



Intellectual  
Property  
Office

# Our Inclusive One IPO Culture



**IPO** | Making life better through IP

Intellectual Property Office is an operating name of the Patent Office



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# Foreword

A brilliant place to work is one where our people have everything they need to succeed in their role. Our people are at their best when they are clear on what is expected of them, have the capability to deliver, and the confidence to be themselves and do what is right.

Our ideal culture encourages people to build relationships, work together and create a strong sense of IPO community. It's not just about what we do, it's also about how it feels to be a part of One IPO. We want everyone to feel included, valued for their uniqueness and supported in all they do.

We have built our culture on principles not rules, inclusion for all, and trust in each other and our intentions. Our Deal principles, which sit at the heart of our culture, encourage us to see everyone as an individual, with different skills, knowledge, and experience. Each of us has a unique set of gifts and a special contribution to make and at the IPO, our goal is to give everyone the chance to use those to make life better through the work we do. We think this is a really good way to think of inclusion at the IPO.

**Penny Phillpotts,**  
Director of People and Place

# What is Culture in the IPO?

This report reflects on work done in 2021/22 to bring our people together in our One IPO culture. It celebrates the work of our teams and the individual effort invested by our people to build supportive, authentic communities who value each other for their difference and their brilliance.

Culture is what makes us who we are, it's the shared values, practices and norms that guide us and influence how we work together to make the IPO brilliant. We want a culture that we feel connected to and proud to be part of. We want it to join us together as One IPO community, to be supportive and allow us to be who we are, to enable us to innovate and grow, embrace ambiguity, and bounce back when needed. Ultimately, we want a way of working that enables us to do and be our best and so that we can both achieve the ambitious goals we have set for ourselves as well as delight our customers – who, after all, are the reason we do what we do.

Our cultural foundations are built on:

- **Principles not rules** - recognising we all work differently allowing autonomy and decision making within guiding principles
- **Inclusion for all** - where we have the confidence and support to bring our whole selves into work
- **Trust in each other and assuming good intentions** – to build adult relationships

How it feels to be part of the IPO is important to us. It is an indicator of how engaged IPO people feel here and how successful our cultural activity has been. This then helps us determine what to focus on in future.

Our culture already gives us a lot of what we need to be successful (we know from our recent surveys) but there are gaps and pressures that we must adapt to. For example, Hybrid working, the Cost-of-Living Crisis, the Gender Pay Gap etc. How we respond to these challenges will define the direction of our culture, and we will need to lock in what is great about who we are whilst improving on areas where we could do better.

The role of our culture team is to help create the conditions for our ideal culture including helping teams to develop the confidence to create the right culture themselves, becoming more intuitive about what is working and what is not. Our cross-disciplinary work gives consistency across our corporate activities like leadership development, reward and recognition, pay, inclusion, communications, and continuous improvement.

Our organisational ambition is to be the best IP (Intellectual Property) office in the world. Our One IPO inclusion strategy is central to defining the features of that.



“ We want a culture that we feel connected to and proud to be part of ”

# Our Values and the Deal principles

Our values and principles are the foundation on which we build our relationships, and so have a key role in influencing how much a part of the wider IPO community our people feel.

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## Our Values

Our values guide our customer and people focussed action. They are what we believe in and, along with our corporate strategy, direct what we do:



