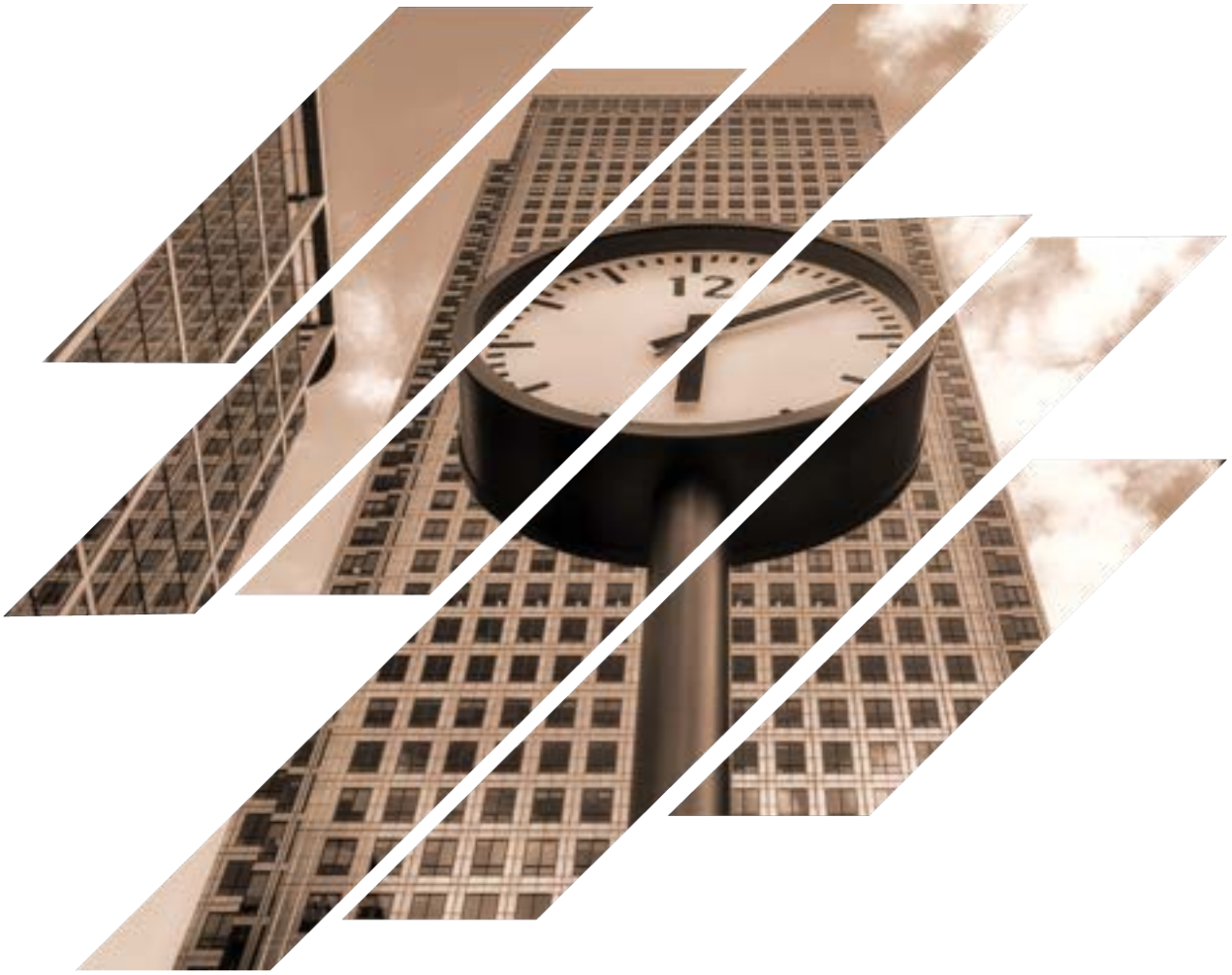
IF NOT NOW, WHEN? REPORT

ACTION FOR BLACK INCLUSION IN BUSINESS

October 2021



IF NOT NOW WHEN

FOREWORD



"On May 25, 2020 the world had a rude awakening. Our society, which we so desperately want to believe is fair and equal, was shown to be nothing of the sort. The ugly and shameful truth was exposed.

This truth has been exposed before. Many times. We will not recount here the numerous instances which comprise the collective trauma of the Black community, but we will ask the key question; What more does business need to see to understand that systemic racism is real and that action is desperately needed?

For years, many voices from within business and wider society have pleaded for action on ethnic minority inclusion. We know boards, executive teams, partnerships and the whole talent pipeline through to entry-level, simply isn't representative of the diverse society we live in. The sad truth of what we have learned in these years is that organisations have not been ready, nor built enough understanding to have a sufficiently challenging and frank conversation about race, systemic racism and discrimination within the four walls of their own office."

These are the opening words of a letter I presented in the Sunday Times soon after the 2020 upsurge of the Black Lives Matter movement. With the images of millions of people around the world showing their support and solidarity for the Black community, I called on business leaders in the UK to respond to the call for change with clear and sustainable long term action to address Black inequity. At the time there was not a single business I knew of that had initiatives specifically in place to support Black employees. The vast majority had never even had a conversation about race and racism in their business, certainly not amongst leadership and definitely not between leadership and their own employees. They simply were not "ready" and it is hard to say whether they ever would have been.

From where we were then, to where we are now, I am pleased to see a shift towards positive change in some UK organisations. Not just in the understanding of concepts like systemic racism and identifying barriers to progression but also in activity. To date, 84 UK business leaders from companies representing over 1 million UK workers have signed the Open Letter I presented committing to action on Black inclusion. To see this level of commitment is encouraging, but even more profound is that over the months of checking in with signatories I have witnessed them become activity. Learning has been sought, important conversations are happening happened, data is being collected, initiatives have kicked off and progress has been published.

This report and its case studies outline some of the work being done by a selection of our signatories and share the lessons learnt during implementation by those who are pushing forward inclusion within their companies. I hope that in sharing these examples we can inspire other individuals and organisations on what they could and should be doing to address Black inequity both within and also outside of their own four walls. It is early days when it comes to results, and all too often we see how easily progress on inclusion can stall, but I firmly believe that we need to take any momentum we have now and continue to build on it; making sure this remains a movement not just a moment.



Suki Sandhu OBE
Founder and CEO, Audeliss & INvolve

INTRODUCTION

In June 2020, INvolve and Audeliss created the 'If Now Now, When?' Open Letter for Black Inclusion in Business.

This letter acknowledged how little tangible action had been taken to reduce systemic discrimination against Black people in the workplace and set out a list of practical commitments to drive long term and sustainable change including the annual reporting of progress.

