



MEASURING PROGRESS EVENT 2023 REPORT

Wednesday 15 November 2023
Skipton Building Society, Skipton



Measuring Progress Event 2023 Report

This exclusive in-person event was held in the picturesque Yorkshire Dales, hosted by Skipton Group. Guests kicked off the day with a special Yorkshire breakfast and a warm welcome by Stuart Haire, Group Chief Executive of Skipton Group.

Attendees gained clearer insight into how their organisation is performing against the WISE Ten Steps framework, via the results of their Ten Steps diagnostic submission. The day included best practice presentations from WISE members on issues of data and returners, opportunities for knowledge sharing during tailored breakout sessions, and, importantly, a deep dive into the 2023 Ten Steps diagnostic submission results.

Executive Summary

Having analysed the 2023 Ten Steps diagnostic submission results, we can see real long-term progress in terms of gender parity in the STEM sector among our members. We're pleased to announce a year-on-year increase in Ten Steps diagnostic submission scores since 2016.

In addition, comparative results from 2021-2023 show a generally positive trend across the majority of the steps. This year 'Plan Your Journey' became the highest scoring step – overtaking 'Change Mindsets' and 'Enable Flexible Working'.

Results also showed that two of our steps are falling behind the others in terms of progress - 'Transparency of Progression' and 'Sponsor Women Proactively'. These steps emerge as key areas for focus in 2024.

According to the Ten Steps diagnostic submission results, the average percentage of women in STEM companies is 28%, whilst the average percentage of women in STEM roles is 22% - coming just below the number of women in the Core STEM workforce at 26%. However, we're pleased to share that the average number of women in Engineering roles has hit 13% - higher than the national average.

Overall, it's good news and there's plenty of evidence that the hard work is paying off. Keep reading to better understand where future work most urgently needs to be done to continue achieving progress.

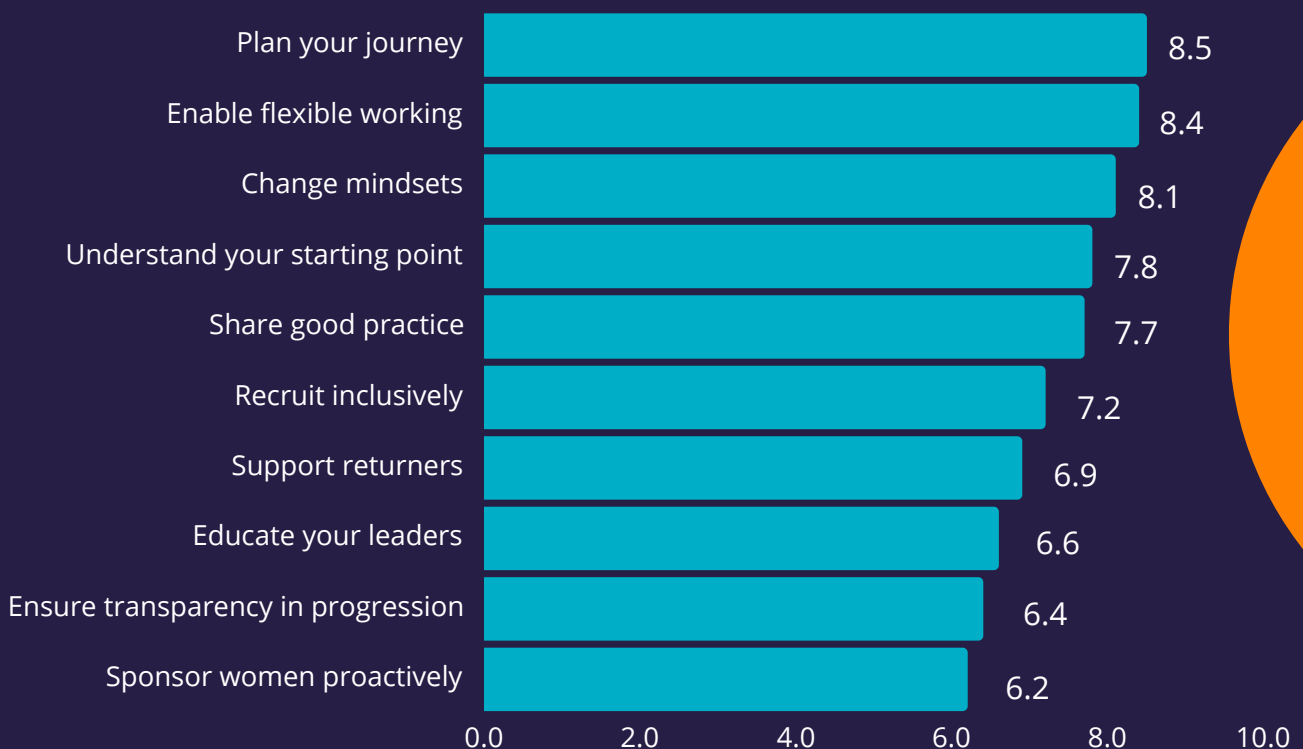
TEN STEPS DIAGNOSTIC SUBMISSIONS

This year was our most popular Measuring Progress Event (MPE) since 2020. We received a total of 28 diagnostic submissions from member organisations, with 10 first time entries. This means that we had a wealth of data to analyse and some new and interesting results to share with you.

