

### Introduction

**2020 is going to be an historic year that we will all remember.**



Future generations will look back and reflect on this last year as the catalyst for change. Events have shone a new light on the racial inequalities and racism experienced by Black people, Asian people, and people from other ethnic minority communities across the globe, in the UK and in Wales.

The murder of George Floyd, the Black Lives Matter movement, and the subsequent protests, have also highlighted systemic inequalities and injustice. Currently applicants from minority ethnic backgrounds face an uphill battle in the hiring process. They have to send 80% more applications than a white British person before they get a positive response from a company; according to [a study by the Centre for Social Investigation at Nuffield College, University of Oxford](#). Even if they progress onto an assessment centre or interview stage, Black, Asian, and other ethnic minority candidates are 14% more likely to be rejected than white candidates.

Like gender bias, racial bias can be implicit and frequently is unknowingly perpetuated by recruitment professionals. The first step in creating an inclusive environment is within recruitment, for example, some careful attention to words and phrases used can help eliminate implicit and explicit bias and increase diversity.

Commitment from the top of the organisation is essential to achieve sustainable change. We need to throw away any signs of tokenism and instead look at implementing long-term measures that will attract, retain, and promote black talent in our organisations. A number of Housing Associations have signed up to Tai Pawb's pledge to action, 'Deeds not Words' as part of their commitment to tackling racism and racial inequality. They have produced a lot of useful resources that are available to everyone, [click here to view](#).

**In HR we have a key role to play as we manage many of the processes that can make a difference.**

### Recruitment



### Inclusive Recruitment

**There are some simple ways to ensure we are recruiting from a diverse and wide talent pool, and that those people have equal access to development:**

#### 1. Review the recruitment journey

Map the candidate's journey from the day they submit the application to acceptance. And remove any unnecessary blocks. Your prospective colleague is like a customer so look at where this person is coming from and also how and when they will want to be informed throughout the process.

Walk in the candidate's shoes and challenge yourself and see how inclusive the whole customer journey is. Could you make CVs blind, for example?

Undertake an audit on your previous recruitment adverts. Look at the language used. It may have been targeted to a specific demographic. In order to boost your diversity recruiting strategy do not be afraid to specifically target a demographic. Let your candidates know that you're looking for them and explain why you would make a great fit.

Could you use video adverts? These can be placed on websites or sent to recruiters. This is where you can talk about the role and an opportunity to talk about *'Deeds not words'* thus establishing your commitment to creating a more inclusive environment.

Look into removing the question to determine ethnicity from the application process, this could demonstrate that it is not an important factor in selecting candidates for interview (this will though have an impact on the data we collect and our ability to monitor at that stage.)

Consider advertising your job vacancies in different languages and sharing with your community networks to increase your reach.

#### 2. Sourcing

**Don't wait for candidates from under represented ethnic groups to come to you.**

Proactively engage with Black and other communities from under represented groups in the areas that you operate – explore using recruitment agencies/companies who specialise in sourcing candidates from ethnic minority groups, that will have a more diverse database of candidates and are well-connected in the community to attract diverse talent for your organisation.

Engage with community leaders as they can provide you with contacts and opportunities to let people know you are hiring. Establishing trust within community leaders will add credibility and trust when you do place job adverts and encourage them to promote the positions.

**Ensure your adverts specifically welcome under represented groups.**

Consider the imagery used throughout your recruitment process, whether that be websites pages, recruitment portals or social media, is it inclusive?

Be mindful of language and terminology in your adverts - phrases like “strong English-language skills” may deter qualified non-native English speakers from applying. Gov UK have a guide on [‘Writing about ethnicity’](#), including use of the terms BAME, BME and People of Colour.

Ask people who are from black and minority backgrounds (whether they are within the organisation or from the community) what they think about the recruitment process – get their feedback on the wording, make them feel engaged in the process. If you want to be more inclusive you must bring the right people into the process to understand whether you are getting it right.

### 3. Job Descriptions

When you review the job description, look at the wording. Is it inclusive or alienating certain groups? Compare what other companies are writing in their job descriptions. Get some feedback on yours.

Refer to values alignment rather than cultural fit in the document.

### 4. Interview Process

Consider implementing the ‘Rooney rule’ at job levels where you identify under representation. ([Inside Housing have published an article](#) on how to implement the Rooney Rule without falling foul of discrimination laws)

Consider how ethnically diverse your interview panels are? When considering representation, how are you showing up to interviewees?

Use ethnicity data to measure how you are doing in terms of successful applicants, as well as promotion and other development opportunities.

Use standardised interview questions for each job role/group – what will you ask? How will you score it? What do you ask for supplementary questions?

### 5. Learning & Development

According to the McGregor-Smith review into race in the workplace, only 6% of top management positions are held by people from a Black, Asian, or other ethnic background. Look at career development specifically for your employees from ethnic minority groups and ensure that open conversations are being held about promotion and the steps needed to achieve it.

Creating an inclusive culture does not end with recruitment. It is only the start of the journey. It is important to focus on career development. Look at career development specifically for your employees from ethnic minority groups and ensure that open conversations are being held about promotion and the steps needed to achieve it.

- Train all staff on Unconscious Bias and refresh regularly, raising awareness of white privilege.
- You can complete the following questionnaire to test your own bias by [clicking here](#). Understanding your own bias is not a sign of weakness but can assist you in understanding where they lie when operating in your day to day to help you combat them.
- Talk about the company values and culture and share case studies to promote inclusivity.
- Awareness sessions – talking about our ethnicity data and what it tells us, discuss how can we be more representative of the communities we serve.
- Leadership program and training: If you have a leadership program, advertise it. Ask new entrants from black and minority groups whether they would like to be part of it. Provide a clear road map detailing how someone can go into leadership.
- **Mentoring**
  - Consider setting up or adapting an existing scheme to sponsor or mentor at least one employee from a minority ethnic group, as well as other groups that may be underrepresented in your organisation every year.
  - Reverse mentoring for senior leaders with more junior employees from Black, Asian, or other ethnic minority groups can help open eyes to others' experience in the world of work and beyond.

### 6. Networking

- Build links with and support minority ethnic community groups in the area and beyond, invest in building their capacity to support local communities and bring in community knowledge and challenge to the organisation.
- Consider creating your own internal network/group
- Invite speakers with learned experience to share and provide learning within your organisation.
- Encourage your colleagues to share the prospective role within their networks. Offer an incentive?
- When networking develop a company brand which showcases your diversity.
- Celebrate success stories of people within different roles.
- Look at how good you are at communicating the company's commitment to diversity – it's great that you have one but if you do not promote or talk about it internally and externally how will prospective diverse candidates know about it?

