



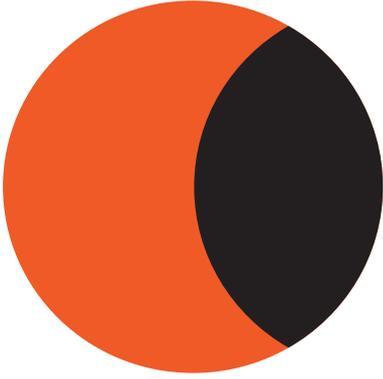
2020  
Progress  
Report



The CEO Pledge Progress Report



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## Introduction

Last year the MRS Diversity Council decided on a new initiative, designed to encourage a top down commitment to diversity of talent within the industry. The CEO pledge was formed.

The CEO pledge asks CEO's of research and data businesses to make five commitments that support diversity and inclusion.

These commitments include taking actions to close the gender pay gap, positively support and promote a wider mix of talent and to set goals and hold themselves accountable.

We now have over 25 businesses representing a large part of the UK research industry signed up to the pledge. We are working hard to increase this number to reach the target of 100 by the middle of next year.

The MRS has, with the help of Kantar Profiles and Versiti carried out industry wide research, over the last two years, with the latest in the last few months, to look at the issues and challenges we face while we are making progress the research shows there is still a lot to be done. This report highlights some of the latest key findings. The full report will be made available next year.

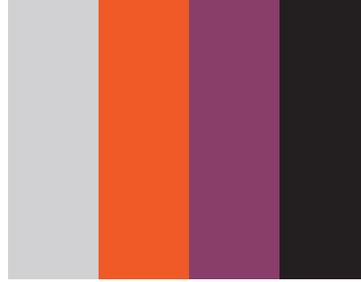
In addition to this, we interviewed some of the industry's most prominent CEO's and influencers and asked whether they could give us a unique perspective on some of the issues and challenges contained within the diversity and inclusion agenda, encouraging them to talk about an aspect of diversity that they connected to personally. We deliberately asked them to give us a unique, personal take, rather than talk to the broad scale issues that impact us all. What they said is captured in this report as a set of unique points of view. We hope they too make interesting reading.

Beyond this, we report back on some of the achievements that have been made by the early adopters of the CEO pledge. We hope this specific feedback gives inspiration and practical ideas for others to do more to support greater diversity and inclusion within our industry. Words are easy, it is the actions we take, internally within our own organisations and externally with others that will drive real change. It is also, of course important that we sustain the actions we take. I am proud of our industry; the steps it has already taken, its ambition to create further change and the leadership and commitment that has been shown by its CEO's thus far. Working together we can achieve so much more.



**Vanella Jackson, Global CEO Hall & Partners**

**MRS DI&E Committee Member**



## The original CEO Diversity Pledge

We believe that a sector that provides insight and evidence needs to be representative of the world it serves, and we are committed to creating an environment where the only barriers to progress are personal choice and professional competence.

**To that end, we commit to:**

**1**

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Publish pay statistics annually and demonstrate clear, sustained progress towards gender and BAME pay parity.

**2**

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Work towards ensuring all our staff are fully representative of the diversity of the UK.

**3**

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Work towards achievement of government targets on inclusion of women and BAME people at executive committee and Board level.

**4**

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Improve recruitment of a representative intake with initiatives such as ending unpaid internships and supporting school and university and apprenticeship programmes.

**5**

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Create safe places to work for all, committing to:

- timeTo Code of Conduct\*.
- A proactive culture that supports whistleblowing.
- Train staff to recognise and create systems to support those who need help for stress or mental health issues.

## CEO's who have signed the Diversity Pledge

Crispin Tarrant	BVA BDRC Group
Kirsty Fuller	Big Sofa
Felix Koch	C Space
Gary Laben	Dynata
Kenny Imafidon	Clearview Research
Jem Fawcus	Firefish
Warren Saunders	GfK
Ben Page	Ipsos MORI
Paul Twite and Frederic Charles	ITWP Group
Amy Cashman	Kantar
Caroline Frankum	Kantar Profiles Networks
Fiona Blades	MESH
Ginny Monk	Motif
Guy Goodwin	NatCen
Matthew Sell	Northstar
Peter Dann	The Nursery
James Endersby	Opinium
Michael Simmonds	Populus
Ali Camps	Quadrangle
Roger Perowne	Savanta Global
Nick Baker	Savanta UK
Vin De Robertis	Savanta Americas
Mark Squires	Watermelon
Steve Phillips	Zappi







# Why diversity matters



Words from MRS CEO

Jane Frost

A little over three years ago we launched the MRS Diversity and Inclusion programme, with the first survey of the issues the sector faces in attracting, welcoming and keeping diverse talent. Our sector's core philosophy, that "evidence matters" drove us to try, with the help of Kantar, to establish quantitatively the priority factors we needed to address. The evidence from the survey was clear that there was much work to be done in all areas from the basics of equal pay and representation to leadership and management practices.

We consulted far and wide and it was clear that we needed to make a bold statement of commitment from sector leaders as the central pillar of our work. With the help of Vanella Jackson and her volunteers the CEO Pledge was born.

The CEO Pledge is a clear statement of purpose. It commits CEO's to change and just as importantly to improve transparency with their staff. The Pledge covers the key areas of diversity which are common to all underrepresented groups and where there is supporting government data and targets it makes a firm commitment to those too.

The Pledge was never intended as a burden to businesses but as a call to action, a catalyst for change. With the support of clients, who increasingly ask procurement departments to specify the Pledge in their purchase specifications the Pledge activates the whole supply chain.

To put extra emphasis on the importance of inclusion in attracting the brightest talent the MRS board has established the MRS DI&E Council, with board member Babita Earle in the Chair. She and her council members have placed priority in escalating the numbers of companies signing up to the pledge. As we commit to further action, the latest wave of evidence from our evidence shows that we cannot let up, but I welcome this evidence of the change that has already been made.



Words from MRS President

Jan Gooding

This is meant to be an age of disruption, with change happening at a dizzying speed throughout business, culture and society. Yet the pace of change in how we create more inclusive cultures seems to me still depressingly glacial.

I always felt my generation would be the one to knock down the barriers to greater diversity and inclusivity. That we'd take our own experiences of prejudice and use them to build a better way of doing things. And yet here I am still having to make the case for something that seems so obvious - the more diverse a business culture is, the better the business will be in terms of productivity, profitability and better outcomes for customers. However, those who have the power to make a meaningful difference too often pay lip service to the diversity agenda or turn a blind eye.

I believe the research industry has the capacity to instigate a seismic transformation in making the culture of work and that of society more inclusive, diverse and empowering. Evidence-based measurement and inquiry spark honest conversations, encourage us to listen more intently, examine the evidence more carefully – and, hopefully, act upon it.

First, we need to understand why people still feel excluded. Despite decades of scholarly work, we in the marketing industry are still gifted amateurs when it comes to understanding diversity. We are, after all, meant to be a sector that shines a light on all of society through elaborate forms of questioning, interpretation and analysis, not just familiar parts of it. Even when I became Chair of Stonewall, it was sobering how much I didn't know about what makes us different, how we show conscious and unconscious biases, how instructive it is to be immersed in otherness and how vital it is that we expand our minds to think about how people are different and what they are hiding.

We must acknowledge that in life everyone is hiding something, not always because they want to. To combat that, we need to create an inclusive culture where people feel able to reveal who they are and what drives them. What makes them feel isolated and excluded. How their feelings – even if they are in a minority – are as valid as everyone else's. That when they say they feel discriminated against, people take notice rather than dismiss them out of hand.



Our industry should be having those conversations, be listening more actively, expressing thoughtfulness, accommodating people's differences and diversity will follow. Sometimes those conversations might be uncomfortable, but they will always be instructive, even the tiniest details. I remember at Aviva where I was Global Inclusion Director, one of our staff surveys revealed the insensitivity felt by a Muslim employee observing the Ramadan fast, amongst colleagues who placed a birthday cake for one of the team right next to her desk. A small thing perhaps but to that one person, it felt hugely important to who she was and her part in the corporate culture.

Listening, however, is just part of it. The second and far harder part, is acting on that information. For that, one solution is allyship and creating supportive associations with each other. For instance, the most important champions of women are men; the same way that straight people champion gays and the person with perfect hearing speaks up on the conference call for the colleague who struggles with deafness. Everyone is hiding something, and everyone can be an ally to someone to stop that 'secret' holding them back. The fewer things we feel we need to hide, the better our working culture will be.

I want us in this industry to display true leadership by bringing on those who are more vulnerable and give others the kind of access that we might take for granted. We may not be able to change the world, but we can have an enormous effect on personal spheres of influence.

In my career, I've felt discriminated against twice, quite apart from my time in the very male-dominated advertising industry. First, when I had children and then when I fell in love with a woman. They were moments in my life when I didn't express my feelings for fear of being different to, and judged by, those around me. Back then, I felt isolated. Today, I feel angry. It's 2020 and yet we're still talking about the need for greater inclusivity. Or not, as the case may be.

So, maybe through these small but significant acts within our market research industry, we can inspire a transformation that can inspire others to change, a little faster than I imagined it would happen when I set out on my career.



I hope to drive the change I want to see, where we have an industry that represents the society we measure and feels accessible to all. I am excited to collaborate with some amazing people and organisations who share this passion and together we will be accountable for making a difference. The industry and its clients need to make better and more inclusive decisions and this starts by us getting our house in order.

**Babita Earle**

Zappi EVP Strategy and Industry Partnerships  
Chair MRS DI&E Council

# MRS DI&E Council



**Babita Earle**  
Zappi EVP Strategy and Industry  
Partnerships  
Chair



**Caroline Frankum**  
Global CEO, Kantar Profiles Division  
Agency Representative



**Danielle Todd**  
Insight Director, Relish  
WiRe (Women in research) Representative



**Jane Frost**  
CEO, MRS



**Jake Seadman**  
VP Consumer Insight, Deliveroo  
Client Representative



**Kenny Imafidon**  
Co-founder, ClearView



**Michael Brown**  
Partner, Insight & Cross-Culture, UM  
MRSpride Representative



**Shazia Ginai**  
CEO, Neuro-Insight



**Shibu Pillai**  
Founder, Shrodhin Consulting



**Stephen Lacey**  
Founder, The Outsiders



**Theo Francis**  
Founder, GuineaPig Fieldwork  
Co-Founder, Colour of Research  
CRe Representative



**Vanella Jackson**  
Global CEO, Hall & Partners  
CEO Pledge Lead

# MRS DI&E Research 2020 Toplines

Two years ago, the MRS, in partnership with Kantar Profiles, commissioned its first industry wide report on the experiences of those employed in the research industry, in relation to diversity and inclusion. The results were surprising to many of us, identifying significant issues within our industry. This is despite that the industry already embraces a wide mix of people versus other industries, employs significant numbers of women, many in senior leadership roles and supports many with entrepreneurial spirit to run their own businesses. The MRS DI&E Kantar report made very disappointing reading.

The research has been repeated this year by Versiti, in order to help start to track out progress to a fairer, more inclusive and diverse industry. The survey was sent to sixteen thousand people working in our Industry and there were just under 500 completes. The following are some of the highlights, coming from the report which will be published in full at the beginning of 2021.

Overall, most people report a positive work experience in our industry. Many feel that they are given the opportunities and resources to work flexibly (86%), that they are a valued and essential part of their direct team (85%); that they get recognition for work well done (73%); that they belong at the company (70%); that they are a valued and essential part of their company (66%); that their unique attributes, characteristics, skills, experience and background are valued in their company (66%); that they are emotionally and socially supported at work (63%); and that they are given opportunities and support to learn and progress (61%).

However, despite all this there is no doubt that the findings, as they relate to diversity and inclusion, continue to show that we still have a long way to go to improve diversity and inclusion. People still feel that discrimination is rife and that prospects for people who are not white, straight, older and able-bodied men are curtailed. The following sets out some of the key highlights, in advance of the full report for us all to reflect on.

85%

feel they are valued and essential part of their direct team

86%

feel that they are given the opportunities and resources to work flexibly

66%

feel they are a valued and essential part of their company

73%

feel they get recognition for work well done

66%

feel that their unique attributes, characteristics, skills, experience and background are valued in their company

70%

feel they belong at the company

63%

feel that they are emotionally and socially supported at work

61%

they are given opportunities and support to learn and progress

# Highlights MRS Diversity and Inclusion Research 2020

## **1. The industry's workforce is not seen as representative of the diversity of society**

Only a third (32%) believe that 'their company attracts a workforce that represents the diversity of the whole community'.

## **2. The industry is not seen as meritocratic**

Most researchers think that women, working-class people, younger people, disabled people and people from ethnic minority backgrounds do not have the same opportunities to progress and are not rewarded fairly.

## **3. On all measures, perceptions of fairness and inclusion are worse among women and ethnic minority groups**

Only 9% of ethnic minority researchers believe that they are treated fairly and have the same opportunities as other colleagues.

## **4. Pay inequality is real**

Women who work full-time, report earnings of £15,000 a year less than their male colleagues. The pay gap is widest among those with the most years of experience. Ethnic minority and disabled researchers also report earning significantly less than their white British and able-bodied colleagues.

## **5. Discrimination and inappropriate behaviour at work is experienced often**

Most researchers have personally experienced or witnessed discriminatory or inappropriate behaviour over the past year. Only a small fraction of incidents get reported, either because employees do not trust the process for escalating and dealing with complaints, because the person involved is a line manager or senior leader, or because researchers fear that reporting concerns might have a negative impact on their career.

## **6. Concerns about DI&E impact staff retention**

Roughly a quarter of all employees who are not older, white, straight and able-bodied men have considered leaving or left their company because of concerns linked to DI&E. 17% of 'indies' and those working

in micro-businesses left their previous employment because of discrimination; and 29% of self-employed people said that issues linked to DI&E were part of their decisions to work as freelancers, independent researchers or to start or join a micro business.