In this document, we begin by running through the key takeaways from the 2023 Ten Steps diagnostic submission results.

OVERALL: TEN STEPS DIAGNOSTIC SUBMISSION RESULTS

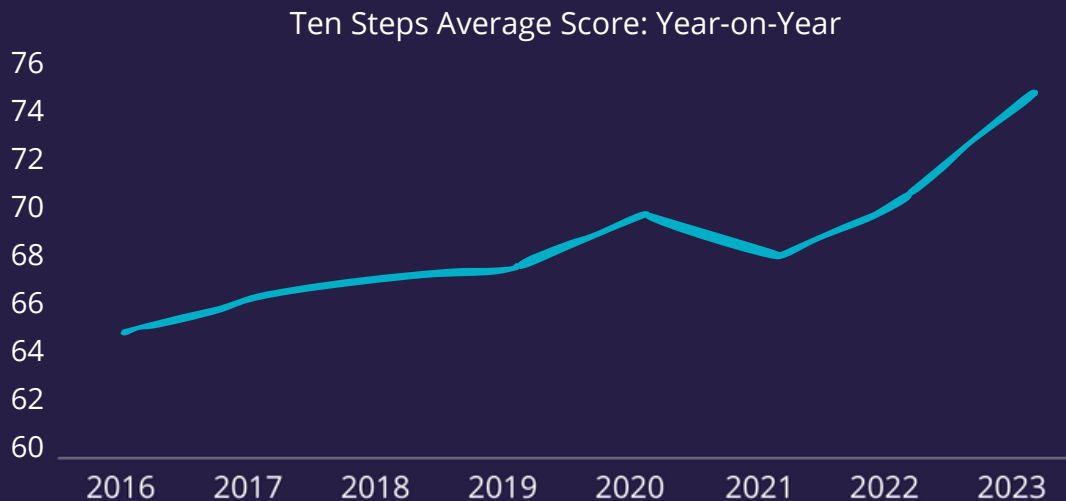
Ten Steps Average Score: Year-on-Year



This graph shows the 2023 Ten Steps Signatories score. This is an average of all the submissions received as part of the 2023 Measuring Progress event.¹ This year, for the first time, 'Plan your Journey' is the highest scoring step.

This has overtaken 'Enable Flexible Working' and 'Change Mindsets', which have comfortably sat as the top two steps for the past few years.

TEN STEPS DIAGNOSTIC SUBMISSION AVERAGE SCORE: YEAR-ON-YEAR

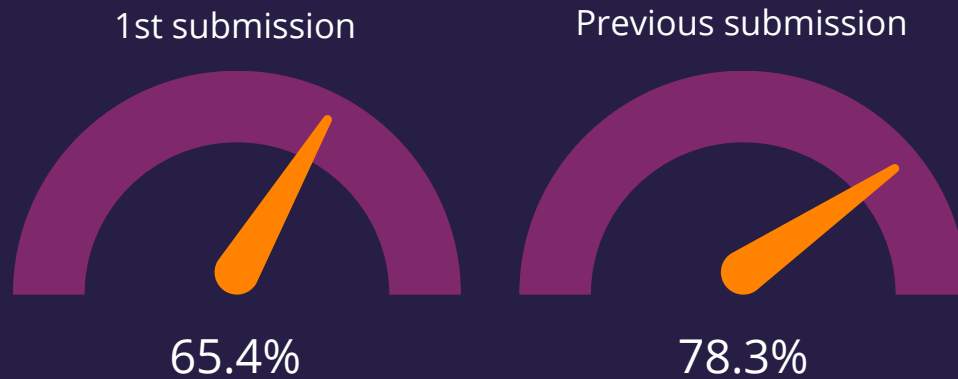


We are delighted to see a year-on-year increase in Measuring Progress Event diagnostic submissions since 2016. This suggests that we are seeing real long-term progress in terms of gender parity in the STEM sector.

The Ten Steps framework was founded in 2014 and many of our members have regularly submitted diagnostic submissions as part of the annual Measuring Progress Event ever since. The year-on-year benchmarking aspect demonstrates that our members are achieving clear growth.



FIRST SUBMISSION VERSUS 2023 SUBMISSION



Organisations submitting Ten Steps diagnostic submissions for the first time are showing an average score of 65.4, whereas those who have previously submitted are showing an average score of 78.3.



