



RPC



Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging

2023–2024

Introduction

At RPC, we believe that great minds do not all think alike. We believe in the power of difference – of diversity – diversity of thought, diversity of background, experience, skill and talent, diversity of characteristics. We believe that attracting, retaining, and harnessing the power of this diversity does not come by chance, happenstance, or mere passage of time. Instead, we believe that it is our collective responsibility to proactively create that diversity and to carefully nurture an environment which is inclusive on a consistent, intersectional, and sustained basis. A culture where each of our people feels they belong, is respected, and is valued for the differences that they bring. DEIB is all about making sure our culture is and remains diverse and inclusive.

For more information, or to get involved, please contact:



Rachel Pears
Head of Responsible Business

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Rachel is responsible for designing and implementing the firm's ESG strategic priority. She works with Kelly Thomson, ESG Partner Lead, to ensure responsible business principles are woven through how we work.



Katie Horn
DEIB & Responsible Business Manager
(Market Facing)

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Katie is responsible for all external-facing DEIB activities and initiatives which fall under the firm's DEIB & Wellbeing stream of our ESG structure.



Rachel Euripides
DEIB & Responsible Business Senior Executive

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Rachel is responsible for the internal-facing DEIB Communities, activities and initiatives which fall under the firm's DEIB & Wellbeing stream of our ESG structure.



Carmen Dennis
Responsible Business Assistant

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Carmen is responsible for assisting and supporting the team with all administrative aspects of their ESG programmes.



Awards

<p>2022</p> <p>Top 25 Law Firm 42nd overall Gold ranking</p> <p>STONEWALL</p>	<p>2023</p> <p>Top 75 Employer</p> <p>UK SOCIAL MOBILITY EMPLOYER INDEX</p>	<p>2022</p> <p>Silver Award</p> <p>ECOVADIS</p>
<p>2022</p> <p>Silver Award</p> <p>ARMED FORCES COVENANT EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME</p>	<p>2022</p> <p>Winner Pro Bono</p> <p>CHINA BUSINESS LAW AWARDS</p>	<p>2022</p> <p>Winner, Silver Inclusion and Diversity Award</p> <p>NATIONAL INSURANCE AWARDS</p>
<p>2023</p> <p>Highly Commended Faith initiative of the Year</p> <p>WOMEN AND DIVERSITY IN LAW AWARDS</p>	<p>2023</p> <p>Winner Mental Health and Wellbeing Initiative of the Year</p> <p>WOMEN AND DIVERSITY IN LAW AWARDS</p>	<p>2023</p> <p>Winner Kelly Thomson Ally of the Year</p> <p>WOMEN, INFLUENCE & POWER IN LAW UK AWARDS</p>
<p>2023</p> <p>Winner Alexandra Anderson Lifetime Achievement</p> <p>WOMEN, INFLUENCE & POWER IN LAW UK AWARDS</p>	<p>2023</p> <p>DISABILITY CONFIDENT LEVEL 2 EMPLOYER</p>	<p>2024</p> <p>Winner Responsible Business of the Year</p> <p>WOMEN AND DIVERSITY IN LAW AWARDS</p>

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) Communities:

We have eight DEIB 'Communities'. 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 DEIB. But this is just the starting point as we recognise the value of a broader, intersectional approach. Members of our DEIB Communities representing teams (and offices) globally across the RPC network with steps being taken to ensure wherever possible that initiatives and resources impact all our people globally, where ever they are in the world. Currently, our Community Groups are as follows:

- Belief
- Disability (ENABLE)
- Ethnicity
- Families
- Gender
- LGBTQ+ (RPC RAIN)
- Mental health
- Social mobility



