

1 - Debbie Forster

Welcome, everyone. I'm now in the room, you're in the room, and you're wondering if we're going to make it through this afternoon. It's a busy time of year. And it has been a crazy couple of weeks. Thank you for taking the time to join us, to be part of the festival. Whatever else is going on outside in the world, this is about trying to focus on EDI, to make sure that you can drive things forward in your company. We are the Tech Talent Charter, and what we try to do is to focus on the practical. What we want to do, across the first two days, is to really unpack what we've learned from our report, and really even go deeper. So we'll start off at the helicopter, and we're gonna then go deep dive, to understand what is working. If you are trying to drive inclusion, diversity, equity, within your organisation. I make no apologies if you come to an event at the Tech Talent Charter, that we preach to the choir, you're here because you're in the choir, and you want to sing better. So what we'll do, across the two days, is start at the helicopter, look at the report understand what's going on. We'll then go into hearing from our employers, what's working, what's not working, whether that be gathering and using data, thinking about how we can grow and really move into leadership and management, or under-represented groups. How are we making hybrid working work, from a DNI perspective. We'll think about, what are we doing in terms of alternate routes into tech. And how can we go deeper, wider, we began just with gender back in 2017. But you told us, you wanted to think about inclusion, in its fullest sense. And each year, we've worked with you to push that horizon farther. And so in the last session, we'll be looking at what our companies are doing, to think about what we're calling, the invisible lenses. Those things that we've not felt that we could lean into, to make sure that everyone feels they are in the room, a part, have a voice, so that we are making tech for everyone, making sure everyone has part of making that. So thank you for joining us. Now if we were in the 3D world, and this was the real world, I would then do the, this is where the emergency exits are, this is where the loos are. So what I'm going to do is, walk you through the screen that you have in front of you today. So if you look within this little orange screen, you should go down, and you can see a gear. Alright, and if you can see the gearbox, you can tweak, you can go up to high def, why would you not want to know how many freckles I have on my forehead, think about that view. More importantly, what I'd love for you to do, is to ask us questions throughout our sessions, as much as we can do, we're online, but we'd like to keep this interactive. So drop those questions throughout, we'll bring those through, and whenever we have panels, we'll try and get to those. If, as I'm referring to the report, you think, wait, there's a report, I'd like to learn more. If you scroll down the screen that you're on right now, you will find that you can download, have a look at what our report is saying. If you've only signed up for one session, and why would you, and you really want to hear what's happening later today for our afternoon cuppa, or tomorrow, you can still sign up for the sessions. We'd love for you to share what we're doing on social. And if you're not already a Tech Talent Charter signatory, I'd love to have you join us. It's free to join, and this is that, put something that puts you in the room, with people who are wanting to really drive DEI, within their companies. So that's the screen, that's the logistics. At the end of this session, we'll make sure that we ask you, how did we do, aside from the start of the morning, or the start of the session, where you couldn't actually hear me. So we'd love to send you feedback forms, they'll be ever so quick. Also, if you're like me, I tend to log on to one of these events, leave it going

in the background. Once it's going in the background, you can leave it going, because we've got some little tasters, top tips, excerpts from some of our best events in the last year. So we can spend the rest of the afternoon with you, until you join us for the afternoon cuppa. That's the last thing, I guess the only tech hitch I've been told, over the last few days, as well as my joys with sound, my internet's not always what it could be. So I'll go a little bit hazy, don't worry, I'm still here. My team would tell you, it's probably I am actually hazy and just need some more caffeine. So I'll just keep loading up a little bit here. Some of you may have noticed the last 12 months have been a bit tough. And what's been really pleasing, is although it's tough, you as our signatories, widely, have worked with us, to keep driving forward, with the DEI, across the space. So we thought we'd kick off, with letting you have a look back on what's been the last 12 months at the Tech Talent Charter.

2 - Debbie Forster (After the Video)

And there you have it, we have been busy the last 12 months. And thank you so much, to our principal partners and our sponsors, who've been with us every step of the way. We'll talk a little later this evening, hearing from Beasley, who are our headline sponsors for the event today. But also thinking about our sponsors. We have HP, we have Lloyds Banking Group, we have PWC, nominate and global, organisations, who have not just been signatories, but who've leaned in, to make sure that what we do is free to everyone. One of those partners that I mentioned is the DCMS. Since we started, back in 2017, the DCMS has been there, every step of the way, investing in us, recommending us to companies. So I'm really pleased to be able to have the Right Honourable, Nadine Dorries, who is the Secretary of State, for digital. Who recorded something earlier for us, that she wanted to share.