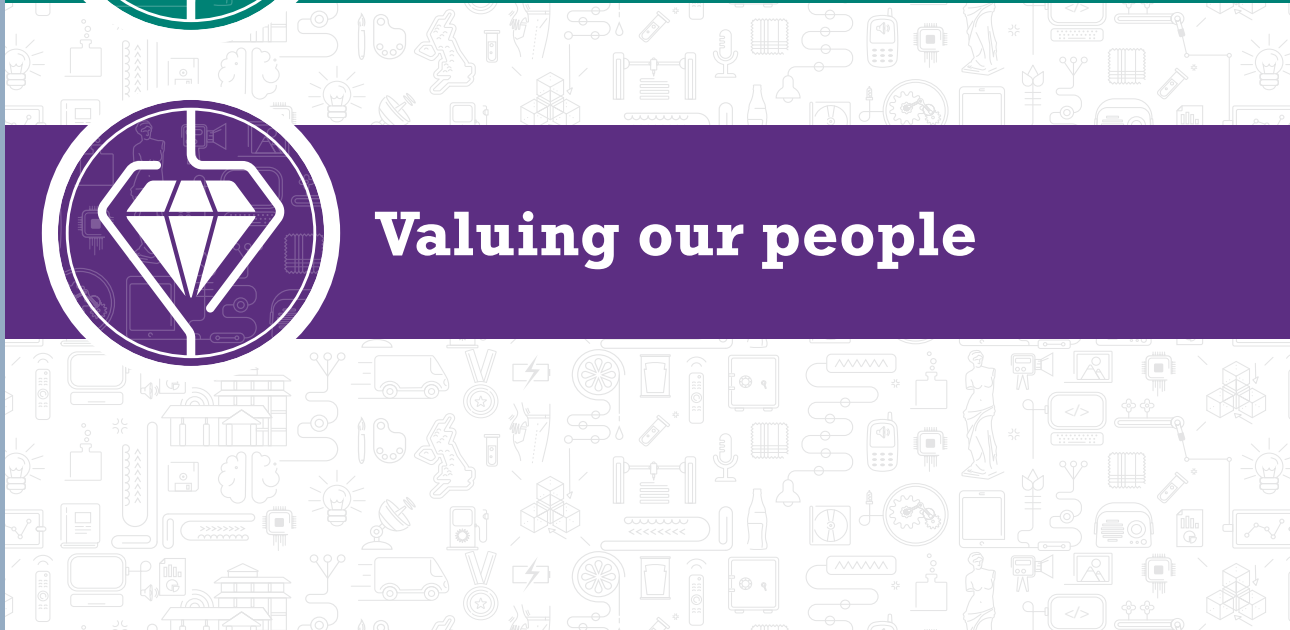
**Delivering for customers**



**Innovating for success**



**Valuing our people**





## Our principles - The Deal

The Deal marked the beginning of our journey to becoming a principles-based organisation. It gave us clarity about what good looks like in terms of how we interact with each other, and it allows us to do things differently depending on the individual.

The Deal principles can help guide our actions so that we are able to get the best out of each other. It is a fundamental building block of our 'One IPO' culture and is our commitment to give our best and see the best in others. It involves all of us contributing to a safe space for us to operate within, and we will continue building our capability to have the conversations that support this.

The Deal principles are:



### Respectful

We are mindful of how we act towards others, considering our impact. We treat others as they would prefer to be treated.



### Accountable

We take responsibility for our actions, and those of our teams. We own our own performance, give, and receive feedback, and we do what we say we are going to do. We own our mistakes and learn from the process.



### Confident

We ask the questions that help us continually improve. We are open to change and to taking calculated risks. We feel comfortable asking for support when we need it and can challenge those who do not meet our values and principles.



### Reasonable

We consider how appropriate an action or decision is in the light of the circumstances. We are prepared to compromise when it is appropriate, and we consider carefully alternative views and opinions.



### Pragmatic

We focus on the wider impact of our actions and decisions, looking at the overall impact. We rely on principles, as well as rules. We recognise fairness and consistency are not the same thing, and people sometime need to be treated differently to have the chance of an equal outcome.

# Inclusion and Diversity

**Making the IPO a Brilliant Place to Work is a key pillar in our strategy and weaved intrinsically through that is our focus on inclusion and diversity.**

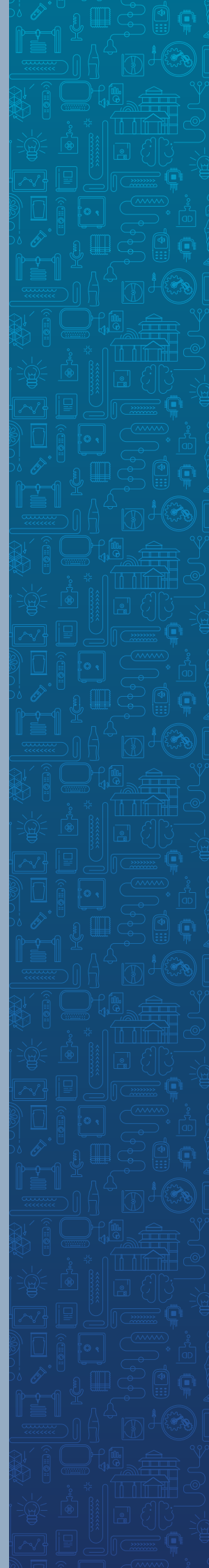
We know a diverse workforce is an authentic and innovative workforce and creating an environment where our people can bring their whole selves to work cultivates strong communities. Those communities are at the heart of our intersectional approach to building an environment of openness, trust, and respect.

