



EDI LIVE

A collection of articles and videos from the B4 One event at Ashmolean Museum on 25th November, 2020.

..... → FEATURES

A focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

with Lydia Igweh

Inclusion and Diversity at GWR

Ruth Busby, Great Western Railway

Supporting Black Founders And Businesses

Imisi Adefala, IAMedia

Why should a white guy care about diversity? And what can he do if he does?

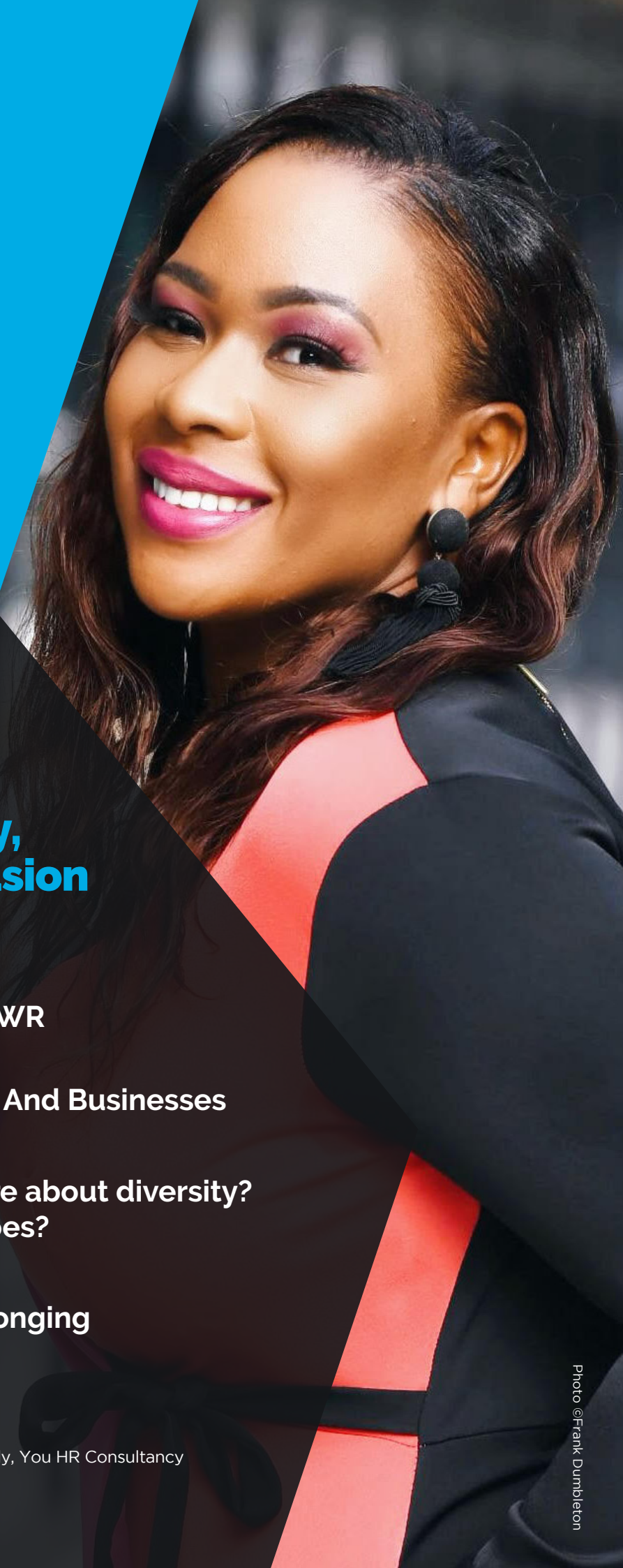
Adrian Sell, Oxfordshire Community Foundation

Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging

Jenny Garrett, Jenny Garrett Global

B4 EDI Survey Results

Linda Hughes, Dynamic HR Coach & Jonna Mundy, You HR Consultancy



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



BROUGHT TO YOU BY:



◻ A Focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace

I was delighted to co-host the B4 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion live broadcast at the Ashmolean Museum. The purpose of the initiative was to help organisations, and its people to thrive through putting a spotlight on this increasingly important topic.

The webinar provided an appreciation of the value of diversity of thought and respect for others, an understanding of the critical elements of delivering inclusive leadership, and creating environments where everyone can reach their full potential. Additionally, it provided insightful tools and inspiration from influential leaders and experts from a national and international business community.

If 2020 has taught us anything, equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace should not be afterthoughts for any organisation.

They're central to business success. Innovation drives a business forward – and research shows that disruptive, breakthrough ideas come about when employees have a sense of belonging and diverse teams look at challenges from different angles.

“An inclusive culture built on valuing difference, fostering inclusion and promoting collaboration will not just enable a business to survive but thrive!”

