



The Prince's
Responsible
Business Network



Report

RACE AT WORK CHARTER 2023: COMMITMENT SIX

October 2023



REPORT

RACE AT WORK CHARTER REPORT 2023: COMMITMENT SIX – BUILDING ALLYSHIP SUPPORT

The Race at Work Charter, launched in 2018, has seen an increase of signatories from 85 employers at launch, to over 1000 signatories in 2023. 238 employers completed the Race at Work Charter Survey 2023. This amount of employers participating has more than doubled compared to previous years, with 114 employers participating in 2020 and 108 employers participating in 2019.

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COMMITMENT SIX OF THE RACE AT WORK CHARTER

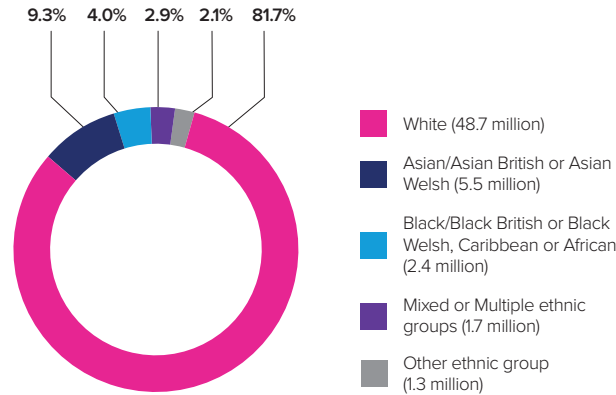
Support race inclusion allies in the workplace.

The Race at Work Charter was expanded in 2021 to add a commitment to supporting race allies in the workplace and to promote race equality in teams and within communities, as 26% of White employees in 2021 said they would like more support from their employers.ⁱ We included questions on allyship for the first time in this Race at Work Charter Survey for employers, following the bold demonstration of allyship from people of all ethnicities in 2020.

Business in the Community (BITC) Race at Work 2021 Scorecard report found 39% of White employees said, ‘*My organisation supports employees like me who want to take part in Race and Ethnic Diversity and Inclusion activities*’, alongside 26% of White respondents saying they wanted more support to enable them to be allies.

We have a richness of data and insights from employees about their experiences at work. Overall, in 2021, via the YouGov panel and a public open link, 24,638 people completed the Race at Work Survey 2021. This survey attracted 24,950 comments linked to leadership, being overlooked for promotion, bullying, harassment and allyship. 9,450 of the comments were on

Figure 1: Population of England and Wales by broad ethnic group categories: Census 2021



Source: Census 2021 Ethnic Group TS021

allyship alone. Employers must tap into the energy and enthusiasm of the inclusion allies in their organisations. We witnessed a worldwide demonstration of allyship support following the death of George Floyd, as White and Black people in the UK stood together to say that change was needed.ⁱⁱ

With ONS Census 2021 data evidencing that 18.3% of the resident population of England and Wales are from a Black, Asian, Mixed Race or other ethnically diverse background, transparency and

Deborah Hinds, Pro Vice Chancellor International, Arden University, said:

“Our commitment to leadership on race and diversity is not a one-time act, but a continuous effort to listen, learn, and take action. It requires us to challenge our own biases, embrace diverse perspectives, and cultivate a culture of inclusivity that values and empowers all voices. We all need to take action and all ensure that we are allies in all aspects of Equity, Diversity and Belonging.”

RACE AT WORK CHARTER REPORT 2023: COMMITMENT SIX – BUILDING ALLYSHIP SUPPORT

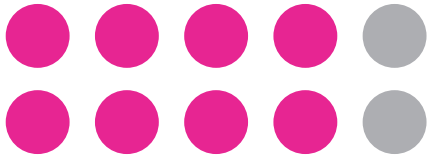
representation have never been more important. It is also key to note that ethnically diverse people also make up almost one in five (19.3%), of the working-age population.

For more information please see BITC's [Race Regional Factsheets](#).

CHARTER EMPLOYER TRENDS 2019–2023

Trend question: Are you training employees on ally effectiveness and/or anti-racism?

81% of employers completing the Race at Work Charter Survey 2023 responded yes to training their employees on ally effectiveness and anti-racism.