We can all benefit from an inclusive approach. When we start thinking about how to best involve everyone in what we do and the decisions we make, we can identify and remove barriers to success for us all.

Often when people think of inclusion, they only think of certain characteristics that are protected by law. These protections are important to make sure that no one is disproportionately disadvantaged by our processes, policies, or structures, but we like to think more widely about inclusion at the IPO.

## How do we do that?

- Our Staff Networks are a critical friend to the central HR function, and a driving force for change. They work intersectionally across all protected characteristics, partnering to make sure our policies, practices, services, and culture are inclusive.
- Our Respect at Work campaign continues to remind people of our zero-tolerance approach to Bullying and Harassment. Driven by our central HR functions, but tailored to and partnered with each department, we offer support, challenge, training, and opportunities to engage with what respectful behaviour is. Creating an environment where our people are safe to challenge inappropriate behaviour and giving them confidence to do so is critical to our success.
- External partnerships with organisations such as Chwarae Teg and Inclusive Employers ensure that we are aligning all we do with the best-known practice. Of course, being a top employer in the UK is important to us, but the scrutiny that comes with external validation reassures and challenges us to keep improving with our people at the heart of all we do.
- Evidence based practice is critical to making changes that are right for our people. Regular scrutiny of data helps us to align our strategy to any development points we have. Using data, we have been able to improve policies and practices around things like recruitment, reward and recognition, shared parental leave and menopause support.
- An engaged and diverse workforce benefits our customers greatly. A culture of respecting diversity and respecting all customers is vital. All customer contact should be dealt with fairly and all issues taken seriously. This is done in line with the Customer Strategy, Customer Charter, and the IPO Complaints process. We are developing policies around gender inclusive language, how we can help vulnerable customers, and raising awareness across the IPO on accessibility – how we communicate with customers.



# What have we achieved?

We are thrilled this year to have been recognised by several external organisations for being a fair and inclusive employer



Our networks have worked hard this year to celebrate difference and improve communities, connections and understanding.

They are most proud of:

## Women's Network

“We have developed a network of volunteers in the organisation who, amongst other things, have made a commitment to becoming a Menopause Friendly Employer by developing resources, guidance, support groups videos and podcasts.”

“We have developed a cross-government session, which was later delivered to all our people, busting myths on Imposter Syndrome and sharing personal stories.”

### Hazel Thorpe

Business Change Manager and  
Women's Network Chair

### Gemma Jones

Head of Business Intelligence and  
Women's Network Deputy Chair



# Men's Network

“Following our own successful in-house lunchtime seminar, men from the network contributed to a Civil Service wide session on the benefits of shared parental leave.”

“Creating a safe space for men to share their experiences on personal topics such as testicular cancer, alcoholism and surviving domestic abuse.”

## Peter Mason

Deputy Director and Men's Network Chair

# BAME Network

“We hosted a series of office-wide discussions in a ‘safe space’ where participants were encouraged to ask questions about issues faced by colleagues from ethnic minority backgrounds. The discussions had excellent feedback and allowed all colleagues to share thoughts on issues ranging from current affairs to behaviours in the workplace.”

“During the pandemic, to raise awareness of Black History Month, we published a series of articles on our intranet, covering contributions about culture and colleagues’ experiences of being from ethnic minority backgrounds in the UK.”

“We also hosted a talk during Black History Month by Yvonne Walsh, Senior HR professional and Public Tribunals Officer, who spoke about her education and professional life and the challenges she faced growing up in London as a black woman.”

**Michelle  
Llewellyn**


**Head of Finance Business Partners  
and BAME Network Chair**



# iBelieve

“Partnering with our Women’s Inclusion Network (WIN) we delivered a panel discussion on ‘iBelieve: in Feminism’ where several people shared why Feminism is important to them and their personal experiences around this belief.”

“We published a video entitled “What does Christmas mean to you?” where we invited all staff to share their religious and emotional perceptions of the season.”



**Stephen Williams**  
**Patent Examiner and**  
**iBelieve Network Chair**

# Peer 2 Peer

“We have welcomed 12 new colleagues to the weekly virtual Peer 2 Peer sessions in the last 12 months.”