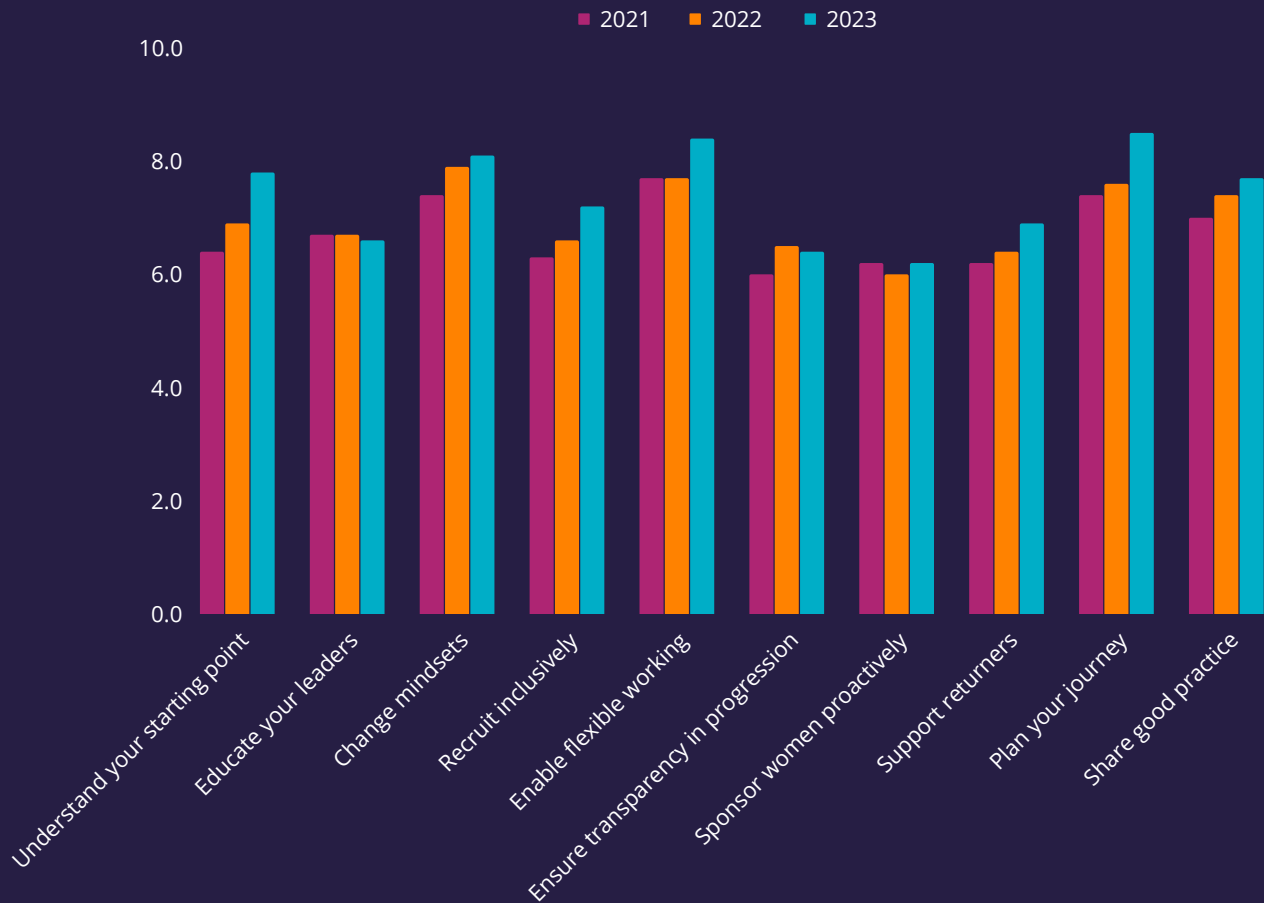
This year, there was an average increase in scores from 2022-2023 of 16%.



In addition, if we look more widely, since a company's first diagnostic submission to 2023, there is an average increase in score of 40%.

This suggests that companies that are following WISE guidance improve gender parity within their organisations.

2021 - 2023 COMPARISONS



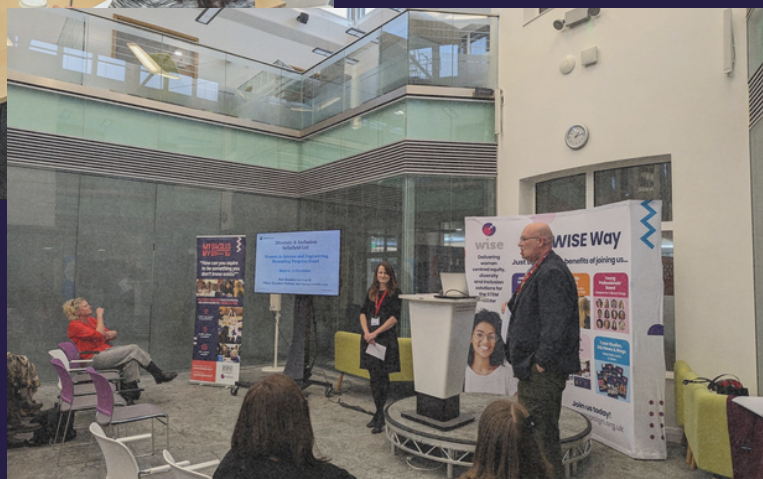
Looking at diagnostic submission results from 2021 through to 2023, we can see there is generally a positive trend across the majority of the steps. This is indicated by the overall score increasing year on year. When we compare 2023 diagnostic results against the two preceding years, we see that two of the steps have stagnated a little over the past few years: 'Transparency of Progression' and 'Sponsor Women Proactively'. These have now been our lowest scoring steps for a number of years. As such, these areas need urgent work and focus.

