, I can understand up to 5 languages and speak all 5 of them. Hosting the most diverse people in the city, we celebrate all Indian festivals, starting at the beginning of the year with Sankranti, a harvest festival, and ending with Christmas and New Year's Eve.

One of my favorite festivals is Dussehra, also called Dasara or Vijayadashami, symbolizing the victory of good over evil. In North India, it is celebrated for the victory of Ram over the evil King Ravana. In various places in India, Ravana effigies are burned to signify the destruction of evil. In South India, in Mysore, elephant parades with Goddess Chamundeshwari in them are carried out while the whole city is decorated beautifully with colorful lights. The city is crowded for the 10 days of the festival with people from all over the world who gather to watch this great celebration. No matter the region, this festival signifies the same moral code. Throughout my life, having celebrated various festivals, cultures, languages, and diversities, makes me stand up tall as a proud citizen of India, and I am grateful to have grown up in such a beautiful place.



Krishna Janmashtami Festival Celebration
States and their traditional dress styles Thirdera

IRELAND

Ronan Kevitt

Chief People Officer, Thirdera

Born in the 1970's I grew up in a relatively remote suburb outside Dublin City, the Ireland of my formative years is pretty much unrecognisable to what I experience today. And this can only be a positive thing!

The island of Ireland... From Paganism to Catholicism to a significantly more diverse land! From Agriculture to Famine. From Financial Services growth to Tech Growth... From 'Celtic Tiger' to Economic Bust and back again. From UK Rule to 'Home Rule' to Independence to the EU. From many years of "The Troubles" to Peace across the Island.

Some of the things that are synonymous with Ireland and some of our best exports...

- Green Countryside
- Rain – and more Rain
- Riverdance
- St Patrick's Day
- Guinness
- And a lot of 'craic agus ceoil' (laughter and music)

Having lived and worked abroad for many years (Australia, UK, US), travelled extensively around the globe for work and personal reasons, I count myself lucky that I could experience the wonders of our global and diverse world.

I returned to Ireland permanently back in 2015, and I saw a country that continues to adapt to a significantly more diverse population. Ireland has seen huge investment by US multinational corporations as they look to take advantage of a very competitive corporate tax rate offered by the Irish Government and with that significant job growth. This, in itself, has brought a significant expansion in the cultural diversity of our workforce, especially for linguistic-specific tech roles. The internationalisation of the population presents Ireland with the key challenge of developing a truly integrated society that values and promotes cultural and ethnic diversity.

Despite the significant change that Ireland has seen over the past number of decades, there is one constant that connects Ireland's chequered past and more progressive future... our "cead mile failte" (Hundred Thousand Welcomes!) is as strong as ever. I am super pleased that Ireland is now the multi-cultural and inclusively diverse place it is today!



The many faces of Ireland!

MEXICO

Diego Mendoza

Technical Trainer, Thirdera

I was born and raised in Guadalajara Mexico the beautiful land of Mariachis, Tequila, and Tacos. Growing up in a place like Guadalajara comes with some benefits as well as some challenges.

Over the years I have been exposed to situations in which a lot of people have used stereotypes to define what a being "Mexican" truly is, and I've always found kind of funny to see how people relate "Mexicans" with Tacos, Mariachis, Farmers or Tequila. I can proudly tell you that, as a Mexican, I AM more than just tacos and tequila.

It was only after moving to the US when I was 18, that I was truly able to embrace my heritage, and having grown up in a culture that motivates us to be hardworking human beings and that shares tons of love and respect for Family members, friends and of course tourists, or as we like to call them our "Amigos". Today, I can proudly tell you that I am a "Mex I Can".



COLOMBIA

Silvia Bonilla

Talent Development Manager, Thirdera

My country is sitting at the entrance of South America, where it connects with the countries of Central America.

Colombia is a land of variety. The central regions is surrounded by mountains and volcanoes that are part of the Los Andes Mountain Chain.

