

Open Letter to the UK Legal Profession:

InterLaw Diversity Forum's UK Model Diversity Survey

“What gets measured, gets done.”

In order to bring about meaningful change in the UK legal sector, it is essential that we collect reliable statistics on diversity and inclusion (“**D&I**”), understand what these statistics are telling us, and support the appropriate utilisation of these statistics by identifying the most effective interventions to improve them. We need a single, reliable system to measure and benchmark this diversity and inclusion data across the UK legal profession.

The InterLaw Diversity Forum's **UK Model Diversity Survey (“UK MDS”)** provides an affordable, end-to-end solution – a seamless D&I and social mobility supplier diversity survey to assist corporates and financial institutions (“clients”) in managing their law firms and legal service providers (“participants”) for better outcomes in this space.

As Senior Advisory Board members of the InterLaw Diversity Forum's **Apollo Leadership Institute** – and as clients ourselves – we support the launch and implementation of the UK MDS.

InterLaw Diversity Forum & Apollo Leadership Institute

The **InterLaw Diversity Forum** is now in its 13th year and is the leading force for diversity, inclusion, and culture change in the UK legal sector with over 8,500 members and supporters from over 300 law firms and chambers and over 500 corporates and financial institutions. Three years ago, the InterLaw Diversity Forum launched the **Apollo Leadership Institute** for general counsel and senior in-house lawyers to support their work on diversity, inclusion, and culture, as well as their collaboration with their panel law firms and legal service providers in this area. The Institute now has over 500 general counsel and senior in-house lawyers as members. The UK MDS underpins and supports the key objectives of both organisations.



American Bar Association's Model Diversity Survey

Adapted from the American Bar Association's ("ABA") Model Diversity Survey, which is now in its fourth year, we believe that the UK MDS will provide a proven standard for law firms' reporting of their D&I and social mobility metrics to clients. We believe that the UK MDS can bring a number of benefits including data uniformity, time efficiency, and trending year over year both in aggregate and for individual firms. It should also save considerable time and effort for our law firms, reducing the extent to which data has to be recalculated, reclassified and repackaged by law firm participants in many different ways for different client requests.

Benefits of the UK Model Diversity Survey

The UK MDS will help us, as clients, to more meaningfully partner with our legal service suppliers and will create a benchmark for relationship discussions and collaboration between ourselves and our panel firms on D&I and social mobility.

We also note that the UK MDS will create significant cost savings and efficiency for law firms, eliminating the need to create reports with data calculated differently for each individual client. The more clients who join the UK MDS as signatories, the greater the benefit to law firms.

As client signatories, we entirely support this and are delighted to see that this data-driven approach has been undertaken in collaboration with the Solicitors Regulation Authority ("**SRA**"), the ABA, and Microsoft.

Bolt-Ons to the UK MDS: Diverse-Owned Legal Suppliers and the Scotland-Woolf Rule

We also note the bolt-ons that the InterLaw Diversity Forum has added to the UK MDS to further drive tangible gains in inclusion and diversity in the profession.

The **Diverse-Owned Legal Suppliers** initiative aims to encourage both client signatories and law firm participants to work with diverse-owned legal suppliers contained in a directory. These suppliers will be vetted for diverse or socially mobile ownership, as well as for their ability to supply services to top law firms, corporates and/or financial institutions. This model is inspired by, and being created with the support of, the National Association of Minority and Women Owned Law Firms ("**NAMWOLF**") in the United States.

The **Scotland-Woolf Rule** will also be introduced alongside the launch of the UK MDS. This will be an outcomes-focused, 'Rooney Rule'-inspired approach tailored for the UK legal market to support diverse hiring and promotions, particularly at senior levels where the sector is most challenged. This will include monitoring short lists, interviews, and hires across senior roles, and will be used in conjunction with the data gathered in the UK MDS to benchmark progress for law firms in this space. As clients, we feel it is particularly important to ensure that the future of our profession is truly diverse and values inclusive and diverse leadership.



Conclusion

As major purchasers of legal services in the United Kingdom we believe that the UK MDS can drive significant progress around inclusion and diversity through its unified, data-driven approach. That's why we will be foundation signatories of the UK MDS and will in turn be asking our panel law firms and legal service suppliers to participate. We will also be encouraging them to consider participation in the Scotland-Woolf Rule and the Diverse-Owned Legal Suppliers initiative.

We encourage other general counsel to follow our lead and we encourage law firms and legal suppliers to bring it to the attention of your clients.

Signed:

- **Rob Booth**, General Counsel & Company Secretary, The Crown Estate
- **David Jackson**, General Counsel, Barclays Europe
- **Ruchi Kaushal**, General Counsel, Cable & Wireless Communications
- **Chris Macfarlane**, VP Associate General Counsel, Peloton
- **Barry Matthews**, SVP General Counsel (EMEA and UK), Meggitt; Founder, Social Mobility Business Partnership; Member Board of Directors, Solicitors Regulation Authority
- **Banke Odunaike**, Head of EMEA Legal, CBRE Advisory
- **Emma Slatter**, General Counsel, Visa Europe
- **Emily Smith-Reid**, Deputy General Counsel, HSBC
- **Daniel Winterfeldt**, General Counsel – EMEA and Asia, Jefferies