'Transparency of Progression' includes actions such as monitoring promotions by gender, actively encouraging diverse individuals to consider promotion opportunities, having gender balanced promotion panels, ensuring opportunities are transparent to everyone, and more. 'Sponsor Women Proactively' includes initiatives such as women-only development courses, offering mentoring and sponsorship within the businesses, and raising the visibility and profile of women in leadership teams.

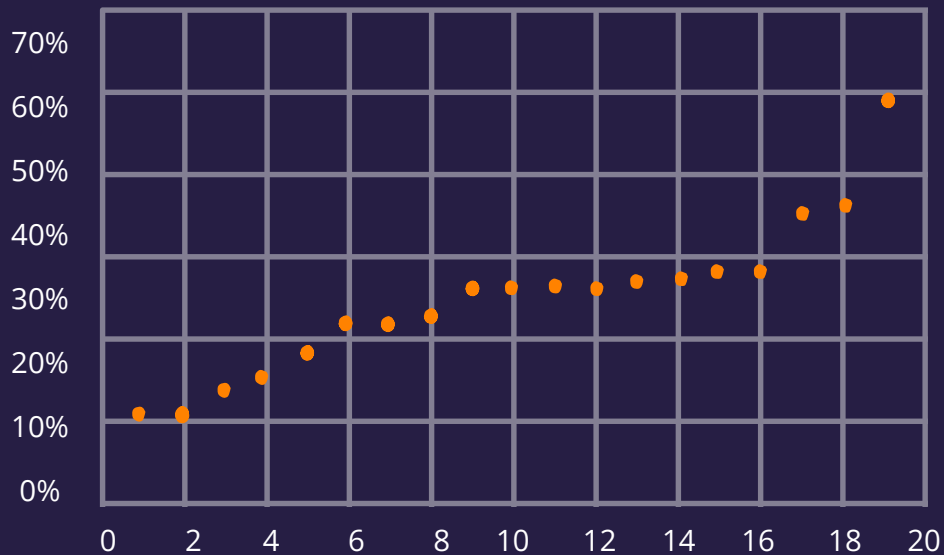
2021 - 2023 COMPARISONS CONTINUED...

We also see the lack of growth within 'Educate your Leaders' this year – it has dropped to the third lowest scoring step. This implies a decrease in scores for questions associated with leaders understanding, and being able to articulate, the business case for EDI, and around having leaders who lead by example to raise the profile of diversity issues. Having leadership buy-in for is critical to making change within organisations.

The two steps with the biggest increase in score this year are 'Understand your Starting Point', and 'Plan your Journey'. It's positive to see the growth of these steps as they demonstrate the importance of data. This data includes, for example, the number of women in a business, those in STEM roles, and those in leadership positions, but it's also about understanding employee experiences. This involves using a data driven approach to create an informed plan. It's about organisations having clear goals and priorities – putting initiatives in place and having the metrics in place to accurately measure their impact.



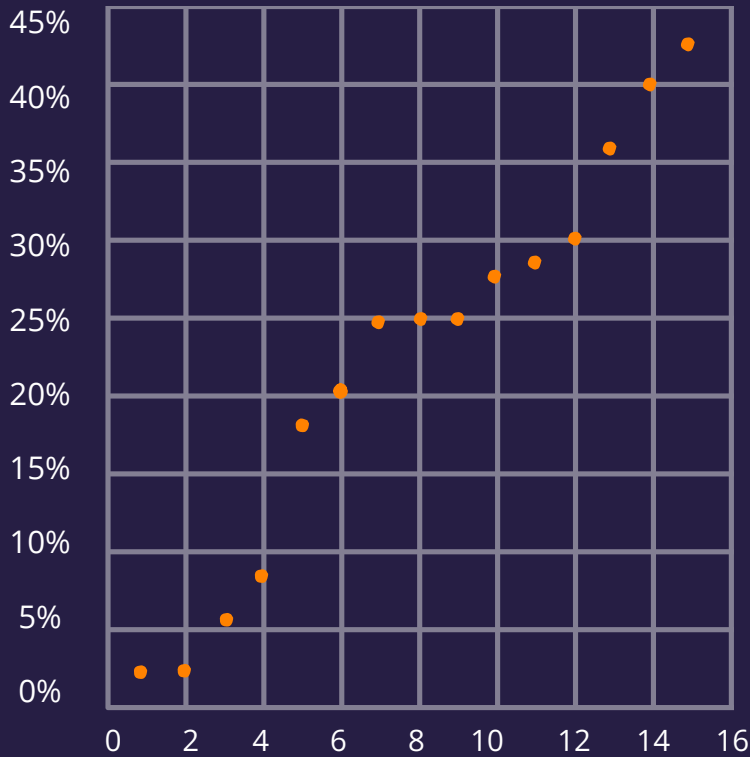
PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN IN WISE MEMBER ORGANISATIONS



We asked our WISE members questions about the number of women working in their organisation, and those working in STEM roles. This graph demonstrates the percentage of women in each company who's provided us with this data. As you can see, it ranges from 10%-59% with an average of 28%. To put this into context, women represent around 47% of the total UK workforce.



