

**BUSINESS
IN THE
COMMUNITY**

Opportunity Now: 20th Anniversary Review

Celebrating two decades of advancing women in the workplace



**1991-
2011**



Visit our website: www.bitcdiversity.org.uk

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1991-
2011

Introduction



Twenty years ago, in 1991, a campaign to advance women in the workplace was born. It was called Opportunity 2000. Two decades on, as Opportunity Now, we continue to support and challenge employers as they seek to become more diverse and more inclusive. I firmly believe that the commercial imperative of our work has never been greater and the need for truly inclusive workplaces has never been stronger.

Opportunity 2000 was created by Business in the Community in response to a 1990 Hansard Society report entitled *Women At The Top*. The report, the result of a government taskforce led by Baroness Howe, revealed that women were grossly under-represented at the top of the UK's business and public institutions. It identified key barriers to women's equality: outdated attitudes about the role of women; direct and indirect discrimination; the absence of proper child care provision; and inflexible structures for work and careers. It also identified emerging solutions to these problems, and began to recommend best practice for employers to adopt.

Opportunity 2000, founded with 61 members and support from the then Prime Minister Rt Hon John Major MP, sought to bring together

the employers who were committed to addressing these challenges, to share success stories, better research the causes behind the barriers, and inspire a more ambitious speed of progress towards change.

Today, as Opportunity Now, we are proud to have made a difference to so many workplaces and so many women, not just because it is the right thing to do, but because it makes business sense. We ask you to join us as we continue to challenge for change and make businesses better, our economy more dynamic and our society fairer.

**Alison Platt CMG, Chair,
Opportunity Now**

**Divisional Managing Director,
Europe & North America, Bupa**

Who we are

Opportunity Now empowers employers to accelerate change for women in the workplace. We work with our membership of employers, from the private, public and education sectors to offer tailored, practical and pragmatic advice on workplace issues.

Currently working with nearly 300 employers we build and communicate the business case for diversity and inclusion, share and inspire best practice, and give employers the tools to drive change.

Opportunity Now is part of Business in the Community, a registered charity which stands for responsible business.

“Opportunity Now gives employers valuable support as they strive to become more diverse and inclusive. It has achieved a great deal for women in the workplace and will no doubt continue to play a vital role in future.”

Rt Hon Theresa May MP,
Home Secretary and Minister for Women, 2011

“Opportunity Now is undoubtedly the boldest corporate equal opportunities initiative we have yet seen.”

Rt Hon John Major MP,
Prime Minister, 1991

Our founder members: Abbey, Ashridge, Avon, Bank of England, Bank of Scotland, Barclays, BBC, BG Group, Boots The Chemist, BP, British Airways, British Railways, BT, Cabinet Office, Cadogan Management, Channel Four, CIMA, Co-Operative Bank, Coopers & Lybrand, Diageo, Digital Equipment Company, GlaxoSmithKline, Grand Met, HM Customs & Excise, HM Revenue and Customs, HSBC Bank, IBM UK, ICI, Independent, J Sainsbury, Kingfisher Group, Legal & General, London Weekend Television, Lucas Varity, Marks & Spencer, NatWest, Open University, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Reed Elsevier, Reed Executive, RHM, Royal Mail Group, Safeway Stores, Sheffield Hallam University, Shell International, Tate & Lyle, Tesco, Thames Television, Royal Bank of Scotland, Unilever, United Biscuits, Whitbread Group, WH Smith Group, Xerox, Zeneca Group, Zurich Financial Service UK Life.

How we help employers

We support our members through:

- **Access to knowledge and expertise:** Our members have access to the latest gender best practice, research, case studies, statistics and news.
- **Personal support:** Every member is allocated a named account manager who will offer specialist support and challenge your work in gender diversity.
- **Celebrate your achievements:** For many years our prestigious annual awards have celebrated outstanding practice in equality and diversity work. The high profile awards are the ideal opportunity to demonstrate and publicise your organisation's best practice, innovation and dedication to diversity and inclusion.
- **Thought leadership:** Members are invited to participate in shared research to explore current issues of diversity and inclusion. We are continually investing in research to benefit our members. We ensure you are kept abreast of new thinking by regular external news bulletins and research reports.
- **Benchmark your progress:** We offer our members use of the UK's most extensive survey on gender diversity in the workplace. These allow employers to clearly chart their progress on mainstreaming diversity and to compare their progress with other employers. Employers receive a detailed analysis of their performance and are given one-to-one advice and guidance on how to improve.
- **Inspiring and informative events:** We organise a wide range of events to inspire and inform. Events include roundtable discussion forums, best practice networking meetings and most are included as part of your membership. Events occur across the UK, and have a particular emphasis on identifying and sharing best practice.
- **Peer support and learning:** Our network of diversity practitioners and leaders is a great source of support, inspiration and learning. Joining Opportunity Now allows you to network with peers from a wide range of organisations and sectors, share ideas, experiences and challenges.

Then and Now

Progress on women's advancement over the past two decades has been rapid in some areas but painfully slow in others. Below is a summary of how far we have come¹:

The workplace in 1990	The workplace in 2010
Women's employment rate was 66%	Women's employment rate is 69%
The full-time hourly gender pay gap was 22%	The full time hourly gender pay gap is 15.5%
9% of the total female workforce worked in managerial roles	11% of the total female workforce is in managerial roles
Women made up only 2% of board directors	14.2% of FTSE 100 directors are women and listed companies are required to report annually on their boardroom diversity policy, including gender, and on any measurable objectives that the board has set for implementing the policy and the progress it had made in achieving the objectives
Only 6% of Members of Parliament were women	22% of Members of Parliament are women
13% of Peers in House of Lords were women	20% of Peers are women
5% of senior civil servants were women	36% of senior civil servants are women
Most FTSE 100 companies offered between 1 and 5 days paternity leave	Two weeks paid paternity leave is a statutory requirement and the government is consulting on measures to increase shared parenting
Around 2500 job-sharing opportunities existed, mostly in junior roles in the public sector	75% of our employers offer 9 or more types of flexible working, and the Government is intending to extend the right to request flexible working to all

¹ All 1990 statistics taken from The Report of The Hansard Society Commission on Women at the Top, 1990. All 2011 statistics taken from the Equality And Human Rights Commission and the 2010 Opportunity Now Benchmarking Survey.

Twenty years of progress

One woman's story – Naeema Choudhury, Partner, Eversheds

“When I entered the corporate world in the early nineties, starting at the bottom of the ladder as a trainee solicitor, the office was a very different environment from how it is today. Then, only around a third of those awarded a legal training contract were women. Today, more than half of trainees are women, a symbol that firms are keen to diversify the pipeline of talent that will feed their future leadership teams. Then, elements of macho culture were still pervasive. Now, law firms have embraced the idea that an inclusive culture leads to more motivated employees. Today, there are more diverse role models for incoming trainees to look up to; they are able to see women like myself among the highest billing partners in my practice group, despite having taken two maternity breaks to

welcome my two young boys to the world. Then, the pay gap between men and women in the legal sector was still extreme; today, firms like mine are leading the way in creating a transparent culture around pay and voluntarily reporting our pay gap in the public domain. It has long been the case that long hours are deemed essential for those who want to progress in law, but expectations are slowly changing. Today's generation of trainee solicitors want their workplace to work for them, as well as for them to work for their workplace. The future is likely to see the sector become yet more agile. The pressure to modernise has come not only from our recruits but from our corporate clients, who are increasingly keen to work with firms who can demonstrate their diversity and evidence a healthy working environment. If this continues the speed of change may shift a gear, which we would welcome.”

Twenty years of progress

One member's story – BT, Founder Member and Corporate Champion

“BT has been committed to being a beacon for equality, diversity and inclusion for several generations. Our support for Opportunity 2000 when it launched in 1991 was symptomatic of an existing movement within the company towards an innovative and forward thinking diversity strategy which is embraced as an organisational priority, from our leadership teams to our frontline services. There are a number of areas in which we have led the way as a diversity-proud company. We are committed to addressing occupational segregation, and our programmes to attract more women into our engineering roles have been widely looked to as best practice, working with schools, recruitment companies and the media to change the masculinised perceptions of telecoms engineering. We are innovators in flexible working, and recognise the economic, environmental and societal benefits which can be harnessed by becoming a truly mobile, agile workforce. In 1992, the year after Opportunity 2000 formed, we piloted the first home-working call centre,