Equality and diversity is a strategic and operational strand relevant for all workplaces,





regardless of whether you're a start-up that employs one or two people or a large corporation with hundreds of employees. It's irrespective of whether you work in an office, virtually, or on a restaurant floor.

The aims of equality and diversity are simple: To ensure equality of opportunity for all, giving every individual the chance to achieve their potential, free from prejudice and discrimination.

It's not about giving everyone the same monthly salary. It's about ensuring people have equal and fair access and opportunities to allow them to meet their full potential. Sometimes this means giving some people extra help as different people have different needs.

"It sounds obvious to state that we all have the right to work in a fair and inclusive workplace free from discrimination, harassment, victimisation, and bullying. Still, unfortunately, this isn't always the reality".

It can only become a reality when organisations and their leaders create a genuine commitment to building meaningful, enduring and respectful relationships and to making equality, diversity and inclusion part of everything they do.

Having this respect embedded into philosophy, policies and processes and fully understood by all staff is consistent with ethical leadership. Everyone wins when organisations create environments where every employee is empowered to impact their business.

There is a benefit to good people practice decisions for employers, employees and the wider society. Apart from the moral case for building a fairer, more inclusive labour market, there are several positive business outcomes.

Attract and Retain Top Talent

In difficult and challenging economic times, using the whole workforce's talents is more important than ever. With society becoming ever-more inclusive and young talent, being acutely aware of inclusivity, **your teams need to reflect the community in which we live** so you can attract and retain the best talent.

You'll be able to recruit the top talent if your job applications are open to everyone, and not just a select few. Not only will your employees feel empowered that their capabilities were the reason behind their hire, but they're more likely to bring their best contributions to their work.

Hiring people from different cultures provides

an opportunity to capitalise on **diverse language skills**, helping you to sell products and services and provide enhanced customer support. Additionally, you'll benefit from reduced employee turnover if people feel comfortable, valued and happy in a workplace with an ethical and inclusive culture.

Competitive Advantage through Increased Innovation

Once you have that top talent, you want to make the most of it. **Research by Deloitte** shows that organisations committed to, and supportive of, diversity is more likely to improve their employees' ability to innovate and collaborate. A diverse workforce can help to inform the development of new and enhanced products and services, open new market opportunities, improve market share and in some cases, broaden an organisation's customer base.

However, employees need to feel they have a voice in the organisation, so different perspectives are heard.

Company Reputation and Brand Profile

A 2017 **survey by PwC**, shows 54% of women and 45% admitted to researching if a company had a diversity & inclusion policy before taking their most recent position. Additionally, 61% of women and 48% of men said they assessed the company's leadership team's diversity when deciding to accept an offer. Thus, equality, diversity, and inclusion are a transformational factor in attracting both employees and customers.

It's also imperative for organisations to consider corporate responsibility (CR) in the context of diversity as social exclusion and low economic activity rates can limit business markets and growth. Increasingly employers now take a more expansive view, seeing an organisation's overall image as critical to their business's success.

Written by Lydiah Igweh



Lydiah Igweh
Director of Enterprise Support
Oxford Brookes University

With over 17 years of C-level experience, Igweh specialises in innovation, entrepreneurship, organisational change, leadership and digital transformation. She's committed to championing women in business and equality, diversity and inclusion with a particular passion for advancing race equality. She is a founding Director of OSEP (Oxfordshire Social Entrepreneurship Partnership) supporting social enterprises and purposeful businesses to thrive.

Connect with Lydiah:
www.linkedin.com/in/lydiahigweh/



Richard Rosser
CEO, B4

“This event underlined that all businesses need to embrace diversity, not at some point in the future, not tomorrow, they need to do it today.”

About B4: B4 provides platforms for our growing and diverse community of members to connect, learn, raise their profile, inspire and be inspired to become better businesses.

B4 members share the same values – they understand that any successful business, now and in the future, will need to build long-lasting, trusted relationships and embrace collaboration, reciprocation and integrity.
richard@b4-business.com



⬡ A Unique Venue in Oxford – Inspiring Minds Since 1683

The Ashmolean Museum with its imposing façade is a well-known landmark building in the City of Oxford and one of the oldest public Museums in the world. Its Collection contains artefacts from across the globe which illuminate elements of the human story; from the earliest civilisations right up to the modern day.

From the wonder of the Collections to the dedicated Events Team who will work with you through each stage of planning, the Ashmolean provides a stunning setting for a very special event, meeting or broadcast. The spectacular spaces available for hire offer a diverse range of event venue options for clients; from the contemporary to the classical, all displaying a world-renowned collection that encompasses five millennia of art and history. Your guests will leave inspired.