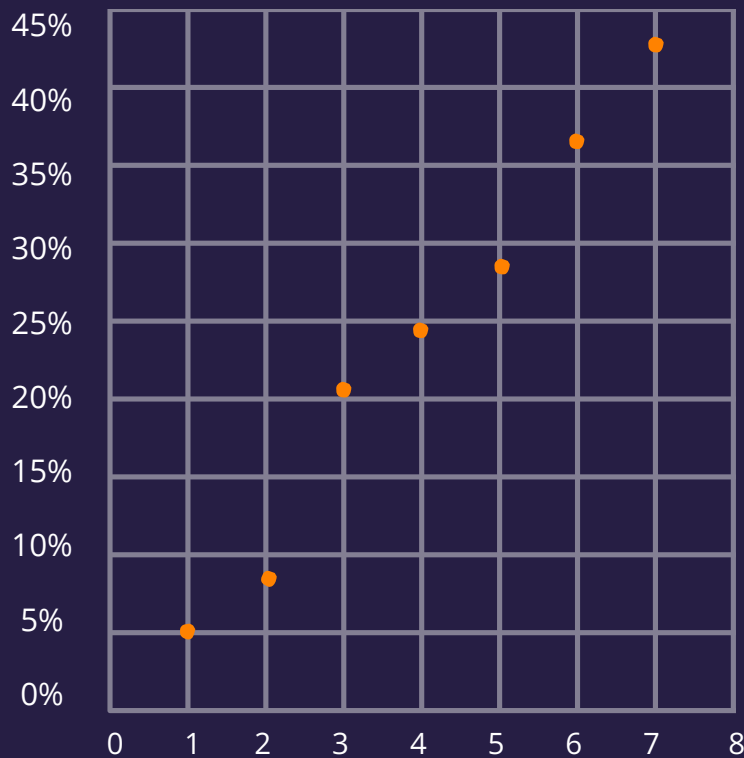
PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN IN STEM ROLES



If we breakdown the data further, to examine the number of women in STEM roles, the numbers are slightly lower across the board. They range from 3% to 42% with the average percentage being 22%.

Currently, the national number of women in the Core STEM workforce currently sits at 26%, which is just below this number. However, this figure depends on the sector – many Transport and Automotive firms are scoring very low, for example.

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN IN STEM ROLES - ENGINEERING



Engineering is the sector in which we've had the highest number of diagnostic submissions. Engineering as a STEM sector has one of the lowest representations of women in its workforce. The percentage of women who are Engineering Professionals currently sits around 13%.

As such, we can see that, in 2023, a higher proportion of WISE members are exceeding the national average. This means that the work that WISE companies are doing is having positive results.

MEMBERS' SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

We asked our attendees to share some of their recent successes and challenges with us, to help learn from each other. The following is a record of their answers.

What are the biggest challenges you're facing in achieving gender parity in STEM?

- Gender bias starts early - researchers have shown it affects children as young as 5 years old. The challenge is to counter this reality by educating leaders, teachers, parents.
- Stereotypes continue to persist in STEM. There is still unconscious biases around women in STEM.
- Forcing people to go back to the office just for "the sake of it", without any clear rationale, has led to a lack of trust between employer and employee.
- We need more education in the 'why?' and the 'how?' of EDI to better promote ideas of accountability and responsibility.
- There is a lack of graduate apprenticeship schemes.
- There is a lack of on career progression and sponsorship for women.
- Low visibility of women role models in STEM, especially at senior levels.
- In many industries, there are not enough women grads/job applicants, to achieve gender balance.
- The challenge of balancing business needs with employee needs.
- Lack of budget and resources.
- In large organisations, there is a lot of red tape to get EDI policies and processes developed and implemented.
- Lack of visible leadership around EDI topics.
- Lack of trust in management by employees.
- EDI is not a company priority.
- Lack of data being collected.

MEMBERS' SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES CONTINUED...

What are the biggest successes you've had in relation to achieving gender parity in STEM?

- Working Families Network. As part of this initiative, fathers show-off their caring duties to normalise the idea of 'parental' duties as opposed to 'mothering' duties.
- Having senior men as allies.
- Having executive support on all initiatives, leading to inclusive leadership and the lowering of manager dependency.
- STEM outreach programmes like Stemmettes and WISE's My Skills My Life have helped leaders, teachers, parents and especially young girls to see that there are lots of different career options within STEM.
- Taking advantage of virtual networking opportunities to facilitate discussions around EDI best practice in the STEM sector.
- Implementing employee questionnaires have been a successful way to gauge experiences and barriers and ideas for improvement.
- Holding deep dive discussion groups on key EDI topics.



