

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Global annual report 2020



A message from Mike Haigh

Welcome to our fourth annual equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) report. This year marks the end of our first, five-year EDI strategy.

As we leave 2020 behind, it's a good time to reflect on this five-year journey and focus on how we can support EDI across our sectors going forward. This year was full of challenges which presents an opportunity to review what we learned and perhaps even re-evaluate what we thought we knew.

In many ways the Coronavirus pandemic has catalysed several of our EDI efforts. We have also galvanised our actions on race equality to tackle racial injustice and bias. We outline our work further in this report, and I would like to share some of my reflections here:

1. Leaders must make time to understand and deliver on EDI. Over two-thirds of executives rate diversity and inclusion as important and this must be reflected in commitments made to progress ([Deloitte](#)). I have found it hugely beneficial working closely with our EDI team and our Advance employee network.

I also learned much from internal colleagues and external contacts in our recent roundtables on race equality, and believe we are in a better position to tackle some of the root causes of unequal outcomes.

2. It's ok not to know everything, but not ok to ignore this lack of awareness. To be inclusive we must challenge the belief that our own perspective is the most informed, or even the right one. We need to value the insights of others and be open to positive challenge. This year we have over 100 colleagues involved in our reverse-mentoring schemes in the UK and Middle East, connecting senior managers with underrepresented and minority colleagues for a two-way mentoring relationship.

3. Embedding EDI into core processes is critical to delivering inclusive social outcomes. This year we brought our global human resources leadership team closer together which has helped connect our EDI strategy more closely with our People strategy and to further localise action. We are also highlighting inclusion and responsibility as one of our Communities of Practice in our updated People Operating Model. Several initiatives will help embed EDI in our policies and processes; an example is our People Promise – made by

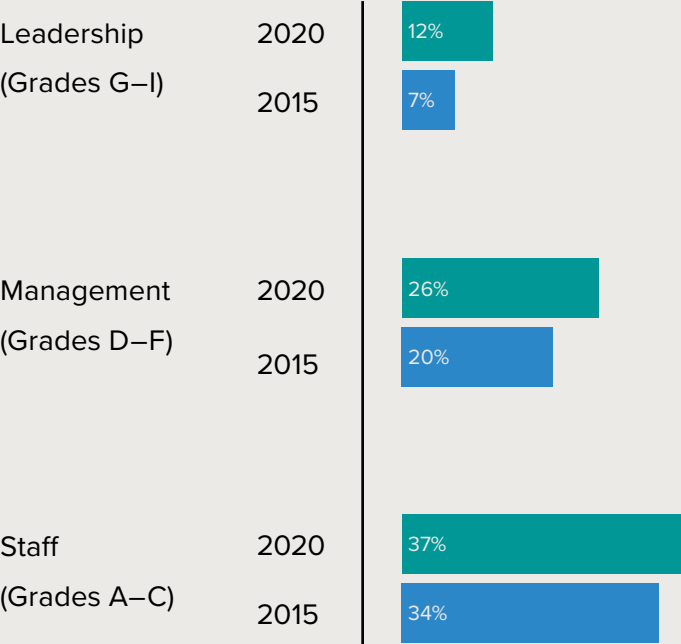
all colleagues – which includes commitments to 'create a nurturing environment where we can be ourselves, feel valued, safe and at our best' and highlights that we will 'celebrate our differences and treat everyone fairly and with respect.' As our 2025 strategy develops we will see further initiatives with EDI embedded at the core.

Mike Haigh
Mott MacDonald executive chair
(He/him)*

* To find out more about why we have specified colleagues' pronouns throughout this report, visit the [Mott MacDonald website](#).



Talent



Female representation 2015-2020

Collecting, monitoring and reporting of EDI data is important to track progress and identify areas of focus

Measuring and monitoring data has been key to our EDI strategy. We have collected gender data across the Group and have seen improvements in the representation of women over the past five years at all levels. This has been most significant at management levels, where female representation has increased from 20% to 26%, and in our leadership where representation has increased from 7% to 12%. While we are pleased to see a positive trend, we know more must be done to speed up the pace of change.

We have developed our diversity data analytics significantly in our UK business over the past three years, helping us measure progress, identify focus areas and hold our business units to account against our EDI goals. We are updating our HR system in 2021 to enable us to capture and measure diversity data globally which will help with further benchmarking and support progress across the Group.

We also collect and analyse EDI data at recruitment stage wherever possible. For example, in the UK, our new talent acquisition tracker enables us to see diversity trends at each stage of recruitment, from application to hire. This has informed regional EDI actions, including the roll-out of a new inclusive interview training module for all hiring managers.

We will continue to improve our data analytics to inform the areas we need to focus on to increase the diversity of our workforce.