**7. Older, white, straight and able-bodied men, are less likely to recognise the pervasiveness of workplace discrimination and inequalities**

They are much less attuned to the reality of discrimination and its impacts than their female colleagues and those who belong to any visible minority groups.

**8. However, there is growing awareness of the issues**

Except for older white straight and able-bodied men, people are very aware of the issues and that they care about making a difference.

**9. Young people care deeply about inclusion and increasingly look for workplaces that reflect their values**

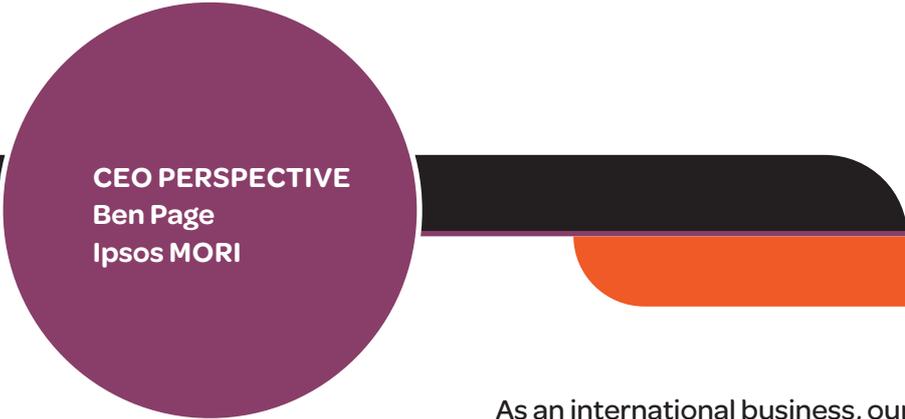
They are more prepared to act as allies and champion the need for change.

**10. The LGBTQ+ community, by contrast have a positive work experience**

On all measures, LGBTQ+ researchers have a better workplace experience than their straight colleagues. They report earning more, on average, than their straight colleagues.

Source: Dr Marie-Claude Gervais, Research Director Versiti

These results continue to be disappointing and underline a real need for us to work together and commit to driving significant change. Diversity and inclusion have been on the agenda for some time and many actions have been taken, but much more needs to be done to create a fairer, more inclusive industry. These results clearly suggest a problem that needs to be tackled in more significant and impactful ways, with tangible commitment and action coming from the top to the bottom of our industry.



CEO PERSPECTIVE

Ben Page  
Ipsos MORI

As an international business, our success depends upon us having a strong sense of diversity within our ranks and celebrating that diversity. The 120 different nationalities, cultures and ethnic minorities represented just here in our UK headquarters ensure that our work remains relevant, forward-thinking and insightful. We have to reflect not just Britain but the world, so being diverse is at the centre of our success.

However, like any business the situation isn't perfect, and we are always at risk of succumbing to group-think if we end up recruiting people just like us. In market research that often means white, middle-class and conventionally educated people, particularly the higher up the ladder you find yourself.

That has to change, and it is already changing, with those at the top showing real leadership in meeting the challenges of greater diversity and inclusivity. It has required us to get creative with constructive and systematic remedies, disrupting the workplace status quo.

For instance, we have senior executives with an Asian background but not nearly enough with an Afro-Caribbean background. That's partly because we don't get enough applicants. We can't just wait for these people to find us; we have to find them. The onus is on us to do more, especially because many of those from a minority background don't even consider market research as a profession, law, medicine, banking and accountancy are front of their minds. We need to demonstrate to young people how exciting an industry we can be for the future health of business, culture and society.

So as an experiment we've ended the need for new applicants to have a degree. Instead, we're setting a series of tests to assess their skills and suitability. We're also involved in two academies in London where, on average, two thirds of the attending children come from households where English is not the first language and where many parents have never been to university. We're encouraging staff there to

recommend IPSOS as a place to work or gain an apprenticeship. We're also behind a global initiative with refugees, taking our longstanding work with disadvantaged children and families a stage further. Refugee children frequently miss out on even the most basic education and so we're taking them on as employees to help them fulfil their ambitions and further their career prospects.

We're also changing the way we view ageing. Why does employment for those aged over 55 fall off a cliff when, in fact, we're heading to an era where we're likely to retire at the age of 70? How can you create jobs for older, experienced people so they can stay, whilst making sure that younger members continue to be promoted? Perhaps those with more mature careers can be given greater flexibility. It's about trying to find different kinds of solutions instead of idly repeating what we've always done. In fact, flexible working is very much part of our culture here. It helps us to be more inclusive and has reduced staff turnover.

We're trying to make a difference in a variety of ways, not just because it's the right thing to do but because it also makes good commercial sense. Greater diversity enables us to provide richer, broader and more accurate insights because we're able to utilise the myriad skills of a workforce drawn from different corners of life.

And, of course, we're measuring our progress too. It means that our specially constructed Diversity and Inclusion Group doesn't just see how things are changing but also helps us answer the question as to why some aspects of workplace culture aren't so easy to change. Find those answers and the measurements we take will have more significant impact.

It's those of us at the top who need to try hardest to enact solutions to greater diversity. That's our challenge. Meeting it head-on, no matter how uncomfortable it makes us feel, will ensure that our industry matters more and the work we do for clients becomes even more meaningful.



The industry has a lot of work to do and I am honoured to be part of this journey. My hope is that we can truly re-shape the industry for the better. The industry skews to being very white heterosexual male dominated at the top, there is a real lack of racial diversity and the biases that exist result in injustice up and down the professional ladders. As a woman of colour who managed to get to the position of CEO, I don't often see people like me in my peer group. It's time to truly drive equality and equity across all groups.

**Shazia Ginai**  
CEO Neuro-Insight  
MRS DI&E Council





# The impact of Black Lives Matter

While the MRS Diversity and Inclusion initiative had been up and running for some time, the events of the summer put our goals into sharp focus. The 'Black Lives Matter' movement has ignited the collective energy and commitments of not just our industry, but the world.

It has helped create an urgent rallying call to everyone whether they had been pursuing a diversity agenda or not. It has helped generate more passion, energy and above all a commitment to get things done.

Every business spoke of how their people were impacted, that the issues the movement raised created a huge outpouring of emotion and a desire to do something. This meant that diversity and inclusion, while already important for many businesses, was put front and centre of discussions with employees and within management teams. It has been a much-needed catalyst to help propel us forward faster. The challenge now is to ensure that Diversity and Inclusion remains at the top of the agenda, with the conversation kept visible, energised and alive. Let's not lose the passion and emotion that 'Black Lives Matter' surfaced, to help propel us forward.

**IN THEIR OWN WORDS...****BVA BDRG GROUP**

We were approached by some members of staff looking to raise funds for the Black Lives Matter organisation. It became an agenda item at our next Board meeting and prompted much discussion.

A message was sent to all staff, reinforcing our commitment to diversity and equal opportunity and suggesting the Runnymede Trust, the UK's leading independent race equality think tank, as a recipient of donations.

**BIG SOFA TECH**

It had quite an impact with a serious questioning of what we were doing as a business to address diversity issues. We re-announced the MRS Pledge and then decided to create a Diversity Board. As CEO I am part of our Diversity Board along with two permanent members and then three people who rotate every six months. We are committed to ensuring this is not a 'side-line' conversation which is why the CEO is part of it.

**HALL & PARTNERS**

There was a strong response from the business across all our offices, with lots of people wanting to get involved in making a difference. There has also been a lot of emotion and anger. We initially focused on giving our people outlets to share how they feel. We held 'Open House' discussions to discuss and reflect on what people had felt and experienced. We then created a cross office global D&I committee of thirty engaged people, from all levels and backgrounds. This group helped us co-create our diversity 'Manifesto for Change', which is made up of three overarching commitments, with a specific set of actions for achieving each.

**NORTHSTAR**

It started conversations and really pushed the 'Diversity Task Force and other existing initiatives into action and has mobilised staff to become more vocal across the business.

**SAVANTA**

The recent 'Black Lives Matter' movement reaffirmed our commitment to tackling prejudice, our collective solidarity with all people of colour, and our support for racial equality. The reignited momentum of the BLM movement following the killing of George Floyd was felt particularly strongly among colleagues in our New York office. The sentiment was shared by UK colleagues, including a prominent member of our Client Development Team who shared an 'Open Letter' to the business expressing her distress and call for action as a black woman living in London.

**CEO PERSPECTIVE**  
**Stephen Phillips**  
**Zappi**

Throughout my career in market research, I've watched the industry get to grips with diversity, from where I sit, it's certainly more diverse in terms of gender and ethnicity. However, here at Zappi, we've faced a slightly different issue. We're both a market research and technology company with the latter of these industries traditionally being dominated by men. It's something that I hope we can significantly change.

So, a while ago we set up a special DOTI team, Diversity of Thought and Inclusivity, to deal with the issue of workplace culture. We're a global market research and technology company of 200 people, with offices around the world and feet in both camps.

We have people with PhDs in quantum mechanics working alongside colleagues with, no degree, doing roughly the same job. That kind of diversity works brilliantly. Educational background is often irrelevant when we're trying to fill technology positions. Other roles might suit graduates, particularly those that entail a certain amount of confidence in front of clients that a conventional education can provide. But that's not the case for all roles. In sales and build, for instance, where so much of our growth is at the moment, educational attainment is not a pre-requisite to getting in the door here. So, having that kind of diversity within the office environment makes us a better company – and me a better leader.

As a CEO without a tech background, I'm a better listener and decision-maker, perhaps even more collegiate than I used to be because of how diverse we are. I'm more aware of internal issues before they're allowed to fester and can see and appreciate different points of view with much greater clarity and understanding. Things are changing and, hopefully, as people with more diverse backgrounds rise through the ranks, the make-up of this industry, whether it's market research or technology, will continue to adapt.

Above all, though, what I hope will happen is that we see more women in technology, engineering, software and coding roles. Having such a diversity of gender, background and thought is not just good for business but society too.



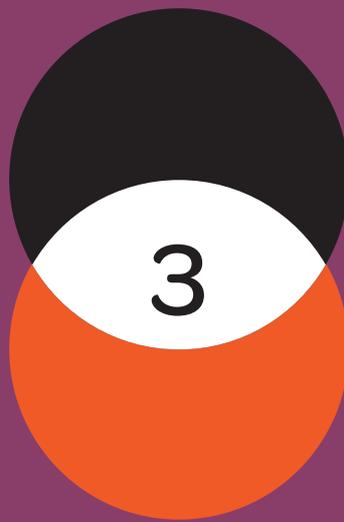
I feel privileged to be a part of a group of passionate individuals committed to creating positive change for diversity and inclusion in our industry at all levels. Our aims are far reaching; from attracting the best diverse talent to sustain and grow our industry, to raising awareness and understanding of underrepresented communities and groups. I am hopeful that as this group works together, we can help drive the changes required.

**Shibu Pillai**

Strategic systems integration and  
optimisation consultant  
MRS DI&E Council

A blue neon sign is mounted on a brick wall. The sign features three lines of text in a cursive font: "Be the Buzz", "You Wish to See", and "In the World". The first line is underlined. The sign is set against a dark background with a large orange rounded rectangle above it and a purple-to-pink gradient on the right side.

Be the Buzz  
You Wish to See  
In the World



# Big Achievements in 2020

A lot has been achieved throughout 2020, both before and after the killing of George Floyd and the campaigning around the 'Black Lives Matter' movement. It would be easy to think this was a reaction to what happened earlier in the year, and to some degree this is true. However, most of those signed up to the CEO Pledge were already well on their way to make a difference with the initiatives they had already put in place. Nevertheless, it is clear that 'Black Lives Matter' had a galvanising effect. What is encouraging was to see many of the initiatives being inspired by the 'MRS CEO Pledge' and relating closely to the specific commitments within it. Much of the focus has been internally ensuring that there was space to have a constructive and open conversations on diversity and inclusion. There is evidence of a clear commitment to bringing in a broader range of talent into the industry, with lots of specific actions around unbiased recruitment and talent sourcing. There has also been a strong emphasis on how to create safe environments, where people are encouraged to speak up when they see and or experience discrimination of any kind. Most of our CEO's have worked with their HR teams to carry out an overhaul of their internal policies and recruitment practices. There is real evidence that staff engagement has been high, with a wide range of people getting involved in specific internal initiatives. Getting their internal houses in order seems to be the key area of focus.

However, it is also encouraging to see some looking externally and committing to actions that aim to impact further afield. These include setting up shared community initiatives, doing research and talking about it on public platforms and doing more to champion representativeness in the communities we serve. Overall, there seems much to be proud of in terms of intention and real action. Again, the 'proof will be in the pudding', how well these initiatives can be sustained and how far they will travel. And how we can expect the change that started internally, can gather momentum collectively and externally. If we are going to make a real difference, we need to become a shining example of an industry that represents people in all aspects of what we do. And championing and supporting everyone to be heard within our society.

The following is a list of the things each CEO identifies as the key highlights of what has been achieved during 2020.


 IN THEIR OWN WORDS...
**BVA BDRC GROUP**

We have reported on pay by gender in the main BVA BDRC agency and trained and supported staff on mental health issues and whistle blowing.

We trained all staff in mental health issues and how to support colleagues if they are struggling. The face to face sessions raised a number of issues that we were able to address, and the channels put in place for staff to raise issues have been shown to work.

**BIG SOFA TECH**

The highlights have been key female promotions and establishment of Diversity Board. This included the promotion of a woman to the most senior leadership level.

**FIREFISH**

We are now putting these issues on the agenda where they belong.

**HALL & PARTNERS**

The strong response from our business across all our offices was the highlight of this year. Lots of people wanting to get involved in making a difference. We decided that we would create a 'Manifesto for Change, setting ourselves three overarching goals and specific actions against each:

*Promote understanding*

Share information and insight into the lives, experiences, history and culture of BIPOC and BAME groups to empower our people to challenge inequality through an ongoing programme of learning.