'DATA REPORTING & ANALYSIS – WHY IS DATA IMPORTANT'

**Shagufta Sharif, Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Lead
Skipton Building Society**

Summary

Data is repeatedly cited as one of the key barriers to an effective EDI program. And yet, measuring data is critical to driving success. In this presentation, Shagufta will draw on 10 years of experience to consider how to elevate your use of data for an improved understanding of what's really happening.



Which data is important?

To understand data, we must begin at the beginning: collecting data. At present, the types of data typically collected by employers include:

- Gender Identity
- Ethnicity
- Sexual Orientation
- Disability
- Age
- Sex
- Marital Status

In addition, the following types of data are increasingly being collected:

- Socio economic status/ background
- Faith
- Caring responsibilities
- Neurodivergence

However, there is more useful data that could be collected. In fact, by doing so, companies can learn new and vital information. These include:

- Turnover information
- Grievances/complaints (Are complaints being dealt with? Are there any patterns you need to understand?)
- Staff well-being
- Training (What training is happening and what impacts are these initiatives having?)
- Recruitment (Are diverse panels used and, if so, are they having the desired impact?)

‘DATA REPORTING & ANALYSIS – WHY IS DATA IMPORTANT’ CONTINUED...

Why is data important?

It’s also useful to think about why we need data in the first place – what does it allow us to do? Data enables us to:

- to understand your starting point
- to prioritise your activity?
- to assess what is working and what is having an impact?

Furthermore, collecting data is often obligatory. The regulatory bodies that regulate different sectors request that data is reported – this includes SRA (Solicitors Regulatory Authority), FCA (Financial Conduct Authority), PRA (Prudential Risk Authority).

Without the right data, a company won’t know what interventions are most needed.

What to do with data?

Finally, you have the data so what do you do with it? Data can be analysed in order to:

- understand and improve data quality – a good quality dataset has a 60-80% completion rate
- communicate findings with employees and potentially externally – this could be about success on achieving gender or diversity targets, etc.
- identify areas with lower rates of disclosure and conduct targeted communication plans to remedy this
- make it a business-as-usual activity – this is best EDI practice
- decide on what you want to report on
- gender Pay Gap/ Ethnicity Pay Gap
- build accountability and encourage positive change

It’s important to acknowledge the quality of data when setting out your objectives. In addition, remember to look across the entire employee lifecycle.

‘DATA REPORTING & ANALYSIS – WHY IS DATA IMPORTANT’ CONTINUED...

How do organisations respond to this data?

When data is collected, it can be used to test any hypotheses around the diversity of your organisation, which will help dispel myths and allow you to take a more evidence-based approach to prioritising actions, and formulating or refining your D&I strategy, policies and initiatives.

When communicating with leadership, data helps to improve buy-in. Leaders can see the evidence behind any proposed initiatives, making it easier to build the case for implementing them.

With employees, data can show how their personal data is being used to drive positive action for their sake. Externally it shows that you are pursuing an authentic and deliberate approach to D&I within your organisation.

Although it is helpful to compare your data with other organisations in industry – comparing historical data for your own organisation is arguably more important, allowing you to track progress over time. Organisations with multiple years of data can understand how things are changing and monitor trends and impact of interventions.

The importance of inclusive culture

Finally, whilst collecting, analysing and publishing diversity data is an important step in driving change, change will be hard to achieve and sustain if it does not occur within an inclusive culture.

Therefore, it’s important to consider and measure the inclusiveness of your organisation to ensure that you create an environment and culture where people from any background can thrive. You can ask employees questions such as:

- Do you feel part of the team?
- Do you feel valued?
- Do you feel you can be yourself at work?

**Measuring data is critical to driving success.
What gets measured gets done.**

'CAREER BREAKS – IMPROVING PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCE'

Hilary Royston-Bishop, Research and Development Manager
Alan Rankin, Diversity, Inclusion, Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead
Sellafield Ltd.

Summary

Sellafield Ltd have recently completed a year-long project to improve people's experiences of taking a career break and then returning to work, whether this is maternity, paternity, a sabbatical or ill health. Hilary Royston-Bishop and Alan Rankin discuss what has been put in place and its impact.



The D&I journey 2016-2023

TSince 2016, Sellafield has been on its D&I journey. This has included implementing a range of initiatives, working around the challenges posed by Sellafield's history and tradition; demographics and geography; complexity and bureaucracy

Employee-led support networks

One of the main ways in which Sellafield has successfully pursued its EDI agenda is through the development of Employee-led support networks. These are:

- HR Supported
- Executive Sponsored
- Employee Led

The support groups fall into four categories: Mental Health, Equalities, Colleague health and well-being; neurodiversity. There are currently over 12,000 active network group members.