Acknowledging that no two workplaces and cultures are the same and possess their own unique opportunities and barriers for change, these commitments were intended as a roadmap and benchmark for organisations to drive forward their own journey in addressing Black inequity. The commitments were signed by UK CEOs (or equivalent) to ensure accountability for action.

Since being published in 2020, the Open Letter of commitments has evolved into the 'If Not Now, When?' campaign, a unique community of over 80 CEOs stepping up to the call to action to drive a culture which is fully representative and inclusive of Black individuals. With the commitments at its heart, the 'If Not Now, When?' campaign aims to support those with the power to make a difference and connect them to the resources required to achieve their goal for change.

In this first report from the If Not Now, When? campaign we have focused on the practical steps different organisations are taking to meet the commitments and support inclusion for Black employees, customers, or communities. The aim in sharing these case studies is to share inspiration, lessons, and best practice on taking action, and also provide direction on the key areas where more work needs to be done.



IMAGE CREDIT: TINU ROLAND | NAPPY.CO

THE IF NOT NOW, WHEN? COMMITMENTS

To further Black inclusion across all industries, we asked our signatories to implement the following commitments:

01. Diversifying the face of our organisation

Especially setting targets for Black talent within candidate slates for every position and holding recruiters accountable for presenting diverse shortlists.

02. Measuring

Investigating the specific challenges and barriers faced by Black talent in our organisations, starting to track ethnicity data, and conduct focus groups or listening sessions to properly understand the experiences of our Black and ethnically diverse minority colleagues.

03. Starting the conversation

Being vulnerable with our people. Admitting we haven't done enough and that the work is just beginning. Understanding that the first step in solving the problem is admitting that there is one. Senior leaders and middle managers need to be bold when speaking about issues of systemic racism and part of this is admitting that historically not enough has been done to look into Black inclusion and the experiences of Black people in the workplace.

04. Elevating Black voices

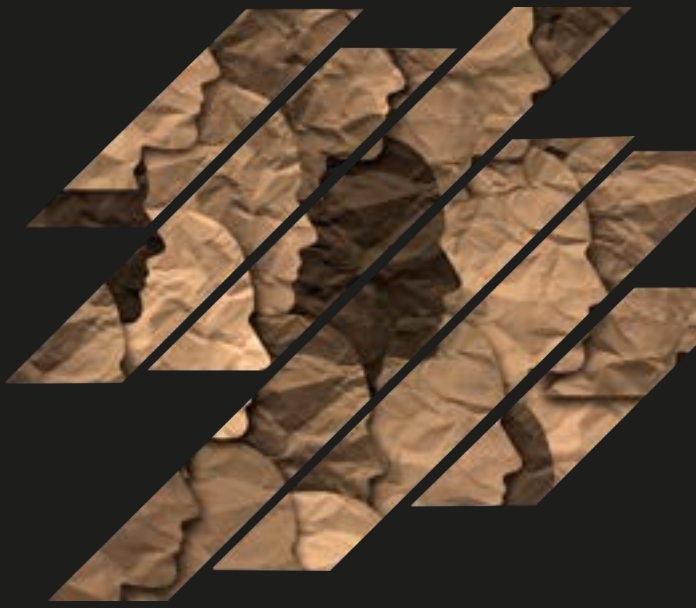
While the burden to educate should never lie with the Black community, it is vital for businesses to ensure that Black voices within our organisations are heard and amplified through internal and external channels to speak openly about their experiences, if they are open to sharing them.

05. Committing to specific actions

Over the last 18 months, we've all posted on our corporate social media accounts but now is the time to channel these words into action. Each organisation must define their own aims and create tangible pathways and solutions to address challenges specific to them, because If Not Now, When…

The List of signatories to the If Not Now, When? campaign and these commitments can be viewed at www.ifnotnowwhen.uk

DIVERSIFYING THE FACE OF OUR ORGANISATION



Specifically setting targets on Black talent within candidate slates and holding recruiters accountable for presenting diverse shortlists.

There is a lack of Black representation in leadership positions in the FTSE 100. Despite ethnic minority groups making up 14% of the UK working age population, ethnic minority groups only hold 5% of Chief Executive titles across the entire FTSE 100[1].

Setting performance targets?

When thoughtfully considered, diversity targets can help provide an important snapshot into current levels of representation within an organisation while also providing a compass for progress. However, setting diversity targets can be tricky. Where do you start? How do you set a realistic yet impactful target? How do you attract talent? What processes and procedures need to change?

Creating significant changes within a short period can be difficult especially without robust systems and processes in place. Therefore, it's vital for businesses to refine their systems, track progress to locate areas of improvement and ensure that they are held accountable through consistent reporting.

Beyond the number

Black inclusion is not just a numbers game. While setting targets is useful, they are not an all-round solution or an overall indicator of progress. Inclusion is essential to achieving and sustaining targets as well as ensuring that you cultivate an environment of acceptance, and respect which should be at the centre of any and all recruitment and talent pipeline strategies. Below are examples of what certain organisations are doing in order to address this imbalance within the UK.

[1] Reboot Campaign, 2021



CASE STUDIES

HACHETTE UK: THE INCLUSIVITY TASKFORCE

Overview

After receiving an open letter from the Black Writers' Guild (BWG), a group formed to represent and champion Black writers, Hachette UK set up an Inclusivity Taskforce to respond to the requests of the letter and to focus initially on high-impact interventions to support Black publishing staff and create a sustainable publishing ecosystem that would ultimately benefit Black writers. The letter contained a list of eight recommendations on how to tackle the lack of Black voices in publishing and Hachette UK's initial objective was to systematically overhaul resourcing and focus on attracting Black talent which included the launch of an enhanced positive action publishing traineeship for candidates from Black and marginalised ethnic backgrounds.

Implementation

The Inclusivity Taskforce (comprised of Board members, Department heads and Co-Chairs of Hachette UK's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic employee network) was set up to focus on cultural interventions towards increasing the representation of Black staff and authors and to respond to the Black Writers' Guild.

Using their ethnicity pay gap action plan in conjunction with BWG's eight recommendations to guide thinking, the taskforce identified areas of intervention that needed refocusing towards Black inclusion. As a result, the task force decided to focus its initial activity on increasing the representation of Black talent within publishing to ensure they became reflective of Black authors and those they hope to publish.

In collaboration with the Inclusivity Taskforce and the BWG, the HR team consequently took steps to ensure that Black inclusion was embedded into all project elements, focusing on outreach and attracting Black talent which meant moving away from focusing on ethnic diversity in a broad sense to explicitly addressing the representation of Black talent.