with 11 operators taking 750,000 calls in a year from the comfort of their own living rooms, in what came to be known as “the Inverness experiment”. Today we have in excess of 63,000 flexible workers, across many areas of our business, and know that this flexibility enhances loyalty, performance and efficiency. We have also been advocates of supplier diversity for many years, working to include minority-run companies in our supply chain, recruitment from hard to reach communities, and sponsor organisations and projects which include those communities. The role we have played nationally in supplier diversity has helped bring about significant changes in the way public bodies procure goods and services from the private sector. Opportunity Now has supported and challenged us throughout our work on inclusion, has recognised and rewarded our achievements, and encouraged us to act as a beacon company for others at earlier stages of their diversity journey. It is by working with organisations like Opportunity Now that we can be sure our practices remain at the cutting edge, and that we continue to improve the opportunities and experiences of our female staff, clients, and partners.”

Our business case

Opportunity Now has always argued that achieving gender diversity and inclusion in the workplace is not just the right thing to do, but also a business imperative. Here are some of the factors which comprise the business case for change.

Women have the leadership skills needed for the future. Women are more likely to balance risk, engage employees, and lead by example.

Diverse teams mean diverse solutions. Homogenous teams are less innovative.

Women drive consumer choice as key decision makers. Women's purchasing power is increasing.

Inclusion and flexibility can save money via increased retention, reduced absenteeism, lower overheads and reduced legal costs.

New ways of working help reach diverse client bases, fast growing and emerging markets, helping you do more with less.

Women's potential is under-used. Half of women work in low-paid, part-time jobs beneath their potential.²

Inclusive leadership increases employee motivation, loyalty and productivity.

"Women and equal opportunities must be seen as a mainstream business issue- nothing less than permeation into the veins of organisations is required."

Baroness Howe, 1991

² UK Women And Work Commission Report, 2006

Our model for creating cultural change

Opportunity Now's approach to advancing women in the workplace is based upon the change model of motivate, act, impact. This underpins all our research, best practice, benchmarking and recommendations.

Motivate is about an organisation developing their own business case for why they are committed to gender equality and inclusion. This could be because they see the commercial business benefits of a diverse workforce, with the innovation and ideas that they bring, or because they recognise the value of understanding the diversity of their people to achieve greater engagement.

Act looks at the integration of gender diversity and inclusion into everyday organisational life, including whether dedicated resources are available to support diversity work, whether the equality agenda has senior commitment, and whether there is board level accountability for the success of actions taken to achieve change.

Impact examines how the impact of action is measured, monitored, reported and learnt from, in the expectation that the learning from measuring impact informs the business case and helps determine future actions.

In 2011 Opportunity Now members employed over three million people in the UK, meaning our campaign reaches over ten percent of the total UK workforce

Our Achievements: A History

October 1991 – Official launch of Opportunity 2000, with 61 founder members, Chaired by Baroness Howe and supported by then Prime Minister, Rt Hon John Major MP. The employers publicly committed to specific goals and action plans to increase the number of women at all levels in their organisations by the year 2000.



October 1995 – First National Women's Day with speeches from The Queen and Howard Davies, then Chancellor of The Bank of England.

February 2002 – *Sticky Floors and Cement Ceilings – Research on Women in Non-Managerial Roles in the UK* – was published, looking at why women predominate in lower paid, low status roles.



November 2000 – *Breaking the Glass Ceiling: Women In Senior Management* report launched, recommending shared responsibility for gender equality.



October 2004 – *Making Good Connections* research launched, exploring how to use corporate women's networks effectively.



June 2005 – Carolyn McCall, CEO of Guardian Media Group, launches Opportunity Now.

May 2009 – Alison Platt of Bupa appointed Chair of Opportunity Now



January 2009 – *Responsibility: How to Survive And Thrive* published against backdrop of recession



June 2010 – *Out Of Office – Building Teams For An Agile Future* research explores embedding flexible working practices through a lens of agility



October 2010 – Opportunity Now named in *Top 50 Employers For Women* by The Times newspaper

"We will go on for as long as members think it is useful. A lot has been achieved. In companies affiliated to Opportunity Now there are significantly more women managers than the UK average."