Unique among Oxford's venues, the Museum can ensure your event is truly memorable by combining it with exclusive access to the Ashmolean's special temporary exhibitions. Offering your guests a private view of the world-class exhibitions with a guide is a fantastic addition to your event. Gallery highlights, behind-the-scenes insights and thematic tours can also be arranged to enable your guests to experience expert insight into our permanent Collection, provoking discussion and sparking conversations.

The Ashmolean's venue spaces are available for exclusive hire on any day of the week from 17:00. Some of our spaces are also available for meetings and filming during opening hours. All of the spaces are fully accessible and the Museum is a COVID-secure accredited venue.

The Event Team can offer expert advice on choosing the right space for your event plans. Book a virtual tour with one of the team and explore the spaces and have your questions answered in real time.

Catering amongst the sensitive objects in the galleries is a challenge, but it's one which is perfectly met by the Museum's catering partners Benugo. Wendy Ball, Head of Events, explains, 'Created with passion, their food is sustainably sourced, showcasing the best seasonal produce, beautifully designed and provides an extraordinary culinary experience to inspire you and your guests. The award-winning chefs create specially curated menus to suit all dietary together with clever wine pairings, and creative menu and table design.'

'Over the years we have developed relationships with our trusted partners to support events at the Museum'. Paul Jeffery, Corporate Relationships Manager, adds: 'This means we can offer our clients a curated list of suppliers and creatives who share our values and meet our high standards. Our network of professionals will provide those added extras like photography, lighting and AV, entertainment and floristry. Familiar with our event spaces they will work with your ideas and bring them to life in the Museum.' The Ashmolean can wholeheartedly



recommend the right partner for your event.

The Ashmolean offers a range of creative solutions for you to engage your clients and networks.

A private view of the exhibition led by an expert as part of your virtual event; a thematic virtual tour of the collection that links to your business theme; a hybrid treasure hunt through the galleries where your guests direct a hunter in the galleries; care-packs delivered to your client's door from the fabulous Museum shops. Bettina Zagoritis, Museum Event Manager, comments, 'Our creative Event Team will work with you, and our technology partners, to deliver a unique, engaging and memorable experience.'

Every event at the Ashmolean helps us continue our vital work to look after and share our remarkable collections with you and future generations.



- ashmolean.org
- AshmoleanMuseum
- ashmoleanmuseum
- ashmoleanmuseum
- ashmoleanmuseum





WHAT'S INSIDE

Thank You To Our Sponsors	2
A Focus on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace	3
A Unique Venue in Oxford - Inspiring Minds Since 1683	5
EDI Event Videos	7
Inclusion And Diversity At GWR	8
Supporting Black Founders And Business	9
Diversity, Inclusion And Belonging	10
Creating The Conditions For Diverse Teams To Thrive	11
Why Should A White Guy Care About Diversity? And What Can He Do If He Does?	13
Unconscious Bias	14
Catch Up With Our B4 One: Workplace Wellbeing Event	15

EDI EVENT VIDEOS



Lydia Igweh interviews B4's Richard Rosser

Watch here: <https://youtu.be/JrqMzKiQMXE>



Why should a white guy care about diversity? And what can he do if he does?

Adrian Sell, Oxfordshire Community Foundation
Watch here: https://youtu.be/-s72Rrqc_Mo



Creating Inclusive Employment Pathways for Care Leavers and Ex-Offenders

Tracy Blackstock, Circles South East
Watch here: <https://youtu.be/RxDfM6rHRZl>



Toward Inclusive Tech in the Workplace: A community approach to fair and equitable systems

Selin Nugent, Oxford Brookes University
Watch here: <https://youtu.be/jgAgpU4Zvr8>



Race Equality: We can't change the past, but we can create the future

Javed Thomas, Race Equality Matters
Watch here: <https://youtu.be/i9PjaYhmhf4>



Interview with Leila Siddiqi, Associate Director of Diversity at IPA

Watch here: https://youtu.be/-s72Rrqc_Mo



Interview with Tim Vorely, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean of Oxford Brookes Business School

Watch here: <https://youtu.be/bB7uRnqC4WI>



Unconscious bias by employment partners Paul Mander and Daff Richardson

Paul Mander, Penningtons Manches Cooper
Watch here: <https://youtu.be/yOdxDwDMywU>



An Inclusive Economy Agenda for Oxford

Clayton Lavallin, Oxford City Council
Watch here: <https://youtu.be/oJYbmyExRjs>



EDI Initiatives at GWR

Ruth Busby, Great Western Railway
Watch here: <https://youtu.be/lSfxBayLlwO>



Interview with Izzy Obeng, Foundervine

Watch here: <https://youtu.be/R2d5H40ZoEg>



Unipart Speaks EDI

Laura Duthie & Deborah Astles, Unipart Group
Watch here: <https://youtu.be/46xiEDePGns>