*Be inclusive*

Proactively increase the diversity of our teams and develop, promote and champion diverse talent, creating an inclusive culture for all.

*Demand representation*

Champion true representation, ensuring our work and our clients marketing accurately represents all the communities we serve.

Specific actions include:

- The creation of our Global D&I Committee
- Introducing diversity and inclusion training for everyone and committing to a continued programme of learning
- Open discussions about BLM and inequality within the business and personally as a group of people
- Creation of 'Voices' our multi-cultural marketing consultancy, to champion better, more inclusive multicultural marketing and advertising.
- Carrying out our own research, in partnership with Dynata, on the issues related to effective and appropriate multicultural marketing.

## **IPSOS**

We created a vision and Roadmap 2025 and Service Line (business unit) specific plans. We now have strong, active employee led networks (Reach (BAME), Pride (LGBTQI+), Parents, Women, EU Nationals and Neurodiversity).

We have changed entry requirements to the 'Graduate Training Programme', which led to a tangible impact on the diversity and balance of gender and ethnicity in our 2019 graduate hires.

Raised the profile of employee networks and their relationship with the Management Committee and 'Belong' diversity and inclusion team. Run regular discussion panels open to all employees (attendance often up to 200).

## **KANTAR**

We underlined how diversity drives innovation and creativity, enabling us to better serve the needs of our clients. We reinforced that inclusion creates a culture of belonging, where everyone is empowered to succeed.

Key areas of internal progress we have made include:

- Creation of internal I&D Steering Committees
- Implementing Empowering Growth Mentoring
- Implementing clear, accountable targets for increasing Female representation at senior leadership
- Creation and ongoing evolution of safe ERG Communities
- Safe Sharing Sessions

- Creating an Ally/Ambassador Ethnicity Mentoring Programme and an 8 Point Plan Ethnicity work stream in the UK
- Launching our Extraordinary People Week across the globe

Our focus was not only internal, but also external. We created the Inclusion Index, to help our clients shine a spotlight on inclusion, diversity and equality in the workplace. We partnered with UN Women and the 'Unstereotype Alliance', on a ground-breaking research study in ten countries, to provide insight into gender attitudes and social norms. We partnered with Diva Magazine (the world's largest Lesbian magazine) and Lesbian Visibility Week to launch the largest ever survey addressing the needs of LGBTQI women in the UK.

#### **MESH**

Our Management team discussed the MRS CEO Pledge and raised awareness of our commitment as a leadership group. We have conducted an employee survey and mentioned the CEO pledge in ESOMAR Research World article.

#### **NATCEN**

We refreshed our focus to fully embed our intersectional approach, supporting equal opportunities for minority and marginalised groups.

#### **NORTHSTAR**

We have several highlights of the progress we have made during 2020, these include:

- Carrying out a 360 blind spot review involving completing our first staff satisfaction survey in 5 years with a module on inclusion and diversity
- Implicit bias testing at management level
- Recruitment process review
- Creating a Diversity Task Force
- Introducing 'Mind' mental health training in the workplace at management level

- Implementing mental health and wellbeing support services for all staff
- Launching of the 'Diversity Task Force'.
- Establishing 'Women of Northstar'

### **OPINIUM**

As CEO, I elected to be judged on employee wellbeing levels alongside revenue and valuation growth. I have made myself accountable to both. We also carried out compulsory unconscious bias training earlier this year.

### **SAVANTA**

Our highlights have been the creation of four Committees, designed to support a more diverse and inclusive environment:

- Diversity & Inclusion
- Health & Wellbeing
- Charities & Volunteering
- Social Committee

We also reviewed our recruitment practices, looked at pay and rewards and training, including the following specific initiatives.

We introduced a robust Global Recruitment and Selection Policy and implemented an audit on practices to identify weak points and uphold Savanta standards of fairness and equal opportunity.

Alongside the policy, we introduced a highly collaborative applicant tracking system that quickly became our standard practice, along with a central Talent Acquisition Manager, upholding and enforcing best practice end-to-end. It included supporting materials as 'Interview Templates', 'Guidance on Minimum Standards' and a strategy on mitigating 'Unconscious Bias' being introduced.



CEO PERSPECTIVE  
Warren Saunder  
GFK

One of the main reasons I've shifted career from technology into market research is simply that there are few more exciting places to be right now than here. Data and insight fuel the way business is done and enable brands to achieve a more meaningful relationships with consumers. We have the potential not just to be at the centre of these conversations but to make them happen too.

However, successfully leveraging that influence also depends upon us having vibrant conversations amongst ourselves. Honest discussions about how to foster greater inclusiveness and diversity within the industry.

I hope that the experience of people such as myself can help to inspire those conversations. Coming from a different industry has enabled me to see things in a fresh light to others, who have a more formal market research background.

First of all, we need to make a noise about how exciting it is to work in this industry. We are very often at the cutting edge of technology and innovation, our behavioural analytics help to shape and measure society, businesses rely upon us to help them make transformational decisions. By shouting a little bit about who we are and what we do and being bolder at selling ourselves in the overt ways that other data-fuelled companies often do, I'm convinced we can attract new and more diverse recruits from an array of different backgrounds. We need to make our brand as attractive as possible to more people.

Second, we need to be an industry with far broader skill sets. I'm a perfect example – a career spent in technology companies has given me a perspective that is perhaps a little different to others. We need to fill our marketer ranks with technologists and storytellers, creatives need to work with commercial specialists, numbers people exchanging ideas with behavioural analysts. Industry leaders need to break down silos and forge more interesting partnerships with people whose skills are different to our own. Through these multi-layered collaborations, we can create a more diverse industry that celebrates difference

rather than inhibits it. In an environment that's changing so rapidly, understanding where consumers are going rather than where they've been needs skills, culture and gender diversity.

Third, we need to be better at reaching out to younger people from different backgrounds and enabling their progress. There's a tendency sometimes for us to be too metropolitan, a bit too London-orientated with graduates cut from the same cloth. During my time with technology companies, that sameness was even more stark. Women were far outnumbered by men, particularly the higher up the ladder you got. Which is why we are planning to introduce a series of talks within GfK from pioneering female leaders within the technology industry to explain to our teams how they made it, what advice they'd give and why gender should never be a barrier to pursuing your ambitions, whether that's within technology or elsewhere. Hearing these stories through our Women's Network and being inspired by them can again help us to achieve more diversity, enabling people, especially women, to take that step up.

But all of this won't happen overnight. Change, whilst essential, is also gradual. It's a journey. The more we talk about it, the more conversations we have with each other, the more effective those changes will be. It comes down to wanting to challenge ourselves to be better. To be better role models, better recruiters, better leaders, better listeners, better at measuring our own performances, better at attracting a broad spectrum of people, better at having uncomfortable conversations and better at analysing what those conversations tell us about the industry that we work in.

Market research is already a pioneer in diversifying the workplace, but we can't rest on our laurels. We have to do better and ensure that, through constant measurement and analysis, diversity stays front-of-mind and that, through greater enablement, we don't always take the easy option.



As an industry we have a privileged and important role to play in reflecting the diverse world we serve, to help influence and shape society in ways that drive sustainable, equitable growth. As a team, we represent a diverse group of creative, inclusive, experienced innovators who understand the importance of creating an industry where everyone is empowered to succeed. So, I am really looking forward to providing support that helps others grow, drives real change and achieves results for the betterment of us all.

**Caroline Frankum**

Global CEO, Kantar Profiles Division

MRS DI&E Council





# The challenges

The journey, towards achieving greater diversity and inclusion in 2020, has not always been straight forward and easy. The 'Black Lives Matter' movement, while putting a vital spotlight on the need to do more to create real change did also unleash a great deal of frustration and emotion that some found challenging to deal with. Also, the very practical challenges of running businesses during the Covid-19 pandemic, when unsurprisingly revenues have been suppressed and recruitment cut back, has meant progress in some areas has been restrained and held back.

Several also highlight the longer-term challenge of attracting and bringing a wider range of diverse talent into the industry. Highlighting that the industry is not traditionally socially diverse and that more needs to be done to bring more young people in at the outset. This year has seen its very particular challenges, but there are, nevertheless some significant systemic challenges that we need to find new ways to overcome. We hope that in 2021, we can work together to find some fresh, exciting and sustainable ways to attract different kinds of much needed new talent into our industry and tackle the other barriers to progress once and for all.

**IN THEIR OWN WORDS...****BVA BDRG GROUP**

Dealing with the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has naturally been the main challenge, which means that plans for changes to the recruitment process have been delayed as opportunities are currently so limited.

**HALL & PARTNERS**

We are already a diverse group, particularly in terms of gender, with many of our most senior people being women. However, we recognise that we are not consistently representative of the communities we serve, in terms of ethnicity. Although our 'Diversity and Inclusion Committee' includes those from minority groups, it can sometimes feel like our initiatives and discussions are being led by the white voices in the room. We are proactively looking at ways we can ensure every voice gets heard.

**IPSOS**

It was challenging sometimes to read the mood surrounding 'Black Lives Matter' and find an appropriate response. We worked closely with our Reach (BAME) network to engage and establish a dialogue. We need to strike a balance between management and employees on how we get this all done. Employees want the company and its management to act and do. They don't want it all coming from the networks themselves.

The aim of having greater diversity at senior levels (in research) is really difficult. The industry itself is not particularly diverse. It will take time to create real change at the senior level.

**KANTAR**

We are focusing on making a more direct, evidence-based connection on why diversity and inclusion is critical for our business. We are all learning the importance of striking the right balance between responding now and authentically on important social issues that our employees care passionately about, whilst also taking time to address the issues in sustainable ways.

**MESH**

Covid-19 has meant that we are on a hiring freeze, so tackling the need to increase diversity within teams has been challenging.

**NATCEN**

The only real challenge we have faced is we need to capture better data on our staff demographics, so that we can take more targeted action to address any imbalances.

**NORTHSTAR**

Carrying out and completing all that we are committed to during the Covid-19 pandemic.

**POPULUS**

We signed the pledge at the beginning of March 2020. Since then the businesses attention has been on planning and then implementing our response to the Covid-19 pandemic, shifting from office-based work to working from home. Through this period, we have stressed the importance of empathy and recognising the challenges that colleagues are facing.

Over the last few weeks, I have begun to look again at our diversity and inclusion plans, as part of a wider company re-organisation.

**SAVANTA**

Some challenges in Committee meeting attendance owing to capacity and workload constraints – broadly overcome through online meetings, access to recordings of online meetings and sharing follow-up communications to all members;

Some challenges in coordinating and realising projects/ideas due to capacity and workload constraints, exacerbated by 70+ colleagues taking up the furlough scheme;

Exceptional challenges in attracting suitably qualified BAME talent, particularly at mid to senior level vacancies in our UK offices, from a limited BAME talent pool.

Difficulty in managing Pay & Promotion transparency in a fast-moving M&A environment – often pay bands and job titles not aligned in newly acquired businesses. Existing gender and ethnic make-up of acquired businesses may skew overall progress (and any lack of) made by the overall Savanta group.

**ZAPPI**

Increasing diversity when structural realities make it hard e.g. the number of male vs. female applicants for engineering roles. We have now made a conscious decision to slow down and accept the costs of doing so, in order to meet our diversity recruitment goals.



**CEO PERSPECTIVE**  
**Amy Cashman**  
**KANTAR**

Maintaining and encouraging that work-life balance is one of our industry's great challenges as we strive towards creating a more diverse and inclusive environment - to provide conditions in which people can live their lives beyond career expectations.

After all, this industry is meant to reflect and understand human behaviour. Experiencing life and being a part of that wider conversation is as crucial to what we do as poring over data at our desks. People need the flexibility to do a good job and have the life they want outside of work. It's good for them and it's good for business. The market research industry isn't alone in needing to better understand how a person contributes to an organisation, focusing on their outputs rather than their inputs. Is your team happy, are your clients happy and is your work making a difference to the company as a whole? If so, who cares where you're working from on a Friday afternoon.

If it wasn't for flexible working conditions, I wouldn't have been able to enjoy the career I've so far had. I've had a variety of roles and experiences which have, in turn, led me to be more empathetic and understanding with both colleagues and clients.

All of us have different needs, backgrounds, talents, genders, ethnicities, responsibilities and desires. Having a melting pot of those diverse ingredients and behaviours makes for better companies. Because that's what we do. We study life, question it, measure it and analyse it. The more human that we can be at work, the more insightful our assessment of human behaviour will be.

That means working flexibly. As a mother of three children whose career was affected by the life choices I made, I understand how important it is to dedicate a period of time to family without having it impact on your work progression. And then, on the return to work, to ensure that parental life is not unfairly burdened by traditional working habits. Just because you don't work a classic nine-to-five pattern for five days a week, it doesn't mean that you're not doing a great job.

Sometimes it feels like we haven't progressed very far from the 20th century construct of working life, you can be breadwinner or homemaker, never the two combined. Cultural shifts and technological advances mean that it need not be an either-or choice. Which is why those in leadership roles have to be more determined than ever to change things, to allow diversity and inclusivity to flourish by rewriting the rules of work.

Flexibility enables people's working lives to become part of their entire lives, not separated from it. It's not simply about being a parent. We have members of staff who are able to look after their elderly parents due to flexible hours. Some have special physical requirements which means a regular nine-to-five just isn't practical.

Others have lifelong ambitions they want to fulfil, writing books or working with charities, for instance. One of my colleagues is a dedicated member of his local church and now works four days a week so he can spend one weekday to actively participate in his church and study theology. The more that we experience life, the greater our understanding of what life is all about. Because that is market research, human understanding. And we need to be at the heart of it. Leaders need to show the way and inspire those around them to see flexibility as a natural part of the job rather than something special. If I want to be at my sons' music concert, then there's no question I'll make it. My work won't suffer because I have family commitments and I'd never assume that my leadership role entitles me to special dispensation.