Tropical beaches line the north region, with the Caribbean Sea & Atlantic Ocean on one side and the Pacific Ocean on the other. We also have deserts and vast grasslands called Los Llanos. In the southern part of the country, we have the dense forest of the Amazonas, which are the lungs of the planet earth. That's why we are the second most biodiverse country in the world.

Family and friends are very important to Colombians. We love to party, as we are very good salsa and merengue dancers. We are very passionate about soccer, and we can drink coffee at any time of the day. In fact, Colombia is the world's third biggest exporter of coffee.

I feel proud to live in a place so culturally diverse!



PANAMA

Nestor Padilla

Senior Developer, Thirdera

Panama is a small country located in Central America, bordered by Costa Rica to the west and Colombia to the east, and we are known for our warmth, hospitality, and love of music and dance.

Panamanian culture is a unique blend of traditional and modern elements. Our country is home to seven indigenous groups, each with its own language and customs.

I am proud of my country's history and culture. I am proud of the fact that Panama is known as the "Bridge of the World, Heart of the Universe" thanks to its history as a crossroads for trade and commerce, and that it is a melting pot of cultures.

A curious anecdote, during the crudest phase of the pandemic, I saw how the community worked together helping each other through the hard times. That reminded me of what it is to be Panamanian. It means celebrating our differences and coming together as a community to create a better future for ourselves and our country. A source of pride and joy.



PHILIPPINES

Gilly Celis

Technical Consultant II, Thirdera

The Philippines consists of different ethnic groups with each of their own cultures but let me tell you mine!

Growing up, schools taught us to give “mano” our elderly to show respect. Mano is done by gently striking the elder’s right hand to the young’s forehead, however, I didn’t grow up doing that. Instead, I show my respect for my mom/aunts and uncles by giving them a “beso” or kiss on the cheek. I remember started giving mano when I was in college. On the other side, to strangers, we bow our heads to show respect. These kinds of gesture made me realize how hospitable and respectful our culture is.

In every school in the Philippines, we have dance troops that usually do folk dances where we dance other ethnicities’ dance, I was one of them. I remember dancing to “Paru-Parung Bukid” which was a traditional Folk song that was originated from Spain in the 1890s. I also did “Kuratsa” which is commonly performed during festivals in Bohol and other Visayan towns. And the recent one I did was “Pangalay” and “Singkil” which both are Muslim dances. I remember having fun dancing to these songs, not only did it made my dancing skills improve, but it also made me proud to know and show off the cultural dances we have in our country.

Every year I’m always looking forward for Ber months (September – December), once September 1 started, you will see a lot of houses here that already have their Christmas decorations up which is fun. It’s like we’re celebrating Christmas for 4 months. You may be asking, what about Halloween? We also provide decorations for that, but with the Christmas decorations as well, its confusing but for me, I really like it. In our family we usually wait December 25th midnight before we eat our Christmas food and before we give each other our Christmas gifts – a tradition called Noche Buena. And on new year, we always make sure we buy 12 different kinds of round fruit – it will bring good fortune for the next year. We have been doing this tradition since I was a child – I look forward to passing it on to the next generation.

Some of these may not be done by other people here in the Philippines, but these shaped me on being who I am right now. And I’m grateful for it.



SPAIN

Cristina de Vega

People Generalist, Thirdera

I was born in Valladolid, Spain, my parents are from Valladolid and so are their parents. And, although I feel very proud of our culture, customs, food... it has always called my attention to know different cultures, because of how much you can learn from them and from yourself (for example, you may not have tasted your favourite dish... yet).

A few years ago, I took a genetic inheritance test, one of those tests that tell you the percentage of different ethnicities that make up your DNA. I must admit, I was expecting a different result... I am 86% Iberian and that's no surprise. But I am also 10.5% Irish, Scottish and Welsh and even a surprising 1% Nepali! On the other hand, I think that being born in Spain brings with it the good fortune of being born in a very diverse country, with 4 official languages, 8 dialects, beaches, mountains, deserts... even sometimes in the same place!