To do this, Hachette UK had to identify partnerships that would allow them to raise awareness across Black communities and specifically

> **Hachette UK recommend all organisations monitor ethnicity, report on their pay gaps, and have an action plan for addressing underrepresentation, but that this includes nuances and specificity to Black inclusion.**

engage with Black creatives and professionals. They also focused on enhancing their 12-month Publishing Traineeship, which had been running since 2017, to ensure that there was more holistic and in-depth industry experience for Black talent looking to break into publishing. This new scheme included partnering with literary agency Curtis Brown and booksellers Waterstones, doubling the number of placements available, and broadening the number of departments and functions the trainees will have exposure to. This enhanced traineeship is industry-first, designed to make the entire industry accountable for change and ensure the richest experience for Black and marginalised ethnic talent interested in a career in publishing.

Feedback

To ensure that Hachette UK is reaching Black talent interested in a career in publishing, they have successfully established partnerships with five new jobs boards to ensure that their adverts are being viewed by Black talent. They have also formed a relationship with the digital lifestyle subscription platform Black Ballad, a recommendation by BWG, who they will be partnering with on a bespoke outreach event during Black History Month 2021. They have received over 800 applications and have successfully recruited and onboarded ten trainees, inclusive of Black talent to their Publishing Traineeship.

One of the critical measurements of success for this resourcing and outreach work has been internal accountability to the Inclusivity Taskforce to ensure momentum on Black inclusion and the external positive feedback received from the BWG through their regular stakeholder meetings.

SANTANDER : ACCELERATING YOU - BLACK TALENT PROGRAMME

Overview

Santander's "Accelerating You: Black Talent Programme" is a bespoke leadership development solution delivered over 9 months as part of their wider Black Inclusion Plan. Like many organisations, they have been monitoring and analysing their diversity & inclusion data and metrics to help guide their aim to be the place where all their colleagues feel they belong and are supported to succeed.

Santander's Black Inclusion Plan focuses on 3 pillars – Leadership, Allyship, and Networks – each with targeted initiatives to help them become more inclusive, represent the diverse communities that they serve, and contribute towards positive societal change.

The Accelerating You: Black Talent programme is a key initiative under the Leadership pillar. This bespoke talent programme helps to showcase and develop Santander's existing Black Talent with the aim to accelerate progression towards leadership roles with a specific aim of doubling Black representation in Senior Leadership roles by 2023.

Implementation

Working with Zircon Be Talent, Moving Ahead Limited, Lead Curriculum Limited, Way Wiv Wordz and APS Intelligence Ltd, 36 ambitious candidates enrolled in the Spring 2021 cohort, all with various career backgrounds and experience from across the Bank. Additionally, Santander made parts of the programme available externally to 5 Black finance colleagues within smaller organisations who will also benefit from expert leadership training and being part of an extensive learning community.

The 2021 Programme has been divided into 2, 12-week Phases: April-July and September-December and focuses on Service Leadership Principles and Values whilst also looking at self-reflection and personal growth through authentic storytelling. Through the delivery of empowering Thought Leadership Masterclasses, this programme also explores future work skills such as emotional intelligence, problem-solving and strategic thinking workshops.

In addition, Zircon BeTalent has supported career development planning using individual strengths assessments of potential skills and capabilities which align with Santander competencies. They use 360-degree Talent Profiles and incorporate observational line manager feedback, as well as providing a comprehensive range of learning resources through their research, particularly the Black Voices Report from Business in The Community.

> **This bespoke programme has been co-created with colleagues across the business to emphasise the importance of sponsorship, thought leadership from inspiring Black role models and a focus on authentic leadership through lived Black experiences.**

The next steps are to engage with participants at mid-point to evaluate their progress and gain insight into the learning experience, which will help shape future programmes that will support wider diversity strands career progression throughout the Bank.

Lessons

Some early learnings include identifying that a key career barrier impacting Black participants progression is the lack of opportunity to build internal relationships with senior leaders. Leadership teams that can advocate and support strategic career mapping and provide opportunities for stretching work assignments and enabling the development of new skills is key. In order to address this, Santander have a facilitated Sponsorship Programme run by Moving Ahead, a social impact organisation that has supported Santander in previous diversity and inclusion initiatives.

Santander have recognised that line managers need to be fully on board with every aspect of the programme for it to be successful. The expectation to juggle personal development alongside the day job can impact work/life balance and work performance and they are revisiting the enrolment process to ensure the candidate's full participation and understanding of the additional work to be undertaken as part of personal development outside the 90-minute workshops.

IHG: ASCEND

Overview

ASCEND is an advanced nine-month multicultural talent programme that has been rolled out in the Americas, IHG's largest region. The programme is designed to support and increase ethnic representation in corporate leadership through development, sponsorship and 1:1 mentoring from leaders at SVP or VP level. IHG is keen to roll out this programme out globally to support ethnic talent across IHG and across the industry.

Implementation

The ASCEND program has four objectives. These include:

- Supporting the acceleration and ensure the readiness of Black and multiracial colleague (at Director and Head Of function level) career progression
- Connecting talent to opportunities for visibility, exposure, professional growth
- Recognising candidates' unique personal strengths and workplace experiences to unleash their potential
- Fostering an inclusive environment and network to retain talent and facilitate their path to success

The programme is being implemented with a cohort of 18-20 with four key components, including Self-Assessment & Empowerment (Korn Ferry), Coaching (Manager Coaching & Guidance), Formal Learning (McKinsey & Korn Ferry) and Sponsorship. Each participant has been matched with a leader two levels above them (SVP) for a sponsorship relationship with specific learning provided to the SVP Sponsors.

> **We will continue to take important steps to highlight our response to racial injustice and enable colleagues to show their support within our organisation and our communities.**

Feedback

Feedback has been positive and the aim is to continuously evolve the programme. Recommendations include increasing the support of managers in their role as coaches and helping pace the programme to manage/balance time demands when participating.

Lessons

Following the tragic deaths of George Floyd and others in the Americas, IHG made several commitments to Listen & Learn, Advocate and Act. The roll-out of the Ascend programme fulfils one of these commitments.



MEASURING



Investigating the specific challenges and barriers faced by Black talent in our organisations. Implementing processes to track ethnicity data.

Benefits of Diversity and Inclusion data

The Black Lives Matter upsurge in 2020 accelerated the conversation surrounding Black equality and inclusion. Businesses can no longer ignore this much needed call to action and must call for greater transparency and accountability in order to cultivate a workplace where Black people can thrive.

From reporting on ethnicity pay gaps to improving the representation of Black people in high-ranking leadership positions, diversity data has become increasingly significant In order to create long-term, sustainable change.

Collecting data on diversity and inclusion can provide a deeper understanding of your employee landscape. While diversity is easier to measure and observe, inclusion can be more challenging to quantify but should not be ignored as a key metric in understanding the lived experiences of Black and other employees within the organisation.

> **Diversity is fact, inclusion is the act, belonging is the outcome**

Analysing diversity data throughout your business operations is vital in identifying the areas where interventions are required, focus business resources, and respond in real-time to inclusion roadblocks.