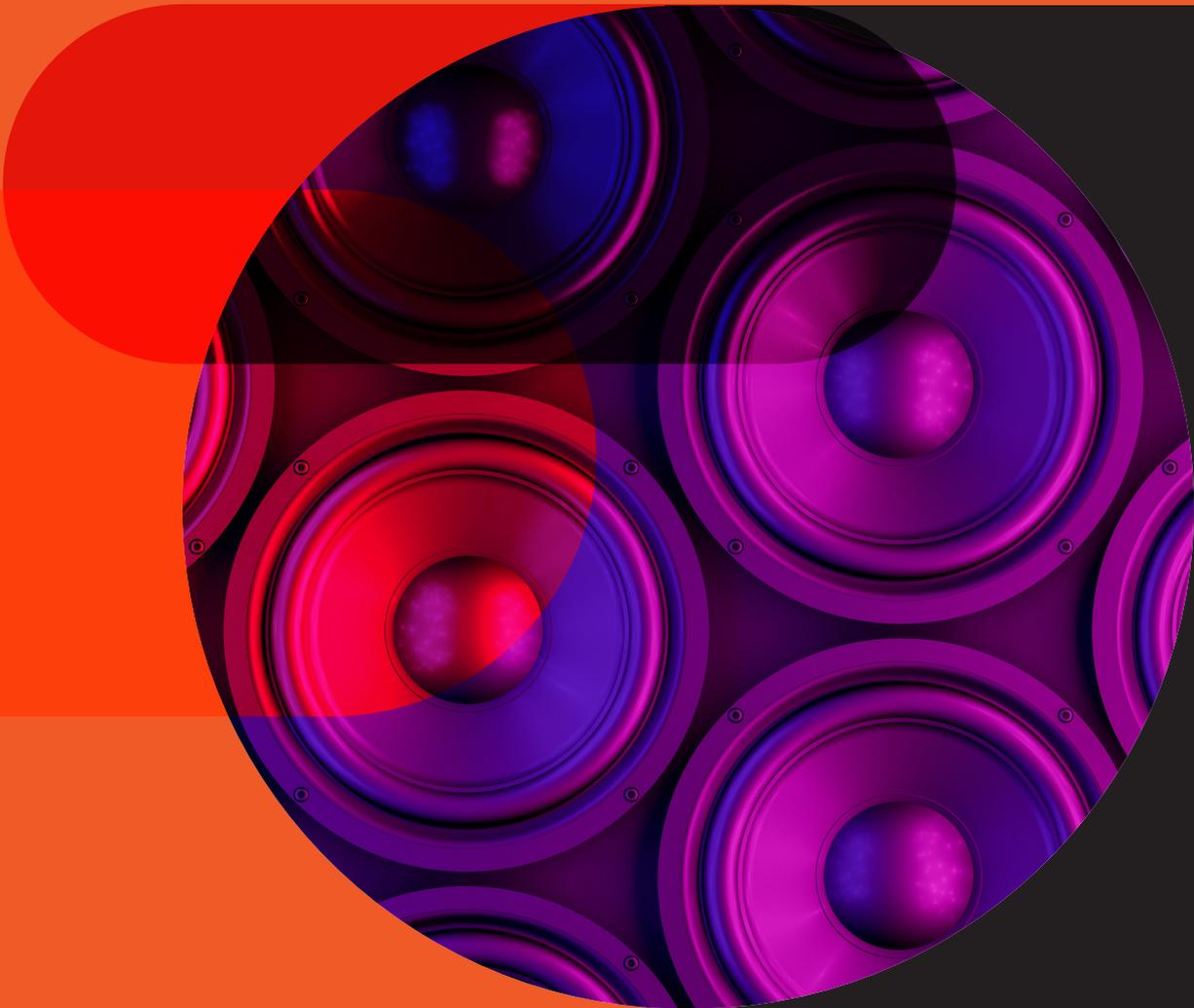
I want all of my colleagues to know that balancing work and home is not a privilege, it's a right. And that the more diverse human experiences we can be a part of, the more effective our work will be.



The formation of this council is a truly important step forward for our sector. Diversity is a very diverse thing, so a group that unifies those causes and helps to amplify our individual voices through collective thought and collaboration has the potential to be extremely powerful. I'm really excited to be part of this council and look forward to working with the great minds we have in the team to drive forward meaningful change in our industry.

**Theo Francis**

Founder, GuineaPig Fieldwork  
Co-Founder, Colour of Research  
MRS DI&E Council





Lessons to share

The lessons to share span both some practical ideas and guidance, as well as some encouraging and inspiring advice. We have been impressed by the openness and willingness to share with others, the things that have made a real difference. We hope they create a valuable checklist for others, when thinking through their own diversity and inclusion strategies and policies. What the advice demonstrates is that change is never easy, sometimes it takes real courage, as well as vital conviction to make a difference. It is easy to confine progress to policy changes; this feels easy and safe. But to create real change it needs to first be uncomfortable, as some of the businesses have experienced.

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

### **BIG SOFA TECH**

Staff in their 20s expect public statements not just internal commitments. Say clearly, we should be judged by actions not words.

### **HALL & PARTNERS**

Don't be afraid to have difficult conversations.

Create different environments, methods and outlets for learning, to make it accessible for all.

Use our unique skills and influence as researchers to make a difference  
Report progress back to the business to keep people informed and hold us accountable.

Six task forces who each have a senior sponsor to keep us on track and report progress back to the wider business.

Keeping up the momentum on our initiatives can be challenging, particularly during intensely busy times

### **IPSOS**

Create dedicated, passionate networks (employee research groups) with strong leadership and connections to the Management Board.

Take real action for change and seeing the difference it can make and momentum you can achieve. Bringing committed people together with a common, positive goal.

More diverse graduate population. We achieved this by taking a risk and removing traditional entry requirements to allow more people to access our programme.

Creating an Allyship programmes led by the LGBTQ+ and Reach networks – this really engages a wide audience in helping to effect change.

Panel discussions (in person or virtually during Covid). They are usually led by Networks and have had a big impact. They have a theme and involve people from all levels sharing their personal stories and experiences.

Getting comms right with the right tone. Navigating different views, opinions and priorities. Ensuring employees know what we are doing in this space. Making sure that you reach everyone and understand that people are coming from different perspectives and starting points. Recognise that people always want the company to be doing 'more'.

**MESH**

It is important not simply to look at ethnic diversity but at ethnic stereotypes too. For instance, we may have a diverse workforce, but do we have diversity within our account handling team and within our data team.

**NATCEN**

Extra effort to engage with people on wellbeing and promoting a good work/life balance.

It has been beneficial to partner with our staff led Equality & Diversity group and LGBT+ network.

People on wellbeing and promoting a good work/life balance and we have received positive feedback.

**NORTHSTAR**

Working with our outsource HR department has been fundamental to a business of our size to navigate this challenge.

**THE NURSERY**

We have presented the Pledge at a company wide video call and been transparent about our intentions and plans for the future.

**OPINIUM**

You can see your salaries, start ensuring that there are no gaps – its not that hard to do.

Put your people joint-first and judge yourself on employee wellbeing levels and revenues, it may be scary, but it sure ensures you focus!

Given that the pledge is not a forced instant fix, but is a commitment to an ongoing strategy, I have not had many negative experiences.

I guess a message to very small, growing agencies would be, focus on ensuring that you nail down your policies and your moral compass based on the areas of the pledge. Focus on ensuring you have diverse recruiting strategies.

Also, you can see your salaries, start ensuring that there are no gaps it's not that hard to do.

**ZAPPI**

We had feedback that we were developing a loudest voice wins culture in some meetings and this was at the cost of inclusive working and decision making. To address this, we placed more emphasis on effective facilitation - using post its and digital boards and other decision-making techniques to incorporate a range of perspectives.

**CEO PERSPECTIVE**  
**Vanella Jackson**  
**Hall & Partners**

Everything is in disorder these days. Health, politics, finance, business, culture; the level of disruption caused by our current global turmoil means that the order that we were once so accustomed to has collapsed. So, disorder has become short-hand for a problem, an issue that needs to be solved, a fault-line that needs to be corrected.

That very often may be true. Yet, sometimes we use the same word to describe something we don't understand, merely because it is not what we might consider to be 'normal'. In particular, neurological 'disorders' such as dyslexia, which society has deemed to be a flaw in brain patterns. Parents fear for their dyslexic children's prospects, school systems struggle to accommodate dyslexics' alternative ways of thinking and behaving, whilst businesses fail to understand the undoubted benefits that different skills and less conventional behaviours might bring.

Because dyslexia is seen as a disorder, it is also seen as a problem. As someone who has battled with the condition their entire life, I can promise you this: it is an advantage, a gift that has lain hidden among my fellow dyslexics for too long. It's time to let this diversity shine, especially in the world of brand marketing.

And especially at this moment, when there is such complexity in our lives. We're buffeted by winds of chaos in which rule-breaking has become the norm. Loyalties – to brands, leaders and philosophies – are more fragile than ever. Unpredictability is making our working lives less harmonious and more precarious. Perhaps, then, we need people who can instinctively simplify complexities because that's what they've been doing their entire lives.

It doesn't surprise me, for instance, that according to Cass Business School in London, at least 20 per cent of the UK's business self-starters have dyslexia. In America, it estimates that 35 per cent of company founders identified themselves as dyslexic, compared with 15 per cent in the general population. Meanwhile, Kate Griggs charity, 'Made By Dyslexia', supported by Richard Branson and many other famous dyslexics, recently revealed that just one in five people view dyslexics as more creative whilst 84 per cent of dyslexics feel they exhibit higher than average creative skills.



What many people consider to be a disability in my brain's capacity to consume information, I see as an alternative ability to understand that information with a unique clarity. Dyslexia is a style, not a problem. A different perspective, not a flaw. A chance to provide powerful new business insights that the group-thinking majority might ignore. It's why so many entrepreneurs have dyslexia – Alan Sugar, Jamie Oliver and Richard Branson among them. It's estimated that almost a third of self-made business people have some kind of neurological condition such as dyslexia. Although, having said that, an average 30 per cent of those imprisoned suffer from dyslexia, too. So, it's not always a force for good.

Truly visionary companies see dyslexia as a neurological processing pattern that inspires talent and abilities, and it's their responsibility to unlock dyslexic people's potential. Buzzwords such as personalisation and innovation are held up as ambitious marketing holy grails within both consumer and health disciplines, but they are only truly achievable if we are able to think, behave and act in different ways.

The conventional solution to making businesses more representative is to increase diversity. Sadly, however, that's not always true of neurodiversity. Talented dyslexics, those with forms of autism or other unusual brain patterns are still too hastily dismissed as people afflicted with disorders when, in fact, they are precisely the people our broken world needs right now – those who think differently.

Because someone with dyslexia might find a routine task such as concentrating more difficult than others do, they have to develop new and better ways of doing things. Chopping things up into bite-sized modules, for instance, or using connections between facts that others might not even consider. We innovate, whilst others just do things the way they've always been done. This is particularly true of schoolchildren who are forced to perform tasks in a relatively regimented, traditional format that often excludes alternative neuro-diverse abilities.



Dyslexic brains are organised differently from non-dyslexic ones not because they are faulty but because they are designed to excel at different tasks. They may not act speedily or with accurate efficiency, but they understand the essence of ideas, problems and solutions much faster. They get the 'gist' of things and have an instinct for people that has been honed from years of being forced to analyse situations in a more creative way. The way they construct narratives is based upon an extraordinary ability to recall scenes, moments, tastes, smells and reactions in more episodic ways than others. It's fragmented and sometimes abstract but it helps create patterns of behaviours, actions and solutions that are very often unique. They're more inclined to spot the larger context and relevance than those who rely on meticulous attention to detail. They see unusual connections between both data and people, think on their feet rather than follow tired procedures, reorder details in more creative, compelling and less ambiguous ways. They invent – not accidentally because of a disability, but deliberately so because of an ability. And they store information in ways that often defy conventional explanation.

My dyslexic brain may not be a well-ordered cabinet with neat, colour-coded dividers but it is a complex spider-web of detailed connections that helps me to make empowered decisions and form fulfilling relationships that others might not consider. We live in a society that is meant to celebrate difference does not nullify it. Understand it, nurture it, embrace it and utilise it.

Some businesses are showing real leadership. My own, Omnicom, has put in place a robust neurodiversity employment agenda. And

economists at EY, in a recent report entitled *The Value of Dyslexia*, claim that more than 6.6 million dyslexics in the UK – a tenth of the population – ‘could help provide the critical support needed for employers to help them to adapt in the fourth industrial revolution.’

So, in this disruptive world of perpetual innovation, as we reach out to find the next generation of engineers, politicians, technologists, communicators and leaders, let’s reassess what we mean by talent.

Is it how fast you can read and understand a Shakespeare sonnet? How many decimal points you can recall in a mathematics conundrum? The way you can juggle so many different pieces of information so that you can successfully navigate two three-hour examinations in a single day. Or do we need to try harder to recognise skills, instincts and problem-solving techniques that our ‘normal’ perspectives might overlook?

Dyslexia and other neurological conditions are not impairments, they are different brain patterns that, whilst undoubtedly challenging, provide businesses and teams with real strengths.

If you want rigid adherence to procedure, I and other dyslexics may not be your best bet. But if you’re looking for big-picture solutions, an ability to build visionary connections that people who all think in the same way might miss, and a determination to show up and do things differently, well my dyslexic brain may well be able to help. The value of diverse teams is, after all about diversity of minds. Too often we think about diversity in terms of the things we can see and miss out on all the diversity that exists with those who have disabilities we can’t see.



