

# FACTSHEET

## OPENING DOORS: INSIGHT AT THE MIDPOINT OF THE CAMPAIGN

Opening Doors is Business in the Community's (BITC) inclusive recruitment campaign. Launched in 2022, we have an ambition to make 2 million jobs more accessible to diverse talent by 2025 by asking employers to commit to making specific changes to the way they recruit. At the midpoint of the campaign, we undertook some analysis of employer commitments and their progress towards them. This factsheet summarises our findings.

### Headlines

- **66 employers** have signed up to the Opening Doors campaign.
- Between them, they have committed to taking a total of **575 actions** over three years.
- **1.1m jobs** will become more inclusive as a result of these employer commitments.

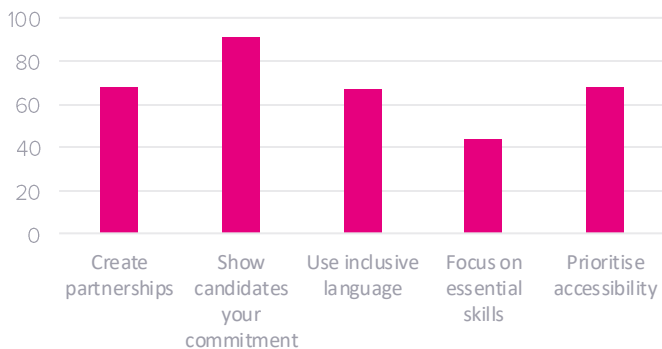
### Detailed breakdown

#### Actions committed to:

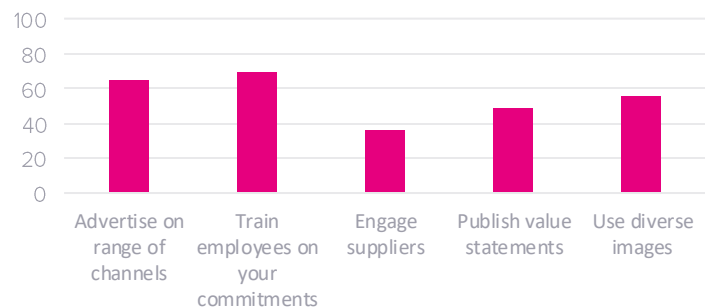
90% of employers committed to taking forward actions under Key 2 - show candidates that you are committed to inclusion; just 29% committed to actions under Key 4 – focus on the essential skills needed to do the job.

Under Key 2, the most popular action was to 'provide training on inclusive recruitment and ensure your employees understand your commitment to inclusive recruitment', committed to by 70% of employers.

% of employers committing to actions under each key



% of employers committing to each action under Key 2

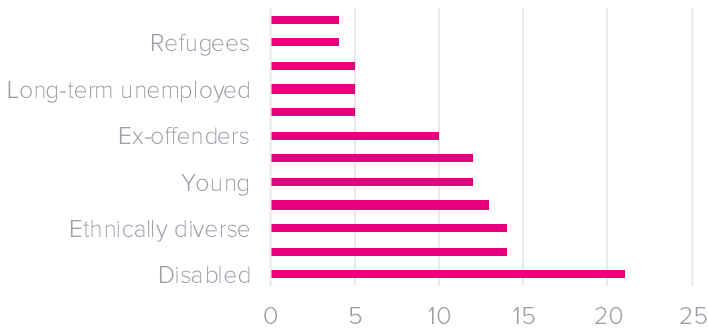


# OPENING DOORS TO DIVERSE TALENT

## Diverse talent supported

21 employers cited 'disabled jobseekers' as a focus for their inclusive recruitment commitments.

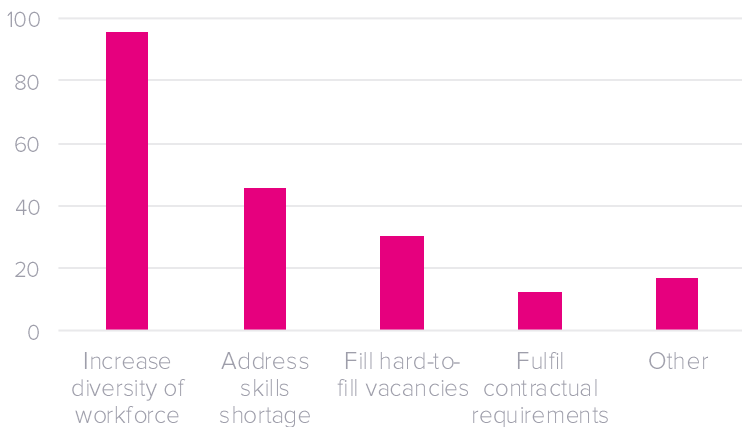
Number of employers targeting their support towards each jobseeker group



## The business case

The most popular reason for joining the campaign is to increase the diversity of the workforce (95% of employers cite this as a driver).

