



# Inclusion & diversity

# Introduction

At RPC we take inclusion, diversity and engagement seriously. Our culture is built on values of trust and respect and as such we see I&D deeply embedded in our firm's DNA.

It is important for our people, our clients and our community to know that. We want our workplace to be one where everyone feels they can bring their whole self to work and feel comfortable.





Some might see I&D as a box ticking exercise. But if you really look at the issues underpinning I&D work, you will know that these are not issues that will be resolved in a day, a month or even a year. They require uncomfortable conversations, challenging the norm, confronting stereotypes and re-evaluating how we think about our workplace and how it works. And you have to do that with authenticity.

You can't just sign a charter or add your name to a pledge and move on to the next. We want to make meaningful change so that we can continue to count ourselves as a leader in this sector and

within our community. It's what the next generation of lawyers expects from their future firm; it's what our clients expect from their advisors. And it's what we expect from ourselves.

This is the type of business we want to be. This is the environment we want to create for our people; a place where everyone feels respected, valued and included.

This brochure is intended to be a mere snapshot of some of the fantastic and boundary-pushing work we are doing in the I&D space. But there is so much more and we want to tell you about it. Even better, we want to work with you on it.



## Allies@RPC

Our Allies@RPC Network is made up of over 60 self-appointed people from across our firm who have agreed (in writing, because, well, we are lawyers) to commit to being available, supportive and open to their colleagues and to promoting an inclusive culture at the firm more generally. They receive regular training and networking opportunities.

## Inclusion & diversity work streams

We have eight I&D 'Work Streams'. Not because we want to put people in boxes but because we feel that this is the natural place to start the conversation – with people who feel passionate and connected to a particular strand of I&D. But this is just the starting point as we recognise the value of a broader, intersectional approach. Currently, our Work Streams are as follows:

- Caring responsibilities
- Disability
- Ethnicity
- Faith
- Gender
- LGBT+
- Mental health
- Social mobility

Each Work Stream is self-propelled so they plan their own initiatives and events which are both internal and external and aim to educate, raise awareness, support and provide networking opportunities. In addition to regular events, the firm spotlights one Work Stream every six months to particularly highlight the issues and challenges that are faced by people who connect with that I&D category.

The Work Streams are led by either a Partner or Business Services Director and are staffed by self-appointed people from across the firm (we currently have over 70). Each Work Stream Lead reports on their Work Stream's activity to our Balanced Business Taskforce (accountable to Board level), the I&D governance committee, which is chaired by Simon Laird, Partner and Partnership Executive Committee member.

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# Early talent and recruitment

We have used Rare's contextualised recruitment tool since 2015, which enables us to consider a more diverse range of candidates for our apprentice and training contract opportunities using social mobility metrics. We are able to understand the context within which a candidate has achieved what they have.

**33% of our 2022 UK Trainee intake are Rare candidates.**

We entered a partnership with Aspiring Solicitors (AS) in 2018. AS works to increase diversity in the legal profession through a series of programmes aimed at underrepresented groups.

**59% of our 2022 UK Trainee intake are AS members. 61% of our 2021 summer scheme offers were to AS members. This is an increase from 50% last year.**

RPC is also a Corporate Sponsor of SEO, an organisation dedicated to helping talented students, primarily from ethnic minority and/or low socioeconomic backgrounds, secure graduate positions and internships.

RPC offers legal and business apprenticeships (including solicitor, paralegal and finance apprentices to name a few) across our UK offices.

**We currently have 15 apprentices working in the business and 8 apprentices who have completed their apprenticeship and secured a role at RPC.**

We also run a number of additional diversity initiatives at the early talent stage including:

- BAME City Law: an open day for BAME candidates in collaboration with Target Jobs
- RPC and The University of Law legal access scheme: this provides 4 students, who don't meet our academic requirements but have potential, with a place on our summer scheme
- DiversCity in Law: We take part in this annual event aimed at raising awareness of pursuing a legal career in the city amongst LGBT students at degree and postgraduate level
- Bright Network: We take part in the Bright Network Black Heritage Future Leaders event each year



# Other programmes, memberships and networks

**RPC, in its continuing commitment to inclusion and diversity, also participates in a number of other programmes, memberships and networks:**

