



Ofcom's Diversity and Inclusion Strategy June 2026 – June 2028

**Building a fair, inclusive and
representative workplace**



Melanie's Foreword

Ofcom has seen significant change since we published our last Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Strategy in 2021. We have taken on major new duties for Online Safety, Telecoms Security and the Media Act, growing our organisation by 70% in the last five years.

We have also had to respond to huge technological, geopolitical, social and economic shifts in the external environment, making our job more complex and requiring new thinking about the ways we work.

Our commitment to diversity and inclusion has remained of central importance to Ofcom throughout this period of change. We know that to make communications work for everyone we must be an organisation that genuinely reflects the diversity of the UK. I am very proud of what we have achieved against the targets set in our last strategy and that we have used our expanded remit as an opportunity to strengthen our connection to the nations and regions we serve, with a new office in Manchester and growth across Edinburgh, Northern Ireland and Cardiff.

Of course we have more to do.



Dame Melanie Dawes,
Chief Executive

Over the course of this new strategy, we will continue to build diversity and inclusion into everything we do, and we will be clear in our expectation that this is the responsibility of every Ofcom colleague. Each of us has a part to play in creating a culture where people feel they belong, where talent is recognised and supported, and where different voices are actively encouraged. This isn't only the right thing to do; it is essential to strong, evidence-based regulation that keeps pace with a rapidly changing world.

Summary of progress against our 2021-2026 Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

Over the past five years, Ofcom has made meaningful strides in embedding inclusion across the organisation. The strategy focused on improving representation, fostering an inclusive culture, and ensuring fairness in systems and processes. Key achievements include:

Gender representation

We achieved an impressive equal gender balance across the organisation and met our target of 48-52% women in senior roles.¹ Our pledge to Women in Tech raised awareness of gender representation across several organisations, and we were recognised as a Times Top 50 Employer for Gender Equality four times during this strategy period.²

Minority Ethnic representation

The agreed target of 16% minority ethnic representation in senior roles was exceeded at points in the strategy. As we approached this milestone, we introduced a stretch target of 19% to further drive progress and ambition. Representation continually fluctuates and therefore this remains an area of focus for us. Encouragingly, we were recognised for our efforts in this regard as an Exemplary Employer by Investing in Ethnicity. We continue to prioritise improving representation of minority ethnic colleagues in senior roles.

Disability representation

We met our 15% overall disability representation target six months in advance of the March 2026 deadline. We are proud to hold Disability Confident Level 3 Leadership status through a programme of work focusing on workplace adjustments, people policies and working environment reviews, all guided by our social model of disability.

Inclusive culture

We introduced a comprehensive inclusive recruitment process, supported by technology to significantly reduce the risk of gender bias. We strengthened our internal colleague networks through the introduction of Senior Leader Inclusion Champions, which played a vital role in shaping our culture and raising awareness. The organisation 10,000 Black and Able Interns was introduced into our Early Careers and apprenticeships proposition and we adopted mandatory Equality Impact Assessment considerations for all new projects and processes.

¹ For the purpose of this strategy senior roles include Principals, Directors and Group Directors.

² <https://www.bitc.org.uk/the-times-top-50-employers-for-gender-equality/>

Data-driven accountability

Monthly reporting to Ofcom's Executive team members on colleague demographics, at organisation wide and local level, combined with colleague sentiment surveying informed priorities to ensure activity was targeted to maximum effect.

Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

The 2021-2026 strategy laid firm foundations for more equitable recruitment, career progression opportunities and inclusion at the centre of all of our colleague policies. An emphasis on fairness by design, constantly seeking best practice, clear horizon scanning and comprehensive internal education programs has delivered improvements for Ofcom's culture in its ambition to be truly inclusive, and for all colleagues to have a strong sense of belonging.



Our Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2026–2028

The new strategy builds on our achievements and lessons learned. It embeds inclusion into how we lead, decide and act as an employer. The new strategy is designed to unlock diversity of thought, strengthen trust and ensure measurable progress. This evolution reflects our ambition to move beyond compliance and create a workplace where everyone thrives and feels they belong.