Diversity and inclusion is everyone's responsibility and I am looking forward to playing a positive role in driving the change that our industry so desperately needs. My hope for this group is that we proactively challenge and support ourselves, our networks and our industry to embed the change needed. This is vital work.

**Jake Steadman**

VP Consumer Insight, Deliveroo

MRS DI&E Council





# Specific progress on CEO Pledge commitments

## COMMITMENT ONE

Publish pay statistics annually and work demonstrate clear, sustained progress towards gender and BAME pay parity.

There is clear evidence that there is a strong commitment to achieving pay parity, rewarding fairly for the work that is being done. Not everyone is there yet, but there are strategies in place to get there.

Most have done an audit of their pay and communicated this to their employees. We know that pay disparity exists and that this is something that needs to be tackled openly if we want to be an industry that stands for fairness.

### **BVA BDRC GROUP**

Pay statistics relating to gender were produced for BVA BDRC in 2019 and showed no discernible gap. In 2020 we will repeat this analysis, extending it to BAME staff and also to the other companies within our group.

### **HALL & PARTNERS**

We have conducted a pay equity audit on gender and BAME/BIPOC across the business. Pay equity is a top priority for us. We have identified some gaps and have a clear strategy to addresses this. We plan to take the whole company through our analysis and findings in early 2021.

We have introduced a new Parental policy that ensures better financial support for all parents

### **IPSOS**

We have diversity data for our employees, particularly ethnicity data to ensure we are in a position to understand what our ethnicity pay looks like and can report on it.

Introduced an industry leading Paternity Policy to the company, where all new fathers will be entitled to exactly the same amount of leave and pay as new mothers.


**COMMITMENT ONE**

Publish pay statistics annually and work demonstrate clear, sustained progress towards gender and BAME pay parity.

**KANTAR**

We are complying with the government data request to publish pay statistics annually.

We have issued clear guidelines on pay review and promotion processes to uncover any unconscious bias.

We include multiple women on shortlists for recruitment and promotions.

Use skill-based assessments.

Use structured interviews .

Show salary ranges to encourage salary negotiation.

Are transparent on promotion, pay and reward processes.

Offer mentoring and sponsorship programs specifically created to support and empower growth for our female employees.

Monitor proportions of women/BAME colleagues at each level of seniority to understand the current position and so we can monitor future progress.

Both of these exercises will be repeated annually, and the outcome reported to the Board.

**NATCEN**

Publish our gender pay gap statistics.

**NORTHSTAR**

Reviewed our pay statistics to ensure we have pay parity across the business and will continue to do so annually.

We plan to publish a specific Pay Parity Promise as part of our Diversity & Inclusion Mission Statement on our website 'About Us' page.

**THE NURSERY**

We will publish pay statistics in 2021.

**OPINIUM**

We have calculated the ethnicity pay gap.

Every BAME colleague is paid in the same salary band as any other colleague at their level.

**POPULUS**

We published our gender pay gap figures in 2018. We are committed to publishing them annually. We do not currently collect information on ethnicity of our employees but are about to do so.

**SAVANTA**

We are transparent with our pay and promotions policy. Full details of these, including pay bands, are accessible to all staff in a shared digital resource drive.

We will publish statistics in March 2021 in line with gender pay gap reporting standards for fiscal year 20/21, in light of our headcount surpassing 250 earlier this year.

We are committed to collating and reporting gender and ethnic representation across different levels of seniority with the company with a view to address discrepancies and pay parity and inform diversity and inclusion initiatives.


**COMMITMENT TWO**

Works towards ensuring all our staff are fully representative of the diversity of the UK.

Businesses clearly recognise more needs to be done to proactively enrich the diversity of their talent pools.

Many have introduced several new initiatives that demonstrate how they intend to work towards creating a work force that is representative of the UK.

These include setting targets on diversity and taking some very practical steps that to ensure that recruitment is more transparent and fairer. This includes overhauling recruitment processes, introducing blind CV's, doing unconscious bias training and creating mentorship schemes.

These initiatives represent a real commitment to action and creating permanent change and so should be applauded. However, the opportunity is to recognise the full scale of what needs to be achieved and how much more that needs and can be done. We hope what has been achieved so far provides practical ideas on how to address each of the specific commitments. We hope we will be able to share a broader range of actions across a wider group of companies next year. And want to thank these businesses on being open and leading the way. Some may feel it is easier for some of the larger companies to act and show progress. However, as we all know, to move a mountain every little change and action helps. What each and every one of us does makes a difference.

#### **FIREFISH**

We are having discussions on how we will do this and are taking steps to develop a more formal plan

#### **HALL & PARTNERS**

We have set targets for increasing diversity within our teams.

Setting targets for representation that reflect the local communities where our offices are based, each Managing Partner has clear ownership of these targets. Our annual DI&E survey will ensure we are able to measure our progress and hold ourselves accountable.

We have overhauled our recruitment policies and practices, to ensure we recruit from a larger pool of talent and that diverse talent rises to the top during the recruitment process.

We already partner with specialist recruitment agencies and use blind resumes and CVs. We have provided unconscious bias training to every person in the company.

Next, we are implementing diverse shortlists and introducing structured interview guides to help manage the impact of unconscious bias.

### **IPSOS**

BAME employees make up 18% of our employee population in 2020. We are reviewing all recruitment processes.

We have made the most progress amongst those in early careers. The proportion of graduates hired in 2019 that were BAME was 26%, (UK average is 25%).

Most of the 'Belong' activity and Roadmap 2025 is aimed at ensuring that our employees are representative of the diversity of the UK, and that we have an inclusive culture where all feel that they belong.

We have launched our Parent Pledge. This is a comprehensive guide to support all parents and partners through being a parent (however they may become a parent) working at Ipsos. It also helps people managers to support their teams throughout the whole process:

- Successfully rolled out unconscious bias training
- Eliminating potential bias from our recruitment process, by selecting gender-balanced shortlists of candidates and reviewing adverts for gender biased language
- Succeeded in achieving a more representative gender split for our training and professional training courses.

*We will focus on ethnicity going forward:*

Conduct an internal investigation into the challenges women face in our workplace, especially those with caring responsibilities.

Establish an active Women in Ipsos network that regularly runs female-focused events, networking opportunities and cross-company mentoring.


**COMMITMENT TWO**

Works towards ensuring all our staff are fully representative of the diversity of the UK.

Encourage all our employees to take advantage of our flexible working and family-friendly policies, including part-time working and job shares.

Ensure merit increases/bonuses and promotions reviewed at gender level and allocated fairly based on achievement. This will also include and ethnicity focus going forward.

#### **NATCEN**

We have published that we are an equal opportunity employer on our website. And highlight the positive actions we are taking as an organisation. We also refer to our commitment to the CEO Pledge and the Race at 'Work Charter' as part of this. A review of how we broaden our recruitment channels and exposure is underway and there is a focus on how we might modify promotion processes to make clearer our position on equality, inclusion and diversity.

Our 'Equality and Diversity Group' and 'LGBT + Network' have co-authored a blog that details the steps we are following, and our CEO has made clear our commitment to making significant progress in this area.

#### **NORTHSTAR**

We have implemented diversity tools for recruitment, such as blind CVs from our recruiters, diversity score cards and increasing breadth of talent pools.

Educated our recruiters and managers on their own biases  
Implemented recruitment diversity challenges, such as CV swaps.

#### **THE NURSERY**

We have shared a list of actions with all for our new recruiting methods to increase diversity with our people.

#### **SAVANTA**

Savanta regularly collates and shares reports with the wider business detailing the workforce diversity across our global regions. We encourage all staff to disclose D&I data confidentially in the interests

of helping us better understand, accommodate and meet our employees' needs, as well as to help inform our duty to build a more diverse and representative workforce.

In the spirit of inclusivity, Savanta strives to offer alternatives to local standardised ethnicity categories on our HR / Employee records system (i.e. BAME - UK, or BIPOC - US), particularly where some of our people do not identify with the standard given categories. This remains under continuous review to help us build an accurate picture of our workforce diversity while respecting our employee's feelings about standardised categories.

Although this creates a challenge in drawing comparisons to official census and ONS data, we are able to report core ethnicity statistics and consult with employees and our D&I Committee regularly on ways to encourage disclosure that our people feel comfortable with.

#### *Key Diversity Statistics in 2020*

##### Gender

53% Male

47% Female

##### Ethnicity

65% White

31% non-White / 14% BAME and Other ethnic groups

4% Prefer not to say

##### Sexual Orientation

84% Heterosexual

6% LBGT

10% Prefer not to say

##### Religion or Belief

55% No religion or belief

6% Christian or Catholic

2% Muslim

12% Prefer not to say



My hope is that collectively we can support, challenge and stretch the sector to become more diverse and inclusive from top-to-bottom. Working alongside key stakeholders and influencers in the industry, we can accelerate this process of change to ensure our sector reflects and represents the societies we research into.

**Kenny Imafidon**

Managing Director and Co-founder  
ClearView Research  
MRS DI&E Council




**COMMITMENT THREE**

Work towards achievement of government targets on inclusion of women and BAME people at executive committee and Board level.

**BVA BDRC GROUP**

We currently have two female Board members at BVA BDRC plus female MDs at the head of two of our subsidiary businesses within the wider BVA BDRC group.

**BIG SOFA TECH**

Our only recruit over the last 12 months is Asian/American and she is stellar!

Delighted to say we have just promoted a female to the leadership team. Besides myself, being a female CEO, this is the first female in this position. We are a tech company which has made it very male dominated.

We have also just promoted a female Head of Front End Development in our tech team and a female strategist to Director. We also now have a female Head of Operations.

We have made strides in the tech space in terms of female representation at the more senior level.

**HALL & PARTNERS**

Our senior leadership team has always been diverse in terms of gender, ethnicity and representative of the LBGT community.

However, we have recently lost three senior leaders from the business and now need to address, for the first time in 15 years, ethnic representation in senior leadership.

In addition to implementation of new hiring practices, like specialist recruiters and ensuring diverse shortlists, we are designing a program to attract and support diverse talent, providing fast track career opportunities, coaching, support and mentorship, to help grow our existing diverse talent base and lift them to leadership positions.

## **IPSOS**

This is one of the key commitments of our 'Belong Roadmap'. We have also created Service Line (business units) action plans using internal survey data to address issues at Service Line level. This enables us to look at Board, leadership teams, talent plans and succession plans to focus on the inclusion of women and BAME employees. We will use data to track progression and promotion.

We have signed the 'BITC Race at Work Charter'. One of the commitments of this charter is to champion the progression for BAME people.

With the help of the networks, we are establishing Ally Programmes so that people can champion and support their colleagues.

We have met with the leaders of Colour of Research (CORe) to look at how we might work together.

We are having initial discussions with the AMOS Bursary about how we can work with them to promote Market Research as a career for young black men.

## **KANTAR**

- Using skill-based assessments.
- Using structured interviews.
- Showing salary ranges to encourage salary negotiation.
- Being transparent on promotion, pay and reward processes.
- Conducting unconscious bias training across 50% of Kantar's 28,000 employee population.
- Launched an Ally/Ambassador Ethnicity Mentoring Programme and an 8 Point Plan Ethnicity workstream in the UK to support and empower growth for our employees who identify with representing an ethnic minority.


**COMMITMENT THREE**

Work towards achievement of government targets on inclusion of women and BAME people at executive committee and Board level.

**MESH**

We are over-represented with women on our board. We are under-represented on BAME due to one member leaving in February.

**NATCEN**

In 2016/17, we were a mainly female organisation with a mainly male Trustee Board and with no LBGT + or non-white British members. Today half the Board are female which is broadly in line with our Executive team and we have increased diversity in relation to ethnicities, sexual orientation, religious beliefs and age.

**NORTHSTAR**

We have an executive committee of three people and acknowledge that this lacks diversity. As an SME, this proves to be one of our biggest challenges as these roles open up infrequently. However, to ensure opinions are represented on the executive committee we are actively pursuing a more representative diverse employee base.

**OPINIUM**

This is a huge area of focus. As a registered partnership (LLP), Opinium is owned by its partners, many of whom are also employees 36% owned by people working in the agency and that will eventually be 50%. Of our current partners, 41% are women and we have one BAME partner. This is one area I want to improve, and as we will be making more employee partners in the future, and rewarding them with equity, this will be achievable.

Our Board of four Directors consists of three men and one women. I would like to improve that.

**SAVANTA**

Our UK Executive Leadership Team (ELT) and Global Board was first established in 2019, following recent acquisitions and a development of our organisational structure. Our Board is made up of our Global CEO, Americas CEO, Group COO and Group CIO. Our UK ELT Is made up of 15 senior roles heading up various streams of activity from our Commercial, Operations, Research Delivery teams and our support services teams.

The Board is currently 100% male and white. While the Executive Leadership Team is a third women, 80% white and 20% BAME. We fully recognise that there is a need to address the inclusion of Women and BAME at our UK ELT level and we are committed to raising awareness and demonstrating the benefits of diversity within our business. As roles become available at senior level, we want to encourage internal development, however, where that is not possible our Talent Acquisition Team will support the Company in breaking down barriers of unconscious bias in our recruitment and selection processes and in assessing all equally. We are also keen as referred to above to work alongside partner at CoRE to increase opportunities for mentorship programmes to provide avenues for talented Women and BAME people into senior roles

#### **ZAPPI**

In July 2020 we changed our leadership structure to improve the focus, operations and diversity of thought:

- 'Futures Group' working on vision and long-term strategy - our founders plus 2 rotating team members from the business. The criteria for selecting the rotating team members has diversity of thought as a key component.
- Leadership team is 23% female with 15% from 'minority' groups.
- Board composition is mostly determined by our investors. The board is 25% female and 25% BAME. We are in the process of trying to expand the board to include greater diversity.


**COMMITMENT FOUR**

Improve recruitment of a representative intake with initiatives such as ending unpaid internships and supporting school and university and apprenticeship programmes and effective placement.