Clara Freeman OBE, Chair of Opportunity Now, 1998-2005

ational Awards Dinner
Rt. Hon Tony Blair MP
n Deputy Governor of



November 1997 – first Opportunity Now Benchmarking Survey launched, allowing members to fully compare their progress against their peers.



ing The Barriers –
ement In The UK
ending board-level
equality.



Spring 1998 – Cherie Booth QC becomes Patron of the Opportunity Now Awards; Clara Freeman, first woman on the board of Marks & Spencers, becomes Chair of the campaign.

Call, then CEO of
appointed as Chair of



Spring 2007 – Opportunity Now website launched, a major portal for research, news, statistics and best practice.



sible Workplace: How
ublished against the



February 2008 – HRH Prince of Wales hosts a Clarence House event to celebrate Opportunity Now's achievements

inity Now launches *The
omen* in association with



September 2011 – *Inclusive Leadership – From Pioneer To Mainstream* research launched at major conference



November 2011 – Twentieth Anniversary reception held in House of Commons hosted by Rt Hon Theresa May MP

Shared successes

PepsiCo – An Agile Workforce

PepsiCo devised a large scale campaign to mainstream flexible working practices, called 'The Dinner isn't in the Dog!'. Under the brand of FlexiCo, flexible working options were proactively introduced to all office based roles and included the option to work compressed hours during June to September and December; options to work from home on a regular basis; and shift-swap and rota flexibility measures for those roles which do not lend themselves to remote working. Now over 1000 work from home and 40% more staff view PepsiCo as a great employer for work/life balance.

BAE Systems – Skills For The Future

BAE Systems recognises that it is a stronger and higher performing organisation with increased diversity. Skills 2020 is designed to support BAE Systems in attracting young, female talent into science and engineering to improve the pipeline of future candidates for employment. Elements of the strategy include a network of schools linked to BAE Systems UK sites; ambassador programmes linking employees to

curriculum delivery in those schools; a website for young people, teachers, parents and employees offering a wealth of material on choosing STEM routes; a School Roadshow programme including exciting theatre performances and practical workshops; and numerous work experience opportunities.

Barclays PLC – Women's Initiative Networks

Barclays has women's initiative networks in most of its business units, globally. In the UK there are 3000+ members. These networks are run as mainstream programmes with business plans, identified objectives, monitoring mechanisms and job descriptions and all have allocated budgets in place. WiN Chairs are top performing, inspirational women who volunteer to drive and direct WiN. Results include improving female client experience, reshaping female private banker recruitment, and increased staff maternity benefits.

Cisco – An Inclusive Culture

Cisco became concerned that its work on inclusion was seen as most relevant to minority groups within the company, and that a proactive approach from the majority was not a requirement. Their More Together strategy was developed to engage the majority within the organisation to be inclusive and drive lasting cultural change. Inclusion and diversity objectives are now part of all employees' annual performance appraisals, and over 200 managers have participated in an interactive 'Minds Wide Open' training sessions, during which participants explore techniques around managing biases and positive outcomes.

PWC & Ministry Of Justice – Co-Coaching

PricewaterhouseCoopers and the Ministry of Justice piloted a cross-sector co-coaching initiative that enabled women managers from business consultancy and the civil service to gain insight into each other's professions whilst also developing their skills as a mentee and mentor. Paired couples set their own goals and co-coached over 12 months. The scheme was so successful it was subsequently rolled out to a wider circle of public and private sector employers.

Tesco – Pay Transparency

Tesco regularly calculate the pay gap between men and women in their workforce and report this to their board. They also publish their pay gap clearly on their website, in line with the voluntary pay transparency initiatives that were promoted following the Equality Act 2010. Tesco's pay gap between men and women is currently only 2%, compared to 15.5% nationwide.

University of Sheffield – Women Returners

The University introduced a Women Academic Returners scheme to address the negative impact of extended leave for maternity or carer reasons on academic/research career progression for women, particularly in science and medicine. Women academics can apply for up to £15,000 for additional staffing cover to support them in maintaining their research activity/profile during periods of absence. In addition to helping to maintain the female academic's career profile, 63% of support staff hired were female, create new employment opportunities for women.