Belief



ENABLE



Ethnicity



Families



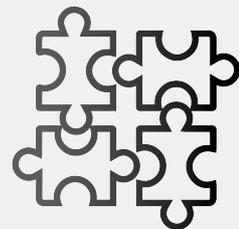
Gender



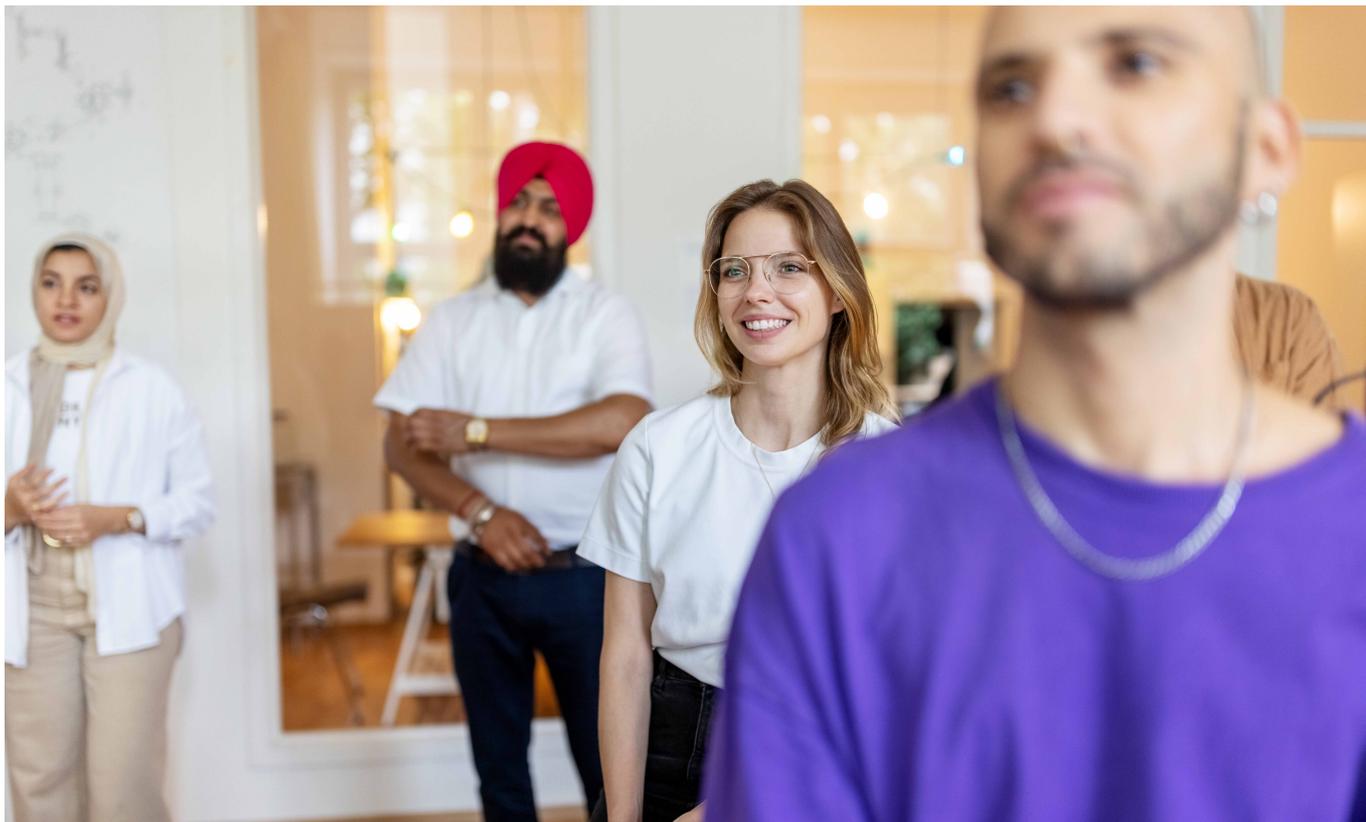
Mental health



RPC RAIN



Social mobility



Our communities aim to:

Support: Provide a valuable support and information network for our people.

Share: Act as a key awareness-raising body for our people and provide updates and information to the ESG Advisory Group (ESGAG), the DEIB/Responsible Business Team and/or the Partnership Executive (PEX), better enabling us to take an intersectional approach.

Suggest: Collaborate with ESGAG and/or the DEIB/Responsible Business Team to support the ongoing development of the ESG strategy by raising and exploring issues, concerns and ideas working constructively and openly together.

In addition to supporting our employees through our employee led Communities, we have a number of additional initiatives in place to support our employees.

