

IP Inclusive Annual Report 2022



2022: Impact and growth **Foreword by Andrea Brewster OBE**

We began 2022 by asking ourselves some searching questions about our impact. We wanted to know how well we were delivering on our mission to promote equality, diversity, inclusion (EDI) and wellbeing in the UK's IP professions.

We could have simply quoted statistics about the work we've been doing: numbers of events and resources published, for instance. But in a field like ours, we felt the best way to find out if we were making a difference was to ask our stakeholders. In particular, what did they think the sector would look like if IP Inclusive didn't exist?

Our February impact survey yielded encouraging responses, both from our Charter signatories and from individual IP professionals. It told us that IP Inclusive is successfully raising awareness of EDI issues; starting meaningful conversations; giving people the confidence to speak out; and providing the leadership, drive and coordination that can catalyse change. Respondents were clear: without IP Inclusive, progress in this area would be slower, less "joined-up", less well informed – and the IP sector as a whole would be the poorer for it.

This fits with my own observations. When IP Inclusive launched in 2015, many people questioned its relevance. Now virtually every organisation, from small private sector firms upwards, has at least someone whose role it is to see that EDI is on the agenda and appropriately addressed. There is a growing appreciation of its business benefits: today's leaders understand its effects on recruitment and retention of staff and on their performance. Individual IP professionals now talk about EDI in ways, and in forums, that would have seemed alien when IP Inclusive began. They are more open about their identities; they share their experiences and help others do the same. Alongside this, wonderful relationships are being built between under-represented groups and their allies.

I like to think – and our survey results confirmed this – that IP Inclusive provides a nucleus around which everyone in the IP sector, with their increasing EDI interests, can gather and collaborate. It is a catalyst, but also, at a more practical level, a mechanism for coordinating and amplifying our sector's response to all manner of EDI-related stimuli in the IP and wider communities. Our organisations now share best

practices as they rarely would have done before, for the good of the entire sector. Inclusivity is being woven into the fabric of the IP professions. As IP Inclusive flourishes, so too does the community it stems from.

Armed with the feedback and suggestions from our impact survey, we felt ready to expand at last. We took on our first intern, then two further executive team members. It was a scary phase in our development but it has been very much worth it. We've been able, in particular during the second half of 2022, to increase the support we provide for our volunteers and to produce an array of extra events and resources to help people with their EDI work. We're particularly proud of our *Inclusivity Unlocked!* programme, which in response to demand from several quarters has focused on rebuilding after the pandemic, making the most of this unique opportunity to create more inclusive and accessible working environments.

Other noteworthy initiatives in 2022 included an online discussion forum for our Senior Leaders' Pledge signatories, the reinvigoration of our IP & ME committee, and early plans for a 2023 *Summer of IP* to improve awareness of, and access to, IP careers. The latter is a campaign we hope will engage supporters from across the sector and in turn help us widen our reach. To us, anyone who works in IP – whether directly, or indirectly through the people they supply or procure from – is an “IP professional”; we want all of them to be involved.

The better-structured IP Inclusive we've been developing this past year can face the future with confidence. We have funding and generous contributions from across the sector, and a clear endorsement of our work so far. We have the resources to engage with an even wider range of IP professionals and provide them with still richer sources of support. We have had an impact and we can continue to do so. Over the next twelve months, then, we will pursue with increasing vigour our mission to improve EDI and wellbeing in our community.

I would like to thank everyone who was involved, in whatever way, in our 2022 activities. From our donors, event hosts and partner organisations, to our executive and management team, Advisory Board and hundreds of volunteers, without you all none of this great work would have been able to happen. IP Inclusive is an expanding, flourishing enterprise. Like all good collaborations, it is so much greater than the sum of its parts.

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