

Advancing Racial Equity

What has changed since the murder of George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter protests of 2020

With the recent death of Tyre Nichols, racial equity has not faded from the headlines. What has changed since the global attention generated by the murder of George Floyd and the Black Lives Matter protests of 2020? The short answer is that conversations about racial equity are now happening at board level.

The consensus, however, from recent studies as well as feedback received by our IWF UK Racial Equity Special Interest Group from our events and mentoring programme, is that much more can be done within UK organisations.

Tips for organisations

The Financial Reporting Council (FRC) report [“Navigating Barriers to Senior Leadership for People from Minority Ethnic Groups in the FTSE 100 and FTSE 250 Companies”](#) (Oct 2022) provides key recommendations for organisations:

- **Be transparent** - this relates to how decisions are made about who gets juicy projects, access to training, mentoring/sponsorship, robust feedback and promotions. Any formal processes such as recruitment or performance appraisals should be reviewed for equity.
- **Embed data and build in accountability** - there is a significant need to improve monitoring, measurement and accountability for initiatives and practices targeted to diversify the leadership pipeline.
- **Build trust** – despite the talk, employees (especially individuals from marginalised backgrounds) are not seeing genuine change and are losing faith in the leadership’s ability to capitalise on this opportunity. Initiatives need to engage multiple stakeholders, not just those from ethnic minorities.

Be allies, mentors and sponsors

Diversity is for everyone, not just for those who are ‘diverse’ – this is where allyship comes in. Demonstrating and practising intentional allyship was the driver for the Racial Equity SIG’s decision to establish a mentoring programme in 2022 for mid-career women from marginalised backgrounds.

As well as mentoring, **speak up** when you see or experience something that doesn’t feel right. Preparing a few phrases ahead of time can help you respond in a constructive manner. And **amplify** the voices of other women.

Sponsorship is even more powerful and hands-on than allyship. Consider putting forward names of women you know for opportunities which they may not have been considered for.

It starts with us

Doing something starts with empathy. As successful women, we know what it can be like when others take credit for our brilliant work, or we’re overlooked for ‘senior’ roles or mistaken for a junior staff member when we’re in fact the boss! For women from marginalised backgrounds those headwinds are even

stronger – we’ve been learning a lot about this in our Leadership Learning Series on the book ‘Me and White Supremacy’.

You can also read IWF UK member Yetunde Hofmann’s article on [climbing the career ladder as a Black woman](#).

To take a deeper dive into your personal discovery about racial equity, consider committing to the IWF Racial Equity pledge (see diagram) and participating in future programming.

If you’d like more information about the mentoring programme, contact Nicolina Andall (nicolina@andalllegal.com) or Sarah Boddey (sarahhart75@hotmail.com).

Christine Brown-Quinn, *Co-Chair IWF UK Racial Equity Special Interest Group*

IWF UK Racial Equity Leadership Commitment

I commit to:



ASSESS where I am currently on my racial equity and equality journey.



Continuously **LEARN MORE** about racial equity and equality, including actively listening when others share their experiences to understand and accept that they are as legitimate as my own experiences.



DETERMINE AREAS in which I can grow, improve and contribute to racial equity and equality, including diversifying my network.



BE INTENTIONAL about and **ACCOUNTABLE** to myself for the impact of my words and actions on others.



SPEAK UP to interrupt and counter bias and microaggressions.