3 - Nadine Dorries

I'm delighted to be part of today's event. Particularly, as one of my main missions, as digital secretary, is to open the doors of tech to new faces. The Tech Talent Charter, is an important part of that work. And their diversity in tech report, gives us a real insight into what's happening in tech companies, up and down the country. We know that UK Tech is absolutely booming right now, with yet another record setting year of investment in 2021. But I want to make sure that everyone benefits from tech success, that the industries record breaking growth, is evenly spread, across the entire UK, and that people can get involved, no matter who they are or where they came from. This year's report has shown, yet again, that we need the right data to drive change. Collecting information on the tech workforce, gives us the knowledge to know where and how we need to act. And by being a member of the Tech Talent Charter, organisations are a vital part of that process. The joint effort of signatories, effectively means, that we are now statistically reporting on about 16% of the UK tech workforce. But the report also makes clear, that one of the biggest challenges facing UK Tech right now, is the digital skills gap. We've got the jobs and now we need to give people the right skills to fill them, while increasing diversity as we do so. The government is doing lots of things right now to build the workforce of the future. We've announced university conversion courses in Data Science and AI. And we've launched local digital skills partnerships, in eight regions across England, to help increase digital skills capabilities across the country, and build thriving regional tech hubs across the UK. This is one of our central priorities, in the coming months and years. We also need to keep collecting the right data, so that we can keep an eye

on what's actually happening on the ground. I was very interested to see that only 14% of organisations, involved in this year's report, provided information about their employees socio economic background. As I said, my main mission is to open up UK Tech to new faces, particularly those from under-privileged backgrounds. As someone who grew up in the council estate in Liverpool, this is an issue very close to my heart. So I want to take this opportunity to make my own call for action, and to ask every single organisation, to step up their efforts in this space, whether it's collecting data, or considering how they can improve accessibility, to people from lower socio economic backgrounds. The Tech Talent Charter is doing great work. And I'm looking forward to seeing what can be achieved this year, thank you.

4 - Debbie Forster

Thanks very much to the Secretary of State for that. So as she said, data has been at the very heart of the foundation of what we do. For those of you who are signatories, you know, there was no cost to join, but the one thing that you do have to do is, you have to share your data with us every September. And we take that and we work with that data, to turn it into our annual report, which was published last week, if you haven't had a chance to look, that link is down below. To find out a little bit more, we wanted to do a deep dive. So I'd like you to join me, as we talk to our panel about what the report told us about the last 12 months in EDI.

5 - Debbie Forster

Welcome, it's lovely to see faces. I wish so much we could be doing this in 3D and I could hug you before and after, in a socially distance, tested sort of way, of course. Thank you for joining us. For the audience, they will not necessarily have met you all before. So I would love it if you did, what I call, my micro introductions. You have 30 seconds, or less, to introduce yourself. Jacqueline, will you kick us off, please.

6 - Jacqueline de Rojas CBE

Sure, hello, thank you for having me. My name is Jacqueline De Rojas, as president of techUK, and an advocate for diversity and inclusion, I absolutely believe that we stand on the shoulders of giants and I love International Women's Day events.

7 - Debbie Forster

Lovely, thank you so much, Jacqueline. And you've been with us since the earliest days, and before we were even properly a thing. Edleen, would you like to introduce yourself?

8 - Edleen John

Sure, hello, everybody. I'm Edleen, I am a TTC director, which is a role that I hold with great pride. So I've been working with Debbie, Lexie and the team for a while now. But in my other day job, I also work for the Football Association, as the international relations, corporate affairs and equality, diversity and inclusion director So really passionate about all things in this space, and looking forward to a good discussion.

9 - Debbie Forster

And last, but not least, Lexie.

10 - Lexie Papaspyrou

Hi, folks, I'm Lexie Papaspyrou. I'm the Chief Operating Officer, of the Tech Talent Charter. And for the last three years, I have collected the data and produced the annual reports on diversity in tech.

11 - Debbie Forster

Brilliant. All right, so Lexie, as the person who, for us on the team, has wrestled with this data for years, and over the last six months you have lived and breathed the data for the report, can you walk me through the headlines?

12 - Lexi Papaspyrou

Sure, so a little bit about, I guess, this sample, and I think some of it, you'll have seen in the video, that we just showed. This data set, that we've collected, comes from 580 UK organisations, that have some sort of digital need or footprint in the digital economy. There's 70 unique industries, represented in our data set. And it accounts for, close to 200,000 tech employees, in the UK. When we look across the data set, it's obviously very broad. But some of the top headlines we have, are that, when we look at gender diversity, across that tech workforce, gender minorities are coming in at about 27%, of that sample. And then when we look across ethnicity, what we're seeing is, compared to the UK benchmark at least, some pretty favourable numbers, there as well. So 20% of the sample, that we've measured here, are from ethnic minority backgrounds, and that compares to a 16% control figure.

