

enei
Inclusivity Excellence
Awards

Celebrating inclusive cultures
and workplace belonging



enei Inclusivity Excellence Awards 2023



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Introduction from Sandi Wassmer CEO

Although it is evident that diversity, equality, inclusion, equity, belonging, and well-being are all essential components of happy, harmonious, creative, innovative, productive, and successful organisations, the pressures faced by those working in diversity, equality, and inclusion (DEI) in the past year have not abated. The economic climate is squeezing DEI budgets, and the current sociopolitical environment is proving hugely challenging. In this context, I am delighted and humbled that we have had more submissions for the awards than ever before; this tells me that, despite all, organisations remain steadfast and dedicated to DEI and to creating that sense of belonging for their employees that every human being yearns for.

Being on the judging panel this year was a truly wonderful experience, evoking a range of emotions from all judges — from excitement and exhilaration through to heartfelt tears. The breadth and depth of the work being done, and the high quality of entries, was overwhelming and I commend everyone who submitted an entry for the awesome things that you are doing to make the world of work a better place for everyone.

Having the opportunity to celebrate all of the marvellous DEI work being done by the shortlisted organisations and to recognise the winners and highly commended in each category at our fabulous awards reception was an absolute honour, as was spending time with so many of our members who were abounding with compliments about the fantastic support they receive from the enei team.

I'd like to say a massive thank you to everyone who submitted an entry this year, and express my enormous gratitude to the Institute of Physics for allowing us to use their beautiful venue and for hosting the event, along with our terrific sponsors, AWE, EMBED, HeX, the Institute of Physics, McLean Public, NHS Employers, and SCC, without whom none of this would have been possible

To those who won or were highly commended, I'd like to extend my warmest congratulations for the well-deserved acknowledgement amidst such fierce competition.

I hope that you will be as moved and inspired as I was at the phenomenal quality of DEI work from those who were winners and highly commended this year, and that you are already feeling motivated to start thinking about your own submissions next year.



Introduction from our venue sponsor

We are delighted to be hosting the enei Inclusion Excellence awards for the second year and congratulate all the winners on their achievements as well as those who have been shortlisted for awards.

We joined enei in 2021 to support our internal inclusion work, as the principles of diversity, equality, and inclusion (DEI) lie at the core of the IOP's mission and are pleased to have been awarded Bronze in our sector two years in a row for our work as an employer.

We believe that us having a foundation rooted in inclusivity guarantees equitable treatment of our employees and creates a sense of belonging. This environment encourages innovation and excellence, benefiting not only our colleagues but also the broader physics community.

The IOP is the professional body and learned society for physics in the UK and Ireland. We seek to raise public awareness and understanding of physics, inspire people to develop their knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of physics, and support the development of a diverse and inclusive physics community through all of our work. As a charity, it has a mission to ensure that physics delivers on its exceptional potential to benefit society.

We strive to enhance diversity and inclusion in physics and have done so for over 30 years. Most recently through our Limit Less influencing campaign which aims to increase the numbers and diversity of young people studying physics post-16. In 2024 we will be launching our new Physics Inclusion Award which seeks to improve the working and study environment in UK and Ireland universities.

We recognise that the collective pursuit of solving global challenges by people from all backgrounds should be nurtured rather than restricted. Our commitment goes beyond the principles of fairness; we believe that fostering greater diversity is fundamental to advancing the field of physics for the benefit of society.

Visit our website to discover more about our work at www.iop.org, and please get in touch with our EDI team at diversity@iop.org if you have any questions or would like to know more.

Innovative Approach to Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion



Winner: Secure Trust Bank Group

During National Inclusion Week 2022, Secure Trust Bank Group launched a DEI podcast series which was hosted and produced by colleagues to help dispel myths and promote understanding and awareness on issues of diversity.

The Impact

The podcast series was developed with input from DEI champions at Secure Trust Bank Group and has covered a wide range of topics, including bisexuality, IVF, religious head coverings, and neurodiversity. The podcast celebrates diversity and authenticity within the company, providing a unique, personal insight into the lives of colleagues who bravely volunteer to share their lived experiences. The audience receives insightful perspectives and answers to questions they might otherwise feel uncomfortable asking. Employees can access the materials at any time via the organisation's intranet. The podcasts have generated over 1,100 unique listens and have been instrumental in raising employee engagement as well as creating awareness of diversity within the employee population.

The podcast is embedded into the culture at Secure Trust Bank Group and is an integral facet of its future DEI strategy.

Judges' Comments

The judges were particularly impressed by the way in which Secure Trust Bank Group had integrated the podcast into their wider DEI work with clear objectives and outcomes. They also felt the podcast series showcased the organisation's true commitment to co-creation and demonstrable internal impact.