“We have continued to provide support to our group with weekly virtual discussion, Christmas Day sessions, Sunday Night Quizzes and one to one catch ups.”

## Dave Watts

Senior Business Analyst and  
Peer 2 Peer Network Co-Chair

## Fiona Dutson

Project Support Manager and  
Peer 2 Peer Network Co-Chair





# iCan

“We have increased the level of support for recruitment panels so that everyone interviewed has the best chance of success. We’ve also worked with our accommodation team to improve workplace assessments, and through Hybrid working have helped to make sure that access to the building is suitable for all.”

“We have also been at the heart of our operations, being used as experts to identify potential offensive Trade Marks. We’ve also been extremely proud of our new Migraine blog which has led to a new mini iCAN-network.”



**Doug Adams**

Trade mark Examiner  
iCan co-chair

**Erin Buntin**

Associate Patent Examiner  
iCan co-chair

**iCan**

# iThink

“Several members of the network have shared personal stories on the intranet to raise awareness of neurodiversity and how it affects them in their everyday life and work”

“Other members have worked with external partners to contribute to in-person events, webinars and magazine articles for IP Inclusive, the CIPA Journal and others.”

## Nikki Dowell

Head of Patent Examining Group and iThink Network Chair



# iPride

“We held a live “watch-along” event where a panel of colleagues from across the business watched a series of themed videos around LGBT+ issues. In real time, our virtual audience were able to share thoughts and questions with all those watching to mark LGBT History. After each video, a panel discussed the issues covered before taking questions from the audience in what was a respectful and lively discussion.”

**AI Skilton**

**Beth Kenure**



**Beth, is Head of Internal  
Communications and Engagement  
and iPride Network Co-Chair**

**AI, is Principal Hearing Officer and  
iPride Network Co-Chair**

# Carer's Network

“We continued to offer Carer's Coffee mornings, providing help and support to our colleagues when they need it most.”

“We also continued to offer support via social networks for our Carer's who are finding it difficult to find a work life balance. Our social networks give them the opportunity to interact with someone at a time and in a way that suits them.”



**Karen Powell**  
**Head of Governance and**  
**Risk Management and**  
**Carer's Network Chair**

## Next year's focus

- Our disabled colleagues have reported to have found it particularly difficult throughout the Pandemic. That is why we will undertake the Disability Smart Audit to improve support, implement an Inclusion Passport which goes even further than our current disability passport, and undertake an Assistive Tech review to ensure our people have easy access to the technology they need to do their jobs effectively.
- We will start to record data on social economic background (SEB (Social Economic Background)) and ensure social mobility is a consideration in all inclusion initiatives. We will measure the current SEB status at the IPO and undertake a gap analysis activity to form a measurable and accountable SEB action plan.
- We will continue to be led by our data and our people's needs. We will use our all-staff survey to ascertain those needs and will scrutinise our data to ensure that none of our people are disadvantaged because of their protected characteristics.
- We still have more to do around our Gender Pay Gap. The number of women in STEM-based roles continues to negatively impact on our figures, so this continues to be a priority we are working hard to address.





**“ Creating an inclusive and diverse environment in the IPO is the responsibility of everyone ”**

## Gender Pay Gap

In 2021/22 we reported a mean pay gap of 18.6%, and median of 26.8%, in favour of men's salaries when calculated using Government Equalities Office's (GEO) methodology. Whilst our concern is not one of gender pay, there is an underrepresentation of women in specialist STEM roles in the IPO.

33% of our people are in specialist STEM roles. Although women make up nearly half of our workforce, most of them are in non-specialist roles. Our patent examining roles attract higher salaries due to their specialism, however, only 22% of these are taken up by women. Although this issue is not exclusive to the IPO, we need to address any perceived barriers that are preventing women from pursuing a career in STEM.

33% of our people are in specialist STEM roles.

22% of these roles are taken up by women.


We are actively seeking to recruit more women into our specialist roles and remove unintended barriers for all our women to progress in the workplace. With support of our STEM ambassadors and our Women's Network, this year we have:

- Developed a programme of work to raise the profile of Patent Examining as a career, seeking out more opportunities to speak at schools, universities and take advantage of media opportunities.
- Continued a STEM based outreach programme in local schools and universities, delivering talks to students, aiming to inspire girls and women to study and build careers in these fields.
- Invested in a STEM Returner scheme to help those who have been out of the STEM environment close the gap in their CV.
- Our Men's Network have continued to role model our Shared Parental Leave offering, holding all staff events to talk about the benefits and discuss the flexibility of the policy, trying to encourage more people to take advantage of it.
- Ensured our outreach activity is diverse and attractive in its messaging so it presents STEM and innovation as something for everyone.
- Continued to work on improving our recruitment practices, ensuring there are no barriers to women in our processes, using data to inform where we advertise, and how to improve attraction.
- Have looked at ways to strengthen the STEM pipeline outside of the IPO for the benefit of everyone, by investing into tech training for women of all ages.