It is great that employers are being proactive in supporting their employees with allyship effectiveness training and anti-racism training. As mentioned above the BITC Race at Work 2021 Survey found that 26% of White respondents said they would like more support to enable them to be allies. The [Regional Insight paper for London published in March 2022](#) found that this increased to 34% for White people living in London. That is one in three employees from

White British and White other backgrounds in London wanting more support to be allies on race and ethnicity.

Trend question: Have you established an inclusion allies network?

62% of employers completing the Race at Work Charter Survey 2023 responded yes to having established an inclusion allies network. This is another positive trend. Employees may choose to join this network for a myriad of reasons.



As allies seek to educate themselves on race, ethnicity, bias, discrimination, racism, microaggressions and inequities they will want a safe place to debrief and share with others what they have learned. They will also want to test their understanding and perceptions, as we have found that only 1% of White employees believe their ethnicity is going to be a career blocker, in contrast to 33% of Black people and 23% of Asian people. Seeking to understand how racism and discrimination play out in the workplace is something they will be familiarising themselves with, and it can be demoralising and challenging as they choose to face into it and sit with the discomfort it can generate.

Helen Ray, Chief Executive Officer, North East Ambulance Service, said:

“This is a high priority for the Trust. We are committed to tackling individual and structural racism. As an inclusive organisation it is important that we continue to raise awareness and take action to tackle the issues affecting ethnic minority patients and employees. As an organisation we are actively supporting employees to understand the issues and narrative around race and anti-racism and raise awareness of what we can all do to be better allies.”

What allies must remember, however, is as distressing as this can be to focus on this topic for a period of time, many of their colleagues from Black and Asian backgrounds are living with these challenges in different manifestations on a daily basis. Employees may be facing challenges themselves, with their managers or within their teams, with clients and contractors, but also for those with families where some of these challenges may be manifesting in their children's lives.

Trend question: Are you including allies in recruitment and selection panels e.g., sift, assessment, interview?

36% of employers completing the Race at Work Charter Survey 2023 responded yes to including allies in recruitment and selection panels.



It is great that more than one in three employers are including allies in their recruitment and selection panels. This is an interesting contrast to the decline in employers actively including people from Black, Asian, Mixed Race and other ethnically diverse backgrounds on their

recruitment and selection panels, which stands at 16%. Think about the candidate and employee perspective. Recruitment candidates and employees in the workplace who are from an intersection of lower socio-economic backgrounds and Black, Asian, Mixed Race and other ethnically diverse backgrounds will be encouraged and inspired to see people like them, working in the organisation. They will also have an opportunity to talk with them during the recruitment and selection process.

Role models on selection panels can only help to change negative perceptions of the opportunities to progress within an organisation and increase the candidates' confidence that they will get a fair hearing and fair assessment at interview.

Andrew Soane, Head of Marketing & Exec Sponsor for Race & Ethnicity, Thoughtworks UK, said:

“Diversity, equity and inclusion – and empowering all people (employees, clients, partners, and consumers) to thrive, regardless of background – are core to our mission at Thoughtworks. We’re proud of the progress we’ve made to cement robust, inclusive processes into our business, and to support in attracting and retaining talent across all ethnic groups. This comes as a direct result of supporting grassroots initiatives and community groups, providing meaningful learning and growth opportunities, creating an inclusive culture, raising awareness of microaggressions and how to mitigate bias, investing in skills development and measuring progress with improved race & ethnicity data and Thoughtworker feedback.”

ACTION EMPLOYEES ARE TAKING

1. Townhall sessions, focusing on how employees can be better allies, regardless of which ethnic group they come from.
2. Regular online Ted Talk style events.
3. ‘Culture Cafes’ and Q&As with special guests.
4. Quarterly events to educate allies on various celebrations – including Diwali, Carnival, and Ramadan. Allies participate in all aspects of these events and they are open to anyone across the business to attend.
5. Anti-racism toolkit, providing a framework to continue and support leader-led conversations on race.
6. Raising awareness of people's experiences and the impact of other people's actions with a 3-step process – Think, Ask, Act.
7. Creating a safe space for allies to share their stories, learn from one another and explore actions that allies can take to be anti-racist.

Stephanie Walker, Head of People and Inclusion, HTA Design LLP, said:

“We know that supporting an inclusive environment and having a diverse workforce leads to better outcomes for our people and work. Harnessing all our talent within HTA and embracing a wide range of identities, lived experiences, and perspectives allows us to better understand the challenges facing our clients and the communities we create homes and public spaces for, to improve the way in which our projects are designed and delivered, thus hopefully leading to more meaningful outcomes. We want to be an exemplar organisation for ED&I, prioritising gender, and racial equity; one that others across our sector can learn from.”