Most businesses now offer paid internships, rather than unpaid and they are proactively involved with schools and university programmes to bring a wider range of talent in. Real changes are being made to the way people are recruited into the business, with several innovative ways to make this fairer and unbiased.

Nevertheless, it does feel that much of the activity is at the fringes, creating opportunities for a lucky few only. There is limited collective work to address the narrow pipeline of talent being attracted to our industry. The industry's profile with Schools and Universities is limited to single relationships, rather than a concerted industry wide effort. This leads to more students to think about Management Consultancy than Market Research. Our industry is fascinating and plays a crucial role in getting people, the Government's, policies, businesses, brands, products and services they deserve. We represent peoples voices, needs and wants to those with power to make a difference. Yet we continue to struggle to attract the wide range of talent we need to become truly diverse and representative. Likely, what is needed is a repositioning of the industry, one that paints a more exciting, less academic face and appeal, in attempt to feel more accessible and approachable to all. One that capitalises on the growing importance of data and innovative technology, To achieve this we need to work together. This is the core focus of the MRS DI&E Council.

**In their own words.....**

**BVA BDRC GROUP**

We offer a successful placement programme each year, providing University students with the opportunity to work at BVA BDRC during their placement year. A number of these students subsequently returned to us following graduation.

For over a decade BVA BDRC has, some of whom are now at Director level within the business.

However, we recognise this is a narrow segment from which to recruit and does not promote social mobility as there are systematic biases across the education sector.

We worked closely with Hackney Community College and its mental health team to provide work experience for young people.

We have already applied to become a member of the Market Research Society's Apprenticeship Scheme, which is part of the research sector's on-going focus on inclusivity, diversity and growth and we plan to work closely with local colleges (in the London area) to recruit and appoint individuals at a level 5 apprenticeship.

All our internships are now paid.

#### **BIG SOFA TECH**

With our newly formed Diversity Board we are developing guidelines for internships and junior recruitment.

#### **FIREFISH**

We have not been doing unpaid internship for years.

A number of us have signed up to become mentors in the CoRe initiative.

#### **HALL & PARTNERS**

We are currently exploring partnerships with local high schools and historically Black colleges and universities in all our office locations.

To inspire and source future talent we have a relationship with Southwark schools, where we attend a diverse school leavers careers fair and will host two work placement students, from ethnic minority groups, at the start of this year. We do not take part in unpaid internships.

We no longer require Graduate degrees for entry level.

#### **IPSOS**

Our Head of Talent is Chair of the Trailblazer group for the new Market Research Apprenticeship standard.

We have a few apprentices in Project Management, Data Analysis and Business Admin to offer to those who choose not to go to university. In 2019 we removed the education entry requirement for our graduate programme and replaced this with cognitive, gamified testing.

15% of our graduate hires in 2019 would not have been able to apply previously. Of this 15%, 36% are BAME.


**COMMITMENT FOUR**

Improve recruitment of a representative intake with initiatives such as ending unpaid internships and supporting school and university and apprenticeship programmes and effective placement.

The initial stages of our graduate selection process are blind. We will look to use technology to extend this blind element further in 2021.

We offer work experience programmes to these schools and outreach activities with local schools as part of our CSR work.

We offer paid internships at undergraduate and post graduate level.

We have partnered with Queen Mary University of London who have a high proportion of BAME students. We are promoting MR as a career and raising the profile.

We have plans to continue to develop our outreach to with schools.

We also have a global focus on refugees. We have hired four refugees into placements roles.

#### **KANTAR**

We target and support unrepresented groups to gain a more diverse group of candidates, including individuals with disabilities.

We have partnered with Artic Shores to introduce an inclusive recruitment process for our graduate programs. This process increases accessibility and removes bias through blind CV's and gamified techniques that identify personality traits irrespective of an individual's gender, colour, age, education background.

Support paid internships (three paid internships in our Profiles division in the past year).

Further action includes, launching a scholarship program in 2021/2022.

We are working with local organizations and social enterprises to diversify talent pools (e.g. Generation Success)

Consciously move away from targeting specific 'high level' schools and universities (e.g. Oxbridge).

#### **MESH**

We don't have unpaid internships in the UK. We do have links to academic bodies.

**NATCEN**

We have improved our recruitment practices but NatCen does not have any unpaid internships. We do have a small number of paid apprentices and we are part of the Q-Step internship programme for social sciences.

**NORTHSTAR**

We stopped unpaid internships several years ago.

We have had two members of staff successfully employed through Government apprenticeship schemes, both female, one of which was B.A.M.E.

We frequently accept work experience placements. Our latest placement of a B.A.M.E teenager was unfortunately postponed due to COVID-19.

We have taken part in MRS/AQR University Roadshows.

**OPINIUM**

We have always paid our interns at above the London living wage. Our partnership with charity 'MyLifeMySay' will bring an incredibly diverse array of talent into our agency and we are very excited.

**POPULUS**

We have not had unpaid internships in our business for the last seven years. We work with one university and our local Sixth Form & FE college.

**SAVANTA**

We operate only paid internship and run work experience programmes ranging from 3-12 months. We do not support unpaid placements.

Discussions with mentoring charity 'ReachOut', includes potential for involvement in their 'Level-up' programme which helps companies diversify their graduate and entry-level recruitment by partnering with schools in more deprived areas in London, which tend to have disproportionate BAME representation.


**COMMITMENT FOUR**

Improve recruitment of a representative intake with initiatives such as ending unpaid internships and supporting school and university and apprenticeship programmes and effective placement.

Robust recruitment policy with centrally controlled steps and protocols to follow a fair process that places the candidates experience at its centre and strives to create Savanta 'advocates' of candidates who are not successful at interview.

HR and global recruitment team continually reviewing methods for mitigating and, wherever possible, eliminating unconscious bias at every stage of recruitment.

Incentivising employees to referring talent from their wider professional networks.

**ZAPPI**

We have delivered a mentorship scheme for disadvantaged students from a local girls school through Future Frontiers.

We have also established ourselves as a London living wage employer including for internships.

Our next steps are to establish an apprenticeship programme and include objectives about diverse representation on the programme.


**COMMITMENT FIVE**

Create safe places to work for all, committing to: timeto Code of Conduct\*, a proactive culture that supports whistleblowing, train staff to recognise and create systems to support those who need help for stress or mental health issues.

Huge progress has been made in the awareness and appreciation of mental health issues, over the last few years, creating a growing acceptance of the need to build supportive environments and cultures. The ground-breaking work, led by charities and celebrities has helped create a sea change in attitudes and understanding of all aspects of mental health. This combined with us all living through one of the most stressful years of our lives, due to the pandemic and all that it has involved, has increased the focus on mental health across the board. Most now have established whistle blowing policies. Many have introduced training that helps people stay resilient and aware of the needs of others.

There is no doubt that there has been a very real need to focus on the mental well being of people, as we all experience living through these extraordinary times. Stress levels have been heightened. People are working in isolation from each other and experiencing supportive contact in limited, mostly virtual ways. The polices and additional support that has been put in place was no doubt much needed and appreciated.

Looking forward, creating safe environments must also tackle how to deal with bullying, unacceptable prejudice and aggression. Getting under the skin of what really goes on between colleagues, proactively hunting out negative behaviour and creating zero tolerance for discrimination of any kind. Many companies have experienced or witnessed inappropriate behaviour and not reported it, this needs to change.

Creating a clear expression of culture and a 'rule book' of how we like to behave around here is critical to ensuring businesses create safe, supportive places to work. Places where people can be themselves and get any help they need. Places where they can learn, stretch and grow.

Making people feel truly safe is hard and often complex. Dealing with mental health issues, bullying, racism and discrimination is challenging and often messy. It is good to see many of the business taking these issues seriously, putting strong, professional support and polices in place. Looking to build this into the culture, so that safety and openness is the norm, will be an important next step.


**COMMITMENT FIVE**

Create safe places to work for all, committing to: **time to Code of Conduct\***, a proactive culture that supports whistleblowing, train staff to recognise and create systems to support those who need help for stress or mental health issues.

**BVA BDRC GROUP**

All staff have been provided with face to face training on mental health issues and confidential channels have been established where staff can raise issues of concern to them.

We have a whistleblowing policy and staff have recently been reminded.

We are developing an internal library of useful resources that staff will be able to access for further support.

**FIREFISH**

We have signed up to the 'Mindful Business Charter', and we are in the process of adapting it and launching it in our business.

**HALL & PARTNERS**

We have relaunched our diversity and inclusion policy, which includes the 'time to Code of Conduct' and our whistleblowing policy.

Every single person in the company across our offices received the J&J resiliency training.

Our people team includes trained mental first aiders and in 2021.

We have a variety of mental and wellbeing support available including our employee assistance programme.

**IPSOS**

We signed the 'Employer Pledge' as part of the 'Time to Change' initiative.

We have over thirty trained mental health first aiders.

We promote various resources from 'MIND' including our 'Wellness Action Plan'.

We regularly support wellbeing events throughout the year, including 'World Mental Health Day', and our wellbeing fortnight where we will create a week's worth of wellbeing focused initiatives throughout the week.

We committed to the 'timeto Code of Conduct' and launched comms to the business.

We are also launching a 'Belong' Action Line.

### **KANTAR**

We have publicly stated that we have zero tolerance for any treatment of colleagues or clients that would be considered racist, homophobic, sexist, and other forms of discrimination based on person's race, gender, marital status, age, sex, nationality, race, colour, religion or belief, or sexual orientation.

We provide important, confidential, always-on support to all our employees via our 'Employee Assistance Programme' and our 'Right to Speak' helpline.

We proactively celebrate and support our diverse employee population via our safe employee-driven, exec-sponsored communities like 'Colourful@Kantar' for our employees e.g. driving awareness of important days like Trans Visibility Day, celebrating and sharing individuals' own 'Coming Out' and 'What Pride Means To Me' video stories to the whole of Kantar, creating 'Safe Zone' Rainbow stickers that employees could put on their laptops to show their support for our LGBTQI+ employees.

Recognising from our 'Inclusion Index' data that the number of employees in the UK who admit to suffering with mental health and wellbeing challenges has been notably increasing over the past three years.

We have a proactive focus on supporting our employee's mental health and wellbeing with:

- Training Mental Health First Aiders.
- Offering free access to the BUPA Healthy Minds helpline.
- Running mediation and mindfulness sessions over workplace during lockdown.
- Celebrating 'Mental Health Awareness Week' every year.

### **MESH**

We have done resilience training.


**COMMITMENT FIVE**

Create safe places to work for all, committing to: timeto Code of Conduct\*, a proactive culture that supports whistleblowing, train staff to recognise and create systems to support those who need help for stress or mental health issues.

**NATCEN**

We have an existing whistle blowing policy and process and our terms of conduct make clear that we have zero tolerance of all forms of discrimination or harassment.

Developing a standalone anti-bullying and harassment policy to better support dialogue.

Refreshed comprehensive review of our mental health policies, programmes, and practices has taken place and we are committed to rolling out training for all staff in areas including 'Stress and Resilience Management', 'Managing Mental Health' and 'Mental Health First Aid'.

**NORTHSTAR**

We have 'Whistleblowing, Anti-Harassment and 'Anti-Bullying' policies in place.

We have our own internal initiative, Wellness Wednesday, a monthly resource pack and open forum for discussion.

Close care regular catchups with staff.

Regular email bulletins from our CEO and COO that promote open dialogue have created an environment in which we have created an open and inclusive environment for all staff.

Our HR department is working on our documentation for timeTo so we can demonstrate our alliance with this important program.

All our senior management team have also completed the 'MIND' course 'Mental Health for Small Workplaces'. This course has now been discontinued unfortunately so we are currently trying to source a similar course for all staff to do.

**THE NURSERY**

We have shared the 'timeto Code of Conduct' with all staff who have confirmed they have read, understood and agree to the terms of this code.

**OPINIUM**

We judge ourselves annually by our revenue and valuation growth, alongside the wellbeing scores of our people.

Our workplace mental wellbeing audit is deployed four times a year on our team.

We are looking into introducing compulsory sexual harassment awareness training.

Our whistleblowing policy is well advertised.

**POPULUS**

We now have three trained 'Mental Health and Wellbeing Champions'

Our Charity of the Year is a mental health charity. We have regular wellbeing sessions run by the wellbeing champions and promote wellbeing activities.

**SAVANTA**

We introduced a 'Whistleblowing policy' in early 2019.

A 'Code of Conduct policy' was also introduced during 2019. This outlines our principles with value for respect and dignity for all.

A support system for mental health was put in place by HR in collaboration with our Health and Wellbeing Committee and is communicated widely and regularly for anyone needing the support of trained Mental Health First Aiders or the services offered as part of our 'Employee Assistance Programme'. Managers have access to guidance on how to support people suffering with their mental health.

'Health & Wellbeing Committee' hosted a highly attended event where three prominent members of staff shared personal accounts of their battles with mental health as part of continued efforts to eliminate mental health stigma.


**COMMITMENT FIVE**

Create safe places to work for all, committing to: timeto Code of Conduct\*, a proactive culture that supports whistleblowing, train staff to recognise and create systems to support those who need help for stress or mental health issues.

**ZAPPI**

We have created our own 'Diversity Manifesto' to govern our behaviour and approach. This is included in our staff handbook and onboarding materials and we regularly discuss it.

We have also run a series of workplace post #metoo created a Head of People & Culture.

We have continued to focus on flexible working, encouraging people to make use of our unlimited leave policy, training mental health first aiders and fostering a learning and sharing culture around mental health. In 2019 we partnered with 'MIND' on their mental health index.

Next steps will be to run more training in early 2021 to highlight channels for reporting issues and to nurture the discussion about diversity and inclusivity.