Accountability and Transparency

Sustain and embed D&I into leadership accountability and organisational governance



Culture and Belonging

Foster an inclusive workplace culture where all colleagues feel they belong



Data and Insight

Strengthen data transparency and use insights to drive targeted action



Progression and Opportunity

Ensure fair access to development and career progression opportunity



Representation

Sustain and improve workforce diversity across all grades, with a focus on senior levels



Accountability and transparency

The strategy reinforces accountability and transparency in delivering D&I outcomes for Ofcom as an employer. Group Directors in their roles as leaders of the organisation will be directly accountable for implementing D&I actions within their Groups. They will be supported by the D&I team for expertise and guidance, and their leadership teams for responsibility. Ultimately, this is the responsibility of everyone at Ofcom, being delivered by strong leadership from the top.

Culture and belonging

Our aim is to create an environment where inclusion is practised every day. This means embedding behaviours that foster respect and psychological safety, amplifying colleague voice through networks and measuring belonging and inclusion as a core cultural indicator. Our colleague networks provide valuable insight into lived experiences, recognising that fostering inclusion is an organisation wide responsibility shared by all colleagues and leaders. The goal is a workplace where every colleague feels connected, valued and able to thrive.

We also recognise that from time to time, particular groups of colleagues with protected characteristics can need additional support. As a caring employer, with **respect** as one of our core values, we will ensure they feel included and supported at Ofcom.

Data and insights

Data will continue to be a driver of action to improve us as an employer. Ofcom will combine demographic and experience data for deeper insights and use this intelligence to target organisational interventions where they matter most. We will ensure transparency by providing colleagues with regular, accessible updates on key findings and outlining the actions being taken in response.

Progression and opportunity

Ofcom will identify and address barriers to progression and ensure fair access to development opportunities. We commit to full communication of development resources as colleagues navigate their own career paths. Using qualitative and quantitative data, we will strengthen our talent pipeline, introducing sponsorship and mentoring for underrepresented groups, and embedding equity into performance and promotion processes.

Representation

Ofcom aims to strengthen minority ethnic representation across all grades, with particular attention at Director and Principal levels. Our approach will expand outreach through strategic partnerships, embed inclusive recruitment practices and set clear measurable goals to monitor progress.

Targets

Targets are designed to focus effort where evidence shows the most significant and persistent gaps in representation and progression. We are therefore **retaining our target on senior minority ethnic representation of 19%**, as we did not meet this in our 2021-2026 strategy and it remains an area we continue to invest in.

We commit to maintaining our gender balance at senior levels and our organisation wide disability representation.

For other protected characteristics, we have chosen not to set numerical targets at this stage. We will prioritise monitoring, reporting and action plans to address barriers as they emerge. Alongside representation, we will also monitor qualitative indicators, such as confidence to speak up, sense of belonging and perceptions of inclusion, to ensure progress is felt as well as measured.

Year 1 and Year 2 themes

Year 1: Consolidation and clarity

Year 1 of the D&I Strategy marks a deliberate shift towards embedding D&I into our culture. After five years of progress, this phase focuses on embedding the fundamentals that will enable sustainable change. Our priorities are twofold:

- Maintaining gender balance and disability representation while addressing the challenge of senior ethnic minority representation.
- Creating the conditions for inclusion to embed across the organisation. This is about consolidating what works and bringing clarity to how we deliver measurable impact.

This means moving beyond isolated initiatives to systemic change, strengthening leadership

accountability through clear Key Performance Indicators, using data to uncover barriers and track progress, and ensuring that flexible structures and progression pathways are in place. At the same time, we will strengthen our culture by supporting underrepresented colleagues, amplifying intersectional insights and embedding belonging into everyday behaviours.

Year 2: Acceleration and innovation

Year 2 is about measuring our progress from year 1 and taking confident steps forward to refine our progress. With the fundamentals in place from year 1, we will focus on practical actions that make inclusion part of everyday experience. This means removing barriers and harnessing technology and data for smarter decision-making.



Our ongoing commitment

Our progress over the past five years reflects what can be achieved through collective effort and a clear sense of purpose. We have strengthened representation, built a more inclusive culture and embedded accountability into how we work. These achievements matter, because they improve our organisation and reflect the values we

hold. Our commitment remains unwavering to create an environment where every colleague feels respected, supported and able to thrive. Diversity and inclusion are not just principles for us, they are integral to who we are, how we succeed together and ultimately how we ensure communications work for everyone.

