

#LearningFromCrisis

Making Equality the “New Normal”

Roundtable – 29 July 2020

ZOOM CHAT: Comments & links from speakers & audience



Neil Smith, HS2 (providing link from comment) : <https://www.roadmapforchange.org.uk/>

Anouk Khan - Real Estate Women : At the senior level, there are not enough : 1. People with disability 2. BAME representatives & 3. Women for people to identify with

Kelly Canterford (she/her) - Changing the Face of Property : As an industry we need to move away from doing the minimal amount needed to reach a standard and start looking at being best in class - be that around designing accessible space or developing inclusive policies for the workplace

Diane Lightfoot, Business Disability Forum : We also need to reframe diversity as talent - there are huge skills shortages in the sector which could be addressed by casting the net wider and attracting a much bigger talent pool

Mark Atkinson : How about age diversity?

Gareth James : This event next week might be of interest: <https://nextcity.org/events/detail/reclaiming-spaces-and-places-session>

Leona Menville, Director Customer & Communities Inquilab HA : We need to acknowledge that organisational culture and structures are a fundamental part of the problem. A lack of genuine diversity at the top table has led to a “group think” mentality determining what ‘good’ or ‘success’ looks like. Leaders have to be willing to dismantle and deconstruct these structural barriers to affect genuine and meaningful change.

Charlotte Morphet, Women in Planning/ LBWF : Great resource – let’s you search different organisations across the built environment looking to push for greater diversity including networks like Women in Planning.

<https://www.buildingpeople.org.uk/>

Anita Singh : How do we feel about companies only focussing on one 'diversity characteristic', and neglecting the others?

Bhavini Shah, Montagu Evans : <https://www.bameinproperty.com/> - I've connected with some fantastic peers through BAME in Property and highly recommend taking a look at the website and social media channels. I'm now on the committee so that I can (hopefully) help to effect some real change! Our businesses need to reflect the environments that we design, value and develop for.

Rocket Science : We all have a role to play in levelling the playing field for young people in our communities - who do not have access or even think about the opportunities working in this space. If we are responsible for building communities how can we make sure we create the diverse talent pipelines for the future

Charlotte Morphet: For anyone interested, this is a great literature review on gender diversity & leadership

https://www.apm.org.uk/media/27360/women-in-major-proj-leadership-report-2018_.pdf

<https://nextcity.org/events/detail/reclaiming-spaces-and-places-session>

Anouk Khan - Real Estate Women : www.thecolourofpower.com - published figures by Green Park & Operation Black Vote - 52 of the 1099 most powerful roles in the country are filled by non-BAME professionals

Kelly Canterford: Definitely, Leona - this is such a unique point in time. In January people would have laughed if you said we'd all be working from home. It feels like many leaders have reached that point where they are saying "we're ready to change"

Diane Lightfoot: @Anita - pick and mix diversity is still too prevalent. None of us sit in only one box and we need to look at intersectionality and see and value everyone as a unique individual.

Sally Garcia : Cabinet Office is a founding partner of Black Professionals in Construction (BPIC) they have built some fantastic momentum and are now trying to influence the pipeline, I understand they are working with Waltham Forest and Southwark. <https://www.bpicnetwork.com/>

Neil Smith : Mayor of London’s Supporting Diversity Handbook is a tool for advocacy, communication and action on the barriers to equality diversity and inclusion. It brings together research, examples of leadership and recommendations that can be applied at all career stages.

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/supporting_diversity_handbook_web.pdf

Marcia K : Networking I find is difficult especially if you're the only BAME in the room. It a skill which many find overwhelming and uncomfortable. It would be good to know if there any courses which deal with this especially from BAME perspective.

Anita Singh : Marcia - I completely understand. Over the years noticed that often others would realise I was the only BAME in the room before I did. I would take it as/ and I learned to take it as a positive to use - because you're different in appearance, you're more likely to be noticed/ remembered (another more senior BAME advised me of this early on in my career).

Gavin Chinniah: I don't agree that people from BAME should work harder. Everyone is equal and should be given the same opportunity.

Charlotte Morphet : Yes - I agree Gavin the culture has to change. Its not about fixing people. In gender leadership theory there is a lot about fixing people but it is relevant for everyone

Anouk Khan : @Anita I fully agree having worked in banking & property - and used it to my advantage!

Violet Pugh : Agree, Jahanara. We need peel away the structural layers of how we're running our businesses and treat the root causes of inequality and not just the symptoms. We need to get away from performative actions and focus on real action that has a tangible long term positive impact for employees and customers.