I am looking forward to working with the team to energise conversations across our sector about how we can use our craft and influence to give a voice to all parts of society, including minorities and people at the margins. Each of us, has the power to make a difference.

**Michael Brown**

Partner, Insight & Cross-Culture, UM  
MRS DI&E Council



**CEO PERSPECTIVE**  
Caroline Frankum  
KANTAR Profiles  
Division

We thrive on asking tough questions, disrupting the status quo and pushing at the boundaries. It's what our clients expect of us. And that's exactly how we should be as an industry, forcing ourselves to get more comfortable with being more uncomfortable.

That doesn't just mean taking the hard decisions to help create a more inclusive, diverse and fairer working environment. It's also how we conduct ourselves as leaders, being honest enough to accept that we don't have all the answers. The more diverse inputs, skills and thoughts we can bring together within a team, the better our work will be. Because everybody is good at something, but nobody is good at everything.

That feeling of discomfort, of seeking it out, is crucial if we are to change this industry so that it better reflects society. Like any business, we run the risk of being a little too sure of ourselves, hiring predictable candidates who remind us of us. Which means we need to engineer a revolution rather than simply oversee an evolution. We should be building teams that truly reflect the world out there. Different backgrounds, skills, abilities, lifestyles and ambitions. Not the world we live and work in but the ones we may barely know about. The ones that take us out of our comfort zones, that force us to thrive on creative conflict.

I've always wondered why diversity of thought seems to hit a barrier when it comes to business. We grow up being told that the more diverse our thinking, the more interesting and richer life will be. And then we get well-paid and influential jobs and suddenly stop looking for those diverse inputs. We work in an age when we have ambitious and driven people in their 40s and above, collaborating closely with millennials who are driven as much by purpose, trying to get to the heart of Gen Zs and others who are driven by a need to change the world. All of us challenging each other. An uncomfortable mix of ingredients but one that makes for a far more enticing end-product. I know from personal experience how vital it is to find and include those voices because, for a time, I had no voice of my own. When I was nine years old, I had a stroke that kept me in a coma for 18 months,

during which all I could do was watch and listen. It was a terrible experience yet also a blessing because it gave me a real insight into what inclusivity means.

It's not always telling everyone what to do by leading from the front in a command-and-control structure but, instead, gauging opinion and including people in the decision-making process. Bringing different perspectives together to better inform an approach or strategy. Leaders need to be bold enough to listen and embrace the discomfort that can sometimes bring.

We know that the more diverse our industry can be, the more potency it has. But we can't just be ambitious for change, we have to make it happen with urgency and commitment. Yes, progress has been made and it's right that we celebrate that. Yet we also have to face up to the uncomfortable fact that those at the top of our industry are still very much cut from the same cloth.

We're breaking the glass ceiling but now we have to also create a stickier floor. We have a lot of women and BAME individuals who come into this industry and yet we don't keep and promote them as well as we should. We need to be better at finding those ambassadors and giving them a platform to show how diverse, inclusive and rewarding market research is. That there is proof behind the concept.

And we should be less afraid of sharing personal stories, like my own, because it displays an empathy, compassion and emotion that can sometimes be missing in the way we approach business. We need to be emotional and open as leaders, listening, understanding, inspiring and being inspired.

We are always talking about positively disrupting business, looking for new, more innovative and faster ways of doing this. Such positive disruption needs to be brought to the way we hire and build our teams. We can no longer just pay lip service and tick boxes. We have to go all-in. As I said, it's a revolution not an evolution.



Looking ahead

### **2021 diversity goals and strategy**

It is encouraging to see that people have continued ambition and strategies in place to do more and more will get done and some change will happen. However, the focus is still predominately internal. This is of course a good place to start, becoming the change you want to create more broadly yourself. However, as the industry that seeks to represent people, we wonder whether there also needs to be a bolder and more joined up vision, one inspires more dramatic, faster paced change. One we can all rally around.

This is not to say that the commitments and actions set out are to be applauded, they are. They demonstrate a strong desire to address the fundamentals and establish the foundations, the policies and practices that support what we are all trying to achieve. Looking forward, however it is important to be ambitious about what we can achieve together for our industry. Ensuring the we, as an industry, become a beacon that others can also follow.


**IN THEIR OWN WORDS...**
**BVA BDRC GROUP**

Repeat the gender pay analysis and expand it to both.

Improve the recruitment process further.

Monitor gender and BAME pay and seniority profiles and extend this exercise to other parts of our Group.

Continue to remind staff about the support available on mental health issues.

To take part in the MRS apprenticeship scheme and to develop links with local colleges.

To review and improve our recruitment procedures.

**BIG SOFA TECH**

Adopt a new approach to internships with inclusivity and diversity mission at its heart.

Introduce a new internship program with specific diversity and inclusivity mission.

New approaches to recruitment at junior level.

Continue to encourage females in tech.

**HALL & PARTNERS**

Repeat our 'Unlearn' training series .

Run cultural appropriation training.

Launch our 'Inclusive Culture' principles, the ways we like to behave and 'Be'.

Redesign structured interview guides.

Fast track career opportunities, coaching, support and mentorship for ethnically diverse talent.

Publish our propriety research into 'Competent Multi Cultural Marketing'.

Work with recruitment and panel partners to ensure greater representation in sampling.

Goals continue to be around our 3 commitments and the next steps on actions outlined earlier:

*Promote Understanding*

Share information and insight into the lives, experiences, history, and culture of BIPOC and BAME groups and empower our people to challenge inequality through an ongoing learning.

*Be Inclusive*

Proactively increase the diversity of our teams, develop and promote diverse talent and do more, intentionally to create a truly inclusive culture.

*Demand Representation*

Monitor our progress against the specific targets we have set on representation for each office for 2025.

Our 'Voices' advisory group will continue champion true representation, ensuring the work and research we do accurately represents all the communities we serve.

Continue to work with clients to ensure that their Multi Cultural work is effective and appropriate to different ethnic audiences.

**IPSOS**

Improve BAME representation at senior levels.

Implement UN Standards promoting LGBTQ+ inclusion and belonging Report on 'Gender Pay Gap' and 'Ethnicity Pay Gap' parity for the first time in 2020.

Build external profile as a diverse organisation.

Continue with mandatory D&I training for all employees.

Continue with the 'Belong 2025 Roadmap' goals as above.

Set targets once we have completed the ethnicity data collection and pay gap exercise.

Work with the network leads to agree measurable targets.

Better communications around Belong both internally and externally.

Develop our 'Belong' work into our employer brand.

Launch of compulsory D&I training for all employees.

#### **KANTAR**

Purse commitment to a +10% increase in female representation at senior roles in each of our divisions and functions.

Achieve gender parity through our talent reviews (talent grids, succession charts, and Hi-Potential employee lists).

Implement clear guidelines on candidate slating for senior roles, ensuring that at least two women are on the interview panel and the candidate shortlist.

Deliver unconscious bias training across the business.

Develop flexible working policies.

Develop our 'Ethnicity Mentoring Programme'.

Embed inclusive practices into everything we do.

Our commitment to continuing to support the MRS in being an authentic and impactful voice leading, helping and guiding our industry on issues of representation, equality and accountability to help the sector better reflect the real world we live in through a mixture of governance (accountable targets) and groundswell (inclusive and influential actions).

**MESH**

Train our people in making each of them feel comfortable in their working environment.

Update our diverse supplier plan.

Ensure we have a representative population.

**NATCEN**

Capture more accurate staff demographic data and identifying any issues.

Roll out training to all staff on inclusion and diversity and mental health and wellbeing.

Ensure all staff receive training on inclusion and diversity.

Review the findings of our staff demographics survey and pay parity data and have this guide any necessary change.

Support recruitment and career progression of a more diverse range of candidates through the broadening of recruitment channels and allyship programmes.

**NORTHSTAR**

Roll out Diversity Awareness Training and Resources for all staff.

Define our 'Diversity and Inclusion Mission Statement'.

Plan to contact grassroots organisations to offer pro-bono work and form partnership.

Continue to support 'Women of Northstar', to support and educate the women in the business.

Expand the scope and drive forward the work the Diversity Task Force.

Formalise our 'Celebration and Education Program' globally.  
Expand the diversity within our client portfolio.

**THE NURSERY**

Increase diversity and inclusion in our employees.

**OPINIUM**

Our management Board of 7 consists of 3 females. Work towards making it 50/50.

Recruit BAME colleagues in at senior levels as soon as possible, targeting 1-2 BAME colleague into the SRM+ level.

Bring in two interns from disadvantaged communities.

**POPULUS**

Refresh our pay gap information.

Review our current diversity policies and address areas of weakness.

**SAVANTA**

Take every opportunity to recruit a more diverse and representative workforce.

Engage our BAME talent in career coaching and mentorship to help drive greater representation at more senior levels and the Executive Leadership Team.

Build on partnerships with 'The Women's Association', 'ReachOut', 'Colour of Research (CoRe)' to supplement diverse talent attraction.

Build further transparency on demographics and pay bands including gender and ethnic minority splits in our reporting.

**ZAPPI**

Improve our recruitment practices.

Measure diversity in our organisation.

Benchmark our efforts and do more in regard to reporting including remuneration.

Build partnerships with organisations supporting marginalised or underprivileged groups. For example, with Foundervine that support entrepreneurs from minority groups.

Establish a work experience scheme for young people struggling to enter employment.

Run diversity and inclusion workshops with staff in key roles.

Continue to invite guest speakers to come and deliver talks to the business.

Implement the improvements to our recruitment process as we begin to hire again, including diversifying candidate sourcing, ensuring the job specs and processes are deployed as objectively as possible, and there is diversity in the recruitment teams.

Measure diversity in our organisation.

Create a leadership group coaching initiative to identify and support the next group of leaders, with a target of equal gender and minority representation on the programme.

**CEO PERSPECTIVE**  
**Eric Salama**  
**Morning Consult**

Making the workplace more diverse and inclusive is not simply about ethics and morals. It's about better business. Prejudice and bias, both the perception and reality, holds people back. There are a lot of talented people in the research industry and if they can express themselves truthfully, without feeling that they are at some kind of disadvantage, their talent will shine. If they perform better so will the entire company. The healthier we are, the more effective a partner we can be for our clients.

We all know that unfairness exists within business. However, it's not good enough to simply acknowledge it and then do your bit to rectify things. We need to go much further and radically transform how we operate.

For instance, a commitment if a commitment is made that a female candidate has to be on every shortlist for a new position. It doesn't mean that she'll have an advantage over men, just that women will automatically be a part of any decision-making process. If people say that they can't find a suitable female candidate, my response is simple: try harder. Equally, if a white man contacts me to say I'm discriminating against them, I reply that I'm just removing the advantage that they've always had.

Trying harder also means conducting difficult conversations about inclusivity and diversity and listening to those conversations more intently. When at Kantar, I took 450 senior men in the company and had five one-day sessions around the world to analyse how our behaviours were and are affecting female colleagues. Beforehand, I encouraged each attendee to approach six women with whom they work and ask them for an honest answer to this question: 'How does my behaviour impact the way you work.'

The effect was both uncomfortable and revelatory, especially since a number of those women spoke on camera about the interactions between men and women, interactions that many people take for



granted. The impact was such that men listened in ways they hadn't before. They spoke more openly about their own behaviours and reacted to negative comments in a genuinely transformative way. It was a very powerful exercise in awareness.

More importantly, it enabled the women to speak out and express themselves. It's not that they pointed fingers at those they felt were sexist or discriminatory. It was more that they reminded all of us that sometimes it's not good enough to behave properly. If you really want to change things, you have to go further and be involved in people's careers, encourage them, defend them, push for them, ally with them.

We also need to be more open about the biases felt by minorities, those in ethnic groups for instance or the LGBT communities. It is important to have an open and honest way to highlight iniquities, praise innovative solutions and call out bad practice if and when it occurs.

Things aren't perfect. And when it comes to ethnic diversity, gaps are starker. Part of the solution to these imbalances is to first ask why, shedding a light on issues that people might prefer not to think about or address because they know that the solutions aren't simple.

The reasons for imbalances and potential solutions are many. Some of it is down to people recruiting in their own image. Some of it is down to imposter syndrome, in that people feel they shouldn't be in a certain job of seniority because of their gender or background. Creating a system of advocacy in which senior leaders are encouraged to push their colleagues' suitability for certain roles and encourage them to take these roles on. Mentoring and coaching can be quite passive in such circumstances, whereas advocating enables leaders to effect real change because they're the ones pushing for their colleagues to fulfil individual ambitions.

Taking these kinds of actions helps create an almost perpetual conversation with each other about the kind of company you want to have and the way others to see you. Conversations are richer, more constructive and honest. Solutions are more meaningful. The ability to reach out to others is magnified. Everyone feels more empowered, from the bottom up.

Like any business the situation, what we are all doing is not perfect. People are always risk succumbing to groupthink, if we end up recruiting people just like us. In market research that often means white, middle-class and conventionally educated people, particularly the higher up the ladder you find yourself.

This has to change, and it is already changing, with those at the top showing real leadership in meeting the challenges of greater diversity and inclusivity. It has required us to get creative with constructive and systematic remedies, disrupting the workplace status quo.

We need to make a difference in a variety of ways, not just because it's the right thing to do, but because it also makes good commercial sense. Greater diversity enables us to provide richer, broader and more accurate insights because we're able to utilise the myriad skills of a workforce drawn from different corners of life.

It's those at the top who need to try hardest to enact solutions to greater diversity. That's the challenge. Meeting it head-on, no matter how uncomfortable it makes us feel. It will ensure that the industry matters more and the work we do becomes even more meaningful.



My first boss once said, ideas are easy, it's the making them happen that is the difficult. I have joined this group as they are committed to making important change happen.