13 - Debbie Forster

Can I interject there, because I think that's really powerful, Lexie, to think about. We've finally grown enough, where we are statistically significant. This is comparable with the ONS data, isn't it? Pleasing to hear, that each year, as signatures, we've moved ahead, and stayed ahead of the UK curve. But this is the first time that we've looked at that ethnicity. So these are, by no means, where we want to end up, and we'll be talking later, particularly on leadership and management. But these are positive stats in that respect, aren't they?

14 - Lexi Papaspyrou

Yeah, they definitely are. What I think we're seeing, and we've said this before, the organisations that are part of the Tech Talent Charter, are forward leaning organisations, that are driving change in the UK economy. And so, of the converted, of the people who care about this issue area, and are leaning into it, we are seeing that these are positive diversity stats, compared to a UK benchmark. And that's exactly what we'd expect to see. Obviously, we're not expecting to see huge swings from one year to the next. And that's exactly what we're seeing here. So last year, when we collected this data sample, from again, a very similar company demographic, I guess, this was a 25% figure for gender. And to your point about ethnicity, ethnicity was an optional set of data, from last year, where only 45% of signatories were able to report. This year, obviously, we've made that mandatory. So we've got a much bigger data set around ethnicity. And we are seeing positive figures, by and large,

15 - Debbie Forster

Good, so no reason for complacency. But some good news, things that we can please, particularly after the last two years. What did you find, in terms of, because this was also the first year we were able to really

lean in and ask questions about what works, what are you doing that is making that impact? What did we learn when we asked that question?

16 - Lexi Papaspyrou

This year was a really rich dataset. And it's the first year where we actually directly asked companies, what is your secret sauce? What is working well, when it comes to diversity and inclusion. And we have this huge wealth of data now and quite quantitative and descriptive data, around what companies are saying is working well for them. And there are a couple of key themes, that emerge from that data. So some of the biggest things, that are coming up, are investment in DNI data systems. That's a really interesting one, because it's come up across the board. But we are in a position, where we can disaggregate and segment this data, rather, by top performers, in ethnic diversity, and in gender diversity, and in size. So we can segment this data, in lots of different ways. And one of, I think the interesting nuances, is that when it comes to data collection, that has been a much more prominent intervention, that's been reported for organisations that are really excelling, around ethnic diversity. It's not necessarily the same across gender. So we're starting to be able to pull out these nuances, around what companies are doing, dependent on what their focus or success area is.

17 - Debbie Forster

And it's great, because in the report, we've been able to do the top 10 interventions, when we're looking at gender, when we're looking at ethnicity, or we're looking at it as a whole piece. So it's a different game space, I think that we're working on that. Now, that's telling us the good news. What are we hearing, in terms of challenges? What are the big pain points still, for companies in this space?

18 - Lexi Papaspyrou

I don't think it will surprise anyone to hear, that the biggest thing that's been reported, across the board, is difficulties with hiring diverse talent, amidst a tech talent shortage. So that came up as the top challenge, across all of the signatory surveyed. A close second, was around diversity in senior positions, which I guess could be seen as a linked issue. It's this idea, we're going on comments around things like, the gender pay gap, and how do we promote into senior roles. So there's a broader cluster of challenges around, not just focusing on diversity, in junior and mid roles. The third thing that came up, is a thing around challenges with obtaining and analysing data. Data seems to be coming up, both from the intervention side of things, and also from the challenges point of view as well. Companies are struggling with it and companies are finding that when they manage to find a way to collect and analyse data, around diversity, it is proving to be very impactful.

19 - Debbie Forster

For those of us behind the scenes, though, I do see this as a victory of sorts. Five years ago, you've got to remember, that was the first year of gender data reporting. And this was, in terms of the gender pay, that sort of, ripped the plaster off, didn't it? In terms of company actually accepting, that they needed to start doing data. So from the early days, that really urging companies to gather data, to share data, now to look forward, and companies are seeing that data is at the heart of what works, and the challenge that they're looking for, seems positive. But what about skills? We've not really thought about skills in that space and that talent gap, although we're making progress on DEI, we need more

tech, that talent gap hasn't stopped. So what did we learn from the report, in terms of skills?

