

IP Inclusive Plans for 2020



IP INCLUSIVE

Working for diversity and inclusion in IP

The following are projects and priorities that we would like to take forward in 2020, based on discussions at our 21 January 2020 annual meeting and the results of our November 2019 diversity benchmarking surveyⁱ. The five communitiesⁱⁱ and the regional networks will devise their own plans for the year (as for example identified in our 2019 Annual Reportⁱⁱⁱ), co-ordinating with one another and with the general themes below.

IP Inclusive Management (IPIM) welcomes suggestions for other projects. Please contact the IPIM Chair Richard Goddard (Richard.Goddard2@uk.bp.com), or the IP Inclusive Lead Executive Officer Andrea Brewster (abrewsteripinclusive@gmail.com).

Priorities for the year

- Extending our reach:
 - Persuade more people of the importance of diversity and inclusion (D&I) to the IP professions
 - Target in particular D&I opponents and sceptics; people from outside the “minority” groups, who believe that D&I are irrelevant or that IP Inclusive is not “for them”; and senior people in decision-making roles
- Disability confidence:
 - Through IP Ability, encourage and support disability confidence in the IP professions
- Ethnic diversity:
 - Understand more about, and begin to address, the current low levels of ethnic diversity in the IP professions
- Careers in Ideas:
 - Continue to raise awareness of, and improve access to, IP-related professions, focusing on currently under-represented groups
 - Develop the existing Careers in Ideas resources
- The EDI Charter:
 - Encourage and support greater involvement from Charter signatories, and fulfilment of the Charter commitments

Specific initiatives and projects

Extending our reach

- Encourage event attendees to invite someone who is not yet involved in IP Inclusive, preferably an ally, potential ally, diversity sceptic and/or senior decision-maker
- Identify supportive diversity champions in senior positions; work with them to create visible and approachable role models
 - Consider organising a round-table meeting of senior professionals to identify (i) persuasive arguments for D&I and (ii) best practices for promoting inclusive, supportive and respectful workplaces
- Continue to provide events and resources in accessible formats (eg webinars and live viewings; podcasts; recorded and/or multi-centre events) and at a variety of times of day
- Continue to support the regional networks and encourage the creation of new ones
- Continue to work with relevant external organisations, such as the Law Society, to pool resources and widen our reach

Allies

- Work with the communities to reach out to, encourage, inform and support both allies and potential allies and include them in the communities' activities
- Run at least one event on allies, as a collaboration between all five communities
 - Emphasise the importance of "intersectionality" between different diversity strands and minority groups
- Consider providing:
 - Guidance (including on language and communication) for particular types of allies
 - "Quick win" suggestions for employers wishing to support minority groups
 - Events and resources to raise awareness, understanding and acceptance of less "conventional" forms of sexuality and gender identity and the issues facing the LGBT+ (in particular the BT+) community

The business case for D&I

- Collate resources relevant to the business case for D&I, for the IP Inclusive website
- Organise a round-table meeting on the benefits of D&I for recruitment and retention, inviting IP sector recruitment consultants and HR professionals
 - Use the outcomes to supplement the website resources

Business support professionals

- Encourage and support greater involvement from business support professionals in IP sector organisations (eg in HR, training, business development or practice management)
- Provide additional events, if appropriate, on D&I-related topics of interest to them
- Help them to source information and other resources to persuade their senior colleagues of the benefits of D&I
- Consider establishing an IP Inclusive community or network for them

Disability confidence

- Collate information and resources to help disabled people, carers and their allies (including their employers) to obtain appropriate support and workplace adjustments
- Raise awareness, understanding and acceptance (for example through events and publications) of the issues facing disabled people and carers, and of the support they need

Ethnic diversity

- Work with IP & ME, and relevant external organisations, to improve our understanding of the reasons for, and ways to address, current ethnic diversity levels in the IP professions
 - Consider organising a round-table meeting of experts from across the sector, to discuss these issues and devise strategies in response

Careers in Ideas

- Develop the existing resources, securing sponsorship funding as necessary:
 - Enhance the careers pathways map with information about alternative routes to – and between – different IP-related careers
 - Create materials tailored for students reaching specific educational milestones (eg A-level or university choices) and their teachers and careers advisers
 - Look into the feasibility of a Careers in Ideas app to guide students towards appropriate IP-related careers
 - Ensure these materials are also useable by IP professionals who provide career talks, work experience days and similar outreach activities; provide guidance for making effective use of them
- Work with IP Futures to recruit more volunteers, from different backgrounds and in different roles, to help promote and distribute the Careers in Ideas resources
 - Consider creating small working groups to handle specific projects
 - Include a group responsible for communications via the Careers in Ideas website and Twitter account

- Continue to work with relevant external organisations, including the UK IPO, to target the resources appropriately upstream of the IP professions
- Work with IP Federation on at least one project related to improving socio-economic mobility in the IP sector
- Convene a sector-wide round-table meeting to explore routes to, and barriers to, entry into the IP professions, and less conventional alternatives that can improve D&I on recruitment
- Consider running a “Careers in Ideas Week” as an alternative to IP Inclusive Week this year

