

The Inclusion Network

Since TSB's inception in 2013, the bank has had a clear vision to create an inclusive work environment where Partners from all backgrounds can collaborate, feel valued and take ownership. There is a desire to ensure that *'the diversity of their Partners reflects the diversity of the communities the bank serves.'* As Maria Fletcher, Diversity & Inclusion Lead at the bank explained: *"Our whole purpose of creating a new bank was to generate competition and be something different in the market place, and we want our approaches towards employee engagement and diversity and inclusion to be different as well."*

The bank's Inclusion network was established in 2014 to *'focus on helping every TSB employee, regardless of gender, ethnicity, disability or sexual orientation, to fulfil their potential by creating an environment where they can access the help and tools they need.'* A decision was made early on by the members who helped set up the network to move away from traditional groups based on protected characteristics, and instead create a forum where all employees, irrespective of their backgrounds could join and share ideas. As Catherine Diamond, Senior HR Business Partner at the bank explained: *"I think just by having different networks for different protected characteristics by its very nature becomes exclusive. I think just by doing that you are calling out the difference rather than bringing people together."*

The Inclusion network is open to all employees and has three key themes, which the bank believes are relevant to every TSB Partner - *career development, work-life balance and inclusive culture.* The Inclusion team work very hard to gather information and feedback from people who attend its events. As Maria Fletcher, Diversity & Inclusion Lead at the bank explained: *"We have built a sophisticated tool that captures attendees' demographics the first time they register for an event, and we are pleased to find that they were reflective of our workforce demographics. It has given us the confidence that we are reaching the diverse audiences as well as engaging those who may not personally identify with a specific group."*

Additionally, the network consists of five affinity groups (gender, disability ethnicity, LGBT, and new to TSB), and each of the affinity groups has an executive sponsor who gives voice to the group and champions their cause, while making sure that their work is always on the business agenda. The Inclusion Network also works closely with the bank's human resources team by reaching out to role models within the five affinity groups to help Partners' develop their career within the bank and also address any workplace issues.

The senior leadership team at TSB have been extremely supportive of institutionalising the diversity and inclusion agenda. As Claire-Carrington Windo, Area Director for the West Midlands TSB and Co-Chair of the Inclusion network explained: *"The leadership have been extremely supportive of the work we do around diversity and the Inclusion network. We couldn't have asked for any more support."* Maria Fletcher added that at the time of setting up the Inclusion network, all of the executive committee, especially Paul Pester, their CEO was very encouraging and championed the cause. *"You hear about knocking on executive doors, and having to give them the business case for diversity and inclusion. In our case, every door has been opened. So that has been a huge help, and it is forward thinking. I think we are very lucky to have a group of people in our leadership team who are so enthusiastic about doing something around diversity and inclusion"* she said.