**Vanella Jackson**  
Global CEO, Hall & Partners  
MRS DI&E Council





Holding ourselves  
accountable

Clearly, as an industry that believes in measurement, it is not surprising to find that many of the businesses that have signed up to the CEO Pledge, are also thinking about how they are going to hold themselves accountable. It is good to see the commitments to regular reporting back to the people in their organisations, keeping the issues related to diversity consistently visible. Several are also thinking about other ways to use internal and external communications to keep the ongoing conversation alive and top of mind. These include publishing reports, creating newsletters and sponsoring events.

There is some commitment to monitoring progress against specific targets, running surveys and monitoring progress against established KPI's. However, as yet, these harder measures of accountability are not consistently being adopted. This may be because this is harder to do for the smaller organisations, nevertheless hard facts, as we all know speak the loudest. While the MRS industry report on Diversity and Inclusion provides a robust focus point for us all, having our own harder measures of successful outcomes is vital. It is likely to become increasingly important as businesses continue to report back to a highly engaged employee audience and the shout for the evidence of progress gets louder.

## IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

### **BIG SOFA TECH**

Diversity actions and outcomes are announced clearly internally.  
Regular reports to the Board .

### **HALL & PARTNERS**

Establish and monitor progress against targets and KPIs.

Run an annual survey to identify the progress we are making,  
comparing KPI's and challenging the speed and scope of progress.

Create strong Feedback loops.

Establish clear sponsors and defined responsibilities for all the actions  
we want to take. These will be monitored in a series of planned review  
meetings with.

Leadership and the 'Diversity and Inclusion Committee',  
Regularly report back to the business on progress in our 'Big Shares' all  
office meetings.

### **IPSOS**

The co-chairs of 'Belong' report activity to the UK Management.

Committee each month.

Quarterly reports will be issued to the whole Belong group and UK.

Management committee with key data.

Quarterly 'Belong' Newsletters.

'Belong' pages on the intranet.

External reporting of the Gender Pay Gap and Ethnicity Pay Gap  
Data is on the 6 weekly Belong and Network meeting's agenda.

### **KANTAR**

Embedding I&D in every aspect of our value chain (talent, suppliers,  
clients, society, and at every level of the organisation across our talent  
management practices and employee life cycle.

Update our employee listening framework to include the 'Inclusion Index' on a bi-annual basis.

Provide an always on employee listening platform with Open Door.

The Country I&D committees and grassroots local action along with Employee Resource Groups.

Use our industry connections and showcasing how we can also support clients, our industry, and society externally has also had a positive internal impact, industry recognition for the 'Reykjavik Index', the 'Inclusion Index', and some of our employees have proved important platforms.

#### **MESH**

Report every quarter to the business how we are doing against our objectives.

Provide diverse supplier reports and plans to our clients.

Ensure that Directories will be searchable by diverse certified businesses.

#### **NATCEN**

Set milestones against initiatives and our Leadership Team will be meeting regularly along with our HR, Equality & Diversity group and LGBT + network to discuss progress and maintain momentum.

Appoint a Pan-Equality Executive Sponsor.

Further training, for all staff on equality and diversity issues  
Initiate a review of how we capture intersectional equality and diversity data.

#### **OPINIUM**

Place employee wellbeing alongside revenues, profits and business valuation as a KPI for the CEO.

Create of our Diversity Committee.

Partner with 'MyLifeMySay' to open up a recruitment channel to a far wider pool of people.

Improve the gender imbalance at a senior level and in our ownership.

**POPULUS**

Having open, honest conversations particularly with our Black employees to find out how they feel and how we can support them.

**SAVANTA**

Continue to hold quarterly forums where the base agenda is the review of progress and methods of measuring/monitoring progress.

Drive visibility and awareness of our commitment to these goals and objectives throughout the business as part of regular internal events and business updates.

Track and report achievements and maintain momentum on driving positive change.

Engage our People Committee on all matters relating to recruitment, pay and promotion to ensure our policy of transparency, equal opportunity and fairness are adhered to.

Report and escalate any non-compliance of processes to The Board.

**ZAPPI**

Redesign our recruitment processes and establishing diversity objectives at the top of the funnel

Change our leadership team structure.

Focus on effective facilitation to ensure decision making is inclusive.

**CEO PERSPECTIVE**

Kirsty Fuller  
CEO Big Sofa  
Technology

There's a danger that diversity within any industry can default to a box-ticking exercise in which targets are set, achieved, maintained and hopefully surpassed. You can see it sometimes in the way companies boast about how half of all positions now go to women or there has been a twenty-five per cent increase in the number of BAME candidates.

Setting targets is good but I sometimes wonder if that leads leaders to a false sense of security. Because such justifiable progress won't necessarily enable diversity to flourish in the long term. To do that, you need to focus on culture because that provides cohesion. Cohesiveness between different skill sets genders, social classes, educational backgrounds, ethnicities, sexual orientations, ages and more.

A complex web of behaviours shapes the experience of a business, both internally and externally. The more diverse the workplace is, the more crucial the creation of a culture which enables this diversity - with myriad backgrounds, perspectives and approaches - to express themselves in an honest and open way.

Creating the glue that binds everyone towards a common goal yet allows people the freedom to pursue their own ambitions in their own different ways, takes time, effort and perhaps some element of good fortune. It also requires urgency and direction from the top to make it work.



In joining, I am putting my voice and support behind dismantling a skewed view of the world, in the on-going aim of rebuilding a reflection that incorporates plurality of vision, representativity and inclusivity. It's my hope that we use this group to collaborate, challenge and collectively grow our actionability and accountability in embedding change.

**Danielle Todd**  
Insight Director, Relish  
MRS DI&E Council





## A new CEO Diversity Pledge

Our goal is to get at least 100 of the industry's CEO's to sign the CEO Diversity Pledge. Over the last year we have had many conversations with different organisations encouraging them to sign up. We have as a result become increasingly aware of the very real barriers to signing, particularly for the many smaller businesses that make up a large proportion of our industry. With this in mind, we have decided to make a small number of accommodating changes to the CEO Diversity Pledge, and so make it more accessible to all. However, for those who have signed the original CEO Pledge commitments, these will still stand.

On the right is the new proposed 'MRS CEO Diversity Pledge'. The new commitments reflect the MRS D&I Council strategic pillars and the reimagining our Industry, as more inclusive and socially diverse. We hope this report and the progress that many have made inspires more of our industry CEO's to sign up. If any, would like to talk more about their organisation signing they simply need to reach out to Jane Frost at the MRS.



We believe that a sector that provides insight and evidence about human behaviour and society should be representative of the world it serves. We are committed to creating an inclusive environment where the only barriers to progress are personal choice and professional competence.

**To that end, we commit to:**

**1**

Gather, and where appropriate, publish pay statistics annually and where it is found, dismantle pay discrimination based on gender and ethnicity.

**2**

Work towards ensuring our staff are representative of the full diversity of our business locations.

**3**

Work towards the achievement of appropriate government targets for the representation of women and minority ethnic groups at senior management and board level.

**4**

Improve the recruitment of a representative intake with initiatives such as ending unpaid internships and supporting school university and apprenticeship programmes.

**5**

Create safe places to work for all, committing to:

- Create accessible environments in our offices for all staff and visitors
- timeTo Code of Conduct on sexual harassment
- A proactive culture that supports whistleblowing
- Train staff to recognise those who need help for stress or mental health and create appropriate support systems.



Closing thoughts

This has been a remarkable journey. It all started when ten CEO's got together around a table in Soho to discuss what more the industry could do to drive the diversity agenda within our industry. We all agreed that of all industries, one that represents the voice and opinions of people to Governments and business, that we had a responsibility to ensure that we represent the people we serve accurately and fairly. We also agreed that when we looked at ourselves, the people we employed did not accurately reflect the communities we served. Many of us were already involved in actively championing diversity within our own businesses.

That was two years ago. Never had this group come together to discuss and decide to work together to create real change and a strong call to action for our industry. This was when the 'CEO Diversity Pledge' was born.

Since then there have been huge strides to make significant progress. There is no doubt that at the 'Black Lives Matter' movement had a galvanizing impact, helping accelerate the actions that were already in motion and inspiring many more.

I really hope this progress report inspires us all; to commit to continuing to pursue and drive real change. Also, that it gives everyone some very practical ideas that they can pick up and use in their own organisations.

Personally, I feel extremely optimistic about the future. We have hit a turning point, which the progress we have already made bears testament to. However, as the research highlights at the beginning of this report we have a long way to go. We need more of you to join the mission to create a fairer, kinder and more inclusive society, for all.

**Vanella Jackson**

Global CEO Hall & Partners

MRS DI&E Council

The CEO pledge is a core focus for the DI&E Council, we feel it is probably the most effective framework to drive accountability, measurement, collective learning and most importantly change. I remember having a conversation with Jane in 2016 about my concerns on the lack of diversity within our industry, my lens then was from simply from a gender perspective, I didn't even consider my ethnicity. Since then we have made progress, admittedly it is slow and for many frustrating, but we are moving forward. We have 25 organisations signed up to the Pledge and individually they are all doing incredible work against a backdrop of a pandemic. We want to celebrate this, and raise awareness amongst other organisations out there yet to sign the Pledge that it does not take much - learn from what you read in this report and please reach out to any of the Council members for advice.

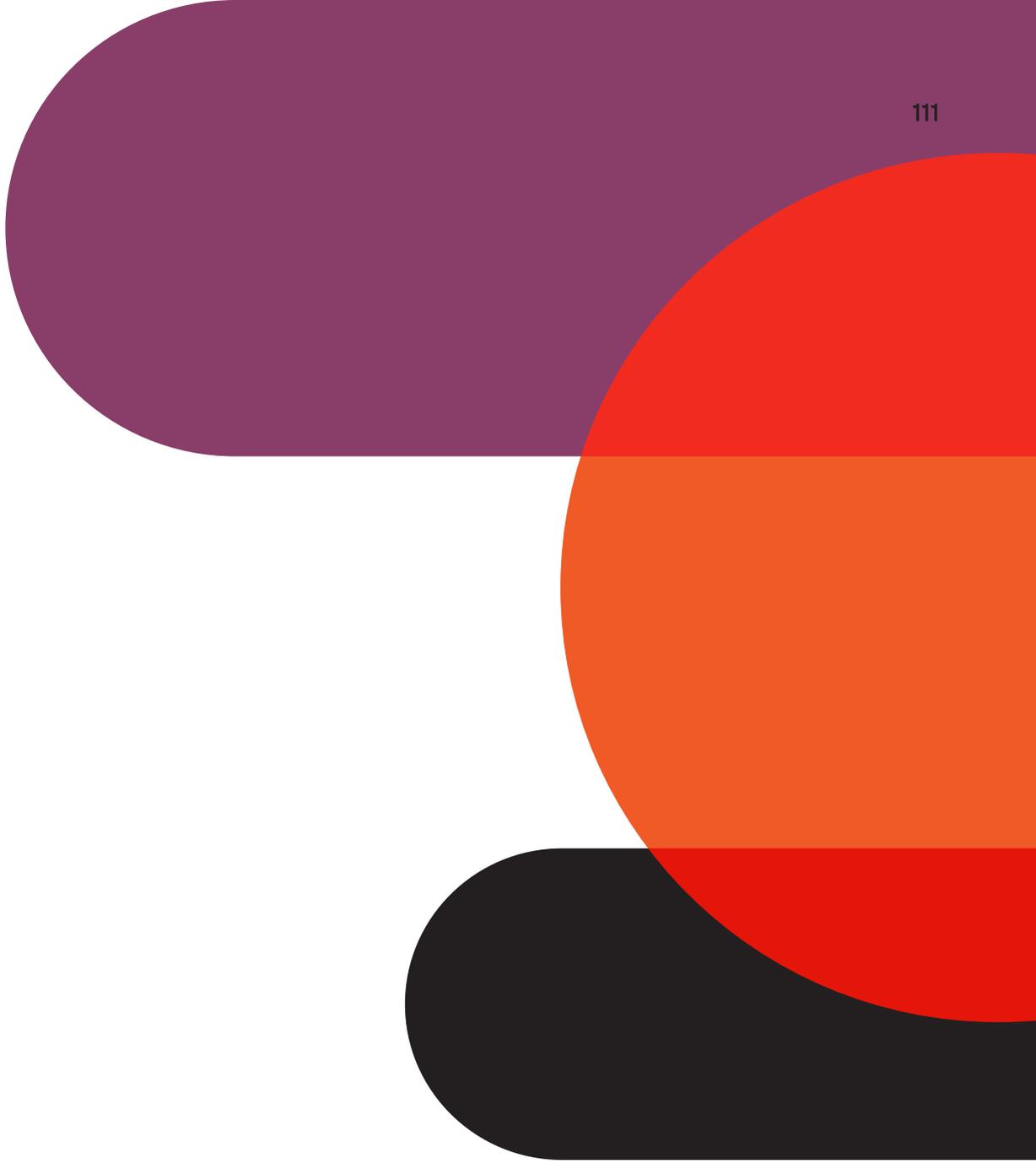
There are 2 things that really stood out to me whilst reading this report:

1. There seems to be a disconnect between how the industry feels as a whole (results from the D&I Survey) and what is being done top down. It raises the question whether the CEO work is filtering to the people that matter. So I urge leadership within organisations to ensure a bottom up strategy in creating awareness and making sure their initiatives are impactful

2. We have to break the traditional ways of recruiting, attracting and nurturing talent, this takes time, may cost more money and will require organisations to think creatively and seek new partnerships. This particular area is key for the MRS DI&E council - from the apprenticeship scheme to new partnerships. Ultimately the way we talk about our industry needs to change so it is one that more people, irrespective of who they are, choose to enter and feel they can

I hope in 12 months we are able to say that a 100 plus organisations have signed the pledge and the impact of that is we look around us and see an industry that represents the society we serve.

**Babita Earle**  
Chair MRS DI&E Council





Manifesto for Opportunity

**MRS  
CEO  
Pledge**