The EDI Charter

- Remind Charter signatories of the commitments they made
 - Encourage and support their efforts to fulfil those commitments, with practical tips, check-lists and other relevant resources
 - In particular, work through the regional networks, the EDI Officer contacts and business support professionals to encourage collaboration and mutual support
- Consider asking signatories to reconfirm their commitment to the Charter at regular intervals (eg annually), potentially with an update on their D&I efforts
- Encourage signatories to undertake a D&I audit such as the IP Inclusive/Focal Point “Steps to Inclusion” review
- Continue to encourage new Charter sign-ups from a range of IP sector organisations, not just traditional IP or legal practices
- Recruit more volunteers to help with the Charter Group’s administration and communications, including keeping the signatory database up to date

D&I data gathering

- Continue to encourage and support the gathering, sharing and appropriate use of D&I data throughout the IP professions
- Reschedule the intended 2019 event to explore legal and cultural barriers to, the benefits of, and best practices for, D&I data gathering and use
- Produce guidance on best practices for D&I data gathering and use
- Repeat the November 2019 diversity benchmarking survey in November 2020, to explore trends and progress and inform our 2021 work
 - Liaise with IP sector organisations to co-ordinate their individual D&I data gathering efforts with ours

Mental health and wellbeing

- Continue to raise awareness and understanding of mental health challenges, to help employees and employers to address them, and to reduce the associated stigma

- Where possible, partner with existing mental health charities in the sector (eg LawCare and Jonathan’s Voice), to avoid duplicating or undermining their work
- Continue to champion mental health first aid (MHFA) training, including through further “pooled” MHFA courses and support for trained MHFA-ers
- Organise activities to mark Mental Health Awareness Week (18-24 May 2020), working with our communities and regional networks
 - Liaise with LawCare over their plans for a sector-wide wellbeing survey, ensuring that IP sector-specific data can be made available as a result

The IP Inclusive website

- Upgrade the website, securing sponsorship funding as necessary, in particular:
 - The mailing list sign-up form
 - Automatic placement of events and blog posts
 - Accessibility for disabled people
- Try to increase footfall to the Resources and Mental Health & Wellbeing pages
- Recruit more volunteers to help manage and promote site content

Other

- With the help of the five communities and the Careers in Ideas team, respond to CIPA’s “Mercer Review” into the education, training and assessment of UK Chartered Patent Attorneys, with comments on D&I-related aspects
- Consult with supporters regarding:
 - Potential event topics
 - Preferred event formats, locations and timings
 - Mechanisms for funding IP Inclusive activities (eg Charter signatory subscriptions; sponsorship opportunities; fees for events and resources)
- Organise another full-day diversity conference and annual meeting in January 2021
- Through IPIM, continue to develop IP Inclusive’s structure and strategic planning to enable it to deliver on the above objectives efficiently and sustainably

Further suggestions for 2020 activities and events

Discussion groups at the annual meeting yielded the following additional ideas. We will try, resources permitting, to progress these, linking with the priorities and initiatives identified above.

- Careers in Ideas:
 - Better engagement with universities
 - Continuing focus on improving socio-economic mobility at the point of access to the IP professions
 - A Careers in Ideas “jobs board”, for potential recruits to identify employers with good D&I credentials
- The EDI Charter:
 - Sharing of EDI Officer contact details, to encourage collaboration in particular through the regional networks
 - Higher tiers of Charter accreditation, potentially linked with the reporting and/or sharing of D&I data
 - A team to take charge of developing and engaging with the Charter community, the support we provide to signatories and potential follow-up schemes
- Potential event topics:
 - Encouraging socio-economic mobility and class diversity; creating a suitably inclusive and non-intimidating culture; helping recruiters and decision-makers to see the benefits of recruiting beyond Oxbridge
 - Different approaches to D&I issues (eg working culture, flexible working arrangements) in other countries, perhaps via overseas membership organisations
 - Workplace culture and the expectations of different generations (potentially led by IP Futures)
 - Harassment and inappropriate banter in the workplace
 - Personality differences and cognitive diversity (ie broadening from the more obvious diversity strands)
 - Visual differences and body image (also reschedule the intended 2019 webinar on workplace dress codes)
 - Making leaders more approachable
- Support:
 - A new community or network specifically for allies
 - Mentoring schemes (including the one planned by the Women in IP community)
- Resources:
 - Better promotion of the resources available on our website
 - Audit to ensure those resources are up to date and relevant
- Mental health and wellbeing
 - Guidance on stress management
 - An event on the particular challenges faced in private practice (eg client demands; billing and business development targets)

- Personal stories and/or “This is Me” videos to encourage conversations, publicise role models and reduce stigma
- General:
 - Social as well as training and awareness-raising events
 - Ensuring our communications are constructive and positive; avoiding off-putting or critical messages

IP Inclusive Management
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ⁱ See <https://ipinclusive.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/ipi-2019-benchmarking-survey-report.pdf>

ⁱⁱ IP & ME, IP Ability, IP Futures, IP Out and Women in IP

ⁱⁱⁱ See <https://ipinclusive.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/ip-inclusive-2019-annual-report.pdf>