Interview with Gary Stewart, Co-founder & CEO of FounderTribes

Watch here: <https://youtu.be/oLlnxz1-ilw>



How systemic EDI issues become internalised by employees

Heather Griffiths & Charoula Tzanakou, Oxford Brookes University
Watch here: https://youtu.be/IU6_GC1be1o



How to really embrace equality, diversity and inclusivity for all

Jonna Mundy, You HR
Watch here: <https://youtu.be/BVqMZOQml7c>



Supporting Black Founders and Businesses

Imisi Adefala, IAMedia
Watch here: <https://youtu.be/tb2JjpPw2yo>



Diversifying Leadership

Jenny Garrett, Jenny Garrett Global
Watch here: <https://youtu.be/bnCKdnYPhxw>



Building a Diversity & Inclusion Programme from scratch

Linda Hughes, Dynamic HR Coach
Watch here: <https://youtu.be/PPOfcccDuAE>



Reviewing Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Survey Results from the B4 Community

Jonna Mundy, You HR & Linda Hughes, Dynamic HR Coach
Watch here: <https://youtu.be/OcPU4OVvwIk>

◻ Inclusion and Diversity at GWR

Great Western Railway has worked collaboratively with colleagues to establish an Inclusion and Diversity Strategy and Action Plan that creates an environment where all colleagues feel comfortable to bring their whole selves to work. Over 600 colleagues and Trades Union representatives worked with us to develop the strategy that aims to achieve our vision where: *We are progressive. We are one family. We are inclusive. First time, every time.*

The strategy aims to broaden our appeal for both customers and colleagues and has strong links with our Great Experience Makers customer excellence training. We have empowered colleagues to hold the Executive Team to account through the Inclusion Action Board and staff network groups, each with an Executive Sponsor.

Our strategy covers five areas:

Understanding our position: ensuring that our people data captures colleagues protected characteristics; that we investigate recruitment outcomes at each step of the process; analysing our engagement survey results by protected characteristic; and, understanding the ethnic diversity of the communities that we serve.

Our appeal: changing where we advertise; working with underprivileged communities; supporting PRIDE celebrations; naming trains after local heroes including Sir Paul Stephenson, Tul Bahadur Pun, and Odette Hallowes; and pioneering the Rail to Refuge Scheme to provide free travel for women and families to reach the safety of a refuge to escape domestic abuse.

Our experience: updating the language in our policies to be gender neutral; creating transgender guidance in collaboration with transgender colleagues; introducing gender neutral uniforms but gender specific Personal

Protective Equipment; and, creating blueprints for all future building changes to include gender neutral facilities and spaces.

Our talent: introducing specific development programmes to develop women and ethnically diverse colleagues; reverse mentoring for our Executive team and senior leaders; and, training over 140 Mental Health First Aiders.

Our voice and partners: supporting a wide range of active staff network groups who speak directly to our Executive Board; collaborating with our Trades Unions colleagues on I&D; and, working in partnerships with Women in Rail, Stonewall, WISE, and the 5% Club.

Measuring progress

We regularly review our quantitative data such as the percentage of the workforce that is female and the diversity of our management colleagues and we have set targets to drive progress. However, we are as interested in the qualitative insights. Insights come from: our Your Voice results, with a specific question in 2020 around feeling valued; increased positive sentiment on social media; and an increased number of colleagues feeling comfortable to share if they are disabled, LGBTQ+, or carers. Ultimately it is the nature of the conversations and stories in the organisation that really tells us if things have changed.



Our advice to others

There is always more work to do to ensure that GWR is inclusive and diverse. You can never assume you have done enough. However, we would recommend:

- Make your journey on inclusion part of your cultural change with clear connections to your business purpose.
- Work with colleagues directly to ensure they feel part of the story.
- Ensure there is something for everyone to connect with. The inclusion of our work around mental health has helped to change the dialogue.
- Encourage visible sponsorship from senior leaders who are engaged and show active support.
- Avoid rules and encourage conversation, allow people to make mistakes in a supportive environment.
- Encourage kindness. We must always make the effort to "seek first to understand" what the other person is going through and why they have their perspective. Dialogue with kindness at its heart is what really makes the change.



- 🖥 www.gwr.com
- 🐦 [GWRHelp](#)
- 📘 [gwr.uk](#)
- 📷 [gwr.uk](#)
- 📺 [FGWComms](#)



Supporting Black Founders And Businesses

This could be a very long article as to why and how racism still exists within modern British society. I could divulge countless racist experiences I have personally had - such as being attacked by the police, or racist slurs in the workplace - but this was not the focus of my talk at the B4 One Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Talk, or this piece. Rather, the purpose is to speak to how we can tangibly contribute to seeing racial equality and equity become the institutional norm in the corporate setting.