'CAREER BREAKS – IMPROVING PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCE' CONTINUED...

Gender Balance Network

One of the networks making the biggest impact is the Gender Balance Network. This is open to both men and women who want to positively impact issues related to gender justice at Sellafield. Unlike other networks at Sellafield, the Gender Balance Network is not a support network, but a group of volunteers. Instead, members act to influence change in the business and make improvements.

Sellafield have been WISE members since 2020. They use their WISE diagnostic to specifically inform and prioritise their Gender Balance Activities. Projects in previous years included assembling over 30 Case Studies of people at different points in their careers who are doing things differently, including many women working in STEM, to provide many examples of things that people do to manage their work life balances.

This also includes people who work part-time, who took career breaks, who took adoption leave, who took shared parental leave and who came in as graduates, apprentices, direct entrants and much more. Volunteers with the Gender Balance working group also produced fact sheets on these with advice on how to overcome them and where to go for help.



'CAREER BREAKS – IMPROVING PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCE' CONTINUED...

Supporting employees to return after a career break

In 2022, in response to the negative experiences of some staff after returning to work following a career break, we decided to bring our group together, to focus on one challenge area: returning from career breaks.

Between April 2022-April 2023, in response to the negative experiences of some staff after returning to work following a career break, volunteers with the Gender Balance working group planned and then achieved:

- A series of tailored, accessible resources designed a support returners and managers to navigate key information related the maternity journey and career breaks.
- 'Case studies' of Sellafield staff who have taken career breaks – to promote visible role models
- Improvements to the intranet webpage – improved usability and signposting of maternity and career break policy

Resources Developed included:

The Maternity Leave Journey

An infographic with information, plotted along the specific key points of the pregnancy journey, with clear advice to staff about where and when action is needed from them.

Returning to Work Guidance

A concise informative document, aimed at employees, that supports them to plan how they can best ensure that their first weeks and months at work are as smooth as possible.

During a Career Break

An informative document, aimed at employees, which helps them to prepare for their career break in the best possible way for them. It asks them to think about logistics related to "touch points" with their line manager whilst they are away from work.

The Impact

Sellafield are tracking the number of people clicking on these new resource pages and links. After an initial surge of traction after launch, there continues to be steady and regular traffic. Anecdotally, colleagues have shared testimonies about the positive impact of this new project.

You can read more about this initiative, its impact, and how to replicate the initiative, in a forthcoming in-depth WISE case study, which will be available to WISE members on the [Library page](#) of our WISE website.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

In our breakout sessions, we focused on three key topics:

- Inclusive recruitment
- Data
- Allyship

This document aims to record the outcomes of those generative discussions.

Inclusive recruitment

We asked our members, in terms of reaching underrepresented groups, which platforms have been most successful and why?

Our members mentioned doing STEM outreach with local primary schools, as well as running internships and placement opportunities. The Raspberry Pi Competition is a free competition run by PA Consulting, designed to inspire young people aged 8 to 18 to learn STEM skills, teamwork, and creativity, and to move toward a career in STEM.

Making apprenticeship case studies can shine a spotlight on the many different STEM pathways that are available and reach a wider audience. Companies can also partner with apprenticeship centres to help them recruit from under-represented groups.

It was highlighted that, in order to encourage more job applications from women, companies should adopt strength-based interviews, use a gender decoder to avoid off-putting masculine language on job adverts, or trial blind CVs to avoid unconscious gender bias during the recruitment process.

We asked our members: What initiatives have you taken to appeal to the returner demographic specifically? What has worked best and why?

The initiatives most successfully used to appeal to returner demographics included increased family-friendly policies, an emphasis on job flexibility and agility, care giver leave and gender neutral parental leave.

Other tactics included strength based interviews that are technical and soft skills balanced, and providing training to hiring managers.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS CONTINUED...

Data, data, data

We asked our members: In terms of collecting data for tracking and monitoring EDI performance, what are your biggest challenges and why?

By far and away, members cited that the biggest challenge for them is acquiring data. EDI data is often voluntary. Many employees have trust-issues around sharing sensitive information. This is fueled by a lack of understanding as to why the data is needed and how it is used.

Other challenges highlighted a lack of resources, lack of appropriate HR staff and systems to process data, and a lack of data analysts to support EDI data learnings. Attendees reported anxieties about handling GDPR Responsibilities whilst also collecting data of staff's protected characteristics. One member raised that sometimes fear about what the data will tell us or reveal about a situation can be stopping companies from properly utilising data to its fullest potential.

We asked our members to share some of their own successes or challenges in relation to EDI and data?

Members reported that hard work paid off – they saw a great success in data accumulation after a big, concerted push in that area. One member suggested that online employee surveys can pop up (on screen) on pay-day when employees are using the company's digital system to check their pay slips. Give people ringfenced time during their work hours to complete EDI surveys. To ensure a better completion rate for these, there can also be an incentive for completing the survey. Other ideas for incentivising the filling out of surveys for employees included staging a competition for the department with the most completed surveys; or considering offering staff a free donut if completed.

