

diversity & inclusion matter for everyone

**we
are.
social**

We Are Social
Charter for Change
2018 — 2021

Create more meaningful connections between brands & people by embracing differences & championing diversity.

Social media drives positive change in the world. Whether that's by bringing people together, empowering them to speak up, giving them a chance to be discovered or the freedom to belong. At its core, it presents people with opportunity.

However, social media and the creative industries are not above judgement. We're in a position of influence, and we must work hard to ensure we are meeting our responsibilities and continue to have a positive impact both in the industry and around the world.

We are committed to helping our clients connect with their audiences in meaningful ways. To do this with creativity and innovation means committing to ensuring real diversity and inclusion is at the heart of what we do at every level.

We have made great strides. However, we know we have more work to do. This charter will help us make and measure progress in the areas we have identified as priorities. It contains a set of agency commitments and goals to address all areas of our business — from our people, to our culture, to the work we produce.

1. We are committed to ensuring diversity, inclusion and equal representation in our business across all departments and levels of seniority.

Where we are:

In 2018, we ran our first agency diversity survey to help us understand who we are and identify areas for improvement.

We exceeded industry standards in several areas. Women are in 51% of roles across the business, and 47% at a leadership level [+8pp above industry average]. LGBTQ representation at 10% across the agency [+3pp above industry average], while 23% of our people come from non-British white backgrounds [+8pp higher than industry average].

Our aim:

- Increase BAME representation from 14% to 20% across the business and from 5% to 10% at leadership level (currently 16.6% at exec level) by 2021.
- Increase new joiners from BAME backgrounds from 20% to 30% by 2021.
- Increase disabled representation from 0% to 3% by 2021.

2. Social mobility is a key barrier to entry and we will address this in our hiring approach.

Where we are:

Since 2017, we've offered apprentice places across Client Services, HR and Finance, while in 2018 we launched our Creative Upstarts programme, offering placements to students based in London from low socio-economic backgrounds. Three budding individuals undertook a six-week placement, complete with rotation around all creative departments, a buddy and a mentor.

Our aim:

- We plan to increase the number of apprentices in our business from 2% to 5% by 2021, specifically looking at roles in Research & Insights, Creative and Design.
- In 2019 we're going to broaden Creative Upstarts beyond London to the rest of the UK. There is so much untapped talent across the country, who might not even know what the creative industry is. We're going to break down this barrier and do what it takes to support interested and passionate young people.

3. We understand the need not only to attract more diverse talent but also to develop and retain this talent.

Where we are:

We are committed to developing relationships and partnering with organisations such as BIMA, SheSays, Who's Your Momma and NABS to bring pioneering programmes to We Are Social that develop and retain our workforce.

Our aim:

- We are founding partners with Creative Equals on their Returners Programme, helping creative women to overcome barriers to re-entering the workplace having taken an extended amount of time out to care for their families.
- We will provide a paid placement to one of the delegates and we are supporting the rest of the programme with our experience.

4. We commit to improving equality to ensure all can work within our agency, whatever their commitments, and to addressing mental health concerns within the organisation.

Where we are:

We had the highest levels of people benefitting from formal flexible working arrangements in 2018 with 16% of people at the agency working flexible hours. These arrangements have been extended to non-parents as well as parents.

We've also committed to understanding changes within working culture, for example, people having children later in life. We offer all employees two weeks paid leave in addition to annual holiday to support during IVF treatment.

Our aim:

- We also understand the impact of increasing work pressures on people's mental wellbeing and our aim is to ensure a healthy work-life balance for all. To support in this goal we're currently training 10% of our business to become mental health first aiders to direct people to the help and resources they need.

Mental health first aiders will better support our employees during times of need.

people

1. We commit to creating work that is progressive, working with clients to ensure content and casting is inclusive.

Where we are:

In 2019, we conducted our first annual internal review of our creative output at an offsite featuring the entire creative department.

In a group discussion, we talked about how representative and inclusive a selection of pieces were, and shared what could have been better and what should be done in the future.

Our aim:

- When we want to reflect a character or storyline that features an underrepresented community we will consult with representatives from that community to develop the creative with them and conduct focus groups to test the final creative.
- We will consult with WAS offices in markets where creative will run to make sure we remain culturally sensitive and we don't presume knowledge.
- We will conduct an additional annual independent audit of our creative work to assess diversity and representation and set goals for improvements.