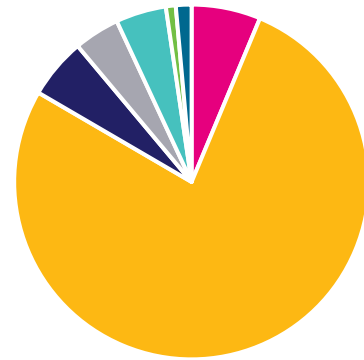
Employer reasons for joining the campaign (%)



## Interest by sector

Campaign signatories come from a wide range of sectors, although the retail sector contributes the vast majority of jobs (77.1%).

Campaign signatories by sector (%)



- Financial services
- Retail
- Support services
- Accountants and consultancy
- Utilities
- Construction
- Other

## Employer experiences

During autumn 2023, we contacted all employers who had signed up to Opening Doors at least six months before to understand their experience of the campaign to date.

## Completed actions

All but one of the employers we spoke to during the midpoint review had completed at least one action.

The three actions most likely to have already been completed since the start of campaign were:

- Partner with organisations that support disadvantaged groups into work.
- Use diverse images and role models in all your public-facing communications.
- Advertise your vacancies through a range of channels that target diverse groups.

The action most likely to have been 'started but not completed' was 'training hiring managers'; explanations for this included:

## OPENING DOORS TO DIVERSE TALENT

- A reduction in vacancies means that there are fewer opportunities for hiring managers to engage in inclusive recruitment (and therefore less incentive for them to participate in training).
- The amount of time and resource it takes to train all hiring managers.

### Key challenges facing employers who want to change the way they recruit

The reduction in live vacancies was given as a reason for not completing (or in some cases, starting) some of the actions and is likely symptomatic of the changing labour market since the campaign was launched. However, the employers we spoke to didn't suggest that this would stop them from being able to implement their commitments, just that it was taking a little longer to progress some of them than originally thought.

Some employers also talked about the size of the talent pool making it more challenging to bring some hiring managers on board with inclusive recruitment commitments. For example, for roles or industries that require specialist skills, the talent pool is quite small, and therefore targeting diverse candidates can be seen as limiting. However, it was recognised that partnerships are key to overcoming this challenge in the short-term, and in the longer term, more needs to be done to build the skills of the future workforce.

### Advice to employers

We asked Opening Doors employers for their top tips for other businesses wanting to make their recruitment processes more inclusive:

- Start with the "low hanging fruit". Each organisation will find some of the commitments easier to implement than others. Focus on the easy things first – these will lay the groundwork for the harder, potentially more impactful actions by gaining traction and momentum.
- Training hiring managers is key. Without their buy in, it will be extremely difficult to make

many of the changes advocated by the campaign. Continuous communication is key, specifically you need to demonstrate how they will benefit from this new approach.

- Track your progress. Inclusive recruitment must be more than a box ticking exercise. You need to understand that the actions you take equate to real progress, and if they don't, you need to revisit and refine what you do until you see that change you desire. Knowing your successes also help build the case for further change.
- You need transparency at every level of the business. Every employee needs to buy into your inclusive recruitment ambitions so you need to communicate what you are doing and why (and what their role is in supporting you).
- Partnerships are invaluable. The right partners can help you find candidates, support those candidates through the recruitment process and beyond, and provide feedback on the process itself.

# OPENING DOORS TO DIVERSE TALENT

## About Opening Doors

Many longstanding and widespread recruitment practices mean that employers are effectively closing their doors to diverse talent:

- 22% of businesses would close their doors to disabled people.<sup>i</sup>
- 35% of businesses would close their doors to refugees.<sup>ii</sup>
- 35% of businesses would close their doors to education leavers.<sup>iii</sup>
- 58% of businesses would close their doors to homeless jobseekers.<sup>iv</sup>
- 55% of businesses would close their doors to people with criminal convictions.<sup>v</sup>

Opening Doors calls on employers to make changes to the way they recruit so that their jobs become more accessible to all jobseekers, regardless of background and life experience. Working in collaboration with a wide range of organisations supporting diverse candidates (see 'Our Endorsers' below), we identified 25 actions that would improve access to jobs. The actions are grouped under five 'keys' to inclusive recruitment:

1. Create partnerships that connect untapped talent to your jobs.
2. Show candidates that you are committed to inclusion.
3. Use comprehensive job adverts with inclusive language.
4. Focus on the essential skills needed to do the job.
5. Prioritise accessibility and eliminate bias.

Employers are asked to commit to taking a minimum of three actions during the campaign.

## Our endorsers

Thank you for our key campaign endorsers who have committed to contributing their insight and expertise as we deliver the campaign:

[Back on Track Manchester](#)

[Bridge of Hope](#)

[Business Disability Forum](#)

[Catch-22](#)

[DWP](#)

[Generation](#)

[Leonard Cheshire](#)

[Movement to Work](#)

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<sup>i</sup> PageGroup, 2021

<sup>ii</sup> BITC research with YouGov, 2020

<sup>iii</sup> LinkedIn, 2021

<sup>iv</sup> Crisis, 2021

<sup>v</sup> Progress & Prejudice, 2022