BEST PRACTICE IN ACTION

In this section, the following employers share more detail on how they build allyship support in the workplace:

- Aegon UK
- Arup
- Capgemini UK
- DWF
- Financial Ombudsman Service
- Grant Thornton UK LLP
- IBM UK Ltd
- Llywodraeth Cymru / Welsh Government
- Pension Protection Fund (PPF)

Aegon UK

Aegon and Allyship

Aegon empower people to take control of their finances with pensions, retirement savings and investment solutions.

The main objective of Aegon’s Race and Cultural Diversity Community (R&CD) is to create a network of allies. They have support from Executive Committee members and the leadership team, with whom they share regular updates.

The community organises regular online Ted Talk style events, Q&As with special guests and ‘Culture Cafes’ – quarterly events to educate allies on various celebrations – including Diwali, Carnival, and Ramadan, open to anyone across the business to attend.

In 2021 they launched a bespoke Race and Cultural Diversity allyship scheme, tailored to support colleagues from ethnic minority groups.

The ‘Becoming a Race and Cultural Diversity Ally’ guide provides a range of information, focused on the importance of being an active ally and offers resources that empower colleagues to take immediate action. The R&CD Community also holds town hall sessions twice a year, focusing on how colleagues can be better allies. Allies also

give feedback on what they’d like to see going forward at these events. The activities of the R&CD Community support building an inclusive environment at Aegon, where colleagues understand diversity and the benefits that it brings.

“As Aegon’s Chief Distribution Officer, I’m a big advocate for inclusion and diversity in all walks of life and feel strongly that everyone should have a fair chance to succeed – both in business and personally. I’m delighted to be the Executive Sponsor for Race and Cultural Diversity and to get the chance to be involved with our allyship, support all colleagues in developing their careers and help to break down any barriers which may currently exist.”
Ronnie Taylor, Chief Distribution Officer

Arup

Career Progression & Reciprocal Mentoring

Arup wants all colleagues to thrive and this involves being able to access the same opportunities in regard to career development and progression. Arup’s region race plan commits to consulting ethnic minority employees about what support and development they need to navigate and progress at Arup, as well as – investing in a programme of development activities, aimed at increasing the number of ethnic minority employees at senior level.

Arup commissioned an external consultant to hold several focus groups and interviews with ethnic minority employees at all career stages, to hear from them about their experience at Arup. The consultants also spoke to White leaders and the People Team to hear their thoughts about how progression works at Arup. The report showed that support with confidence, influencing, networking and stakeholder management needed to be addressed. There was also a lack of increasing psychological safety for ethnic minority employees. To respond to feedback Arup commissioned and launched a reciprocal mentoring programme, piloted in the Northwest & Yorkshire. This was open to all underrepresented groups, however, ethnic minority members were prioritised. The programme is a fully comprehensive 6-month programme, with 4 cohort learning sessions exploring, allyship, power, privilege and active listening, with regular 1:1 sessions embedded.

As the programme is currently ongoing, the impact of the programme may not be captured immediately i.e., greater representation within promotions processes, and reduced attrition rates for underrepresented groups, but will be built into ongoing EDI metrics and reporting across geographies.

Measurements of success will be assessed utilising criteria benchmarked against the Inclusion Survey such as:

- Participants are confident that leaders understand what changes need to be made to make Arup more inclusive.
- Participants think leaders have a good level of self-awareness about their impact on others.
- Participants are clear on what they need to do to succeed in their career at Arup.
- Participants said they are able to be fully themselves at Arup.

In addition, participants will be asked about their sentiments towards the programme, Further case studies and testimonials will also be gathered.

Early reporting indicates the following metrics and impact:

- 84% of participants say the programme has met or fully met their needs.
- 88% of participants say that they would recommend the programme to their colleagues.
- One leader has already reached out to request for further reciprocal mentoring programmes to be held.

Arup's delegates have said:

"A great start to the programme."

"Thank you very much for the session on Wednesday. I have to admit I was a bit nervous but I enjoyed it and it gave me lots of think about and to reflect upon! Looking forward to the follow-up."