Equality impact assessments of job advertisements can help recruit diverse talent

In 2020 we expanded our EDI review of job advertisements to live vacancies in our Australia and New Zealand, Middle East and South Asia, North and South America, and UK and Europe regions. The assessment is carried out by our EDI specialists who reviewed over 300 vacancies and made recommendations to our talent acquisition leads.

Notable outcomes include de-gendering language by using a gender decoder for all advertisements and removing reference to length of experience wherever possible to minimise any perception of age bias. This review is embedded as an annual action in our 2025 EDI strategy.

Partnering with external networks helps attract top talent

In the US, our partnership with the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) supports our EDI recruitment efforts, linking us to a network of more than 20,000 students and professionals. We participated in the NSBE’s first virtual convention in 2020 and are starting a Mott MacDonald chapter of the NSBE. As with the NSBE itself, this chapter will be open to everyone.

“We want Mott MacDonald to be seen as an employer of choice for all candidates and communities. Our partnership with the National Society of Black Engineers this year meant that we were able to market ourselves – and our opportunities – to a diverse talent pool.”

Jahlisa Jones,
Talent acquisition specialist and energy unit lead for NASA EDI committee
(She/her)





Leadership

Embedding EDI into our thought leadership

Our Thought Leadership Working Group brings together experts from across the Group to debate and set organisational positions on key societal challenges and opportunities. We have published commitments under four papers (Delivering Social Outcomes, Net-Zero Carbon Emissions, Living with the Impacts of Climate Change and Digital Innovation). In each paper we make commitments to our clients and also to our colleagues, setting out how they can help us deliver our pledges and the support available. All papers this year have been reviewed by our Group head of inclusion and responsibility.

A mix of EDI learning opportunities provides staff with the skills and knowledge to create an inclusive workplace culture

Unconscious bias training remains a key piece of our learning puzzle. In 2020, more than 2000 colleagues completed our unconscious bias e-learning module, part of our global induction training. Since 2015, nearly 7000 staff have completed the course which we complement through live 'lunch and learn' sessions. We have also started refreshers on 'managing bias' for senior leaders prior to our promotion panels.

We have a specific EDI e-learning course which is mandatory for all new joiners in the UK. This year just over 2000 employees completed the e-learning course and more than 6000 have completed it since 2015. We capture feedback to adapt and improve the course.

97%

of EDI e-learning participants, agreed that 'the content and materials presented helped me understand how to apply this learning back to my role'.

External visibility – and scrutiny – of EDI efforts supports ongoing learning and development and raises the profile of the business

In May we published our latest annual gender pay gap report in the UK and voluntarily published our first ethnicity pay gap report – both [available on our website](#). We are proud to be the first engineering consultancy to publish both our gender and ethnicity pay gap reports and share our accompanying action plans to reduce these gaps.

In October we were delighted to be awarded the National Equality Standard (NES), the UK's highest benchmark for EDI. Sponsored by EY and developed by business for business, the NES sets clear EDI criteria, against which companies are independently assessed. Between September 2019 and March 2020, EY assessors reviewed our policies and practices against 35 competencies covering all aspects of diversity. EY looked at HR, recruitment, business practices and learning and development, as well as assessing documentation and speaking to staff.

To achieve the NES, we developed new plans to deliver our EDI goals, including piloting an 'achieve or explain' policy to support greater diversity in interview shortlists.

We also share updates on our social media channels including Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Popular posts include celebrations for Chinese New Year, signing the Armed Forces Covenant to support service personnel back into the world of civilian work and updates on our race equality efforts.

“Our senior promotions process is designed to ensure all eligible colleagues are considered with feedback and development plans for anyone not progressed this time around. I have found it helpful to include our EDI lead and Advance network chair on panels as they provide different perspectives, help to positively challenge existing approaches and help us remove bias.”

Nourhan Elsadowy,
Human resources manager, Middle East
(She/her)

Reviewing development and progression through an EDI lens improves outcomes

Our senior promotions processes take place twice a year across the global business. Each region recognises senior talent in similar and tailored ways with a common goal of recognising the best performers. To ensure no one is overlooked and that the criteria used is objective and bias-free, we have carried out an extra EDI review in our UK and Europe region for several years now. In 2020, we expanded this review to include our International Development, Middle East and South Asia (ISMA) region. Our EDI specialists review promotion cases and join departmental and regional promotion panels to provide feedback. We also ensure diverse panels for promotion interviews, often with representation from our Advance employee network strategic committees.

Employee engagement

Regular and accessible communications are key to supporting our EDI messages

Our Group Advance Insights spotlight a range of events, festivals and celebrations. Examples include: Cinco de Mayo, Yom Kippur and the World Day of Indigenous People.

Live events have also helped us to listen and to share. Our 'Rise and Shine' initiative connects over 100 female colleagues every month across our Middle East region. The group discusses challenges women face at work and at home and shares ideas on how to manage life in an uncertain world. The group has hosted a meditation session, unconscious bias training, and connects users to a dedicated online forum through Microsoft Teams.