Storytelling and testimonials work too – and these complement a focus on data and numbers.



BREAKOUT SESSIONS CONTINUED...

The importance of Allyship

We asked our members: How can we ensure that allyship programmes move beyond simply creating awareness to creating meaningful change in our workplaces?

The responses we received stressed the importance of acting, rather than always talking. We need more training to support people to understand the difference between active and passive allyship, and to practice the former. Don't just say "I'm an ally" but show that you are in your daily actions. For example, people should be allies even when the underrepresented/marginalised groups are not present in the room. However, it was also raised that men may need pre training to support them in becoming strong allies who feel comfortable speaking out – some members highlighted a sense of anxiety around wanting to patronise women by speaking up on their behalf unnecessarily/not knowing how or what to say.

Other tangible suggestions included to invite opinions from underrepresented groups when making important decisions to ensure that their perspectives are heard, and to use Employee Resource Groups (ERGs).

We asked our members: How do we make sure that we bring all men along on the allyship journey? Can you provide examples in which you have tried to reach and engage with harder-to-engage male demographics?

Our members highlighted that active male allies can be used as change agents to influence others. This has proven helpful for engaging the "neutrals" and "dissenters". Someone cited an example of using a man to speak on International Women's Day as a good way to initially engage other men in the cause. Consider networking opportunities where allies can openly express themselves, thus providing an environment in which they feel most comfortable.

Target influencers such as union reps and then you will start to get others on board. By using external stakeholders, you can help gain support for the EDI narrative internally. Importantly, it was noted that we need to create a work culture that supports allies to learn and grow – rather than simply to chastise their mistakes. Other responses highlighted the positive impact of Reverse Mentoring programmes, Dignity In The Workplace programmes and unconscious bias training. Finally, be intentional about your goals - make an action plan to drive the desired change.

ROUNDUP AND TAKEAWAY

It was an inspiring day all-round. We were delighted to share our 2023 Ten Steps diagnostic submission results, which demonstrated our members' tangible progress.

There was a positive trend across the majority of the steps, in addition to a year-on-year increase in step scores since 2016. We believe that this progress reflects a widespread positive trend within the EDI sector, which has become smarter about how it achieves its objectives. Nonetheless, our 2023 results also show a need for more leadership buy-in and greater commitment to positive action for women.

Data was the topic that was on everyone's lips throughout the day – not least the logistical difficulties of collecting it. Shagufta Sharif provided some invaluable tips; not only what data to collect, but what to do with data once you have it and then how to best utilise it organisationally.

This presentation highlighted that collecting, analysing and publishing diversity data needs to be accompanied by a commitment to fostering an inclusive work culture.

Hilary Royston-Bishop and Alan Rankin's presentation demonstrated the power of employee-led gender working groups as a mechanism through which to make real change happen.

Their work showed us how to plan and then create accessible high-impact, low cost resources to improve people's experiences of taking a career break and then returning to work, by first learning from the lived experiences of employees to imagine what success looks like.

In event feedback, members reported that they are taking away a renewed belief in collaboration across the STEM industry; in the importance of sharing insights and sharing challenges. In the words of one member, "I should network more!"

Most reported that they are taking away the importance of communication with other organisations and colleagues, and internally, communication within their own organisation to promote an inclusive culture. Finally, when it comes to the Ten Steps diagnostic submission results, our members said that they are taking away the following advice: Stay positive and keep adapting.

CALLS TO ACTION

Here are three actions that you can do today, to improve your scores for the next Ten Steps diagnostic submission.

1. Last year, WISE introduced member roadmaps, a tool to allow you to track the delivery and impact of your WISE membership, aligned with targets and goals set out by you, on what you would like to achieve. For each area of focus, you and your Relationship Manager will come up with an action plan of agreed activities on how WISE can support you in that area. Each of these will be monitored closely throughout your membership year. Speak to your Relationship Manager today about getting your roadmap started.
2. Networking with other STEM industry-leaders within the sector provides a vital platform for sharing, reflecting and learning. Each year, WISE programmes a tailored agenda of online and in-person events, knowledge sharing events, and exclusive networking opportunities. Make sure that you keep up to date with these by checking out our events page.
3. Consider booking in a [Ten Steps workshop](#) to work out how to move the dial for gender parity most effectively for the year ahead, responding directly to where your company is right now. After the in-depth Ten Steps workshop, organisations are provided with a full report capturing the diagnostic results and analysis, as well as WISE's recommended actions.





WISE Campaign

WISE Campaign is a not-for-profit CIC which exists to deliver women-centred equity, diversity and inclusion solutions for the STEM sectors. We support our partners to achieve gender parity and benefit from better productivity, innovation and business performance.

We work with major UK organisations to improve their gender balance and are open about the economic and business benefits of doing so. WISE offer exclusive membership support to over 100 organisations through events, webinars, workshops and training.

[For more information, please visit us at:
www.wisecampaign.org.uk](http://www.wisecampaign.org.uk)

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