Organisations are looking towards evidence-based solutions to understand the shape of their culture. For global organisations, it is essential to understand the social customs and legalities around data collection for each country. For example, in France and Germany, at present, it is not possible to collect data around race identification.



CASE STUDIES

SAINSBURY'S ETHNICITY PAY GAP

Overview

The goal of Sainsbury's Ethnicity Pay Gap Report was to be transparent and locate areas of improvement to ensure equal pay is achieved across its employee base.

As part of this Sainsbury's were aware of the differences in representation across different ethnic populations. In line with its aim to be transparent, Sainsbury's chose to include a Black Pay Gap to ensure that differences across ethnic minority groups were accounted for which created space for targeted improvements in their pay gap. For further context, there are fewer Black colleagues across senior levels, and more Black colleagues work in Sainsbury's London stores that have a location premium.

Implementation

Last summer, Sainsbury's launched a programme that was focused on listening to the voices of its Black colleagues about how the business can take responsibility and drive change. As a result, several commitments were shared with colleagues in July 2020 as part of Sainsbury's ongoing dedication to improve diversity and inclusion. One of these commitments was to publish an Ethnicity Pay Gap report along with the Gender Pay Gap Report.

Tracking data is key to driving targeted change. By creating a 'fill in the blanks' initiative, driven by internal communication efforts and colleague networks, Sainsbury's worked to explain the benefits of data, encouraged colleagues to submit their forms and clarified how this data can help the organisation improve diversity, all of which improved its overall data accuracy.

To produce the report, the Recruitment and People Analytics team used the ethnicity data available via its internal HR systems to follow the government standard* and generate the report data. However, it's important to note that declaring your ethnicity isn't mandatory, and therefore there are still gaps in the data provided.

The report itself was shared through Sainsbury's internal communication channels, including on its intranet, in 'weekly headlines' and through team huddles. The report is also published on the Sainsbury's external corporate website.

> **Data is imperative to improving diversity and inclusion in any organisation. Therefore, driving campaigns and initiatives to encourage participation is a priority for the business.**

Feedback

The feedback from colleagues in the business has been positive, especially surrounding transparency. However, Sainsbury's is aware of the work that still needs to be done in order to improve the ethnic diversity of its senior leadership.

The impact of these initiatives means that Sainsbury's is monitoring and evolving to improve diversity across its business. Examples include:

- Specific mandatory leadership inclusion goals linked to remuneration
- An improved diversity data dashboard where leaders can regularly review their teams and create actions to improve their remit
- Ethnicity Race/Religion & Belief (ERB) Steering Group led by Simon Roberts, the ERB Sponsor and CEO, to continue to drive actions in key areas such as recruitment, development and progression, customer proposition etc.
- Specific Black leadership representation targets alongside ethnically diverse and gender by 2024
- Tripled its investment in the development of its Ethnically Diverse and Black colleagues, with a particular focus on supporting the progression of Black colleagues
- Working with specialist external partners to drive attraction and retention of Black talent
- Joined the Black British Network where colleagues took part in discussions with other businesses and its Black colleagues to help improve inclusivity and representation with tangible actions and solutions

GREENE KING: CREATION OF AN I&D STRATEGY

Overview

Green King set out to create an I&D (Inclusion & Diversity) strategy that had clear and actionable plans for sustainable change. Their aim is to work towards “building and sustaining a more diverse environment where all employees are embraced and valued for who they are so that they reach their full potential and thrive."

Implementation

Greene King’s first task was to ensure that they had robust, internal diversity data, clear outputs from an independent race audit and were able to tie those in with their current and future cultural aspirations.

Other initiatives include collaborating with the International Slavery Museum and Slave Free Alliance to deliver educational sessions on transatlantic slavery and modern slavery to Greene King team members. In addition, Greene King took part in National Inclusion Week and commited to a month of activity during October in partnership with their Employee Led Inclusion Group for Black History Month.

> **Greene King want to set the bar as an inclusive organisation where everyone feels a sense of belonging and are able to thrive.**

Feedback

Greene King’s use of data affords their work credibility and can provide key insights on internal initiatives that are working and uncover areas of improvement to drive further change. By having solid data, Greene King have been able to identify core pillars that underpin their plans to drive Black inclusion.

STARTING THE CONVERSATION



In order to start solving this problem within organisations, we need to admit that there is a problem. Senior leaders and middle managers need to be bold when speaking about issues of systemic racism, and part of this is admitting that historically not enough has been done to look into Black inclusion and the experiences of Black people in the workplace. Creating safe spaces for these conversations to take place is vital.

We are seeing an increase in organisations opening up communication channels with Black colleagues & employees to understand their lived experiences in and outside their organisations. However, for many, openly hosting conversations on racial inequalities at work is unfamiliar and uncomfortable territory.

When handled correctly with respect and compassion, they can be supportive, educational, revealing and inspiring.

Having these conversations are vital to the ongoing support that your Black employees need, and are also a learning opportunity for the allies within your organisation.



IMAGE CREDIT: WOCINTECH | NAPPY.CO

SAINSBURY'S LET'S TALK ABOUT RACE

Overview

'Let's Talk About Race' was a programme created in the summer of 2020. The sessions started at the highest level of the organisation with the CEO, Ops board, PLC board and top 250 leaders all taking part.

After great feedback from these sessions, they were adapted and rolled out to over 1,400 senior leaders.

Leaders in the organisation were responsible for organising and/or delivering the sessions for their divisions and teams.

The objectives were to:

- Create a space to explore the experiences of ethnically diverse colleagues in society and within Sainsbury's
- Tackle the perceived taboo of talking about race
- Improve race fluency and knowledge on ethnicity and inclusion
- Improve colleague confidence speaking about race in the workplace
- Commit to actions to better support ethnically diverse colleagues

All of the above came directly from feedback made by ethnically diverse and Black colleagues and showed how experiences vastly differ compared to those from white peers. 'Let's Talk About Race' acknowledges this.

Implementation

Creating the content was a collaborative effort between the Diversity and Inclusion team, the Talent and People Development team and the 'I AM ME' ethnically diverse colleague network at Sainsbury's. The talent team are experts in development/session structures and brought these skills to the table, while the Diversity and Inclusion team and I AM ME network brought with them expertise and knowledge surrounding race. It was important to start the sessions around the challenges today regarding the lived experiences of Black individuals

> **This programme ties into just one of many actions to drive Sainsbury's 2024 ethnically diverse and Black representation targets in senior leadership roles.**

and how this cascades and translates into more specific challenges/experiences in Sainsbury's.

Through the 'I AM ME' network at Sainsbury's, Black colleagues openly shared stories of microaggressions and racism they have experienced whilst at work. These were re-recorded by a voice artist so their identity was protected and used within the session to highlight very real and current lived experiences of how challenges can manifest in the workplace.