The premise here is that racism is an institutional problem; in other words, rather than being defined by isolated overt racist encounters, racism is somewhat of an organised covert system, culture, or set of unspoken rules. Pertaining to entrepreneurship, this means that there are significant yet obscured barriers in place that hinder Black people's opportunities to create and grow a successful business.

Take for instance the term a 'smoke filled room,' - a "place of political intrigue and chicanery, where candidates were selected by party bosses in cigar-chewing session," per William Safire - which was created after the 1920 Republican convention. It was used to describe how a seemingly defeated Sen. Warren G Harding became victorious after a group of Republican kingmakers held a series of private meetings. With smoking indoors now banned in the UK, this term is now used metaphorically to describe a process of how certain decisions are made.

For example, according to The Independent, in a devastating year for so many businesses, the government awarded £18bn in Coronavirus-related contracts to private firms, most with no competitive tendering

processes. Lord Bethel was quoted stating that the government relied on 'informal arrangements' to fulfil the need of PPE. Meller Designs, a company owned by a prominent Conservative party donor was awarded PPE contracts worth £163m after one of these informal calls with Lord Bethel. There are many other examples like these which merely exemplify the real way business is often conducted.

With Black people being less likely to receive referrals than their White peers, and holding less than 7% of director positions across FTSE 350 companies, this means that for new entrepreneurs from the Black community who may not have relationships with key decision makers, it is significantly harder to win contracts and grants. As such, overcoming these barriers will take a great deal of intentionality and nothing less.

If you would like to be an ally to Black businesses owners a great way is to become a sponsor. Look at your current networks both professionally and socially, and actively promote Black business owners you admire in those circles. Research has shown that Black people are just as likely to succeed in winning a contract or promotion

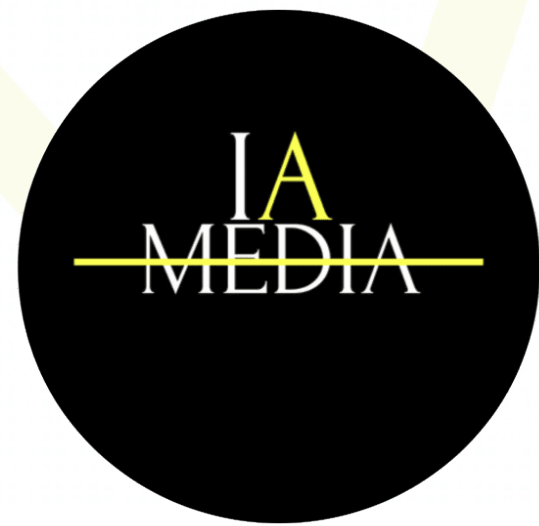


as their White peers when they are referred or sponsored, as opposed to when they are not.

At Inspiring Action Media, we strive to have a diverse team and champion other Black businesses. In 2020 in collaboration with Oxford Brookes University we created the Young Entrepreneurs Challenge which gave young people from diverse backgrounds the chance to pitch to a panel of business leaders and win cash prizes. This is an example of championing businesses, providing access to kingmakers and creating access to funds.

If you would like any support on how you can become a sponsor or have any questions about IAMedia, please feel free to get in touch via Imisi.adebola@iamedia.co.uk.

Written by Imisi Adefala and Annette Funto Tony-Fadipe



-  www.iamedia.co.uk
-  [imisioade](https://twitter.com/imisioade)
-  [IAMedia](https://www.facebook.com/IAMedia)
-  [iamedia.uk](https://www.instagram.com/iamedia.uk)
-  [imisi-adebola](https://www.linkedin.com/company/imisi-adebola)



Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging

Numerous studies show that Black, Asian and minority ethnic employees still face significant barriers in the workplace. From recruitment and progression to reaching leadership positions, there are strategies that organisations can adopt to improve team representation from entry level all the way through to boardroom.

The first thing to consider is what level of allyship you're willing to give. There is an allyship continuum from: apathetic, when you are saying that you're an ally, but not doing very much to be an active ally through to someone who is willing to educate themselves and be active in speaking truth to power and pointing out when they see microaggressions in the workplace.

To become an active ally, it is helpful to broaden your perspective by reading books from diverse authors, seeking out news from different parts of the world and different perspectives and widening your own network.

As an ally, you'll have conversations that include race. In one of the organisations that we're working with, a senior leader is a sponsor. He has been leading for a long time and before the programme started he said he had mentored lots of people from diverse backgrounds and race had never ever come into the conversation.

In reality that means that some things have not been allowed to come into the conversation that might be very important for individuals and that might be playing a very important role in their career and their lives. A

good question to ask yourself as a senior leader is "What am I privileging in conversation, what am I inadvertently excluding, and what impact does that have on others?"

