

IP Inclusive: LEO's report 1Q 2021



IP INCLUSIVE

Working for diversity and inclusion in IP

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1 General

Much of this first quarter of 2021 has been given over to planning IP Inclusive's strategic development, alongside IPIM: see 2 below.

On 1 March 2021 we published our 2020 Annual Report¹. Note that there is no separate quarterly report for 4Q 2020; please refer instead to the 2020 Annual Report, in particular section 1.4.7 regarding the November 2020 Careers in Ideas Week campaign and section 4.3 regarding the stakeholder consultation on IP Inclusive's development.

Our annual meeting was held on 23 March 2021. Nearly 100 delegates attended. The meeting included:

- Updates on our 2020 work from the Careers in Ideas task force, the four regional networks and the five communities
- A presentation from Ben Buchanan (IPIM Chair) and me about the "To Diversity and Beyond" plans (see 2 below)
- The formal IPIM AGM
- Breakout sessions to discuss 2021 priorities and plans
 - Our 2021-22 business plan will be based around the extremely constructive ideas that emerged

2 Strategic development

- February: report of "To Diversity and Beyond" (TDAB) survey results published²
- February: draft proposals provided to IPIM with recommendations on the financial viability of, and alternatives to, incorporating IP Inclusive as a Community Interest Company (CIC)
- March: revised plans presented to the 2021 annual meeting
- March: based on discussions in the annual meeting, started work on 2021-22 business plan and budget, in preparation for fundraising campaign in 2Q 2021
- In line with the revised plans, expect to have reconstituted IPIM, and established a new advisory board, well before the end of 2Q 2021, enabling a smooth transition to an independent and self-sustaining IP Inclusive for the second half of the year

3 Careers in Ideas (CinI)

- March: CinI task force met to plan 2021 projects and priorities
- Key plans (to be initiated and progressed over the next few months) include:
 - Mentoring scheme for higher and further education students wanting to enter the IP professions

¹ See <https://ipinclusive.org.uk/newsandfeatures/our-2020-annual-report/>

² See <https://ipinclusive.org.uk/newsandfeatures/to-diversity-and-beyond-survey-results/>

- Directory of volunteers willing to do outreach work on behalf of CinI, with an associated mailing list to communicate and coordinate opportunities
- Re-running the November 2020 Careers in Ideas Week events for potential recruits
- Updating the CinI “career pathways map”
- Several new task force members recruited, including some willing to help with social media and comms and/or with the proposed mentoring scheme

4 The EDI Charter

- January & March: continuing regional involvement in the Women in IP coffee dates, each of which comprises a series of virtual meetings hosted around the country
 - “Venues” this quarter included Cambridge, London, Midlands, North of England (including Leeds, Liverpool and York), Scotland, the South West and Wales, also Dublin (“in association with” IP Inclusive)
- February: Scotland network call for additional volunteers; lead Laurence Cheney has revitalised the committee and is busy re-allocating roles and responsibilities
- February: Women in IP’s annual event focused on “Quick wins” for Charter signatories to improve D&I levels in their organisations
 - See 5.5 below regarding follow-up work
- March: Midlands network and IP Ability webinar on “Reasonable adjustments – what are they, and how can we get them right?”
- Acquired 3 new Charter signatories during 1Q 2021
- Following data clean-up checks, 5 signatories removed from our database during the quarter, primarily organisations that no longer exist independently

5 The five communities

5.1 IP & ME

- February & March: some progress made on creating a prototype BAME speaker directory, for feedback from the wider IP & ME community

5.2 IP Ability

- January & February: website News and Features posts published on reflections of IP Ability’s first year, Ehlers Danlos syndrome, the results of last year’s survey on patent attorney exam accessibility, and eating disorders
- March: webinar on “Reasonable adjustments – what are they, and how can we get them right?” (joint project with the Midlands network)

5.3 IP Futures

- First 2021 event planned for early April: informal online networking and discussion event

- Intending to work with the CinI task force on 2021 events for potential IP sector recruits

5.4 IP Out

- January: informal New Year “coffee dates”, hosted from 7 locations around the UK (plus an associated event in Dublin)
 - Joint project with Women in IP
 - Discussion theme: “bringing your whole self to work”
- February: series of 7 website News and Features posts to celebrate LGBT+ History Month
 - Joint project with CIPA, who produced video content on the history and meaning of the Pride flags
 - Included a guest post by Lord Chris Smith, IPReg Chair
- March: online social event on the “Gather Town” platform