20 - Lexi Papaspyrou

Yeah, that's a really interesting one. Off of the back of the fact that most signatories, the biggest group of signatories said that, attracting the best talent, amidst the tech talent shortage, was a big issue. We also asked signatories, are you doing anything to improve tech skills? And what was a little bit surprising, I guess, is that only 58% of signatories are doing anything about it. So the vast majority of them have problems with it, but not everyone is trying to tackle the issue. I think, there was also something, when we when we segment the data, by company size, which is not something that we were able to fit into the published report, but it's a really interesting area. We see, the data suggests that there might be a pattern of the smaller organisations, they are more inclined to lean towards suppliers answering that question, which is a whole other area. But to come back to the training piece as well, we did an additional segment in this report. Looking at the perceptions of roots into tech. We did a survey, with a consumer insights platform, called The Test, who are one of our reports sponsors. We surveyed tech hiring managers, people with some hiring responsibility, for tech roles. And we asked them what their impressions were, of tech bootcamp candidates, versus traditional tech job role candidates. Actually, we found some really interesting things there, that the impression of boot camp candidates, is favourable, more than traditional candidates. When asked things like, how does how does professionalism compare, between traditional candidates, for a job and bootcamp candidates, bootcamp candidates came out on top, across every measure we surveyed. Now, sometimes that difference was only a percentage point. But in a number of cases, it was quite stark, such as things like, expectations, understanding the expectations of their tech role. That was something where bootcamp candidates, or candidates who have come through an alternative route, into a tech job, found themselves with a more favourable impression in the minds of tech hiring managers.

21 - Debbie Forster

Fantastic. Okay, so really positive given, since 2017, we've known, and a lot of our signatories have been saying with us, that alternate routes into tech, is the way forward, and it's suddenly starting to feel like, maybe it's not so alternative at all. And so I think, for those companies, if we're talking about the challenges of using data, of measuring, of thinking about alternate routes, these are sections we're going to talk about across the piece. Can I think, those of you, I've already got some of you keen, in the audience that are sending some questions. Remember, that's just below the screen, below us. Now, if you can start putting those in. We'll be coming to those in a second. Lexie, thanks, I'll come back to you. Jacqueline, you and I have worked around this space, talked about this for some time. Let me keep you with your Tech UK hat, and thinking about the companies that you work with, what's significant about the report, what jumped out at you, and what seemed most meaningful and important, from your perspective?

22 - Jacqueline de Rojas CBE

Yeah. When Lexie says that lots of companies are experiencing the problems. But only 58% are actually doing anything about it. What springs to mind is, the cavalry is not coming. So this is our problem to solve, it's everybody's problem to solve. I think that's the piece that data is actually quite a poke in the eye, isn't it? When we're all, running

around with our hair on fire, saying I can't find any diverse candidates. My pipeline is terrible, where are the diverse people? And you think, for goodness sakes, so right, okay, what are you going to do about it. It's for all of us, and I think that's what jumped out at me most, that it is our problem to solve, all of us equally. And that's quite shocking when you see the data around that, isn't it?

23 - Debbie Forster

Absolutely. And I think this is the power of the reports, because it does remind us of the art of the possible and the actual, in terms of, within that benchmarking, if you have someone in your office who's saying, oh, what can we possibly do. We can now point to data points and companies who are doing it, who are hitting it, who are moving it forward. Jacqueline, when you hear that companies are now not just willing to share data with us, but to share their secret sauce, what does that mean in a space? If you think about where we've been over the last five years.

24 - Jacqueline de Rojas CBE

Oh, my goodness, I am nothing, if not optimistic. Because diversity and inclusion, is now something that we all talk about, every day. But I think there's something else that has changed, and that is that, the power has shifted towards the people who choose where they work. So the employees have more power. And what's exciting about that, is the possibility that companies will be forced to change, in order to become attractive, and in order to retain talent, diverse talent. Because we will want to choose our hours, we will want to choose how we engage, we will want to work with companies who are very, very strong, on the whole ESG agenda. I think that massive shift is going to force companies into a different position and into a position, where they have to be more open more inclusive, in order to define a culture that is attractive.

25 - Debbie Forster

I think, because whereas a few years ago, I used to say I was pleased to watch this going from being, the right thing to do, to a smart thing to do. I say for 2022, I go further, this has gone from being the right thing to do, the smart thing to do, to something that's actually really stupid not to do. The last thing, that question is gonna fall right off the table.

26 - Jacqueline de Rojas CBE

Totally agree. And you know what, not only that, this is the way that companies will build their competitive advantage. By building a diverse and inclusive workforce and culture. This is how you become competitive. And that is really, it's beyond smart, it's now a must. And I think that, that's where we probably will see a big shift in next year's report.