Highly Commended: Norfolk Community Health & Care NHS Trust

Norfolk Community Health & Care NHS Trust tackled a gender imbalance by launching a podcast series addressing men's mental health.

The Impact

Featuring internal and external speakers, the 14 episodes, accessible on the intranet and platforms like Spotify, Amazon Music, and Google Podcasts, reached a dispersed workforce of 15 locations. With 8,000+ downloads, the podcasts serve as a recruitment tool, highlighting the organisation's culture.

Judges' Comments

Judges praised the Trust for its broad reach, executive team involvement, and strategic use of the podcast to drive traffic to the staff intranet.



INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO DIVERSITY,
EQUALITY AND INCLUSION AWARD

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Inclusive Culture



Winner: AECOM

AECOM's assertion that it is inclusion-led rather than initiative-led means its primary focus is on the broader culture, to enable future initiatives to drive lasting change. Gender disparity is a well-documented obstacle within the engineering industry. AECOM used a variety of methods to embed a culture of inclusivity within the organisation, including updating policies, reviewing recruitment procedures, and creating development programmes for under-represented groups.

The Impact

By setting targets and tracking progress, AECOM has been able to see an increase in female representation, including within leadership roles, as well as an 8% uplift in early career intake from low socio-economic backgrounds. The increase in employee engagement is evident in the results of employee surveys and employee resource groups (ERGs) are also seeing high engagement with 1200+ members across gender, ethnicity, LGBTQ+, and disability networks.

AECOM believes its inclusive workforce has triggered better service and long-term growth which was evidenced in an 18% uplift in new bids and proposals the following year.

Judges' Comments

The judges were particularly impressed by the clear-sighted way AECOM identified challenges facing the industry, and the three-pronged approach taken to tackling the issues. They felt that AECOM demonstrated an incredible ability to drive change and reach every part of their workforce.



Highly Commended: Burness Paull

Burness Paull cultivates a 'human and high performing' culture, prioritising diversity and inclusivity throughout the employee lifecycle for enhanced client delivery and colleague acknowledgment.

The Impact

Burness Paull's DEI strategies have propelled employee engagement, with over 92% expressing comfort at work, making D&I the highest-rated engagement factor. The firm's inclusive environment attracts diverse talent, earning accolades such as a silver TIDE winner, Stonewall Top 100 employer, and EcoVadis Gold Level employer.

Judges' Comments

Judges applauded Burness Paull's effective and bold approach in addressing challenging DEI issues, implementing measurable interventions with a clear organisational understanding.

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Progressive Agile and Flexible Working Practices



Winner: National Highways

Despite responding to engagement surveys which conveyed its workforce's preference for flexible working policies, National Highways identified that 44% of part-time employees felt there was limited opportunity for development and progression. National Highways used this information to ensure it was providing inclusive ways of working, believing this would continue to attract and retain great talent.

The Impact

National Highways has firmly embedded flexible working into its culture. Through collaborative working across HR and engagement with employee networks, a flexible working policy was revised to offer the same opportunity for everyone to formally request a variation to their normal working pattern. In addition, part-time employees are able to develop their careers without having to increase their hours. These initiatives have led to a 20% increase in flexible working applications submitted between January 2022 and August 2023 and results from a recent engagement survey show 84% of colleagues saying, "I am satisfied with the flexibility I have in my work schedule."

Judges' Comments

The judges were inspired by the comprehensive approach taken by National Highways, which was linked to tangible outcomes for the organisation. The introduction of term-time-only flexibility was particularly innovative, and the judges were impressed by the way in which National Highways identified that not every role needs to be full-time and reacted to this realisation.



Highly Commended: Local Partnerships LLP

Local Partnerships LLP tackled the challenge of balancing client responsiveness with diverse work-life needs in a geographically dispersed workforce.

The Impact

Prioritising employee financial wellbeing, they ensured all employees received at least the London Living Wage. Adapted working patterns enhanced work-life balance, elevating satisfaction and mental wellbeing. The leadership team's support for flexible and compressed hours fostered a more accommodating work environment.

Judges' Comments

Despite its size, Local Partnerships LLP impressed judges by effectively integrating flexibility into its culture, earning the Highly Commended title for significant achievements in a short timeframe.



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Driving Social Mobility and Social Inclusion in the Workplace



Winner: The Wheatley Group

As part of its mission to improve social mobility and social inclusion, The Wheatley Group introduced its Environmental Roots programme — a pathway to help unemployed people access jobs and apprenticeships within its environmental and facilities services. This programme supported customer employability while enhancing the ability to recruit people who had the required skills and social values.

The Impact

Environmental Roots created access to high-quality training opportunities and jobs for people facing disadvantage. In total, 453 people have taken part in Environmental Roots, with more than 70% having progressed into longer-term paid employment, either with The Wheatley Group or with an external employer in the community.