In order to ensure its process was both sensitive and robust, Sainsbury's produced:

- Template email to be sent to teams to shape the context of the 'Let's Talk About Race' session
- Template email to send to ethnically diverse colleagues (if applicable) in advance of the session to ensure it was supportive of its ethnically diverse colleagues and emphasises there was no pressure to 'lead' conversations
- Full agenda and content positioning of the session in a PowerPoint presentation
- Full facilitator notes
- Resources to encourage colleagues to complete pre-work and to read/reflect on post-session
- Template for follow up email to send immediately after the session
- Action plan templates to agree meaningful changes and actions to put into practice after the session to ensure the learning was embedded and changes were made

With the conversation needing to be open, honest, transparent and purposeful, it was important that colleagues felt there was a safe environment within the sessions. For this reason, the sessions were held within teams, such as head office teams, retail, logistics, etc.

Feedback

- White colleagues who haven't been exposed to or experienced much diversity realised they had a bigger part to play. This is where 'Let's Talk About Race' action plans were created to ensure improvement across the business continues
- Colleagues improved understanding of workplace examples and their impact
- Great opportunity to discuss what has previously felt like a 'taboo' topic
- Breakout sessions during 'Let's Talk About Race' worked well in smaller groups to deeper explore key statements and questions provided to encourage openness
- Surge in ally colleagues joining the 'I AM ME' network

Lessons

One of the key learnings is that this is an emotional topic of conversation where colleagues may find the stories and statistics difficult to hear. It's important to factor in breaks during the session and to inform colleagues that feeling uncomfortable is normal in order to drive change. Focusing on key actions during the sessions helps drive meaningful change across the business and successfully hold individuals accountable to follow through.

SODEXO: BE HEARD CAMPAIGN

Overview

The objectives of the 'Be Heard' campaign sessions were to assist Sodexo's understanding of internal culture and support building a culture of belonging:

- Where all employees can feel included and valued
- Where all employees are given opportunities to develop and progress

Implementation

With the help of their Origins employee network group and its executive sponsors, a strategic task force was formed in June 2020. Made up of senior leaders from Black and other ethnic backgrounds, the task force leads on company-wide change programmes for employees to share their lived experiences and provide guidance for all colleagues on how to conduct positive conversations around race.

The first initiative they designed and delivered was the Be Heard campaign. To engage Black colleagues from across the business, the group designed several channels to connect with ethnically diverse colleagues; posters, engaging the HR leadership team, sending communications out via their executive team, and using the organisation's own communications channels.

The listening sessions were held virtually due to Covid. They were run at various intervals throughout the day, including in the evening, to allow maximum participation. For each session, two members of the Be Heard group facilitated the conversations.

The sessions covered topics exploring:

- Fairness at work
- Career progression
- Role models
- Inclusion, respect and psychological safety
- Participants overall perception of 'belonging' with regards to the culture at Sodexo

The sessions were conducted under the following guidelines:

- Be open and honest
- Nothing is off the table
- There are no right or wrong answers
- Listen to others
- Speak from experience

The 'Be Heard' campaign is a series of listening sessions to understand the lived experiences of Sodexo's Black employees and help to create race action plans as an organisation.

During these sessions, the following key themes emerged:

- Lack of visible role models - 'You cannot be what you cannot see.'
- A need to raise the visibility of high potential Black colleagues
- Lack of opportunities to develop and progress; feelings of being overlooked for promotion opportunities
- Black colleagues feel that they must hide parts of their identity to 'fit in', lack of psychological safety

This feedback was taken to the Regional Leadership Committee (RLC), Sodexo's executive team for UK & Ireland, and initial findings were shared in UK and Ireland virtual town hall meetings.

Senior leaders from their business segments are now using that feedback as they develop their specific action plans, fusing the direct experiences of colleagues with the data available to Sodexo regarding representation, pay, and other factors. In addition, they are being supported with their plans by a member of the Be Heard Group, providing a sounding board and an opportunity for reverse mentoring.

Sodexo's action plan is:

Ensuring the leadership team is engaged and held accountable

- Establish targets to increase the representation of Black, Asian and minority ethnic individuals in management
- Develop a scorecard to track and measure progress
- Development sessions focussed on micro-inequalities/micro-aggressions, privilege and anti-racism

Supporting the attraction, development and growth of employees

- Review of attraction, development, and progression policies and processes
- Implement targeted development programmes such as mentoring, coaching and sponsorship

- Review career pathways, creating opportunities into management and leadership roles
- Profiling role models and networking opportunities for under-represented ethnic groups

Elevating the voices of employees

- Listen and respond to employees on issues relating to racial discrimination and social injustice
- Storytelling lived experiences – enabling a 'safe space' culture for dialogue and positive intent
- Education/learning programmes

Other initiatives in the past 12 months

- Sodexo has published its ethnicity pay report for 2020 – the first in the hospitality sector to do so.
- Partnered with Generation Success to provide young people from under-represented ethnic groups external to Sodexo the opportunity to participate in the organisation's internal coaching programme to aid their career development and aspirations
- A global conversation guide is available in five languages to help colleagues have healthy conversations about race, ethnicity and cultural origins
- Introduction of 'D&I' moments at the start of meetings - short, typically five minute, bite-size education sections on D&I topics
- Targeted development programmes, for example, allocating 20 designated places on internal coaching programme for Black, Asian and Mixed ethnic colleagues

Lessons

Having this work led by Senior Black leaders was very powerful. It raised visibility of senior Black role models inspiring others, provided an environment where people felt psychological safe to openly share their own experiences and ensured action plans were developed putting the Black colleague experience at the heart of it.

ELEVATING BLACK VOICES



It is imperative that Black voices within organisations have their voices amplified through internal and external channels to enable them to speak freely about their experiences as long as they are open to sharing them. This can be a powerful way of raising empathy and proximity of the issue for non-Black employees and ensure everyone feels a part of any and all organisational initiatives.

Creating an aperture for Black voices to share, if desired, their lived experience in and out of your organisation will inspire a change in 'business as usual' practices. Giving voice to Black leaders, colleagues, and employees is important but do not expect them to carry the labour of educating and resolving racial imbalances in the workspace.

Beyond Race

Making space for black voices isn't solely focused on extracting racial information. It extends to sharing space in the different conversations that take place in the work environment; welcoming ideas, solutions and perspectives on a wide range of topics.



EMPOWER TOP 10 UK BLACK ROLE MODELS LIST PRESENTED BY GOOGLE

Overview

The EMpower Ethnic Minority Role Mode Lists created by INvolve showcase business leaders who are breaking down barriers at work and working hard to drive inclusion for ethnically diverse people working in the UK, Europe, US, and Canada. Having been actively involved in supporting and promoting their own Role Models on the annual EMpower Lists, Google approached INvolve for a potential partnership on using the profile of the EMpower Lists to put a spotlight on UK-based Black Role Models from across a range of sectors and job roles with the aim of improving the visibility of Black leaders and giving inspiration to emerging Black talent progressing their careers. The result of this partnership was the EMpower Top 10 UK Black Role Models feature launched in June 2021.