Our 'Diversity Dispatch' newsletter for our North and South American (NASA) region is dedicated to keeping colleagues up-to-date on EDI activities. Our first issue in February 2020 included articles and inspiring stories from our Advancing groups on disability, gender, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT+), race & culture, parents & caregivers and veterans.

Yammer remains a key communication channel and we have several Advance Yammer communities. Our central Advance Yammer community group has had over 3,000 active users in the last 12 months and over 77,000 read messages. We have also seen an uplift this year in engagement from colleagues who are not members of the group but who are accessing the support, information and learning provided by this community.

"One of the benefits of working for a global organisation is that we can connect with colleagues all over the world. It also means we must be mindful of variations in culture and approach while upholding our commitment to an inclusive workplace culture. I am proud that Mott MacDonald recognises sexual orientation and gender identity inclusion and we have action plans in place to make inclusion a reality for our colleagues everywhere."

Christopher Cockshaw,
Principal project manager and NASA Advance chair
(He/him)





Our EDI calendar helps us plan and deliver initiatives to engage colleagues

This year we started our 24-month EDI calendar across the global business. Group-wide events along with regional and local initiatives are all informed by staff feedback through our Advance and wider employee networks.

Mardi Gras (March)

With support from our Advance champion Thomas Sheridan we produced an Advance Insight document on Sydney's LGBT+ Mardi Gras – a major event in Australia's annual calendar and known around the world as a celebration of LGBT+ visibility and diversity.

International Women in Engineering Day (23 June)

A key event in 2020 was International Women in Engineering Day (INWED) which we marked in all regions. INWED was first launched by the Women's Engineering Society in 2014 on their 95th anniversary. It aims to raise awareness of engineering to women and girls who are underrepresented on science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) courses at university and in the workplace. There was wide participation in our INWED webinars which were organised regionally with attendees from our Early Careers Professional Network, senior leadership team and our clients. Colleagues also engaged on our Advance Network and Advancing Gender Yammer platforms.

Pride season (June)

This year we celebrated several LGBT+ events around the world, even though many live events were cancelled due to pandemic restrictions. Our Advancing LGBT+ networks in our North America and UK businesses co-hosted an online 'e-Pride' event at the end of June which is usually when the New York, San Francisco and London Prides take place. The event featured a quiz on topics related to LGBT+ culture, achievements and ongoing inequalities.

International Day of People with Disabilities (3 December)

Colleagues from across the world shared their personal experiences of autism, dyslexia, dyspraxia, limb impairment and Meniere's disease in our 'Not every disability is visible' campaign. Our regional Advancing Disability networks also ran a range of awareness-raising activities including a webinar on 'Supporting neurodiversity at work' in the UK and the launch of a disability inclusion toolkit in our US business.

Race equality events (throughout the year)

Our executive leadership team, EDI team and regional Advance employee networks collaborated on a series of events throughout 2020 to support our ongoing commitment to racial equality and justice. Our Group chair Mike Haigh and NASA CEO Nick DeNichilo hosted a workshop on racial justice with guest panellists from the National Society of Black Engineers and the New Jersey Institute of Technology. In the UK, over 1600 colleagues joined us for our summer 'Let's talk about race' webinar with Business in the Community's Race at Work campaign, while our roundtables on race equality shared powerful stories and insights into racism and race inequality.

Clients and suppliers

Connecting with peers and fellow specialists supports better practice

We work closely with the Royal Academy of Engineering's (RAENG) diversity team and support several campaigns to diversify our industry. Our Group head of inclusion and responsibility helped design RAENG's Flexible Working training materials which aim to support greater use of agile working and flexible working patterns in our sector.

Our UK EDI manager is a member of Highways England's Supplier Diversity Forum and is leading a project on supporting greater diversity in the sector through engagement with schools. We were also invited to present a Highways England masterclass on utilising diversity data following our leading scores in their supplier assessment programme in early 2020.

Our Peer Learning Forums are an annual action in our EDI strategy and enable us to share and learn from good practice on EDI with our clients, suppliers and competitors. This year we moved our forums online and shared learning on adapting and implementing EDI initiatives during the global pandemic.

Embedding accessibility and inclusion into our purpose delivers better social outcomes for all

In 2020 we unveiled our new Group purpose, putting social outcomes at the heart of our work:

“Our purpose is to improve society by considering social outcomes in everything we do, relentlessly focusing on excellence and digital innovation, transforming our clients’ businesses, our communities and employee opportunities.”