27 - Debbie Forster

Absolutely. Because the reminder is, when we look at those top 10s, when we think about those lists, we also have the open playbook behind this. There are no more deep secrets, it is all out there for companies now, to lean into, to optimise to systemize, to really take and customise, for their company, to turn it into their edge. And we're getting questions. Super. A few I can deal with very quickly. Some of you are saying, can I have a summary of those stats, can I... So do remember, cursor down, you can find our report, we'll also be putting the video that we put out on the thing, will be on our channel. So you'll have all of that access again, and the report is just below. Edleen you, as someone who, as well as being part of the Tech Talent Charter, you've lived in this space,

you've implemented this in organisations, when you read the report, what was jumping out for you?

28 - Edleen John

Yeah, so I think, when I read the report, what was really stark for me, was the fact that, this is still such a multifaceted challenge, that we're facing. And in different organisations, depending on their setup, their structure, their budget, their resources, their starting point is going to be very, very different. But when you look through the list of things that actually have worked well, or interventions that can really help move us further forward. Those are not things that are significantly different, from what we were seeing 10 years ago, right? A part of me was happy that we were in a better place that we were getting more data, getting more information and clearly more willingness, from organisations, to collaborate and move things further forward. But the natural cynic in me, was also going, guys, we were talking about some of these challenges for 10 years, right? That was interesting to see. In addition, it's recognising that when we think about diversity and inclusion, often in some organisations, it's a side of the desk job, where somebody is expected to do it, on top of their day to day responsibility, with no additional budget, no additional resource, maybe a thanks once a year from a short email, from somebody senior, but not much else. And what this said to me was, we have an opportunity, across the organisations, to do things in a deliberate and a strategic way, that will really drive things further forward. Additionally, thinking about the biggest gap and talking about the real challenge, as it relates to recruiting talent, the other thing that really stood out for me was, it was a huge opportunity for organisations to go, hang on a second. We have individuals, within our organisation, some of whom are looking for promotion opportunities, looking to change role, to upskill, to reskill. We could actually save ourselves some recruitment money, if we spend some time reskilling people, that we currently have, and retaining individuals, so that we keep people within our organisation. And again, to the point that Lexie made, around 58% of organisations, doing something about it, for me, that seemed like a huge opportunity, or all the others, who weren't currently doing something about it.

29 - Debbie Forster

Let's lean into that, throwing it open to all three of you. Lexie had referred to the issue around boot camps, Edleen, you're talking about the reskilling pace, and Jacqueline, put on your other hat, lots of hats to juggle, institute a coding, with its investments into bootcamps, etc. Where do we think is, where are the easy wins in this space? If I'm an employer, and think about if I'm a big employer, and I'm a small employer? Where are the challenges in that piece? What should I be, if I'm on this call listening, what do I need to be going away and thinking, in terms of, that retraining, upskilling, cross skilling space?

30 - Jacqueline de Rojas CBE

Well it is clear, that the industry, the tech industry, is powering up our re-emergence, from the pandemic. So, growth, growth, growth, we've all seen the figures, is going crazy. We've also realised, throughout the pandemic, that our reliance on technology is significantly heavier than it was before. So it's no surprise that we need talent, into the tech sector, and every business is a tech industry today. Now the smaller business, the problems need to be solved differently for the smaller companies. It's easier, arguably to solve for the larger companies. But what happens with the smaller companies, is that they are

increasingly being taken in, as part of the ecosystems, for the larger companies. So, the big tech businesses have have a tonne of small suppliers inside their ecosystems. And they are looking after them, in terms of sharing their skillsets. At Salesforce, they've got trailhead, where they do, they've democratised education, because it's free. And people can skill up. In the bootcamps that we offer, through the institute of coding. We've got very short modular courses that can pivot people, from nowhere to somewhere, in the tech industry. And that is super important, because it's not just about the new people coming into the industry from the younger generation, but it's also reskilling those of us who are on the journey of lifelong learning. That is really important, because we're all working longer, we're all needed more. I think the key for us is, we've got this big drive into socio economic upskilling, reaching into every corner of the country, making sure that skills are available for those that need it. We do have more of a signposting job to do, so that people can find it. I think that's probably the biggest thing that we can do for employers across the country, is to signpost, where people can find this stuff, because it's all there.

31 - Debbie Forster
Absolutely.

32 - Lexi Papaspyrou
And Jacqueline, on that point, because there's a really interesting piece in the report about this. Looking at the awareness, amongst hiring managers of different platforms, different types of tech learning opportunity. And for the under 35s and a younger age group, is disproportionately represented in the tech sector, as I'm sure we all know. But amongst under 35s, the model that they're most familiar with, is the model where the consumer, so the learner, pays for their own training. As soon as you go over 35, in terms of the age of the hiring manager, the type of tech training opportunities that they're aware of, shifts more towards bootcamps and learning opportunities, that are either online, run by recruiters, or following close behind is the government funded, like the DFE bootcamps. So when we talk about businesses needing to be signposted, there are also things to think about, in terms of, making sure that the whole range of options is being signposted, effectively, to different groups.