Implementation

Google have instigated a number of initiatives for supporting Black talent both inside, and outside, of the organisation including an aim to increase the visibility of Black business leaders in the UK. They realised from their previous work with INvolve that the infrastructure already existed to bring together a list of amazing Role Models to help achieve this aim. A partnership approach would not only tap into the expertise and network of INvolve to make a list based around Black Role Models a reality but would also add profile and reach to the final Lists through connecting them to the existing global EMpower Ethnic Minority Role Model Lists.

The EMpower Lists receive thousands of submissions each year which outline the amazing work each potential Role Model is doing to promote inclusion for ethnically diverse people both inside their own organisation and externally within their industry sector and across the corporate world. This submission process also allows Role Models to profile a little more about the personal journey which has underpinned their career to date and inspired their dedication to driving forward inclusion. One of the key limitations which the wider EMpower Lists have is that featuring around 250 global Role Models,

> **Putting the spotlight on willing Role Models can be powerful and is an important part of the push to increase diversity especially within leadership and sectors where Black representation is low.**

there is not the opportunity to profile Role Models beyond a simple professional biography that appears in the published Lists. This effectively hides many elements of an individual's personal journey, as well as details on their background and barriers they may have faced early on in their careers. While seeing a Role Mode's overall success in their chosen field is inspiring, what has potentially greater weight in bringing forward the next generation of Black Role Models is to profile the real-life experiences and journeys from their starting point to their current position. To achieve this a list of just 10 UK Black Role Models were selected for the feature List and in-depth interviews were conducted to get the full story of their personal development to date.

The EMpower Top 10 UK Black Role Models feature was launched with the support of Google, the Role Models themselves, and their employers who were keen to show their own support for their Black talent. The Role Models were featured extensively across social media and also in the press. The feature remains available from the main EMpower Role Model Lists website.

Lessons

Simply featuring Role Models does not in itself remove many of the challenges Black employees face in progressing their careers. It is therefore important not just for Role Models to be given adequate space and freedom to talk in more detail about the challenges they themselves have experienced both personally and professionally, but also to use this insight to inform real action targeted at removing obstacles for the Black talent following in their footsteps.

MARKS AND SPENCER: ELEVATING BLACK VOICES AT M&S

Overview

Inclusion and Diversity (I&D) has always been a priority for M&S, but, as for many organisations, the global events of 2020 forced them to take a hard look at their work in this space and to make the decision to elevate and enhance their approach. Their aim was to advance and celebrate Black leaders and talent in their organisation and the wider business community.

As part of a commitment made by CEO Steve Rowe, to take urgent action and implement a new approach to Inclusion and Diversity, Group Head of I&D, Cleo Thompson, was brought on board in September 2020 to shape the new strategy and build a focused team to drive delivery.

Elevating Black voices was placed at the heart of Cleo's fresh approach.

Implementation

Strategic planning

The new strategy proposed the pivot from D&I to I&D, with a focus on delivering an inclusive culture within a diverse environment. This means building a culture at M&S where everyone can thrive, by:

- Creating an environment where individuals can be their authentic selves
- Progressing their careers
- Ensuring their voices are heard

This strategy, driven by senior leaders, focuses on colleagues, customers and communities. It began by listening to colleagues and working to understand their experiences at M&S. The iconic retailer has seven colleague networks and, for Cleo and her team, working with these company-wide groups would go hand in hand with engaging senior leaders on their own I&D journey.

Listening activities

One of those groups was called The BAME Network. However, questions arose surrounding the appropriateness of the term "BAME":

> **In the last 18 months, M&S has embraced how to challenge, reflect, and look inwards – even when it can be uncomfortable.**

whether it was was inclusive and if it was a phrase that resonated, broadly, with everyone. Upon asking network members, the verdict showed that the majority of them disliked the BAME acronym and considered it to be old fashioned, reductive and inappropriate. Furthermore, a network survey showed that staff felt that "BAME" was problematic because it combines people from widely different geographical, behavioural, social, and cultural backgrounds into one, non-cohesive whole.

A poll was taken for a new name: and the clear winner was The M&S Culture and Heritage Network. The network became a place where M&S comes together to celebrate all faiths, cultures and ethnicities and promotes racial and religious equality.

Converting listening into visible, meaningful change

There was an immediate uptake in membership and awareness, particularly from those who identify as bi-racial or with dual heritage, highlighting that the network is now a true representation of colleagues from different cultures, faiths and backgrounds. Six months post the relaunch, the network has doubled in size and continues to grow, to reflect true engagement and an elevated voice.

M&S wants to ensure that they sell an inclusive range of products to their customers and they listened to their Culture & Heritage network, who worked with the M&S Lingerie team to provide inputs to the "Nothing Neutral About It" campaign, which launched in June 2021. Proving that the network is not just about peer support but also about being a trusted advisor to the business, the members' inputs included providing guidance and advice on new naming conventions for the colours used to describe the underwear and making suggestions on recruiting a wide range of inclusive models.

Other activities

In October 2020, as part of Black History Month, M&S filmed an in-depth conversation with CEO Steve Rowe and two members of the Executive Committee, entitled "What's it Like to be a Black Colleague at M&S?".

Moderated by the Co-Chair of the Culture & Heritage Network, the discussion was frank and fearless. It featured three Black colleagues, all M&S store managers, sharing their stories, lived experiences and telling leaders what they believe needs to be done to advance Black representation and careers at M&S.

Accountability is imperative and as part of the M&S inclusion strategy, they will be filming part two in October 2021, revisiting their commitments and reviewing the actions that have been taken over the last 12 months.

During Black History Month 2020, M&S also showcased their commitment to working with a more diverse range of external suppliers and hosted an event with Wilfred Emmanuel-Jones MBE – The Black Farmer – who supplies M&S food halls. He subsequently re-joined them in June 2021, when the Culture & Heritage Network staged a Live Event to mark National Windrush Day, which included celebrating the stories of those colleagues whose families came to the UK during the 1950s and 1960s. In addition, Wes Taylor, the M&S Director of Menswear, shared his own family history, which included recounting how his parents travelled from Jamaica to build a new life in the UK - and didn't then live with two of their children again for seven years. This storytelling approach has resonated with colleagues and is part of the M&S approach to elevating the Black voice.

Lessons

M&S acknowledged that they were not as inclusive they could be - but are making positive changes to improve that. And they know that this is a journey, with many future steps, stages and activities to be experienced along the way.