Insights from Opportunity Now

“Both men and women favour greater representation of women on company boards. 97% of men and women believe there are serious barriers preventing women’s equality at work.”

Opportunity Now
poll, 1993

“Male Chief Executive Officers are more than twice as likely as senior women to believe that opportunities for women to advance in their organisations have greatly improved compared to five years ago.”

Breaking The Barriers – Women
In Senior Management In
The UK, 2000

“The main challenges for women’s networks are around sustainability, activities, and corporate culture.”

Making Good Connections –
Best Practice For Women’s
Corporate Networks,
2004

“Equality makes a significant difference across two central areas to business excellence and the bottom line: effectiveness and cost.”

Equality and Excellence:
The Business Case,
2001

82% of women recognise women having to balance work and family as a barrier to their progression, but just 54% of men recognise this. 57% of women recognise women being seen as less committed to work because they often have family commitments as a barrier, yet just 20% of men perceive it to be.”

What Holds Women Back? Women
& Men’s Perceptions Of
The Barriers To Women’s
Progression, 2011

“Knowledge workers account for about 42% of all employment in the UK – up from 31% in 1984 and are expected to account for 45% of all workers in 2014.”

Tomorrow's Workplace,
2009

“Team members who work remotely away from the office, be it on a regular or ad hoc basis, are more likely to take a positive view of all aspects of communication, respect and management style.”

Out of Office – Building
Teams for An Agile
Future, 2010

“Opportunity Now member companies are outperforming their contemporaries. Women account for 31% of managers among our members as opposed to 11% of UK managers as a whole.”

Opportunity Now poll,
1995

“84% of employees reported that an inclusive leader had made them feel more motivated; 81% stated that an inclusive leader improved their performance and productivity; and 81% said that a leader with an inclusive style motivated them to go the extra mile beyond their day to day role.”

Inclusive Leadership –
From Pioneer To
Mainstream, 2011

“Domestic violence can affect businesses in a number of ways including increased stress, increased absence, reduced productivity and even violence in the workplace.”

Domestic Violence and
the Workplace – A Good
Practice Guide For
Employers, 2002

- In 1998, just 19% of Opportunity Now members had a business case in place. By 2010 this was 87%.
- In 1998, only 50% of members had identifiable budget for achieving gender equality, diversity & inclusion. By 2010 this was 84%.
- In 1998, 80% of members had board level responsibility for achieving diversity goals. By 2010 this was 96%.
- In 1998, 16% of the boards of Opportunity Now members were female. By 2010 this was 23%.

Next steps:

campaigning for change

Opportunity Now's current campaigns are for balanced boards, equal pay and flexible working.

In 2011 we undertook a significant piece of research which explored the commercial imperative of a more inclusive leadership style, it defined what inclusive leadership is and gave employers a practical and strategic route-map to embed this style of leadership in their organisations.

We believe that creating leaders who are better able to manage, motivate and empower diverse teams will create wider cultural change and help achieve our campaign objectives of balanced boards, equal pay and more agile and flexible organisations.

Balanced boards

Women make up 14.2% of FTSE 100 boards up from 9% in 1999. The gender mix of boards is the signal measure of gender equality and leadership in the world of business. It is the "tip of the iceberg" indicating the likely equality of career progression at management levels below the

board and offering insight into how organisations manage their talent pipeline further down the organisation.

Boardrooms need to promote independent thought, facilitate debate and encourage informed discussion in order to ensure that organisations are equipped to anticipate problems, identify risks and deal with the changing and challenging landscape. Evidence shows that inclusive and diverse boards are better boards. They are better able to understand their customers and stakeholders. They benefit from broader perspectives, new ideas, vigorous challenge which in turn leads to better and more robust decision making.

For 20 years we have advocated the need to set targets and are delighted that in 2011 the UK Code for Corporate Governance was amended to require organisations to set public targets for the number of women on their board and report on action and progress.

*"The current figures are simply not good enough.
Only 14% of FTSE 100 company directors are women.
We should do far better."*

Rt Hon David Cameron MP, Prime Minister, September 2011

Opportunity Now members have more balanced boards than the corporate average. Our members work with us to share good practice and set internal targets. Two decades of leadership by our members has been good for UK plc, but insufficient; we now campaign for:

- All board positions to be advertised externally.
- All board nomination committees to be balanced.
- Women to make up 50% of all new appointments to the boards of public bodies by the end of this parliament, and for all public boards to be balanced by 2020.
- Organisations to expressly monitor and manage their talent pipelines with due regard to gender.