Lastly, bringing different voices into the room is very important. A good way of doing this is to have a shadow board. This is a board of diverse individuals who know they're not board members but who give you different perspectives. Where possible the shadow board should mirror your customers to ensure you are taking their needs and opinions into account.

There are very few organisations whose audience matches the people in their board, and as a result mistakes can be made by forgetting groups of people who are your customers. When you mirror your audience this is far less likely to happen.

Being on a shadow board also serves as learning opportunity for its members and a succession tool. By being part of the shadow board they'll gain a better understanding of what it means to be a board member. If they decide to go for those sorts of roles in the future they'll be better informed.



There are so many good reasons to embrace Inclusion, Diversity and belonging. It brings adaptability, flexibility, creativity and the ability to see things from a range of perspectives. And in our rapidly changing and challenging world, this will help you to remain competitive and ultimately to survive.

Organisations should want to create inclusive environments where everyone belongs, but only if it's driven by genuine depth of thought and commitment. Don't just jump on the bandwagon because everyone else is doing it or you risk being 'cancelled' in Twitter speak for virtue signaling.

By Jenny Garrett, Executive Coach and Leadership Development Expert

Email: info@jennygarrett.global



 **JENNY GARRETT**

-  jennygarrett.global
-  [JenniferGarrett](https://twitter.com/JenniferGarrett)
-  [CoachJennyGarrett](https://www.facebook.com/CoachJennyGarrett)
-  [jennygarrett.global](https://www.instagram.com/jennygarrett.global)
-  [ReflexionAssociates](https://www.youtube.com/ReflexionAssociates)



Creating the conditions for diverse teams to thrive

We all know that diverse teams deliver better results. And that inclusion creates the conditions for diverse teams to thrive.

But in many cases, progress isn't just slow – it's stalled, with a 50% decrease in participation in Diversity & Inclusion programmes year-on-year according to research data. We believe that's because too often, Diversity & Inclusion programmes focus on changing processes rather than mindsets. And often, they focus exclusively on the underrepresented groups rather than bringing everyone along on the journey.

A true culture of inclusion can only happen when everyone is on the dancefloor. Because real change happens when you give people the tools to start a movement. And a movement starts when everyone gets on the dancefloor.

We asked our members to participate in a questionnaire with the opportunity to share their thoughts to create discussion and action, and they identified these top three priorities:

100% of respondents believed that employees should receive Diversity & Inclusion training to develop their understanding and raise awareness

What Next Steps Can Organisations Consider:

1. Make D&I a corporate initiative through senior leaders scoping their vision for the organisation
2. Assess where your organisation stands in its journey toward a diverse and inclusive workforce – this includes assessing data, surveying employees etc.

3. **Review the gaps** to develop where you need to exert focus and deliver a learning experience that takes employees on a journey from unconscious bias to conscious action by embedding daily habits of inclusion as daily routines
4. **Set measurable goals** and recognise that a culture shift is an evolutionary process
5. **Make an organisational commitment** through your internal communications, surveys, and initiatives, share your success stories

What Next Steps are B4 taking to support their members:

1. **Workshop:** Engage with members, voluntary sector to help deliver "How to develop a diverse organisation and create an Inclusive culture"
2. **Research:** Set up a research group into the competitive business advantage of diverse workplaces

100% of respondents believed that organisations should evaluate opportunities for internships and apprenticeship roles across organisations, to encourage representation from specific groups



B4 EDI SURVEY

What Next Steps Can Organisations Consider:

- 1. Look at how your organisation could engage an intern or apprentice – investigate the different levels and funding available
- 2. Reach out to other organisations to understand how they recruited from specific groups and what feedback they can give you
- 3. Use your network or employees to reach communities or specific groups
- 4. Recognise employees who are focussed on the engagement and development of interns / apprentices ie the people who are promoting what you are doing
- 5. Develop other learning opportunities for interns / apprentices to develop life skills ie Princes Trust, Duke of Edinburgh

What Next Steps are B4 taking to support their members:

- 1. Promotion: Engage with members, other bodies to help promote interns / apprenticeship opportunities across specific groups

100% of respondents believed that taking positive action to address any imbalance of opportunity or disadvantage that an individual with a protected characteristic had was the right thing to do

What Next Steps Can Organisations Consider:

- 1. Assess your organisation though collecting data and understanding current practices, gather insight as it may not be obvious without intersectional evaluation
- 2. Review the gaps and make commitment to your workforce to provide equal opportunities through positive

action, ensuring you are transparent in the actions you take

- 3. Set measurable goals and recognise that a culture shift is an evolutionary process and that your employees feel comfortable and aligned with the positive actions you propose
- 4. Make an organisational commitment through your internal communications, surveys, and initiatives. Share your success stories.