- **Gender Balance Plan** – In 2019 we introduced a 15-point Gender Balance Plan – including a female representation at Partner Level target of 30% which was reached in 2022.
- **FIG** – our Female Insurance Group (established 2013) introduced ‘Boardroom Ready Programme’.
- **Springboard** – Springboard is a programme for women within the Legal and Business Service departments at the firm, at Associate Level 2 or Manager and above. It is a development programme for Women at RPC to help them to navigate any gender specific barriers to their career progression.
- **30 Percent Club Cross Organisation Mentoring programme for women** – This is for women at Associate Level 2, Senior Associate, Manager, Senior Manager, or Head of, who are mentees matched with mentors outside of RPC. It is also for Legal Directors, Partners, Of Counsel or Business Services Directors, who are mentors matched with people outside of RPC. The aim is to build the pipeline of women and create a step-change in the number of women achieving leadership roles. However, this programme also critically addresses the need for men and women to work together to advance workplace.
- **Race and Ethnicity Diversity Plan** – In 2021 we introduced our Race and Ethnicity Diversity Plan to retain, recruit and develop our ethnically diverse talent.
- **Mental Health** – in 2020 we signed up to the Mindful Business Charter and also offer on site clinical psychologist which is free to all our staff.
- **Unmind** – We are thrilled to have partnered with a new global workplace wellbeing platform. The platform offers confidential, flexible appointments with a choice of accredited therapists, across multiple time zones and in 50+ languages, as well as a suite of expert wellbeing tools rooted in neuroscience, cognitive behavioural therapy, mindfulness and positive psychology.

2023 Key Activities:

EDUCATIONAL EVENTS AND CELEBRATIONS

- Our Belief Community marked key religious and faith celebration events throughout the office with food and shared personal experiences
- We held a joint event with our client Howden, for International Day of Persons with Disabilities where we heard from the first Black, blind, female Barrister Jessikah Inaba about her inspirational journey and some of the challenges she has faced
- Launched self-defence classes across our UK offices
- International Women's Day celebrations
- Held an educational session with Dr Mukherjee on understanding menopause and introduced Menopause Cafés to provide a safe space for those going through menopause to come together
- We are thrilled to have partnered with a new global workplace wellbeing platform called Unmind. The platform offers confidential, flexible appointments with a choice of accredited therapists, across multiple time zones and in 50+ languages, as well as a suite of expert wellbeing tools rooted in neuroscience, cognitive behavioural therapy, mindfulness, and positive psychology. This platform is an exciting step in the evolution of our mental health and wellbeing support, offering tailored support for all our people across all four of our offices. Unmind is available online and through an app, so that support is readily accessible and available on demand
- We sponsored Opening Doors, a national charity that supports LGBTQ+ people over 50 during their LGBT+ History Month exhibition at the Bishopsgate Institute and their participation in London Pride Parade, whereby volunteers from RPC were able to support Opening Doors members and attend the march.
- Took part in myGwork campaigns throughout the year, including Work Pride and Trans Awareness Week panellists and providing articles from members of our RAIN Community about their personal experiences
- Celebrated Black History Month with Caribbean food provided by Black-owned business in London and Bristol
- Black History Month event with Maggie Semple and Jane Oremosu on their book, *My Little Black Book: A Blacktionalary* to talk about the importance of language
- Career Insight Days with our clients in partnership with Hope In Haringey
- In conversation with Karl Lokko on social mobility and race for Social Mobility Awareness Day
- Launched our first Bring your Child to Work day in our London Office
- Held an educational session on *Coping with Bereavement & Grief*, on how to support yourself and others

PROGRAMMES AND INITIATIVES

- We launched our first firmwide Reciprocal Mentoring Programme, with over 100 participants across the firm
- We participated in the 10,000 Black Interns initiative again this year, hosting 7 interns across both our legal teams and business services teams
- We remain a Disability Confident (Level 2) Employer
- We ranked 42nd in Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index
- We remain a Top 75 Employer in The Social Mobility Index for the 5th Consecutive Year
- School mentoring programmes in London and Bristol with Jo Richardson Community School and Oasis Academy Brislington
- Started working with *From Babies with Love*, a sustainable gifting company

TRAINING

- Launch of our Respect at Work Training
- Launch of our Mental Health & Wellbeing Champions training with Unmind