33 - Jacqueline de Rojas CBE
I think that's right, Lexie. And also I'm thinking about FTM group, where I sit on the board, we pay our learners, for their 16 to 20 week training module, and then put them into jobs. Because I think we are also done talking about skills, aren't we? We really are now talking about jobs. And we're talking about employability, because I think, we can talk about learning all day long, and that's great. But really, we need to pivot people into useful, an employability, plus probably accrediting the learning, so that it's meaningful to the employers as well, so that they can make sense of the learning that's happened.

34 - Edleen John
I think, just to add to what Jacqueline and Lexie said, one thing I really want to pause and talk about is, we do often think of the tech sector as being disproportionately young, in terms of the age groups of people working in the space. And I often think about the huge opportunity for people who have, for one reason or another, taken a career break, whether it's time out to look after family, whether it's for health

reasons, whether it's because they just want a sabbatical and want some time out. And I think actually, are we as employers, doing enough to provide people with, not just the skills, not just the training, but also the confidence, to want to explore tech as a space or tech as a role. So I think about myself, and I still like to think of myself as relatively young. But I know one of the challenges I often face is, I'm often really frightened, right? I hear words like coding, and I think, oh, gosh, I'm definitely not sharp enough to know how to code, or to write code. And actually, to the point that Jacqueline made, if there were short, bite-sized pieces of information, or pieces of learning where I could realise actually, this could be something I could explore, it could be something I could do. It may mean that there's a desire or an opportunity to pivot, or reskill, or add it to my list of things that I'm able to do. We mustn't forget that as employers, and how much that confidence building can really help people to pivot, within organisations and into different roles too.

35 - Debbie Forster

That's huge and we're going to hear about that in several of the panel discussions, of our role to lean in, to remove those barriers, to build up the confidence and create a more seamless path in and around that retraining pace. And rethinking, this used to be, when we talked about returners programmes, or part time work, we were always just talking about that as a mummy solution. But if we know anything, from the great resignation, there were a whole lot of people, who want to redefine the equation of work and life, and how that fits together. Where we, as employers, can rethink how we do things, remove barriers, offer training offer support, we could be getting a really rich, skilled, motivated workforce, to move forward in that space. Looking across some of the questions and the issues that are coming through, one of my favourites so far, is a comment that said, let's count how many times the word data is used, over the next two days, I'll start the bidding at, at least 200 times, I'll see that and raise it, 250, if we're getting that sort of thing right. Let's think about, I've got several people asking, what's the most important thing from the report? If I was just going to read one thing? Let me phrase it this way, for each of the three of you, what surprised you? And what are you remembering, when you go away tomorrow and return to the day job, in terms of the reports? Who wants to go first, what surprised you in the report? And then what was the valuable piece, that you think, I would take back into my workplace?

36 - Edleen John

I'm happy to start. So I'll be really honest, in saying, what surprised me was, the number of organisations where building awareness is still where they are at. And I say that because, not just because I've worked in this space for years, but I go, after 2020, and a lot of the global movements that we've had, from a DEI perspective, I'm really surprised that organisations are still two years on, at the building awareness space. And what I think I will be taking back is, the huge opportunities to really enhance the workforce, to contribute to organisational cultures and to move the DEI forward. If organisations pause, take this seriously, and invest the time and resources to get it right.

37 - Debbie Forster

Absolutely. I think we need to bring a bit more impatience, to what we're doing on these things. And yes, raise awareness if it's matched by action and moving forward, because it's time to get on. Anybody else want to add to surprise and most valuable, Jacqueline?

38 - Jacqueline de Rojas CBE

When I look at the 20, most cited, impactful interventions. I, sort of, was a little bit depressed, when I read number 19, which is diversity in senior positions. I really hope that next year, that's not number 19. I really hope that we lead from the front, and that we have diversity in senior positions, a lot more at the top of the agenda, and not at the number 19 of 20. It's sort of irritating. And I think that really, and that's not for me, just women, that's diversity in all its forms. And I really, really, really hope, that people will reflect on that, out of the report and do something about it. That's what I would take away.