The programme is helping to reduce poverty — and particularly child poverty — as well as having a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of people.

Another positive impact is in the nature of the jobs associated with the programme, which aim to improve the local environment by maintaining cleanliness and general upkeep.

Judges' Comments

The judges praised the staggeringly impressive approach to solving a recruitment challenge displayed by The Wheatley Group. By creating a programme to support customer employability whilst enhancing its ability to recruit, the organisation has demonstrated a true commitment to social mobility and achieved some truly impressive results.



Mishcon de Reya addressed recruitment inequality in the legal sector by innovating traditional practices and fostering social mobility through a dedicated committee.

The Impact

External partnerships facilitated connections with a diverse pool of candidates, resulting in increased representation of black and socially disadvantaged individuals in trainee and apprentice cohorts.

Judges' Comments

The firm's commitment to reflecting societal diversity in its workforce earned praise from judges, who commended the comprehensive approach, emphasising social mobility as a crucial element of Mishcon de Reya's inclusion strategy.

Highly Commended: Mishcon de Reya



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Enhancing Wellbeing and Belonging at Work



Winner: Balfour Beatty

Balfour Beatty identified that menopause was regarded as a taboo topic within the heavily male-dominated construction industry. To achieve greater representation of women and other groups, it was imperative to reduce barriers, and identify appropriate workplace adjustments in order to establish an inclusive and productive working environment as well as enhance employee well-being.

The Impact

A strategic menopause working group was created to drive progress and embed best practice for everyone impacted by this transition. This group has over 150 members and continues to grow. Initiatives, including a mentoring programme and a menopause hub, have helped to create a fully inclusive workplace culture, while significantly improving the physical and mental wellbeing of employees affected by menopause. As a result of the great work done by this group, Balfour Beatty was awarded Menopause Friendly employer accreditation in 2022. It was one of 30 employers to achieve this, and the only recipient of the accreditation from within the construction industry.

Judges' Comments

The judges were particularly impressed by this entry, as Balfour Beatty pioneered positive action for the construction sector (which is typically male-dominated). The commitment shown to researching and understanding how to provide the right support to staff experiencing menopause was considered outstanding, and the idea of introducing a buddy scheme was seen as particularly innovative.



Highly Commended: Buckinghamshire Council

Responding to staff forums, Buckinghamshire Council acknowledged the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on its colleagues and was determined to take positive action.

The Impact

Responding to a cost-of-living network group, Buckinghamshire Council recognised the importance of implementing various solutions to make a tangible difference. Initiatives, including an Employee Hardship Fund, helped ease financial burdens, with 125 confidential applications.

Judges' Comments

The judges commended Buckinghamshire Council for addressing financial wellbeing from various perspectives and exploring diverse approaches to alleviate the cost-of-living crisis on staff. The council's commitment to staff wellbeing was evident.



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Leveraging Data to Advance Workplace DEI



Winner: Asahi UK

Asahi identified that one of the key challenges to truly embedding DEI into the heart of the business was data gathering and gaining insight into its diverse workforce so that work could be tailored appropriately. Asahi wanted to build a picture of its colleague demographics who work across six locations around the country to discover how diverse the community was and to track progress.

The Impact

An anonymous DEI survey was distributed to all UK staff and provided insights on areas of underrepresentation and explored where more work would be required to gain a better understanding of colleagues' experiences and challenges. Asahi was aware of the value of obtaining qualitative data on personal experience alongside the quantitative and sought to engage colleagues using ERGs and corporate interventions around recruitment and development. Following the activities, a marked improvement in DEI-related scores was apparent in the employee engagement survey.

Judges' Comments

The judges commended Asahi UK's well-organised measures to gathering data and insight across disparate sites and the clear approach to developing tangible, measurable benchmarks. The organisation showed an excellent awareness of the challenges of asking for sensitive data and exemplary analysis and has developed appropriate responses to the data gathered.



Highly Commended: Medical Protection Society

Prompted by the Black Lives Matter movement, the Medical Protection Society launched the #IncludeMe campaign to enhance inclusivity and support marginalised colleagues.

The Impact

Uncovering ethnic underrepresentation, the Society implemented successful initiatives, leading to increased hiring from ethnic minorities, enhanced diversity training, and the integration of DEI into the organisational culture.

Judges' Comments

Judges commended the organisation's collaboration with DEI forums for shaping data collection methods, highlighting the campaign's effectiveness through extensive qualitative and quantitative data and tangible employee benefits.



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Employee Network Group of the Year



Joint Winner: North East Ambulance Service

North East Ambulance Service's employee network, Able@NEAS disability network has been instrumental in supporting disabled colleagues who previously faced challenges accessing support options to help them in the workplace.