REPORTING

- Ethnicity and Gender Pay Gap Reporting
- Ecovadis – Silver Award



MEMBERSHIPS, NETWORKS AND SIGNATORIES

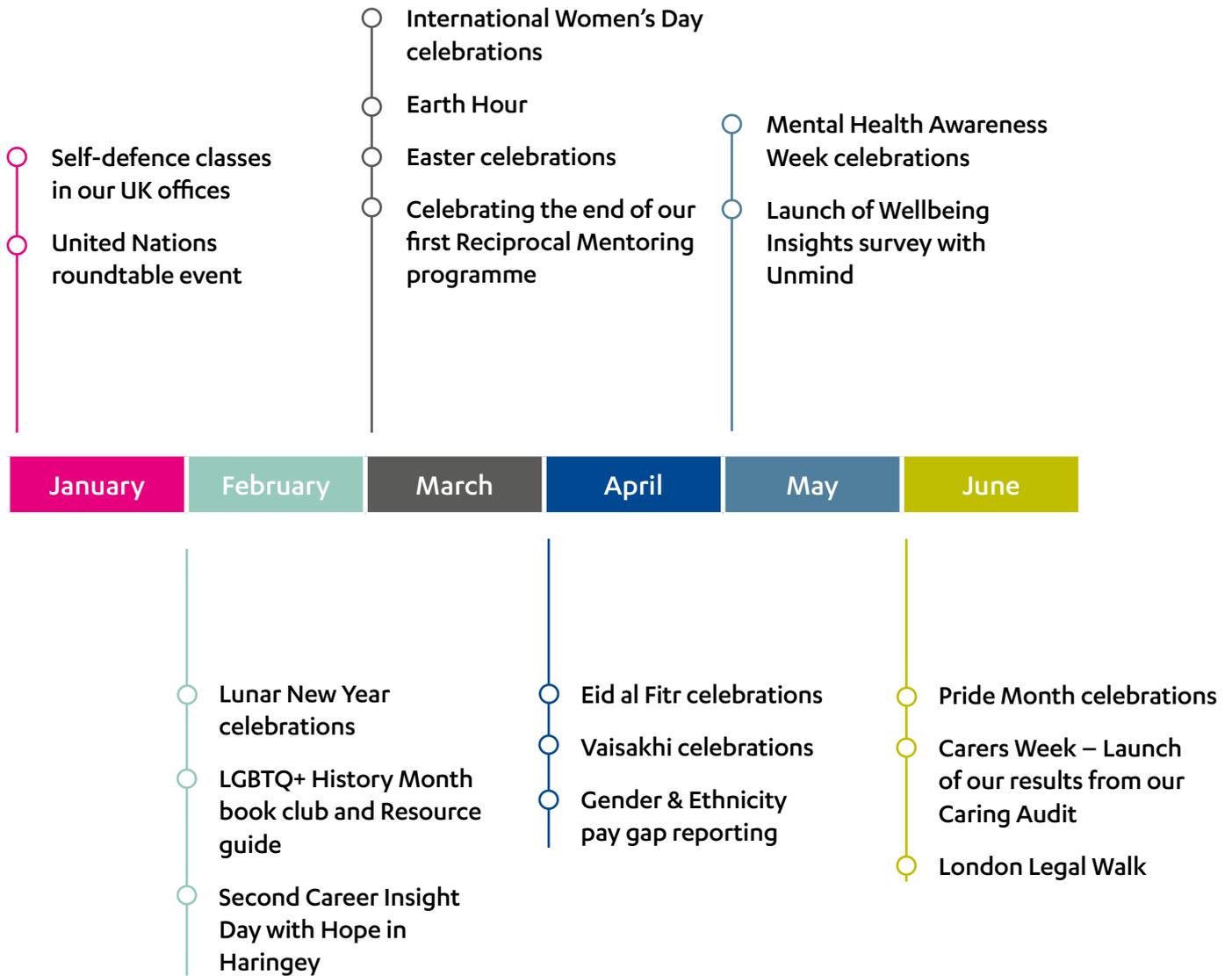
- Member of the Business Disability Forum
- Rare Race Commitment Signatory
- Mindful Business Charter Signatory
- Signatory of the Law Society's Women in Law Pledge
- Member of the City of London Law Society's Social Mobility Pledge initiative
- Race at Work Charter Signatory
- In April 2013 we launched FIG (Female Insurance Group) which now has over 450 members
- Sponsor of The Women's Insurance Network
- Supporter of LINK, the cross-market LGBTQ+ Network
- Law Society's City Law Firm Diversity and Inclusion Forum and the Legal Diversity and Inclusion Forum
- Member of the 30% club
- TerraLex Women's Global Connection Mentoring Programme
- Stonewall Diversity Champions
- Work Life Central Member
- Aspiring Solicitors Member
- Social Mobility Foundation founding member
- We have 50 mental health first aiders trained by Mental Health First Aid England
- Sponsors of the Insurance Families Network
- Sponsors of the 50 Over 50 Insurance Market Project
- Member of LegalBest (Network of LGBTQ+ Networks in the Legal Sector)
- Signatories of the Halo Code
- Signatories of the Menopause in the Workplace pledge