Seven years ago I went to Poland as an Erasmus student, and it was the first time that I realized how big the world is and how little I knew about it. I am ashamed to admit that I thought every country ate 12 grapes on New Year's Eve and how surprised I was to discover that in Poland they put straw under the tablecloth to bring luck in the coming year. (It is a tradition I've since incorporated into our New Year's Eve dinners). I am convinced that being around and listening to people with different histories, cultures and customs is the engine that makes us grow and evolve, and I could not feel prouder to be part of such a multicultural team, nor more excited about everything we are going to learn together.





UNITED KINGDOM

Zina Naghmouchi

Technical Consultant, Thirdera

As someone with a multi-heritage background I've always felt like the odd one out. Being born in Italy to a Hungarian mother and Tunisian father the two parents backgrounds couldn't have been further apart in cultural differences. One being a Catholic, eastern European country, the other an African, Muslim country, they were polar opposite. Growing up I struggled to fit in with any of my backgrounds feeling like I didn't have a root. Living in Hungary I was 'the foreign girl', living in Tunisia I was 'the foreign girl' and moving to the UK at age 10 I was also 'the foreign girl'. I envied people who have just one heritage, lived in one country and had their roots firmly set through their country.

Things did change for the better when my outlook changed on my cultural background. Instead of feeling like I didn't belong anywhere, as I got older, I got to relate to a wide variety of people both from the UK, Europe and Africa due to my heritage. I started to feel like I belong everywhere instead. Being able to relate to different groups of people and recognising our differences has always come as second nature to me, and now that I'm older I'm able to appreciate this about me. Living in the UK has played a huge part with the huge diversity the country has to offer. I celebrate people's differences from all walks of life, hungry to learn more about different traditions, cultures, food and music. I now feel very lucky to be 'the foreign girl'.

NETHERLANDS

Meryem Taouach

People Generalist, Thirdera

I was born and raised in Rotterdam and grew up in a traditional Moroccan family. Rotterdam is one of 2nd largest city in the Netherlands which is home to over 180 Nationalities. When you grow up between two cultures, you try to navigate between different opinions, values and norms that you hear from your family and the society in which you grow up.

During my college years, I have had the opportunity to travel abroad and do a traineeship in Dubai. This was one of the best experiences in my life, not only because I could relate to the culture and religion in the emirates but also to how diverse Dubai is. It's truly a melting pot of hundreds of different cultures from around the world which reminded me of Rotterdam. After having lived in Dubai for a year, I secured a new job opportunity to join an amazing global company in Dublin.

I truly enjoy working in a multicultural environment, especially when a solution is required all the multi-cultural employees come up with their ideas that would have never crossed the mind of a group with a single culture mindset. Adapting to a multicultural working environment is an ongoing process. It may be challenging at times, but in general, you find that interacting with people from diverse cultures is highly rewarding. It helped me to learn more about myself, broaden my worldview and develop greater confidence and cross-cultural skills. In turn, the company benefitted from my unique input, diverse knowledge, and experiences. The overall output of these diversely rich workplaces is that by promoting inclusiveness and openness, this has increased creativity, innovation, and prosperity within and far beyond the organization.

I always have a story to tell about my experiences abroad. That's why one of my favourite quotes is from Ibn Batuta - "Traveling—it leaves you speechless, then turns you into a storyteller."



CANADA

Edrienne Manalastas

Senior Business Process Consultant, Thirdera

Canada is a country that is proud of its diverse culture. It is home to people from different ethnicities, cultures, religions, and beliefs, contributing to its reputation as one of the world's most welcoming countries.

When I first moved to Canada, I felt like I belonged because there were others like me. Knowing I was not alone in a foreign country was comforting and made it easier for me to adjust to the Canadian way of life while still retaining my Filipino roots.