- RPC RAIN, the firm's LGBT+ network that works alongside the LGBT+ Work Stream
- We are a Race at Work Charter signatory
- We run our internal "Springboard" programme which targets gender diversity at RPC
- In April 2013, we launched the Female Insurance Group which now has over 450 members
- We are a sponsor of The Women's Insurance Network
- RPC has been a major supporter of LINK, the cross-market LGBT+ insurance network
- Law Society's City Law Firm Diversity & Inclusion forum and the Legal Diversity & Inclusion forum
- The 30% Club
- TerraLex Women's Global Connection Mentoring Program
- Stonewall
- CityParents
- We currently have 14 mental health first aiders trained by Mental Health First Aid England
- Mentoring scheme at the Jo Richardson Community School in Dagenham and at the Oasis Academy Brislington in Bristol
- We have established a mental health client working group which provides participants the opportunity to share and collaborate on ideas, challenges and developments in the drive to further the health and wellbeing initiatives in their organisations
- Our I&D Lead, Rachel Pears, sits on the steering committee of the Insurance Families Network
- Member of the Business Disability Forum
- We are a Rare Race Fairness commitment signatory
- We are a Mindful Business Charter signatory
- We are a signatory of the Law Society's Women in Law Pledge and taken that a step forward by creating our Gender Balance Plan
- Member of the City of London Law Society's Social Mobility Pledge Initiative
- Sector-specific focus in RPC Retail, Tech, Insurance, Commercial Disputes and Regulatory Pillars







# Achievements

We don't continue to push our I&D initiatives forward for marketing value. We do it because we believe it is the right way to work. That being said, we are always thrilled when our achievements are recognised because it tells us that we are moving the dial in the right direction. Some of our recent achievements that we are particularly proud of are:

**Top 25  
Law Firm**  
STONEWALL

**Top 75 Social  
Mobility  
Employer  
Index**  
2019

**Best  
Employer  
Award**

BRISTOL PRIDE GALA AWARDS  
2018

**Shortlisted  
– Diversity  
Innovation  
Award**

LEGAL WEEK INNOVATION  
AWARDS  
2019

**Shortlisted  
– the Diversity  
and Inclusion  
Award**

BRITISH CLAIMS AWARDS  
2019

**Mentor of  
the Year**

SOUTH WEST MENTORING  
AWARDS  
2019

**Shortlisted  
– 'Rising Star'  
category**

UK SOCIAL MOBILITY AWARDS  
2019

**Finalist  
– Champion of  
the Year**

FIRST HUNDRED YEARS  
INSPIRATIONAL WOMEN OF  
THE YEAR AWARDS  
2019

**Finalist  
– Solicitor of  
the Year**

FIRST HUNDRED YEARS  
INSPIRATIONAL WOMEN OF  
THE YEAR AWARDS  
2019

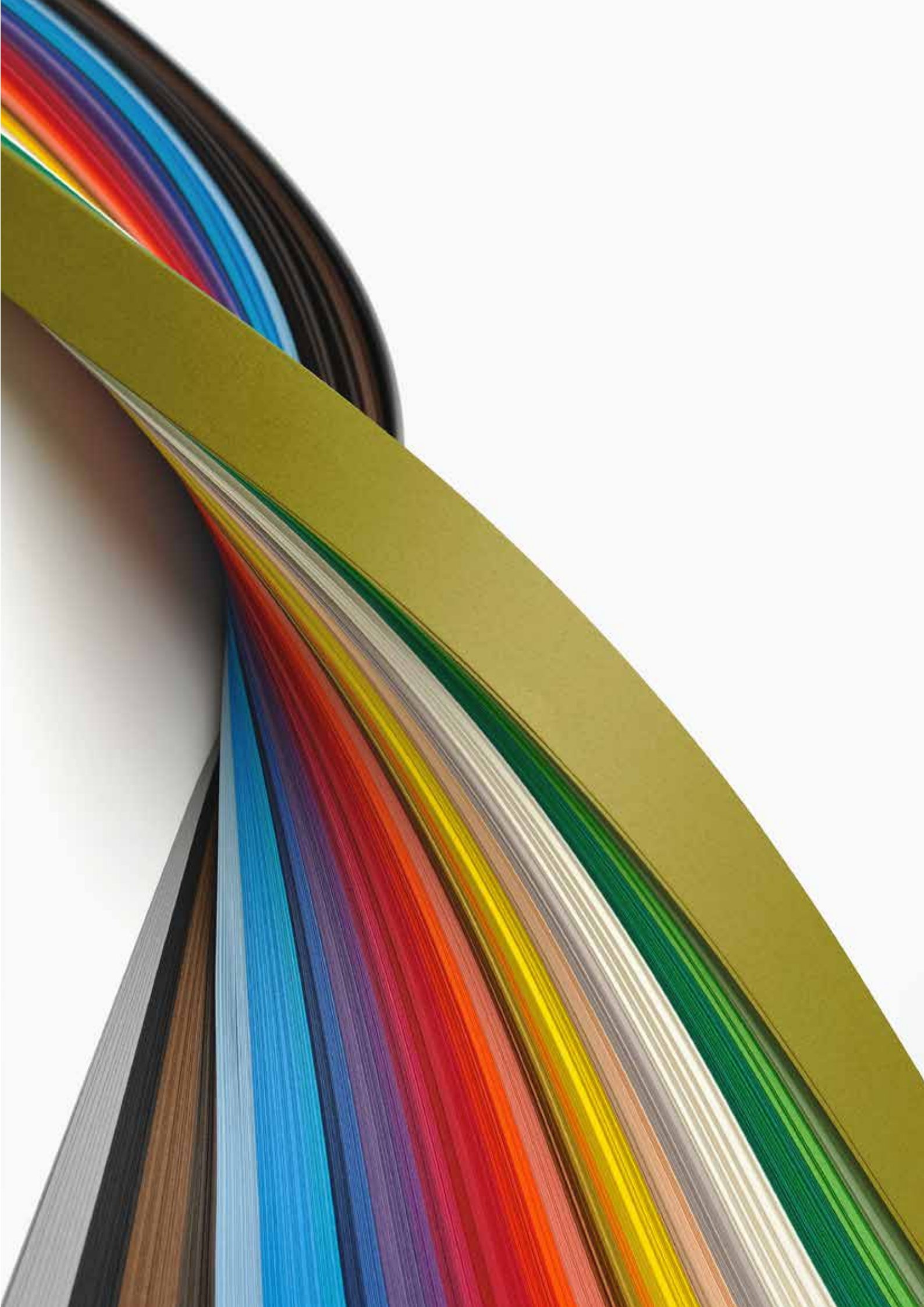
**Roll  
of Honour  
– Community  
Programme of  
the Year**