What Next Steps are B4 taking to support their members:

- 1. Articles: sharing best practices, videos, podcasts that support positive ED&I practices
- 2. Discussion: create occasions for sharing experiences and provide learning opportunities to build a broader understanding of ED&I

The Next Steps are by no means comprehensive, but it's a start. Some of these are easy action items that can be implemented today. Many will take the effort of a thoughtful and committed community of diverse individuals with engaged senior leadership.

I hope this jumpstarts the conversation at your organisation. If you need support to really get going please get in contact with either Linda Hughes – Linda@dynamiccoach.co.uk or Jonna Mundy - Jonna@youhr.co.uk who conducted the research on behalf of B4.

By Linda Hughes - Dynamic Coach and Jonna Mundy - You HR Consultancy



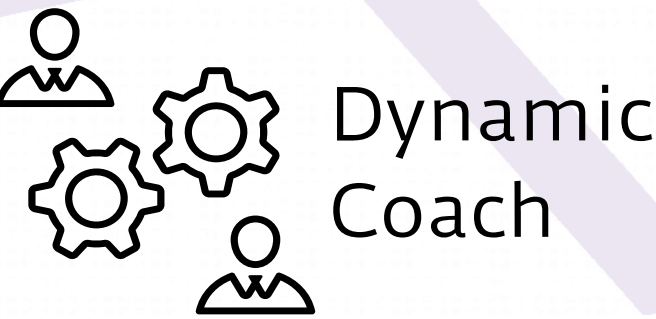
Jonna Mundy



Linda Hughes



- youhrconsultancy.co.uk
- youHRconsult
- youhrconsultancy
- youhrconsultancy
- link
- link



- dynamiccoach.co.uk
- dynamiccoach3
- dynamic-coach-ltd
- link

Why should a white guy care about diversity? And what can he do if he does?

I grew up feeling like a bit of an outsider. I have carried that with me throughout life, and always tried to think about who isn't here, or who we aren't talking about or including. That can be a challenging question, but I think it's an important one for all organisations and people to think about.

My dad was a refugee from Hungary in 1956. He came to the UK and was very warmly welcomed and supported by the Sell family – he changed his name to Sell, partly as a mark of thanks but partly because he wanted to fit in. There are a lot of white people from disadvantaged backgrounds who can make that shift. Twenty years after he moved to the UK, he had learnt how to blend in and look like a 'British gentleman', despite the story under the surface.

His journey has always been with me, it led me to working with Oxfam on humanitarian relief programmes in places like South-West Algeria and Rwanda. I was struck by seeing up close what massive disadvantages people in those communities face; knowing that however gifted you are or however hard you work, you're going to struggle to make it to where you want to be if your standing at birth is against you. This is not to deny that people who are very successful work very hard to get where they do; but there are whole lot of foundations below them that I think we forget about because we like to think that we're the products of our own endeavours.

In professional terms, diversity is massively important to me. We have gone through this whole conversation already with feminism and women's rights, acknowledging that it doesn't make sense to exclude half the population from the talent pool that you're recruiting from, or from decision-making processes, thinking and ideas-generation. I think we're

having a similar conversation now about black and ethnic minority populations.

Charities have a peculiar and I think slightly shameful problem in that we are massively under-representative, particularly at board and senior leadership level. As a community foundation we are here to serve the communities of Oxfordshire, with a particular focus on those who are disadvantaged or marginalised; so I think it is a problem not to have representation and inclusion of those populations in our organisation, and it is one that I'm hoping to address, both behind the scenes and presentationally.

Since becoming CEO of OCF six months ago, I have tried to build on the work of my predecessor Jayne Woodley, who put a lot of time into making sure we were listening and understanding different communities' needs. Through the emergency COVID response, this meant we were able to reach out and support organisations like Oxford Community Action (pictured), who are working with ethnic minority populations and making sure that mainstream services are supplemented with ones that meet their particular needs (halal food distribution being one obvious example).

I've also been chairing a voluntary sector coordination group. We had a conversation back in June about diversity and inclusion and race in our sector, and it was a very uncomfortable one. I think we need to sit with that



discomfort and reflect on it, because it challenges us to think about our own preconceptions and positions – for example it's very easy for me to feel comfortable and secure as a white middle class male, and others might not find that so easy.

But talking about it isn't enough – we also need action. I am proud that UKCF, the umbrella organisation for all UK community foundations, is also taking this issue seriously and making equity, diversity and inclusion a key focus for the years ahead. In Oxfordshire, I've been working with a group of BAME community leaders to try and put together a new infrastructure organisation that will better represent their needs and advocate on behalf of their communities. This is an initiative supported fully by UKCF, and will start to change the dynamic around, for example, which roles are voluntary and which are recognised through pay – and hold the charity sector to account. I hope over time we will see a sector that is more accurately representing the very communities we are trying to serve.