The Impact

A wide range of accomplishments has been achieved by the disability network group, including the development of support groups, provision of guidance on reasonable adjustments, and influencing policy changes. The group's initiatives have led to improved disability declaration rates and have played a key role in Trust disability case studies and videos. The group has been instrumental in securing Dyslexia Smart Award accreditation and has increased the number of network members trained to support others. These achievements are now an integral part of the organisation's governance structure, with dedicated resources, senior-level support, and a budget to sustain and expand their impactful work.

Judges' Comments

The judges were impressed by the way in which the disability network was embedded in the organisational governance structure, the budget given to the network, and the commitment to protecting the time of the chair and vice chair to undertake the ERG work. This ERG was an excellent example of how to influence leadership and lead the organisational response around an issue such as disability.



Joint Winner: Business Growth Fund (BFG)

Business Growth Fund (BGF) formed the Diversity Action Group (DAG) to integrate DEI into organisational systems, facing challenges in sustaining effective Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) across 15 locations.

The Impact

DAG implemented initiatives, including an applicant tracking system for efficient talent recruitment, employee-led DEI sessions, and an inclusion calendar. BGF actively adjusts recruitment processes, addressing gender gaps and resulting in high engagement scores, with 93% expressing pride in working with the organisation.

Judges' Comments

Judges praised this innovative solution for a smaller organisation, considering it an exciting example of DEI in a hybrid environment with resource constraints.

Limit Less

Support young people to change the world.

Physics can teach young people to understand and solve complex problems – and go on to transform our world. Unfortunately, outdated prejudice and stereotypes about who can do physics deny too many young people the chance to pursue it. That means they miss out on the many benefits that studying physics brings.

The Institute of Physics strives to make physics accessible to people from all backgrounds and our Limit Less campaign supports young people to change the world and fulfil their potential.

Support the campaign
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IOP Institute of Physics

DEI Influencer of the Year



Winner: Rachel Billington, Head of ED&I Europe and India, AECOM

Since her appointment into this new role, Rachel has successfully gained leadership support for a three-five-year DEI strategy, establishing a framework, governance structure, and inclusive workstreams spanning various aspects, leading the embedding of DEI into the region's culture.

The Impact

Rachel has expanded her influence beyond the organisation through her work on the global environmental, social, and governance (ESG) steering group, exploring how the business can integrate DEI into its infrastructure. What makes Rachel stand out is her comprehensive examination of the entire system to ensure genuine change in removing barriers and embedding DEI into everyone's roles. Under her guidance, teams throughout the organisation have embraced DEI best practices, AECOM has observed an increase in female promotions, and four thriving ERGs have been established. Rachel's work has led to the creation of DEI ambassadors and champions across the UK, ROI, Spain, and India, fostering a dynamic network of contributors who want to drive positive change.

Judges' Comments

The judges commended the significant impact Rachel has achieved in this role. Despite there being no previous DEI lead in place, she was able to achieve significant strategic and systemic change from a standing start. The judges praised the way that DEI issues have been tackled both operationally and in a sustained manner. Rachel clearly has a global influence far beyond what was expected from the role and has achieved great things in a short space of time.



Highly Commended: Nina Elliot, ED&I Champion, Secure Bank Trust Group

Nina, a dedicated DEI champion at Secure Bank Trust Group, goes beyond her regular duties to advocate for LGBTQIA+ inclusion. Addressing a lack of awareness, she fosters meaningful conversations, contributing to an inclusive workplace.

The Impact

Over the past year, Nina initiated positive change by hosting educational sessions, presenting suggestions to the Executive Committee, and launching a popular podcast on bisexuality. She forged a partnership with an LGBTQ charity, championed inclusivity in customer-facing systems, and committed to DEI and mental health as an LGBTQIA+ Mental Health First Aider.

Judges' Comments

Judges praised Nina's initiative, commitment, and role-model status in promoting authenticity, support, and allyship.



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Closing thoughts

The 2023 enei Inclusivity Excellence Awards was a fantastic celebration, showcasing the vital work teams and individuals are doing to deliver a true sense of belonging and create inclusive workplaces for everyone.

We had a record number of entries this year, featuring outstanding work being done in promoting and progressing workplace diversity, equality, and inclusion. Congratulations to all of our winners, highly commended and shortlisted entries on their accomplishments.

We at enei would also like to say a very heartfelt thank you to all our sponsors, without whom this evening would not have been possible. So, thank you to AWE, EMBED, HeX Productions, the Institute of Physics, McLean Public, NHS Employers, and SCC.

If the 2023 awards have whetted your appetite for next year, you can register your interest in the 2024 awards by visiting our website.

www.enei.org.uk/enei-inclusivity-excellence-awards-2024-register-your-interest/