39 - Debbie Forster

And I'd really suggest you look into the session that we're going to do on retention and promotion, because I think it is the game changing piece. Because if we are getting that right, we get the positive circle as opposed to the vicious circle, because a lot of things we know is, people won't join companies, if they don't see people like me, in more senior roles. We're not going to change how we're doing things. So I absolutely agree. When anybody's coming at it just thinking, I can hire my way out of this. That's not good enough. I think what we'll hear in the panel discussion, it is hard, because our pipeline is so narrowed. But what we'll hear is some companies who are saying, just because it's hard, doesn't mean we don't do it. It's where we lean in, and it's longer solutions, in that respect.

40 - Jacqueline de Rojas CBE

And I agree with that. I'm sure Edleen will have something to say about this, but we often see companies hire diverse leaders, and it's a one shot wonder, because the culture can't sustain it. When I say that, it means that, that diverse leader, just says, you know what, this is too hard, I don't fit, and I can't change it. Because there aren't enough antibodies in this business. And I think that's the thing that worries me most. It doesn't worry me that people can hire that person, what worries me is the sustainability of that company.

41 - Debbie Forster

The retention.

42 - Jacqueline de Rojas CBE

Yeah, yeah.

43 - Debbie Forster

And also the companies that think, the one and done. Well, we've done it, we've got our woman, so that's us done, yeah, we're good. And so this has to be a bigger and deeper. I want to come back to, because a few questions have come up about this short term versus long term questions, etcetera. Edleen, what surprised and what do you most want to... Oh, no, you did that first, so Lex, what was yours?

44 - Lexi Papaspyrou

Yeah, I have two things that I'd like to say about the disappointment thing and what would I recommend. What I found really interesting, as a person who got to see this raw data and actually crunch it three years in a row, personally, I've got a really different view of the data, than maybe you'd get if you just read the report. What's interesting to me is, I can see questions coming through like, how do we measure

social mobility? What do we do if we're an SME? And the thing is, we have answers specific to those questions, in a lot of our toolkit in a lot of our report. Because we're not for profit, we're here to create everything for free and serve it up for free. My plea to the audience really, is to please look at the report and the toolkit because a lot of the answers are there. For social mobility, there's a fantastic toolkit, that's come from the social mobility commission, and you can literally lift and put straight into a process, and it even gives you a matrix on how to analyse it. For small to medium sized businesses, we've also got analysis here, that I'm really keen to talk about more, in maybe something more of a subject specific format. Because we can actually see what the different trends are, for companies that are excelling at diversity, that are from small- and medium-sized companies, compared to large and really large enterprise companies. I can give you an example, for instance, with small organisations, I can see that what they're saying is working best, are very specific interventions. For instance, bringing in blind CV screening, there's other things about interview techniques that are all about reducing bias in specific interview situations. So we're seeing a lot of really specific interventions, coming up for small organisations, whereas with large organisations, the trend that we're seeing, is a focus around auditing processes and systems. Having DNI targets and measures, really strongly in place, you get a more of a systemic view, amongst larger organisations. And, again, this analysis is available, we have it, and we're really keen to be talking about it and sharing this information with signatories. So I guess, my worry, and my takeaway that I would say to people is, please look at the resources, or get in touch, because we have the answers. For the first time, we've got this rich dataset. And we have answers that are specific to different company profiles.

45 - Debbie Forster

It is. And this is where, I think touching back on what you were saying earlier Edleen, the frustration, and Jacqueline, if you've been in this space, the frustration is, there are no magic discoveries left to make. All the pieces of the puzzle are there. And it is just helping everyone in the room understand, don't reinvent the wheel. Start with what's already going on, start with what other companies are doing, look at the research, look at the open playbook and get to work. But it is a matter of leaning in, systemically planning this and knowing that this is a marathon, that this is not a sprint. But you don't have to reinvent things, those 10 things, on the top 10, for the two things. There's nothing on this list, that you can look at and say, oh my god, I've never thought of that, I've never heard of that before, what is this thing. But what we now have is, data-driven answers. There's the data keep the tally, of this does work, these are companies that we've actually got the proof of the pudding, whereas we were saying, five years ago, you should do this, we should do this, we think this is going to work. More and more we have these really firm foundations, to say this absolutely works. And that's what we're going to explore in greater depth. Now I'm gonna find a few harder questions now. There's an interesting one that I thought came in, from someone talking about smaller organisations, because I think it's important to remember, when we look at the Tech Talent Charter signatory base, we're pretty evenly split, between the very large organisations, the SMEs, the small or micro companies. So I'm asking the question, I am a small organisation who doesn't have enough senior of capability, to be able to support and accommodate junior employees and set them up for success. So what do I do? Ideas from the group.