We ask that Opportunity Now members commit to:

- Set a public target to increase the diversity of their board and report on progress in the public domain
- Advertise all board positions externally and have balanced nomination committees by 2012.
- Identify areas, (i.e. within the management pipeline) and functions within their organisation where women are underrepresented compared with the norm and set targets to better balance women's representation.



“Opportunity Now has transformed the way that businesses approach gender diversity. 20 years ago gender equality was not considered a business issue. Thanks to the efforts of Opportunity Now, amongst others, this has changed. By building a compelling commercial case, engaging senior leaders and continually shining a light on best practice, Opportunity Now has had a significant positive impact on the opportunities for women in the workplace. Over the past twenty years the campaign has gone from strength to strength and has always challenged employers to deliver in as innovative a way as possible. I was very proud to Chair Opportunity Now and strongly believe that if employers collaborate and share expertise we will be better able to create work cultures which empower women to succeed and that to me makes perfect business sense.”
Carolyn McCall, CEO of EasyJet, and Chair of Opportunity Now from 2005 to 2009

Equal pay

The mean full time gender pay gap between men and women is 15.5% for hourly earnings, and 26.1% for annual earnings. At current rates of progress it may close by 2085. Pay inequality in an organisation provides a key indicator of both structural and cultural barriers to equality and diversity. Unequal pay contributes to women’s poverty in work and retirement and adversely affects their partners and children; in campaigning for equal pay, Opportunity Now and its members seek to create public benefit beyond the benefit to business. We were delighted to help develop a voluntary gender equality reporting framework which Theresa May launched in 2011.

We ask that Opportunity Now members commit to:

- Conduct an equal pay audit by 2014 and put the results of the pay audit in the public domain by 2016.
- Adopt equal pay best practice, not just as a workplace entitlement, but as a mechanism to create a fairer and more equal society. Such best practice would include corrective and preventative action and robust pay processes such as job evaluation, transparent bonus systems and training for those involved in pay decisions.

Flexible and Agile Working

Increasing women's participation in the labour market could be worth between £15 and £23 billion pounds or 1.3 to 2.0 per cent of GDP. Flexible working arrangements are the key means to keep people in work at times when they must also manage non-work calls on their time.

Flexible working risks becoming a new form of segregation, a "Mummy Track", or an option available only to people less able to participate in traditional ways of work. In fact it allows businesses to retain the talents of any employee through periods of change in their lives. Flexible working also keeps people in work who may otherwise become unemployed and so reduces poverty and social exclusion. It should therefore become a key, mainstream business imperative and not be seen as a fringe "women's issue".

Opportunity Now has campaigned for legislation to enact the government's commitment to extend the right to request flexible working to all employees and fully supports this direction of travel.

We ask that Opportunity Now members commit to:

- Extend the right to request flexible working options to all employees by 2012.
- Embed agile and flexible working practices at all levels and in all areas of their organisation, particularly at management and senior leadership levels.
- Monitor the progression and pay of those with flexible working patterns and address any anomalies.



Thank you



Opportunity Now could not continue to transform the role of women in the UK's workplaces without the generous support of our members, partners, champions and friends.

We thank our Chair, Alison Platt, for the passion, energy and determination with which she heads our campaign. She truly is an inspiring leader.

We thank our Advisory Board for their time, their talent, and their strategic insight, which helps drive us forward, always seeing the bigger picture.

We thank their predecessors for having the vision and ambition to establish our campaign, not just because it was the right thing to do, but because it made business sense.

We thank the many policy makers, academics, gender experts and equality campaigners we work alongside for recognising our role and helping us achieve more together.

Finally, we thank our members, for their support, for their participation, and their commitment to always go further and do better, no matter what stage of the journey they are on.

We look forward to continuing to work with you all to realise our goals.

**Helen Wells, Director,
Opportunity Now**

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Alison Platt CMG

Divisional Managing Director,
Europe & North America
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