Gavin Chinniah: Kate Dodsworth I think your opening statement was great and summed up the struggles in society at the moment.

Anita Singh : And often when you start off in these rooms, people have their unconscious bias, so when you talk to them you can catch them off guard. This can work to your advantage as you can lead/ direct the conversation. What makes you different makes you interesting. Have an interesting story to tell. People remember stories.

Kelly Canterford: I am part of a number of LGBTQ+ networks and networking in those groups has a very different feel to them. I don't have to hide part of who I am

Gavin Chinniah: What are we doing to challenge local planning authorities in London in promoting more diversity? There is not one BAME head of service in 32 London Boroughs

Anouk Khan: *Correction BAME 4 (0 is for Metropolitan Councils)

Anita Singh : re not knowing where/what networking to do: I think it's about showing up again and again, and pushing. When I started off, I just googled property networking events, made contacts at those events, and asked what other events they go to/ know about.

Vivian Murinde : Creating inclusive environments are important and ensuring there is diversity at the top. We can look to create more diverse workforces but if organisations aren't prepared or aren't fostering the right culture, these changes will not be sustainable and can end up doing more harm than good.

Neil Smith : Another area we need to discuss is the role of procurement

Anouk Khan: @Gavin you are right: CEO London Borough Councils: Male 18, Female:14, White: 28: BAME:0

Charlotte Morphet: Hi everyone - this is a great network that exist I am not sure that everyone knows about it <https://www.bameinproperty.com/>

Kelly Canterford: We work hard to attract diversity in to the profession however we need to work harder to keep people in the industry - and this is about the culture of an organisation which in now the focus for CTFOP

Gavin Chinniah : I feel so passionately about this and I have raised this directly with the RTPI

Anouk Khan : Networking & building (business) relationships with people with shared values is becoming more & more important.

Gareth James : @Neil I was going to ask about procurement as well. I'd be really interested to know panelists experience of this, both formal and informal ("old boys network") procurement

Kate Falconer Hall : Thanks @Leona and @Kelly. Absolutely agree that it's important to diversify the representation and understanding at the top. The 'normal' way of thinking and the behaviours that are rewarded need to be challenged - these need to reflect the values of the wider team.

Anouk Khan : Apprenticeships are good but to retain & nurture talent we need to see people of colour at the top positions for them to stay

Onyeka Onyekwelu : To learn more about LOTI's pledge to recruit 100 digital apprentices in London boroughs: <https://loti.london/projects/digital-apprenticeships/>

Dieter's iPhone : hi all - any links to organisations who hold a mirror up to businesses to help improve their D+I and equality would be helpful - we're a growing architectural practice of 20+ keen to retain, celebrate and benefit from a diverse team

Anita Singh : Sorry Lisa, I should have made that clear when I spoke - networking for me has been fundamental to success at work. You have to get out there and meet the right people to bring in business which can often been a differentiator for promotions. You learn about other projects, challenges that other companies, projects are facing - it can be a holistic lesson. The goal is not quantity of people you can meet.

Leona Menville: We need to encourage more self-selection of initiatives – Open up all opportunities to all people. There are many more talented and skilled black and ethnically diverse people within organisations than those that are spotted, sponsored, and put forward for opportunities.

Charlotte Morphet: I am thinking! But I guess most D&I experts would do this

Onyeka Onyekwelu : Agreed @Anouk - we've also been testing mock interviews with the current cohort of apprentices to equip them with the skills to excel in future interviews, and broaden their network of senior leaders to progress their careers

Diane Lightfoot,: We have loads of information related to disability - including a covid19 specific toolkit. <https://businessdisabilityforum.org.uk/>

Rosa Sulley : There's been a couple of comments about the need to change culture and the environment within an organisation which I completely agree with, does anyone have any suggestions or experiences of effective ways to achieve this? Unconscious bias training is often presented as an easy fix all approach in organisations but I'm not convinced this leads to meaningful change?? Thanks!

Vicky Thompson, Montagu Evans : @Dieter, Byrne Dean are great at doing that. I have used them to deliver training which is research based so designed for your organisation.

Charlotte Morphet: Rosa - I haven't come across any good solutions yet on how to fix cultures. I think at the moment Unconscious bias is the best we have at the moment but I agree it's part of a program not the whole solution

Vina (2) : I believe it is a two-pronged approach. Living examples need to go into those schools where they would not imagine themselves in certain spaces. This is what saved me.