"I thought it was fabulous!! Really great content, and thank you so much for organising it – and choosing me!"

Additional statistics:

- In a recent Connect BAME survey, 47% of respondents stated they would like to be involved in reciprocal mentoring – the second most requested form of support.

Capgemini UK

Anti-Racism Toolkit

To reinforce an anti-racist culture Capgemini UK implemented an Anti-Racism Toolkit, providing a framework to continue to support leader-led conversations on race. This can be delivered in person or virtually, for up to 25 individuals at a time. All UK employees can access the toolkit throughout the year and it is signposted at employee induction sessions.

The toolkit provides a facilitator guide that follows a three-step process: Think, Ask, Act. After introducing the topic, five videos are watched as a group and then discussed, using a conversational framework aid to facilitate questions. The videos are: (1) 'Lived experiences & acceptance', (2) 'Challenges & personal impacts', (3) 'How racism has evolved', (4) 'Dealing with racism,' and (5) 'The power of allies – actions we can take to be anti-racist'. The facilitator then reinforces key messages and leads a conversation around the importance of being an Upstander rather than a Bystander and how everyone can take accountability to call out racist behaviour. The session ends with reflection from the participants and signposting to further resources, training, and to Capgemini UK's Race & Equality Employee Network.

Through the toolkit, Capgemini UK aims to:

- Provide a safe place to share thoughts, views, and experiences and ask questions.
- Raise awareness of colleagues' experiences and the impact of other people's actions.
- Enable colleagues to talk openly and embed conversations around anti-racism.

Two reflections from past attendees:

"I gained an appreciation for the daily struggles which are experienced and an understanding of how debilitating microaggressions can be."

"It was important hearing about the impact racism has on individuals."

"We are proud of our many achievements – our strong national employee network which includes a new sub-network for black women, our very successful Anti-Racism programme and our mentoring and reverse mentoring programmes. We will build on this in 2023 by bolstering our commitment to ethnic diversity, equity and inclusion in Capgemini by aligning our Country Board members and their leadership teams around a commitment to ethnic diversity expectations from the bottom to the top of the organisation. We are using industry best practice to inform our commitments and to ensure every employee has an equal chance to meet their professional potential, irrespective of their ethnic background." Gagandeep Gadri, Executive Sponsor for the Race and Ethnicity Network

DWF

Over the last year, DWF has undertaken a number of activities to educate and empower allies.

Examples include:

- A virtual webinar entitled 'How to talk about race', inspired by work undertaken by three members of DWF's Race & Ethnicity Network in London. The aim was to encourage meaningful conversation around allyship, anti-racism, representation and awareness. This event was received well, with many attendees reporting that it had helped build their confidence in discussing race. It was chaired by the Network exec sponsor who said:

"It was a privilege to chair this event and to learn from the perspectives of the guest speakers. We had fantastic attendance and lots of engagement after the event from those who attended."

- In a series of articles, Network members in Manchester shared experiences of microaggressions, including spotlights on the Black community during Black History Month and microaggressions relating to faith during Ramadan. These articles have been published on the company intranet and promoted via the all-staff bulletin, Global D&I leadership group and network of D&I Champions.

- DWF Allies Overview on Race & Ethnicity – This 20-minute vlog, shared as part of National Inclusion Week 2022, was designed to build an understanding of the terminology, challenges, and myths related to race and ethnicity, as well as provide tips on how to be an active ally.
- Community Outreach – The DWF CSR team and volunteers from across the organisation took part in events with underprivileged young adults, focused on the importance of Diversity and Inclusion, exploring why dates such as Black History Month are important and how the next generation of talent can continue to create an inclusive working environment.

“Workplace diversity is incredibly important and produces wide ranging benefits for our organisation, colleagues, clients and communities. At DWF we’re incredibly proud of our diverse workforce. We’re always looking for ways to improve our inclusive culture and increase representation of minority groups. We’re accelerating our progress through internal initiatives as well as external collaborations with clients, industry peers and stakeholders to raise awareness of challenges and address barriers to representation. We will continue to challenge ourselves to make our organisation as diverse and inclusive as possible, where people of all different backgrounds can contribute at the highest level.”
Louise Rogerson, Chief People Officer

Financial Ombudsman Service

Financial Ombudsman Service’s senior managers took part in an anti-racism allyship programme, created by Embrace (their ethnicity network), in collaboration with Business in the Community (BITC) and the Inclusion and Wellbeing team. The four-part allyship programme is designed as a learning journey, focusing on conscious inclusion, anti-racism and active allyship. Attendees learn how to role model the highest levels of inclusive leadership, which support and help drive systematic improvements to advance the organisation’s Diversity and Inclusion strategy and action plan. In the programme, participants were asked to commit to three actions that would help drive an inclusive culture across the service and also role model inclusive leadership. Financial Ombudsman Service received some great actions and feedback from employees on the improvements they have seen from their leaders role-modelling active allyship in their areas.