Email: adrian@oxfordshire.org
By Adrian Sell, Chief Executive, Oxfordshire Community Foundation



 oxfordshire.org

 [OxfordshireCF](https://twitter.com/OxfordshireCF)

 [OxfordshireCF](https://facebook.com/OxfordshireCF)

 [OCF](https://youtube.com/OCF)

 [Oxfordshire-Community-Foundation](https://linkedin.com/company/Oxfordshire-Community-Foundation)



Click to watch our video

Unconscious bias by employment partners Paul Mander and Daff Richardson

In December 2020, the Cabinet Office announced that unconscious bias training is being phased out of the civil service on the grounds that there is no proof that it changes behaviour and that it may in fact cause a negative response. This comes after a group of MPs previously refused to undergo training on the grounds that it was 'pandering to the woke agenda' and it shows the depth of resistance within government to this type of training. But are they right?

The main reason for abandoning the training is that there is no evidence that it changes behaviour for the better, but that is extremely difficult to measure and writing training off for that reason isn't in our view necessarily sound – we have been on multiple IT training sessions which we don't think have improved our IT skills but that doesn't necessarily mean that providing that training is worthless. Someone benefits from it and the fact that it's difficult to measure that benefit doesn't lead to wholesale abandonment of IT training.

Also, the mere raising of awareness seems to be actively denigrated as a reason for having the training in the first place but is that right? Having delivered this type of training we have found the responses to be almost uniformly positive: people have learned things that they did not know: they have become aware of behaviour that may unknowingly cause offence, and not in a trivial 'snowflake' sense. When discussing micro-aggressions, for example, many people are interested in how to make sure that colleagues are

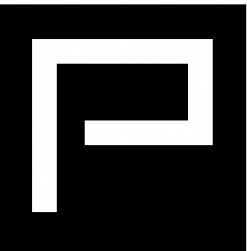
not uncomfortable and genuinely shocked by the widespread offence that is in some cases unknowingly caused.

So 'awareness' in itself surely has some value if it means that it increases our consciousness and if it enables us to improve our behaviour. The suggestion that training in itself can 'backfire' and create a negative response depends, it seems to us, on two things: firstly, the training itself. We have all been to bad training sessions but that doesn't mean all training sessions are bad. Secondly, the audience: there will be people resistant to all forms of training but that is not a reason not to give it and, in fact, the people most resistant to this type of training are possibly the people who are most in need of it. The fact that there is such a level of discomfort about receiving this training from within government makes us uncomfortable, especially when it is combined with statements like 'I'd rather gouge my eyes out with a blunt stick' (a quote from an MP who refused training). Really?



Our main concern with the vociferous objections to this training are that it may be indicative of a denial that unconscious bias exists. There are multiple academic studies, and personal accounts, that show that it does and that it is an issue that needs to be addressed, and writing off the issue on the grounds that the training has no measurable effect is like a much lower form of undermining the black lives matter movement by saying that all lives matter: of course they do, but that misses the point and is in some cases an insidious way of undermining an important movement for change.

In our view there is much to be learned and much progress to be made and good unconscious bias training should not be written off as one admittedly small step in seeking to achieve that.



**PENNINGTONS
MANCHES
COOPER**

-  [penningtonslaw.com](https://www.penningtonslaw.com)
-  [Penningtonslaw](https://twitter.com/Penningtonslaw)
-  daff.richardson@penningtonslaw.com
-  [penningtonslaw](https://www.youtube.com/penningtonslaw)
-  [penningtons-solicitors-llp](https://www.linkedin.com/company/penningtons-solicitors-llp)



CATCH UP WITH OUR

B4 ONE **WORKPLACE** **WELLBEING** **EVENT**

CLICK HERE

B4One



BE INSPIRED BY YOUR VENUE

Art needs an audience and we are all in need of the things museums offer us – enjoyment, reflection and escape.

Make your next event truly memorable. Combine a seated dinner with a privileged look behind the scenes, a thematic private tour or invite your guests to handle objects that are over 3000 years old... either in person or in a virtual environment.

Contact our experienced Events Team to book a virtual tour and start planning.

T +44 (0)1865 610406

E events@ashmolean.org
ashmolean.org/venue-hire



Inspiring minds since 1683

 www.b4-business.com
 info@b4-business.com
 [@b4_community](https://twitter.com/b4_community)
 [b4-business](https://www.linkedin.com/company/b4-business)
 [b4businessuk](https://www.instagram.com/b4businessuk)
 [b4businessuk](https://www.youtube.com/b4businessuk)
 [b4magazine](#)
 [b4businessuk](https://www.facebook.com/b4businessuk)

JOIN US AT THE NEXT **B4 ONE EVENT**

KEEP UP TO DATE WITH B4 BY
SIGNING UP TO OUR NEWSLETTER