2. R&I and strategy teams will help to build agency understanding of how to engage diverse audiences.

Our aim:

- Both teams will incorporate more diverse research methods and community-based cultural insight in responses to briefs.
- We will partner with organisations and community groups to help us to gain deeper insights into the needs and motivations of diverse audiences.

3. Off-screen we will work to ensure equal opportunities for all in production roles, especially those from underrepresented groups.

Our aim:

- We will remove names from treatments when in front of key decision makers or clients.
- In partnership with We Are Social Studios, we will seek out and forge partnerships with wider third party suppliers who are working to bring creative talent from underrepresented groups.
- We will share our charter of values with our third party creative partners and discuss them in negotiations with future partners.
- We will carry out an evaluation of our roster of creative partners to make sure they share our values.

**We will forge
partnerships to bring
in creative talent from
underrepresented groups.**

work

Cultural sensitivity training will help us better understand each other and our backgrounds.

- 1. We will continue to invest in industry diversity benchmarking data to help us measure, track, understand, and share our performance in an open and transparent way.**

Where we are:

We partnered with the Agency Diversity Taskforce to run our first formal agency diversity survey in 2018, gathering crucial data on the makeup of our agency. We had a great 80% response to this survey, which has helped inform our diversity goals.

Our aim:

- We will continue to run the agency diversity survey annually to set benchmarks and monitor progress against workforce diversity goals.

- 2. We will invest in training to help us create a working culture where everyone feels confident they can be themselves, have their talents appreciated and be welcomed.**

Where we are:

In 2018 we ran training across the whole agency to raise awareness of unconscious bias and the impact it has on work and relationships.

Our aim:

- In 2019 we will progress with unconscious bias training by rolling it out to all new joiners and incorporating it into interview and leadership management training.
- We will also introduce cultural sensitivity training across the agency to help us better understand each other and our backgrounds.

- 3. We will create accountability for driving diversity and inclusion goals across the business by embedding targets within both senior management and team objectives.**

Our aim:

- Heads of Departments will be required to include diversity goals and ambitions in their 2019 Department Strategies so all teams across the business are thinking proactively about how they can support the diversity charter.

- 4. We will promote Diversity and Inclusion in the industry through our own agency events, the event partners we work with and the events we speak at.**

Where we are:

In 2018, we spoke regularly in the press and at industry events about issues ranging from the lack of women in AI, to the responsibilities of brands to tackle hate speech online.

We also partnered with a number of external organisations to host events championing inclusion, including She Says, the Creative Mentor Network, Day of the Girl, and InterComms.

Our aim:

- We will ensure that events we develop ourselves or speak at are representative in their speaker line-up, and will not participate in or host panels that are not.
- We will develop and publish an events code of conduct including diversity and inclusion goals. This will be referred to on speaker invites and also event invitations, and will be present on all contracts when the Townhall is being hired by external organisations.

Anti-Racism Actions: June 2020 Update

1. We will implement an ongoing education programme that informs everyone at We Are Social about different cultures, specifically Black history, our own privilege (and specifically White privilege) and the history of racial injustice.
2. We will pay for every person to attend industry events and talks that are promoting diversity, supporting Black creators and raising awareness of diversity issues.
3. We will introduce training for all staff that guides and supports them to have difficult conversations about race and diversity.
4. We commit to ensuring there is a candidate from a BAME background for every single open role in the business.
5. Every new starter in the agency will be taken through our Diversity and Inclusion goals and initiatives at their induction.
6. Delivering these actions alongside the D&I charter will be the responsibility of the UK board.
7. We will use our blog and our social channels to give more diverse voices a platform in the UK creative industry.
8. We will allow any We Are Social employee that wishes to join peaceful anti-racist marches and demonstrations to do so without it affecting their annual leave.
9. We will not work with any business that has racist or far-right views or current or recent affiliation with any racist or far-right groups or individuals. And we'll tell them that.
10. We will create a Diversity and Inclusion Code of Conduct to share with our clients and suppliers. This will detail the expectations that we have of those that wish to work with us and we will call out behaviour that doesn't align with this.

For more information contact:

peopleandculture@wearesocial.net