Feedback from participants was positive

- 100% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the programme has helped their understanding of some of the challenges Black, Asian, Mixed Race and other ethnically diverse colleagues may face, in the workplace.

- 60% of respondents felt more equipped to lead by example in creating an inclusive culture in their workplace and being an active ally since attending the programme.
- Many respondents appreciated the space to have open, thought-provoking and collaborative conversations – with some noting the need to keep the conversation going and suggesting further rollout to more colleagues.

As a result, leaders were encouraged to continue conversations, bringing the groups back together to update on their progress and the aim is to roll the programme out to all colleagues to increase Financial Ombudsman Service’s network of inclusion allies.

“Our board and senior leadership team are fully committed to keeping diversity and inclusion central to the service we provide, ensuring we reflect the communities we serve. Over recent years, our organisation has made progress in key areas such as, reporting on our ethnicity pay gap, setting ethnicity targets, making changes to our recruitment processes and bringing inclusion into our individual objectives. We’re proud of our achievements – however we recognise that there is always more to do, and we’ll be looking for everyone to contribute to building on what we’ve accomplished so far.” Karl Khan COO and executive sponsor

Grant Thornton UK LLP

Inclusion Allies

Since Grant Thornton UK LLP's launch of its "Inclusion Allies" programme, they have trained over 400 allies. The primary objective of an "Inclusion Ally" is to be aware of inclusive behaviours, speak out and stand up for a person or group less privileged by 'calling in' intentional and unintentional exclusion when spotted. Allies work towards deconstructing implicit bias and preconceived notions, at the same time making a commitment to continuously educate themselves on issues and experiences that affect underrepresented groups. Anyone can be an Inclusion Ally, regardless of experience, characteristics or hierarchy within the firm; all they need is compassion, enthusiasm and a willingness to learn. To become an inclusion ally, employees must first attend training led by Inclusive Employers. Within this training are everyday examples on various office scenarios where other employees may feel intentionally or unintentionally excluded. The training highlights bias, its impact, how to spot these factors and how to "call in" such behaviours. Inclusion allies are trained to spot exclusion, but also to use what is learnt as a tool to spark curiosity and create a culture where it is acceptable to ask questions and understand differences – whether that be regarding race, religion, disability, socioeconomic background etc. Once a colleague completes the

initial Inclusion Ally training, they join the community with other Allies to continue to explore, learn, and share ideas and best practice on how they can together help create a more inclusive culture within the firm. Grant Thornton offers continuous training and webinars on subject matters such as trans awareness, neurodiversity, microaggressions and inclusive language. Some Inclusion Allies choose to evolve their contribution as allies to embark on secondment opportunities within the firm's Inclusion and Diversity team, giving them more opportunity to actively continue as advocate for inclusion.

IBM UK Ltd

IBM offers a wealth of Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) education through its 'Your Learning' tool. Its Embrace programme offers specific anti-racism training and its externally credited 'Be Equal Ally' badge offers employees an opportunity to publicly acknowledge their commitment to allyship.

To achieve the badge, employees are required to complete a Be Equal learning plan, join an employee network – known as a Business Resource Group (BRG) – as an ally, participate in inclusion events, ensure they have a relevant D&I goal in their performance metrics and share a direct experience about how they are an active ally to others.

The organisation has also just launched the 'I'm In' allyship campaign to encourage employees

of all levels to get involved with D&I through roundtables, team meetings and events. This is to ensure allyship remains at the forefront of the agenda.

IBM has an ally portal and D&I specific communications channels both globally and in the UK. The portal provides personal stories, for example on microaggressions and the use of inclusive language, alongside suggestions on how to be an upstander. IBM also runs many intersectional panel and networking events through its BRGs and communities, for example through its Black, Asian, LGBTQ+, Carers, Wellbeing and Women's communities, creating safe spaces for employees to share their stories. IBM UK's ethnic Executive Sponsors and Executive Ally Sponsors both attend the UK Inclusion Council, at which communities and allies provide feedback to the leadership team and create action plans to address challenges together.

