

# IP Inclusive Annual Report 2025

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## 2025: Who'd have thought?!

### Foreword by Andrea Brewster OBE

IP Inclusive began to take shape at a January 2015 CIPA-led round-table. Back then, we didn't even know if people cared about diversity in IP, much less whether they would be willing to collaborate – across the sector – to improve it.

And yet, in 2025, we found ourselves celebrating IP Inclusive's tenth anniversary. A whole decade of progress had brought together thousands of IP professionals in pursuit of equality, diversity, inclusion (EDI) and wellbeing. And what an experience it had been!

The milestone was all the more important because it came at a time when EDI faced increasing challenges. Yet despite political pressure in the US and elsewhere, economic constraints and the so-called "anti-woke" sentiments growing around us, it became increasingly clear through 2025 that IP professionals did still care about EDI. Not only that: IP Inclusive's role as an independent, sector-wide initiative was growing in importance. It was up to us to keep the EDI torch burning. It was on us to support both individuals and their businesses through these difficult times.

We celebrated the anniversary in a range of ways. Our annual meeting had a special celebratory feel: longer than usual, it incorporated a panel discussion on "Why do diversity and inclusion still matter?" which left us feeling both reassured and inspired. Several of our 2025 events were themed around the first ten years of progress and what lay ahead. A series of ten anniversary podcasts, released in November and December, focused on different aspects of IP Inclusive's work and achievements and involved all six of our communities.

Importantly, we conducted an impact survey and used it to generate a new Impact Report. In honour of the anniversary, that report was structured around "Ten years, ten impacts". It showcased ten key things that IP Inclusive had achieved: bringing people together, starting conversations, broadening perspectives, providing safe spaces, keeping EDI on the agenda, diversifying the pipeline, supporting mental wellbeing, empowering individuals, facilitating collaboration, and generally leading the way on EDI issues in the IP professions.

From the impact survey, and from our wider stakeholder interactions, one clear message emerged: that the key to IP Inclusive's success has been the community it's created. That "community" is the networks

through which we support one another; the safe spaces they provide for conversations and for personal and professional development; the vast amounts of enthusiasm and energy they generate; the influence they have on the sector's direction of travel as well as on individual career journeys; and the opportunities they create for people to collaborate, to everyone's benefit. It is both the evidence of and the reason behind our achievements thus far.

And that's why the theme for our 2025-27 business plan, published in July 2025, is "community". It means that our communities and networks will become ever more important, as we work to support our volunteers, widen and strengthen engagement among our constituents, keep EDI and wellbeing firmly on the agenda, and develop a diverse and inclusive pipeline of new recruits.

2025 brought many other highlights. Women in IP's mentoring pilot is now ready to roll. New networks have emerged for business support professionals and men in IP. We've published resources on allyship, EDI data gathering and careers outreach. Plans are well underway for a 2026 re-run of our popular *Summer of IP* campaign. We've also recruited new members to our Advisory Board, whose input will be especially valuable as the world responds to changes in the EDI agenda.

Those changes certainly made for an interesting horizon scanning exercise at IPIM's strategy meeting this year. And yet, our fundraising efforts have survived the anti-EDI movements. What we continue to hear, from across the sector, is that IP Inclusive's work is still very much valued by IP professionals and their businesses, whatever may be happening elsewhere. This wonderful sector has rallied round in support of our objectives.

I suspect no one could have predicted, back at that 2015 round-table, how IP Inclusive would evolve and the impact it would have on the UK IP professions. Nor could we have guessed how the wider EDI landscape might change over that time. Who knows what the next decade will bring? – Whatever, we face it with confidence and a renewed sense of commitment.

There is undeniably a business case for diversity and inclusion, which neither individual organisations nor the profession as a whole can afford to ignore. And there's a community – which IP Inclusive has helped to build and which all of us are part of – that we need to protect. We will do that together, for as long as it takes. We have much to be proud of and much more to look forward to.

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