46 - Lexi Papaspyrou

I can tell you what signatories are saying, who are in the small organisation category. So if we're talking about gender diversity, and gender has proven to be the lens of diversity, that most signatories are most concerned with, just as a side note. For gender diversity, smaller organisations are focusing on diversity attraction channels. So looking at, for instance, this is just an example, a job board that's targeted to people who are from Black, Asian or other minority ethnic backgrounds. That's an example that came up a lot and was ranked top, amongst small organisations, that performed the best on gender diversity. We also had organisations saying that focusing on the structured interviews was important, auditing processes and systems came up in the top five as well. So that's an example of actions, that can be taken at different degrees of complexity. So auditing processes and systems, is very different in a small organisation, than it is in a large organisation. But that's good because it means it's achievable, no matter what scale you have, provided, you have a little bit of time resource, where you can allocate someone to be accountable for doing that job, that piece of work.

47 - Debbie Forster

Super. Yes, Jacqueline.

48 - Jacqueline de Rojas CBE

I'm just thinking, that if I was an employer, of any size, I would first ask myself the question, why does diversity matter for me in my business, because when you start from there, then I think you start to come to the right answers. Like, well, diversity matters because I need talent, which is not readily available. And I need to widen my gene pool. For that reason alone, you go, okay, well, let's look at all available talent, versus the talent pool I've been looking at before. I think when you start to ask yourself that question about, why diversity matters, and then for us in tech, it matters more than before, because if we don't have all our voices around the table, when we're designing, and building, and implementing technology, then we're going to build a digital future, that's for the few and not for the many. And that's where we will leave people behind. Again, I think if you ask yourself the question, why it matters, then you will come up with different strategies and different answers. That's where I think that is relevant, whether you're a small business, or a large business.

49 - Debbie Forster

Okay. So we're heading into some of our last questions, we've had a lot of people asking, it's a lovely question to have, are we recording this? Of course we are. What we'll be doing after the event, is slicing and dicing these, not just for videos that you can watch, but we're also going to dip our toes in turning these into some podcasts. Something new and different for us. So thank you, for those of you that are asking. Let me ask another question. This pathways piece, that we've all touched on, that is so important, and really coming up with that multitude of pathways. This feels like a very long term, strategic plan. What should I be doing in the short term, to deal with my immediate pain? Who wants to lean into that one?

50 - Edleen John

So I'm happy to kick start on that one, and be really honest, in terms of saying, it's a comment that you made Debbie. The reality is, this isn't a

sprint, it is a marathon. The starting point is actually, in terms of short term fix, unless you have huge budget to go out and hire people and therefore increase your headcount, or you want to promote people, who you maybe don't feel are ready, and therefore all of a sudden, now I want to promote people. The reality is, it is going to be a longer term sprint, but it's about making sure that you do that, in a way, so that you can retain the talent that you have within the organisation. You can create a culture of inclusivity, because exactly as Jacqueline said, if you just hire people, pop them in there, to be tokenistic, and be able to say hello TTC, we have met better data requirements, and then next year, people leave, then you haven't actually solved the problem at all. It's recognising that it's going to be longer term, it is going to take time, but there are things that you can do to begin to create and cultivate that culture. And part of that is having difficult conversations around topics in the DEI space. Recognising what your future strategic hiring plans are, or promotion plans are, or pathway development plans are. But I definitely would not be advocating that people are promoted into roles that they're not ready to do, because actually, it becomes more damaging, when the diverse candidate is promoted and doesn't succeed. Because actually, people end up pointing and going, you see, I told you that she wasn't ready. I often say to people, I can think of a lot of mediocre people, from all backgrounds, who weren't ready, but actually, they didn't have the pressure of being the only one to have to do it, right?

51 - Debbie Forster

No one turns around and says, that white man wasn't really up for it, let's never hire another white man again. You've got to get the conversation right.

52 - Edleen John

Absolutely. And you've got to land those difficult conversations, you've got to help people to shift their mindset, shift their thinking, and recognise that it is going to be a lot of small things, that will build up, to help create that culture of inclusivity and that diversity that you want, across the board at all levels within the organisation.

53 - Debbie Forster

Super. We four know each other and we could probably talk all day and all night, but we're going to have to come to the end. Can I say, in the last few minutes, that we've had some great questions coming in? And some of those questions I think are going to be answered really well, in other things. Some of you are asking about, what are the benefits of auditing systems, asking about how do you measure inclusion, versus diversity? What do we do about diversity, washing, etc? These are going to come up for other sessions. I appreciate that, I'm not ignoring your questions, we will capture these and we will use them at some later sessions. That means you have to sign up for the other sessions too. Listen, thank you so much, Lexie, Edleen, Jacqueline, it is fantastic to see you again. Let's do it in 3D sometime soon, I really appreciate it. Thank you very much.

54 - Jacqueline de Rojas CBE

Thank you.