Anita Singh : If anyone hasn't already seen it, I would highly recommend '**the school that tried to end racism**' - it was on Channel 4 recently. Although exercise was carried out at school, it would absolutely work for adults.

Diane Lightfoot: @Rosa role modelling and named senior champions to drive this is really key. Language - not just around D&I about organizational culture so it doesn't undermine. Line manager confidence and knowing where to go for practical support

Kelly Canterford : @Rosa we need to embed inclusion in to "normal" development and have personal commitments from leaders who are in turn individually responsible for doing things differently

Anouk Khan: @Rosa - research has shown that (financial) incentives is one way to effect change albeit it is not sustainable. The other way is peer pressure

Leona Menville: I think we need to start moving the conversation from Unconscious to conscious bias awareness. Making ourselves vulnerable and transparent will allow us to change our behaviours

Violet Pugh : It's great to have career progression initiatives, but I also feel that businesses need to ensure that the people they elevate into leadership roles have the right skill set to deliver on the promises/commitments businesses are making about moving the needle on racial injustice and allyship

Onyeka Onyekwelu : AGREED @Neil - working in the open has really helped us to collaborate with a more diverse group of officers

Anita Singh : @Rosa Charlotte is right - an unconscious bias training workshop, and internal roundtable as a plaster is often the proposed solution - I think it needs to be a long-term implementation piece.

Charlotte Morphet: Leona - I like that 'conscious bias awareness' - unconscious bias as a term makes me feel like it's acceptable - which it isn't!

Leona Menville: @Charlotte - Yes, that's exactly how I feel it is being used

Anita Singh : Also - these workshops sometimes need to be pushed by non-minorities to be taken seriously

Marcia K : I battle for inclusive design but these are costly developments and viability will in some cases be the driver for not building enough of these properties.

Diane Lightfoot : John Amaechi - Amaechi Performance - is brilliant on unconscious vs conscious bias.

<https://www.amaechiperformance.com/aps-team/about-john-amaechi-obe/>

Gareth James : @Rosa This NACTO workshop (which I thought was excellent) gave me some ideas on things our organization needs to do differently: <https://vimeo.com/435837236>

Kelly Canterford: We see businesses use "unconscious bias" training as the tick box of "we're doing something". It's one thing making people conscious of their biases but the key thing is to teach them how to address them

Kate Dodsworth : I dread to think of the amount of £ spent on mandatory unconscious bias courses which have resulted in no statistical progress whatsoever.....!

Onyeka Onyekwelu : At LOTI, we often ask ourselves, "what is the [insert your name here] version of this?". What I will do: Being more vocal about issues that matter most to me and being shamelessly and authentically myself at work.

Kate Dodsworth : Brilliantly chaired and fab participation - v. energised thanks folks

Anita Singh : Maybe we could all list our personal pledges (audience too). Mine will be to create an anonymised safe space at work for people to suggest, discuss or escalate an opportunity or concern.

Leona Menville: We need to make sure that we have opportunities for people completing diversity Initiatives otherwise they remain just Initiatives

Sophie Wood : The difficulty we face is these traits run very deep and culture change happens over time. Surely one of the first steps to change is making people aware of their biases? How do people change their behaviour if they don't know they're doing it?

Jahanara Rajkoomar: We can all call out/challenge discrimination whenever we come across it in all walks of life

Mark Baigent : I just finished an interim role with Haringey Council and was really impressed by how they are pursuing equalities issues and taking action within the organisation, in particular responding to COVID impacts and the BLM campaigning locally. for more information, talk to Daksha Desai daksha.desai@haringey.gov.uk

Hasanul_Hoque : I remind myself diversity and inclusion is not a destination but a journey and we need to make sure after the light shone we can leave lasting change.

Anouk Khan : Great to meet everyone & look forward to connecting/ collaborating. With strength in numbers comes power & hopefully lasting change!

Marina Robertson, Norse Group : Thanks Lisa and everyone - so much to take away. Stay in touch!

Kelly Canterford : It would be good to see businesses make role modelling as aspirational as being a good agent/broker.

Jahanara Rajkoomar : Good session and hope we continue linking in too

Onyeka Onyekwelu : Thank you for creating this space - amazing discussion

Bhavini Shah: Thank you everyone! Some great things happening

Charlotte Morphet: Thank you FoL and Lisa. Excellently hosted. Great to hear the great work everyone is doing.