CLIENT ENGAGEMENT

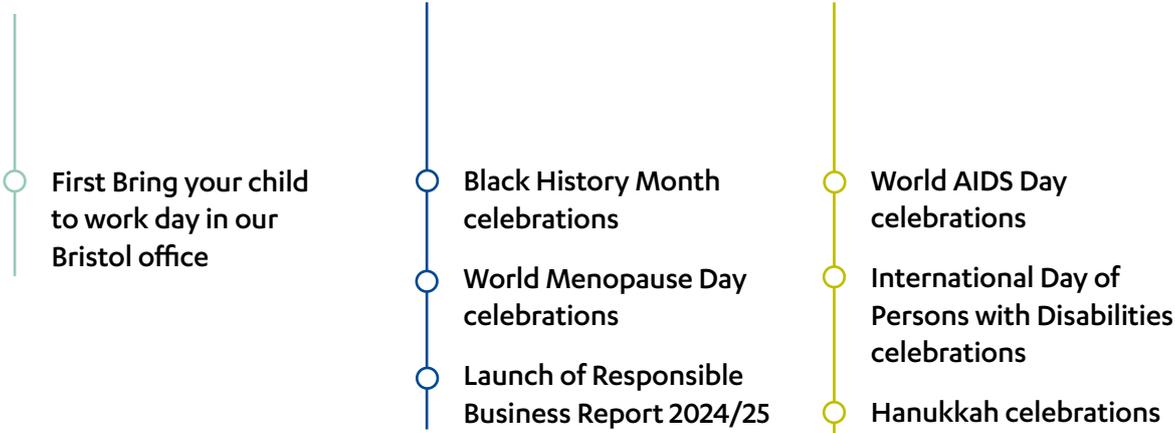
- RPC is the partner for the BRC Diversity and Inclusion Charter, a series of commitments which aims to drive change in the retail industry
- Client collaboration for International Day of Disabilities with keynote speaker Jessikah Inaba
- Social Mobility Work Experience programme with a key client
- FIG (Female Insurance Group)

2024 Key Activities:





July August September October November December



Recruitment

"We want our workplace to be one where everyone feels welcome, respected, valued and included, so they can succeed professionally and contribute fully to life at RPC. From start to finish our recruitment process is inclusive so that our people are a reflection of our communities and clients."

RACHEL STREET, RPC PEOPLE & TALENT DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

1. Recruitment Plan

- A strategic inclusive resourcing strategy in place endorsed by board.
- Resourcing led by our People team. Recruitment specialists working alongside our Head of Responsible Business and Resourcing & Early Talent Lead to ensure a fair and inclusive approach.

3. Screening and Shortlisting

- People team drive search for diverse candidate pool with agencies and direct sourcing.
- Use of Rare's Contextual Recruitment System in Early Talent recruitment process; factors in social mobility metrics to the screening process to identify top talent irrespective of socioeconomic background.
- Operate a blind recruitment process for all Early Talent programmes. Currently rolling out blind recruitment for lateral roles. The candidate's name, contact details, school and university name won't be viewed until a selection decision has been made.
- All senior roles, including recent COO and GC recruitment, have a gender balanced candidate long and short list where possible.