In my student years, good friends challenged me not to take my beliefs for granted. They inspired me to explore and understand my Roman Catholic faith more deeply. This was a turning point for me, and it made me realize that my beliefs were not just something I inherited from my parents but something that I had to choose and practice for myself. I learned to believe and practice my faith not out of convenience but out of choice and a continuous search for truth.

Canada's diversity allows others to be different without hindering connection with others. This means you can have different beliefs, practices, and values and still belong. Diversity is celebrated and embraced in Canada, contributing to its harmonious society.

I am also a big foodie, and it is great to be in a country with culinary richness, as various cultures bring their unique flavours and cooking styles to the table.

Lastly, I am grateful to be part of a company comprising people of different heritage, cultures, and beliefs. Seeing how individuals from diverse backgrounds come together to achieve a common goal is inspiring. This experience has taught me that our differences should be acknowledged and respected, as it makes us unique and valuable.



UNITED STATES

Nicole Donaldson

Global Services Operations Manager, Thirdera

I would say I was an All-American kid, soaking up the sun, running free in Southern California community with kids of all ages and ethnicities. We were either outdoors riding skateboards, performing backyard theatre for the neighborhood, or inventing new games to play together. Weekends were spent at the beach splashing in the waves, toes in the sand. Perhaps my love of Country and being outdoors began when I stumbled on a short cut home from school, a windy pebbled path when a non-venomous King snake, black with a yellow racing stripe, appeared out of the brush crossing ahead of me. That day, the California landscape was etched into my mind, never to be forgotten. My community was a bit of a melting pot and for me, being American is to be an explorer, adventurer, and respector of all people of any background.

Hard work, music and creativity were themes in my childhood growing up. My mother grew up on a working ranch taking care of livestock at age 3. Influenced by Scottish musical traditions, my grandfather grew up playing the fiddle and began taking piano lessons when he was 6 years old. My ancestors were masters at playing the fiddles and created them as a hobby. I started playing the piano at age 7 and found myself always singing and creating music, just like my grandfather. Music has brought our family together and has been an avenue to meet people of all ethnic backgrounds and traditions.

Somewhat of a renaissance man, my grandfather not only ran a ranch, but played the piano, fiddle, was a mechanical wiz and flew airplanes. He flew my sister and I over the Cascade Mountains with my grandmother at his side in a 4-passenger aircraft, an event I'll never forget.

At age 9, our family moved from sunny skies to grey skies which took some time getting used to. Everything is green in Washington state. Rain is plentiful as are mountain views and tall Evergreens. Although the weather between the 2 states is vastly different, they each are rich with unique perspectives. I've been fortunate to live in the larger metropolis where racial, ethnic, and religious diversity abound. This has widened my worldview and given me opportunities to grow from others different from me.

As I have grown, so has our family tree including nationalities with family roots out of Europe, El Salvador, Mexico, Africa, and Israel. We are truly a diverse unit and treasure each other, our unique backgrounds, and views. Each addition weaves more beauty into our family tapestry. I cannot say enough how grateful I am for the family traditions of hard work and music which have built a spirit of can-do, creativity and unity in our lives.





Diversity at Thirdera

Thirdera is committed to building a company and culture that embraces diversity. We are heavily investing in our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) program Be You @ Thirdera to ensure all Thirdera employees have access to opportunities and resources that celebrate and encourage expressions of individuality.

Let your voice be heard

This year for World Day for Cultural Diversity, we encourage you to celebrate each other's uniqueness. It could be as simple as raising a topic around the dinner table about what diversity means to you or sharing the stories from this eBook on your social channels. We challenge you to open the dialogue, start those conversations, and embrace diversity both in and out of the workplace.

We have several open roles at Thirdera across the globe. Check out our current job opportunities and apply to join TeamEra.

[Apply Now](#)

Follow us on social media

