

# WPP leaders recognised for championing inclusion and diversity in the workplace

Fifteen leaders from across WPP have been named in the global [Empower Role Model Lists 2022](#) for breaking down barriers and driving inclusion for people of colour in business.



Source: [www.pexels.com](https://www.pexels.com)

The lists, compiled by INvolve and supported by Yahoo Finance UK, celebrate 100 Executives, 100 Future Leaders and 50 Advocate Role Models from across all business sectors for their work in championing inclusion and driving strategic change within their organisations.

Ten senior WPP leaders were included in the 100 Executives List:

- Kirk McDonald, North America CEO, GroupM
- Dionne Aiken, chief marketing officer, Kantar
- Debbie Ellison, global chief digital officer, VMLY&R Commerce
- Traci Dinkins, president – Head of Media, North America, Essence
- Demet Ikiler, EMEA CEO, GroupM and country manager for Turkey, WPP;
- Akama Davies, global practice lead, Digital OOH, Xaxis
- Shelina Janmohamed, vice president – Islamic Marketing, Ogilvy
- Dorothy Burwell, partner, Finsbury Glover Hering
- Sabrina Natasha Browne, vice president – Corporate Affairs, BCW
- Apoorva Bapna, chief culture officer – India, WPP

VMLY&R's group director: client engagement Nikeisha Beckford and senior talent development manager Francis Carrero-Green both feature on the Future Leaders list.

WPP CEO Mark Read tops the Advocates list, which identifies leaders who are creating diverse and inclusive business environments, with Jessica Walsh, MD: Health at H+K Strategies and Jennifer Remling, WPP's chief people officer, also recognised.

Mark Read, CEO of WPP, said: "For WPP, a diverse and inclusive culture is a business opportunity as well as an imperative. Building teams from different backgrounds and experiences helps us to understand our audiences better, deliver innovation and produce the best work for our clients. Ultimately, our success is driven by our people and I'm proud of what we're doing together across WPP to create a culture where people feel they belong and want to be a part of."

Suki Sandhu OBE, founder and CEO of INvolve, added: "I'm so thrilled to be celebrating this global group of trailblazing executives, future leaders and advocates for people of colour in business. All the individuals within these lists are championing inclusion and, most importantly, leveraging their expertise and knowledge to drive inclusion initiatives and strategic change within their organisations. It's vital that people of colour within our global businesses can succeed and achieve authentically, and these Role Models are essential drivers of change and are smashing barriers to progress to create organisations where people of colour can thrive."

## **Initiatives in place**

In 2020, WPP announced a set of commitments to combat racial injustice and support Black and minority ethnic talent, investing \$30m over three years to support anti-racism charities and inclusion programmes. This includes our Racial Equity Programme which funds projects that help bring about change, and expanding WPP's Elevate sponsorship programme designed to support Black women in their career growth.

WPP has also introduced diverse candidate slate policies in the UK, US and APAC, has roles specifically marketed and accessible to candidates from under-represented groups, and is nurturing early talent to build a diverse pipeline. Our NextGen Leaders learning series welcomed 1,500 people from 60 countries in its 2021 cohort – with half of the participants identifying as Black, Asian or Latinx, while WPP's partnership with Colorintech, The Update, is an initiative aimed at Black tech professionals looking to accelerate their careers within the creative industry.

To ensure progress is driven by accountability, WPP established a global Inclusion Council in 2020 which gives a voice to underrepresented groups and advises on goals, identifies barriers and recommends new systems, and in 2021, introduced DE&I metrics linked to leaders' compensation and quarterly reviews.

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