UK SOCIAL MOBILITY AWARDS  
2020

**Shortlisted  
– Inclusion  
and Diversity  
Award**

INSURANCE INSIDER, 2020  
2020





RPC

# 2020 I & D CALENDAR

## JAN

- Reverse listening exercise launched
- The Legally Disabled Project Event
- Mental Health Work Stream unconference event: Beyond the fruit and yoga... Mental Health initiatives in the workplace: what's next?
- Ethnicity Work Stream focus begins
- Parent network lunch
- Balanced Business Taskforce meeting

- Ethnicity Work Stream panel event – the importance of D&I and how ethnicity and race shaped the panel speakers' careers
- Event with Michelle King, author of The Fix, discussing gender equality in the workplace
- Hosting The Law Society's LGBT+ and Disability event
- Meeting with Stonewall

## FEB

## MAY

- Mental Health Awareness Week Kindness Webinar
- Parent network lunch

- Black Lives Matter Open Letter and Resources Pack
- Mental Health Work Stream event: Beyond the fruit and yoga: Surviving or thriving?
- Partner with the Business Disability Forum
- Celebrate Pride Month

## JUN

## APR

- Publish gender pay gap report and ethnicity pay gap report
- Balanced Business Taskforce meeting
- RPC Community Hub launches to support our people during lockdown
- FIG event: Are you boardroom ready?

## MAR

- HelloSelf clinical psychologist in-house service launches
- Women of the World London Southbank Centre event
- Launch the RPC 15-point Gender Balance Plan in connection with signing The Law Society's Women in Law Pledge
- Publication: COVID-19 Your workforce: a caution against putting equality on the backburner

## JUL

- Rare Race Fairness Commitment
- Allies training: Allies Matter
- FIG event: How to promote yourself in lockdown

## NOV

- Town Hall – firmwide I&D presentation
- National Coming Out Day photo competition and gallery launch event
- Allies training: My Life Living with Asperger's with Alex Manners
- Mindful Business Charter implementation sessions with Corporate Group
- Ethnicity Work Stream event: Let's Talk: Improving racial diversity in the legal profession
  - Letter to The Women and Equalities Committee regarding UK trans people's rights and the proposed reforms to the Gender Recognition Act
  - Publication: The Retailer: What's your one almost-impossibly-small next step to optimal health?
- Ranked 35th in 2020 Social Mobility Employer Index

## AUG

- Black Lives Matter Project interviews

## SEP

- Mindful Business Charter implementation session with Corporate Group
- Participate in virtual Bristol Pride
- Mark World Suicide Prevention Day
- Adult caring workshops with How Do You Do It
- Shortlisted: Insurance Insider's Inclusion and Diversity Award
- FIG event: Opening the door to your creativity

## DEC

- World AIDS Day Lunch & Learn with The Brigstowe Project
  - Social Mobility Financial & Professional Services – Toolkit Launch
- Mindful Business Charter Insurance Group session
  - FIG event: Imposter Syndrome
- Signed up to the 10,000 Black Interns initiative

## OCT

- Celebrate Black History Month
- Balanced Business Taskforce meeting
  - RPC & Aspiring Solicitors virtual insight day
- Legal Cheek event: Gender, ethnicity, social mobility and the changing face of work
- Ethnicity Work Stream Event with Dr Kamel Hothi OBE: First Impressions
  - Publication: Legal Week: Let's Use This Opportunity to Improve Mental Health in the Legal Profession
- Celebrate World Mental Health Day by sharing experiences of lockdown
  - FIG event: The Effective Director

# What's coming up in 2021 ...