TESCO: JOINING THE BLACK BRITISH NETWORK

Overview

More than looking at how to just support their Black colleagues, Tesco wanted to look to better understand racism in the UK, and work to effect systemic change on a wider scale, Tesco became a founding member of the Black British Network (BBN) – which was set up by Cephas Williams following the murder of George Floyd – to support their work in starting the conversation on racism and elevating diverse voices.

Implementation

Working with the other founding companies of the BBN, a group of Tesco senior leaders, Black colleagues and allies attend roundtable sessions – to listen and learn about topics including Black History, the impact of George Floyd's death to their Black employees, and also how other companies responded.

> **Sessions are run by Black people with lived experiences, to help facilitate open and honest conversations, allow them to dig deeper into issues often faced by the Black community, and focus on how to work together to create change.**

Feedback

The impact of these conversations was felt by everyone after each session and it was as educational as it was powerful to learn more about the lived experiences of the Black community. It became clear to Tesco that they had to create specific plans and outline targeted strategies, in order to support their Black employees who had unique experiences and challenges, both inside and outside of work.

BP'S FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION

Overview

bp's position on racial injustice, equity and fair treatment for all employees was published in 2020 in their UK Framework for Action on racial injustice. This framework was developed after engagement with a cross-section of bp employees who are committed to uplifting ethnic minorities and specifically the Black community. The framework is aligned to three core pillars – transparency, accountability, and talent, and goals have been set against each of these. These goals map out several interventions such as seeking to further educate bp colleagues on racial injustice and systemic societal barriers specific to minorities and Black people, creating accountability and dedicating resources to the development of their ethnic minority and, in particular, the Black community.

Implementation

Within this framework, bp launched two cohorts of their Leadership Inclusion for Talent (LIfT) program for senior Black leaders. The programme focuses on both individual and cohort growth over a 2-year time frame and each participant has a 'circle of support' for the duration of the programme as well as a highly personalised development strategy. Development strategies include executive development reviews and career partner support and depending on individual growth needs, may also include visible stretch assignments, coaching, mentoring, specific skills development, or secondments – all with the intention of developing participants to be ready for the next step in their leadership journey.

bp's positively ethnic network (business resource group) leaders have taken accountability for creating a forum for colleagues to share experiences and perspectives and a space for all to listen and learn. Holding bi-weekly virtual cafes they have heard painful stories of experiences within and beyond the boundaries of work. Trust is imperative in these forums where no topic is off limits, and they have become a place to celebrate their successes, to reflect on world events, to learn and to challenge each other. They have highlighted the need for allyship and the critical role both individual employees and the wider company can play in this conversation on race. This sense of community is stronger than it ever has been, and bp aim to keep building this.



bp acknowledge that they do not have all the answers, but they recognise the need to maintain discipline of their inclusion principles in everything they do in order to drive change.

In the fourth quarter of 2021 bp plan to launch a mandatory race for equity training for all 6,000 UK employees. The programme utilises an evidence-based approach to develop and enhance inclusive leadership behaviours regarding race and ethnicity. It seeks to bring awareness and encourages fluency of the concepts and issues linked to racial injustice and will give employees the space to build empathy and to practice the skills of giving and receiving feedback in role play scenarios. The programme encourages colleagues to support each other in understanding their roles in fostering inclusion, giving participants action focussed tools to take away.

Feedback

bp's Framework for Action has been the catalyst for many initiatives across the business and the employee lifecycle, such as awareness events, mentoring circles, and broader community development initiatives. bp's employees have embraced the challenge and core aims set out the framework and it has brought greater alignment and focus to their work around DE&I generally, as well as on race specifically.

bp acknowledge that they do not have all the answers, but they recognise the need to maintain discipline of their inclusion principles in everything they do in order to drive change. Firm believers that diverse, inclusive groups make better, faster, more accurate decisions, with less cognitive bias which leads to better performance, bp know that there isn't a perfect single approach to eradicating racial injustice. bp expect and endeavour to iterate and refine their approach as they move forward.

COMMITING TO SPECIFIC ACTIONS



We've all posted to our corporate Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn accounts, but it's time to channel those words into action. Every organisation still needs to define their aims, create tangible pathways and solutions to address challenges specific to them.

2020 was about realisation and 2021 was about commitment.

Employees are looking to leadership to make an impact and whilst public statements are a step in the right direction, transparency and authentic commitment is required to see real change in racial equality.

2022 will focus on accountability and progression/continuity.

Consistency of action is key to accelerating Black inclusion. With the increased demand for transparency and accountability, actions are speaking even louder than words. Movement towards true racial inclusion will require a variety of sustainable initiatives throughout an organisation.



IMAGE CREDIT: WOCINTECH | NAPPY.CO

SANTANDER BANK PARTNERSHIP WITH PRECIOUS

Overview

Recent research such as the Rose Review has highlighted the challenges women face in setting up and growing a business. However, the challenges faced by women of colour are less reported.

Santander partnered with PRECIOUS, a digital platform, network and resource championing the achievements of women of colour. They commissioned research into the challenges and achievements of women entrepreneurs and women business leaders from underrepresented groups. The research revealed that:

- There is a lack of trust in banks, even when needing finance. Banks are almost completely ignored for non-financial support
- Ethnicity is a greater challenge than gender when growing a business
- The majority of women of colour entrepreneurs strongly agree that they should be given tailored business support
- There is a lack of relatable role models to inspire others to start and grow a business

Implementation

There was a clear need to take action as a result of the research. Santander's first step was to create a steering group of 10 women of colour in business, at different stages and sectors, to help shape the actions that they should prioritise. Facilitated by PRECIOUS and Brand By Me, the three steering groups sessions resulted in a clear list of priorities for Santander and the wider sector. The importance of authenticity and building trust with the group was paramount.

The power of the steering group – an initiative, crucially shaped by users, not colleagues – has also been critical in how stakeholders (both internal and external) are influenced to participate in the project and support next steps.

An essential factor in stakeholder engagement has been senior leadership sponsorship of the initiative, which has helped embed it into the bank's inclusion policy and specific Black Inclusion Plan.

> **The barriers women of colour are facing will not go away without a sector approach and some significant systemic changes.**

In terms of specific internal activity, Santander has:

- Created and published case studies for the steering group members
- Broadened the recruitment reach for the Women Business Leaders' Mentoring Programme
- Broadened representation of speakers on 2021 programmes
- Launched the mentoring circles pilot exclusively for women of colour
- Made changes to when and how equal opportunities data is captured
- Commissioned a pilot business support programme exclusively for women of colour (launching autumn 2021)

Impact and feedback

Santander admit that they are in the very early stages of the initiative to provide insightful feedback but will measure the impact on the beneficiaries of the different actions listed above.

Lessons

Trust, authenticity and accountability are essential. The distrust in the sector can't be overlooked, and it will take a collective effort to shift that. It's also vital to have internal and external stakeholders, and the earlier you can engage them and involve them in your initiatives, the better. Thirdly, there always be naysayers and negative voices, however to drive change it's vital to push on despite pushback.