"IBM UK by signing the Race At Work Charter through the BITC is committed to taking practical steps to ensure our organisation is tackling barriers that ethnic minority people face. We are actively working on all the seven areas of the charter to ensure our ethnic minority employees are able to bring their authentic selves to work & thrive in an inclusive environment, and to actively demonstrate our commitment to Race Equality in the UK."

Elisa J L Pearson, UKI Human Resources Director

Llywodraeth Cymru/ Welsh Government

The Welsh Government aims to be an actively anti-racist organisation. To do this, they aim to ensure that all colleagues, at every level, are both aware of and living by these principles, and that leaders within the organisation act as role models.

The Welsh Government have developed a suite of anti-discrimination training, available to all staff via their Learning Lab. The programme content was shaped with training providers and stakeholders, including their Minority Ethnic Staff Network (MESN). The programme contains topics such as ‘Conversations about anti-racism’; ‘Safe Space Conversations’; ‘Identifying and challenging discriminatory behaviour’; ‘Identifying and understanding microaggressions and ‘Inclusive Workplaces’.

To encourage organisation-wide conversations on race, to break down barriers and tackle inequality and discrimination, The Welsh Government have held all-staff events, such as “Let’s Talk Race”.

They also held an anti-racism event specifically for senior civil servants, delivered by an external training provider.

MESN has an allies' network who meet monthly, supporting the network and wider organisation in embedding anti-racism. MESN run a very successful ‘Sharing Spaces’ programme, designed for those who find talking about race challenging or have questions about race, racism or terminology. Sharing Spaces is a safe, confidential space where non-ethnic minority people can ask questions and raise issues about race without feeling uncomfortable and ethnic minority staff can share their lived experience. Normalising the conversation about race has seen allies grow in number, participation in Sharing Spaces increase and as a result, anti-racism training courses oversubscribed. The organisation holds a waiting list and regularly arranges more to cope with demand.

“The Welsh Government is committed to being an exemplar organisation with a diverse workforce reflecting the people and communities we serve. Our Workforce Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy and Anti-racist Wales Action Plan both commit us to being an Anti-racist organisation. Section 2 of the Anti-racist Action Plan focuses on Leadership within the Welsh Government and Welsh Public Sector, with 19 actions for us as an employer. I am delighted to be the Senior Sponsor of our Minority Ethnic Staff Network, and I am wholly supportive of embedding anti-racism in the organisation and entering the Race at Work Charter Survey.” Joanne Glenn, Head of Equality & Diversity in the Workplace

Pension Protection Fund (PPF)

Pension Protection Fund (PPF)’s Reverse Mentoring programme builds awareness for Race Inclusion allies about the barriers faced by ethnic minority colleagues. This also demonstrates allies’ commitment to race equality, by helping them challenge established hierarchies and contribute to fostering a culture where all employee’s experience, skills and ideas are leveraged. The programme was launched in May 2020 with eight mentors from PPF’s Race Action Group and eight mentees from the Executive Committee. The mentors formed a discussion group which met regularly, to share experiences, support one another and discuss how to promote the programme within the organisation.

The response was extremely positive.

Mentors fed back that: It challenged many to “think deeper about experiences” and how they relate to others. Mentees reported that they felt it gave them “an enriched understanding” and made them “feel confident... taking action”.

One mentee commented that the programme helped “develop my directorate’s Diversity and Inclusion plan” PPF’s CEO stated that it “changed my view on how to make the PPF even more of a welcoming place for everyone”.

In 2021, the programme opened up to the wider business via Diversity and Inclusion groups. As a result, more mentor and mentee volunteers have and continue to come forward. There are currently 36 participants in the programme, with more volunteers waiting to be paired up.

“All of our Executive Committee are measured on our progress towards targets and the actions they are taking to improve representation. The Board oversee the strategy and how we are tracking against our targets.” Dana Grey, Chief Risk Officer
Dana Grey, Chief Risk Officer

REFERENCES

- ⁱ [BITC Race at Work 2021 Scorecard report](#)
- ⁱⁱ [BITC Race at Work 2021 Scorecard report](#)

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