5. Evaluation & Employment Offer

- On Early Talent assessment days, assessors are not provided with any candidate background information.
- Candidates are assessed by four trained assessors and use a structured scoring matrix. The selection panels ('wash ups') are facilitated by the Resourcing & Early Talent Lead with reference to contextualised data (Rare Recruitment tool) as appropriate.
- For lateral recruitment, our recruitment specialists debrief with the interview panel and coach them through assessment criteria to reach a selection decision. DEIB matters are discussed and given consideration.
- Candidates are given a reasonable period of time to consider an offer and have access to RPC employees for further questions.

2. Talent Search

- Detailed job descriptions and adverts clearly setting out our commitment to welcome candidates from all backgrounds and encouraging candidates to share reasonable adjustments required during the recruitment process.
- Advertising on diverse and non-traditional recruitment sites linking to our website detailing our recruitment process, DEIB approach, credentials, communities and pledges.
- Regular agency briefings to share our DEIB priorities and commitment to seeing a diverse candidate pool.
- Specialist DEIB recruitment organisations engaged such as Rare Recruitment, Bright Network, BIUCAC, SEO London, 93% Club, MyGWork and Aspiring Solicitors.

4. Interviewing

- Typical two-stage interview process and technical test. Competency, strengths and situation-based interviews by experienced lawyers or business services professionals. Accredited verbal reasoning test where appropriate.
- Flexibility to adapt the recruitment process to accommodate individual needs. Interviewers have guidance (RPC Responsible Business factsheet) on DEIB and responsible approach to recruitment and access to learning.
- Endeavour to provide a diverse interview panel wherever possible.
- It is a two way process; we encourage questions and open dialogue throughout. We pride ourselves on providing detailed feedback to all candidates.

Early talent

We work with a number of different organisations, such as Rare, Aspiring Solicitors and SEO, to ensure we are consistently reaching and considering a more diverse range of candidates through our application and recruitment processes.

- We have used Rare's contextualised recruitment tool since 2015 to help us reach and consider more diverse candidates for our apprentice and training contract opportunities
- 42% of our UK 2023 Training Contract offers were made to Aspiring Solicitors members, and the same percentage were Rare candidates
- We currently have 10 legal apprentices (seven solicitor apprentices and three paralegal apprentices) having celebrated our fifth anniversary of running the programme this year
- In addition to our legal apprentices, we also have seven Business Services apprentices across the business
- RPC is a Partner Sponsor of The British Inter-University Commercial Awareness Competition (BIUCAC) which is designed exclusively for students from non-Russell Group universities with the aim of allowing them to showcase their talent to leading law firms
- We run an 'anonymous' recruitment service within Early Talent to ensure bias is avoided within our processes
- We have worked with Aspiring Solicitors (AS) since 2018. Aspiring Solicitors works to increase diversity in the legal profession through workshops and programmes aimed at students from underrepresented backgrounds. For the past couple of years, we have been involved in AS's 'Elevate' programme which was designed to attract, engage and develop talented Black (and mixed Black) heritage AS members in their first year of university
- We are a Corporate Sponsor of SEO, an organisation that supports and provides opportunities to students from ethnic minority or low socio-economic backgrounds. RPC offers legal and business services apprenticeships (for example, solicitor, paralegal and finance) across our UK offices. In December 2023 we'll be running an exclusive workshop for SEO members
- We work with Bright Network, a platform that connects undergraduates and graduates with employers and we take part in their Diverse Legal Leaders event every year

Online Work Experience with Forage

We work with Forage to provide online work experience for students at school, from Years 10-13, and for undergraduates. This online platform is accessible from anywhere and allows us to provide work experience opportunities outside of our office locations in the UK, reaching social mobility cold spots across the country, and providing students who might not have access to opportunities with the chance to engage with some work experience. The platform gives students the opportunity to undertake pre-set hypothetical tasks, compare their work with model answers, learn more about RPC and receive a certificate of completion at the end.

In our time working with Forage, we have had:

4,790 individuals
complete our university-level programme

Within that population
62% of students
attended a non-fee paying/state school

42% of students
were the first generation in their family
to attend university