VIRGIN MONEY COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP WITH KINGS TALK

Overview

Virgin Money have built a partnership with Kings Talk to expand its activities and provide greater support for the Black community in London. The aim was to create a series of events that supported Kings Talk's ambitions and brought Virgin Money's expertise around areas like careers, business, and finance.

The objectives for the partnership are to work together to develop and run a number of different business and personal workshops and events designed to:

1. Increase employability within the Black community
2. Support & inspire Black business owners and entrepreneurs
3. Uplift the Black community

Virgin Money is primarily based in Glasgow and Newcastle. These are areas with lower ethnic diversity than other parts of the UK. While they can and do work in their local communities, the last year has demonstrated the scale of the national challenge. They wanted to make sure that they were supporting people who were setting out to make a difference and who could have a greater influence than they could. Working in London, and with King's Talk, allows them to support in a region that they're not heavily represented in, and in a way that it is difficult for banks to do normally.

Implementation process

A working group was formed of key stakeholders within Virgin Money and the Kings Talk members to plan, agree and execute the plan of action for a series of events.

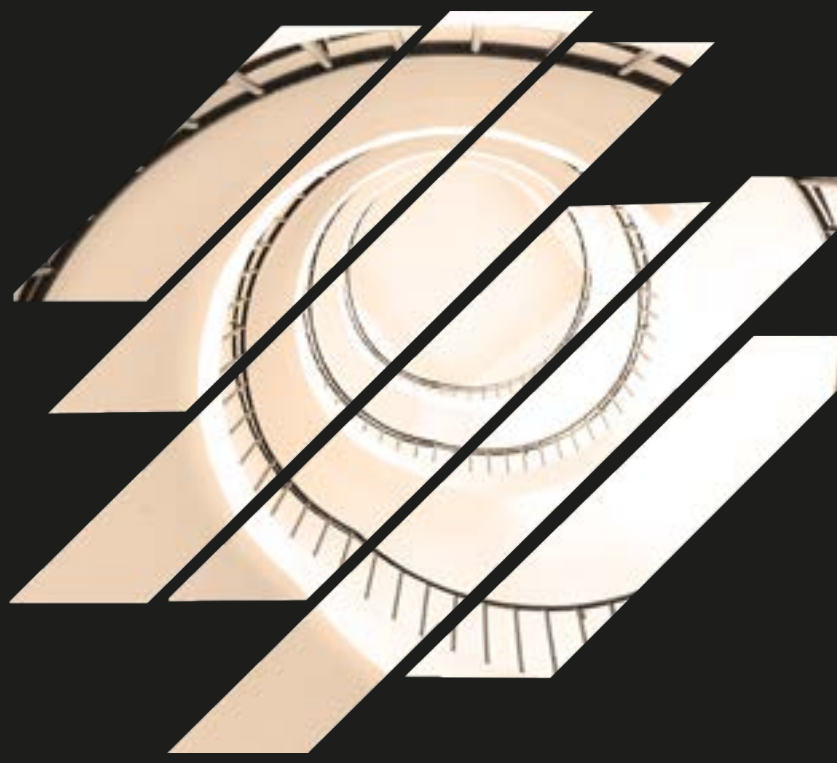
Implementation involved regular working group calls to establish an event order, speaker engagement, introduction and overview sessions, community engagement and social media promotion.

> **Kings Talk is a platform to champion Black men and provide a safe space to talk, learn and grow. It is a multimedia experience that encourages men to exchange, educate and empower one another. A space to connect and converse, taking people on a journey discussing and unpacking hard-hitting topics surrounding what it means to be a man, empowering one another and the wider audience through sharing of experiences.**

In April, Virgin Money's first event was a recruitment and careers masterclass event for around 200 participants hosted via Zoom. As part of a panel of speakers, they answered questions on approaching a new job search, being one's own advocate and what employers really look for. They also hosted a session with the participants on writing great CVs and making impactful applications. Additional stakeholders were engaged to ensure visibility of the programme, including across social media channels.

Over September 2021, Virgin Money have more events planned to support entrepreneurs from ethnic minority backgrounds, with internal speakers and colleagues at Virgin Start-Up. Topics include things like generating capital, managing cash flow and seeking out support when you need it.

WHAT'S NEXT?



While the case studies within this report point to where positive work is being done in support of Black inclusion, there is not a single organisation within or outside of this report who would make any claim of having successfully addressed racial inequity. The legacy of injustice towards Black individuals and how this has manifested in systemic racism is simply too great to dismantle in so short a time.

Every long journey needs a first step and this is what signing on to the If Not Now, When? campaign represents. Those organisations who have put forward case studies for this report felt they were ready to showcase some of their activity for the benefit of others. However, there were many other organisations whose initiatives were not established enough, or had yet to generate clear outcomes, to be able to put a focus on them at this stage. By the time of the next If Not Now, When? report we anticipate this will have changed and there will be many more lessons to share.

We also need to acknowledge that outside of If Not Now, When? and the commitments and support of a campaign to drive action, there will be many organisations doing much less, and much slower, than those featured here. The fear to even open a conversation about race and racism is still prevalent and many business leaders still remain ignorant of the need to address Black inclusion specifically or do not have the knowledge and resources to do so; despite the fact that the education and framework to drive change on this issues exists in a way that it didn't before 2020.

This needs to change as the excuses have been exhausted and inaction is no longer an option. Organisations that continue to fail when it comes to addressing diversity will find their position increasingly commercially and socially unacceptable.



IMAGE CREDIT: WOCINTECH | NAPPY.CO

JOIN THE IF NOW NOW, WHEN? CAMPAIGN

The If Not Now, When? campaign is a CEO-driven campaign focused on businesses over 500 UK employees. There is no charge to be involved and resources and events are provided for free.

If your CEO is not currently a signatory to the campaign then please direct them to our website at www.ifnotnowwhen.uk or ask them to contact us at ifnotnow@audeliss.com.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

If Now Now, When? is an initiative created by INvolve and Audeliss. Both organisations have a range of solutions to create more diverse and inclusive workplaces and increase representation in leadership.

INvolve: the inclusion people

INvolve is a consultancy and global network championing diversity and inclusion in business. Through the delivery of training, events, programs, thought leadership and advisory solutions, INvolve helps firms drive cultural change and create inclusive workplaces where any individual can succeed.

www.involvepeople.org

Audeliss: for a new perspective

Audeliss Executive Search level the playing field for diverse leaders in executive and board appointments. We believe diversity of thought is one of the biggest competitive advantages to any leadership team, so we engage our unique global networks to find exceptional talent who can bring a new perspective to your organisation.

www.audeliss.com

IF NOT NOW WHEN

info@involvepeople.org

https://ifnotnowwhen.uk/