5.5 Women in IP

- January: joint “coffee dates” with IP Out (see above)
- February: annual event on “‘Quick wins’ for Charter signatories”
 - An associated survey sought delegates’ ideas about effective D&I-improving measures
- March: social media campaign for International Women’s Day: photos and quotes on the #ChooseToChallenge theme were published on LinkedIn, Twitter and the IP Inclusive website
- March: coffee dates, hosted from 9 locations (including Dublin), partly to mark International Women’s Day and partly as a follow-up to the February “quick wins” event
 - Outcomes from these discussions, the February event and the survey will be compiled into a toolkit for Charter signatories
- February & March: website News and Features posts published on assumptions and stereotypes, the outcomes of the January and March coffee date discussions, and the use of gendered titles

6 Mental health and wellbeing

- January: webinar with Touch Network (“Touch Network – an amazing story”) about the power of story telling to help people overcome mental health challenges
- March: webinar with Focal Point Training on “Building emotional resilience in ourselves and others”
- March: online masterclass with the CIPA Informals on “Taking back control and redefining failure”, to support people struggling with exam-related stress
- All three webinars organised through our mental health first aider (MHFAer) network, which continues to grow gradually, with exchanges on WhatsApp and LinkedIn to share ideas and provide support for one another (the LinkedIn group has a rota to ensure content is frequently updated).

- Planning to repeat our 2018 and 2019 mental wellbeing surveys this year, with help from Jonathan’s Voice
 - Also awaiting access (by May) to IP sector-specific results from 2020 LawCare survey
- February & March: News and Features post to mark Time to Talk Day and Eating Disorders Awareness Week; regarding the Jonathan’s Voice “Every Mile Matters” campaign and their new mental wellbeing guide for senior leaders; and with reports on the CIPA Informals’ “Wellbeing Coffee Club” and their March event with our MHFAer network
- Updated the website Mental Health and Wellbeing page for several new resources, including our event recordings and the Jonathan’s Voice guide

7 Extending our reach

- Leaders’ think tank meeting organised for early May with Eifion Morris, senior diversity champion at Stephenson Harwood, and other panellists:
 - Aims to progress some of the objectives from the inaugural November 2020 meeting
 - Joint project with CIPA and CITMA, led by CIPA’s Honorary Secretary Gwilym Roberts and me
- Our events continue to be exclusively virtual, helping us to reach more people
 - The Women in IP coffee dates, hosted from “venues” around the country, have proved particularly effective at this
 - Also moving towards the use of automatic closed captions for all IP Inclusive events and larger meetings from now on, to increase accessibility

8 D&I data gathering

- Have been working on report of benchmarking survey run in November & December 2020; hope to publish results summary soon

9 Operational

9.1 IPIM

(Also see 2 above on issues to do with IP Inclusive’s strategic development)

- Current IPIM membership and roles approved at the 23 March 2021 AGM, to continue until its reconstitution during 2Q 2021
- 2020 Annual Report and Financial Report also approved at the AGM
- I attended IPIM meetings on 20 January and 9 March 2021

9.2 Websites

- 28 News and Features posts published on the IP Inclusive website during 1Q 2021, including IP Inclusive news, event reports, guest blogs and comment
- 2 News posts on the Careers in Ideas website during the same period
- Added 4 items to our website Resources page in 1Q 2021, all event recordings and associated follow-up materials

9.3 Other

- February: upgraded to a paid Mailchimp account to allow us a greater number of contacts, more control over the management and timing of our mailing list communications, and the possibility of creating a new dedicated mailing list for CinI supporters
 - This account hosts all our existing mailing list contacts, including for the communities, regional networks and Charter signatories
- February: IPIM insurance renewed
- February: ICO data protection fee paid for 2021
- March: SurveyMonkey account renewed
- March: Zoom account renewed. I pay for this account but make it available for IP Inclusive business as well as my own

10 Miscellaneous

- February: filed submissions in response to IPReg's call for evidence in its review of its regulatory arrangements³
- March: took part in a podcast with Gordon Harris of Gowling WLG and the IPLA, discussing among other things the development of IP Inclusive, its objectives, its achievements and its future plans
- Interest and enquiries from IP professionals overseas:
 - Planning an event with CIPA, CITMA, FICPI-UK and IP Federation to showcase IP Inclusive's work to overseas contacts and exchange ideas and experiences

ARB

1 April 2021

³ See <https://ipinclusive.org.uk/newsandfeatures/ip-inclusive-submissions-for-ipregs-regulatory-review/>