We're very aware of the far-reaching impacts of the work we do. So we set out to identify, highlight and address ripple effects, eliminating negative ones and pursuing the positive. As a matter of principle, nobody should be disadvantaged. And we know from experience that inclusive projects deliver the best results for everyone, our clients too. That is why social outcomes – accessibility, inclusion, empowerment, resilience and wellbeing – are at the heart of our purpose. Here we highlight just a few of our client projects with social outcomes at their core:

Delivering equality impact assessments (EqIAs)

Our specialist social inclusion team is proud of its long-standing EqIA services and continues to deliver EqIAs to support our clients to fulfil their public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010. EqIAs enable our clients to understand how different people are impacted by their proposals and how inclusive delivery can support and open-up opportunities for diverse communities.

In 2020 we delivered EqIAs for several regeneration projects for local authorities and a number of transport sector clients including HS2, Network Rail and Highways England.

Transforming the Green Line in Boston, US

We are working with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) to deliver the Green Line Transformation (GLT) program, aimed at rebuilding and transforming the oldest light rail transit line in the US, serving communities of Greater Boston for over 120 years.

We are helping the MBTA fulfil its goal of equal and fair access to transport links, as it transforms how it operates, maintains and provides service to its customers. As part of the GLT, the Green Line Accessibility Improvements project will provide accessibility upgrades to 26 stations on Boston's Green Line, placing accessibility, inclusivity and communities at the heart of operations.

Sydney Metro – Australia's biggest transport infrastructure project

After delivering Sydney Metro Northwest in 2019, in collaboration with our joint venture partners KBR and SMEC, we're continuing to work with the New South Wales government and other contractors on the rest of the Sydney Metro project – the City & Southwest section, due to open in 2024. Building supplier diversity and empowerment outcomes is central to our approach. We are striving to bring First Nations and voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) businesses into the supply chain as well as building their capacity in the process.

The state-of-the-art metro line provides a fully accessible, fully automatic metro, connects local communities and provides development opportunities for new employment hubs, with a strong focus on delivering social outcomes and inspiring people to change the way they travel.





Communities

Our [Mott MacDonald purpose](#) outlines our aim to improve society by considering social outcomes in everything we do. An extension of our purpose is our [corporate social responsibility \(CSR\) strategy](#) which includes engagement with our communities.

In late 2020 we piloted our new CSR strategy which officially commences in 2021. It includes ‘reduced inequalities’ as one of our four key strategy themes – aligned with the UN’s Sustainable Development Goal 10 and our EDI strategy.

Our CSR strategy outlines our commitment to engaging with our communities to promote a more inclusive and fairer society. This includes widening access to STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) education with our industry skills and recognising causes which support underrepresented and marginalised groups.

This year, we created a new global CSR advisor role to reflect our commitment to social responsibility. Andrew Izzet Lee brings experience and passion to the role and has already connected with colleagues across the Group to explore how CSR can be even more effective in improving people’s lives.

“Mott MacDonald rightly links CSR to EDI, and vice-versa. By making these connections, we can collaborate for better social outcomes in our work and recognise charitable causes, including those that support the most marginalised communities.”

Andrew Izzet Lee,
Group CSR advisor
(He/him)

Making quality education accessible to everybody is key

In response to school closures due to COVID-19, we developed a series of challenges in the UK, called STEM @ Home, to engage children with STEM education while schools were closed. These challenges included building bridges and structures with basic household items. By developing a learning opportunity not reliant on technology, we were able to make STEM learning more accessible for children who are digitally excluded. We are delighted that STEM @ Home has since become a global initiative that has also been taken up in Ireland, India and Canada.

We are also engaging with university students and graduates to position Mott MacDonald as an employer of choice. Our Advancing Race & Culture (ARC) network hosted the Association for Black & Minority Ethnic Engineers (AFBE) for a ‘meet the board’ event in February. In addition, our ARC network recruited colleagues to participate in AFBE’s ‘Transition’ programme, which was held virtually for the first time in November. Over 60 volunteers and attendees joined us for a workshop which aims to support ethnic minority engineering students with the transition between education and employment. Students learnt about accessing opportunities in our industry through a series of inspiring talks and gained useful insights and feedback from professionals through CV reviews and mock interviews.

Adapting our approach to employee volunteering during the pandemic is essential to reducing inequalities

The COVID-19 pandemic has required us to adapt some of our approaches to employee volunteering. [Missing Maps](#) – a virtual volunteering project – provided an opportunity for colleagues to get involved in designing maps of remote communities which aren’t available online. Our volunteers helped design maps for communities in Mali and the Central African Republic which aided the local response to COVID-19, enabling humanitarian workers to reach vulnerable people.

We also encouraged our people to recognise charitable giving for causes particularly hit by the pandemic. For example, a group of colleagues raised more than £3,000 for people facing harsh conditions, including families at refugee and internal displacement camps in countries such as Syria, Yemen and South Sudan through the Coronavirus appeal by the Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC).

Opening opportunities with connected thinking.

Talk to us

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