Creating an inclusive and diverse environment in the IPO is the responsibility of everyone, our people and our teams have inclusion weaved intrinsically through their strategies, ensuring everyone can feel included in our culture. This report celebrates the work done by the culture team to make the IPO a brilliant place to work.

# Talent and Learning

**The IPO is committed to providing an environment in which its people are encouraged to learn and develop so they can achieve their potential, build on existing skills, improve their performance, and deliver against their goals. We have a suite of training that is available to everyone working at the IPO, this encompasses different learning methods such as face to face, virtual, e-learning and written learning resources. We ensure the design of our training is supportive of all attendees needs and provide a variety of times and dates to accommodate different working patterns. Talent and Learning are vital in supporting our aim of being a brilliant place to work, and all the work we do fully support the IPO achieving the culture we strive for.**



We are focussed on developing the capability of our leaders and ensuring individual skills are fit for our current challenges and those of the future. The ability to have the best, respectful conversations remains a key part of our focus for all our people, and we are supporting our leaders to enhance their skills, so they remain relevant and can support our people in our changing environment and are in line with our cultural aims. This creates an inclusive environment for people to have open and honest conversations and be able to bring their whole self to work.

Our peer-agreed leadership behaviours provide us with the foundation for an upcoming programme of development for our Board and leaders at all levels. These are intrinsic in our drive for our culture, for our people through their behaviours, and underpins our focus and how the IPO pulls together, encourages open honest interactions, and supports the business to deliver it's aims.

Our core leadership and management package has been nominated for several Investors in People (IiP) and Civil Service Awards, commending our focus on supporting and developing our people.

IiP assess how the IPO is performing against their framework and will advise and support on how we can improve over time. This enables us to understand performance at leading, supporting and improving our people, whilst comparing against other organisations in our industry.

The IiP Standard sets out the criteria for high performance through people. It is a simple framework to benchmark the effectiveness of leadership and management practices in any organisation. IiP is the standard for people management. It is also an additional benchmark to making the IPO become a 'Brilliant Place to Work.'

In May 2020, the IPO achieved the Gold Investors in People Award, as well as The Health and Wellbeing Award that was recently introduced by IiP. This takes us into the top 16% of accredited companies and we have since developed a corporate action plan to take forward improvements. As part of the process, our accreditation was reviewed at the 12-month and 24-month stage.



It is key to highlight that as part of our reviews, it was evident people are intrinsically motivated and feel valued by working for the IPO and their belief that it is a good place to work. During focus groups it was evident that people feel more valued when they are part of a 'good team' and feel appreciated by their manager and colleagues. People also talked about appreciation being linked to feeling they are listened to, involved, quality of leadership in their areas and how supported they feel. There was an overwhelming feeling that people are supported and that they feel cared about as individuals. The feedback provided ensures that, on an ongoing basis, our Talent and Learning team continues to support the IPO's aim and helps to embed the essence of the IPO culture. Our next full liP assessment will be carried out in early 2023.

As part of our Learning and Development offering to the business, we will continue to be inclusive and accessible for all, we will collaborate with and support the business, and we are recognised as an integral part of it – making a difference and adding value. It is essential we continue ensuring the context in which our people learn is real, adapting to current situations and scenarios and that our staff help drive the customer centric culture. To support all of this, the Deal is integrated in all our training which helps embed the culture.

"After spending 22 years within my previous role, I joined the IPO in 2017.

I have to say I was extremely nervous and overly anxious and had little expectations of what lay ahead of me. I was pleasantly surprised! My first impressions were wow, we have a gym, coffee shops, a shop, hairdressers, the list is endless. Believe me when I say the first few days felt like a was sat within a 5\* all-inclusive hotel, it felt like paradise.

The months have rolled into years, and time has gone so quickly, and I often take a few minutes just to reflect where I was and where I am now and list then pros and cons – the pros win hand down.

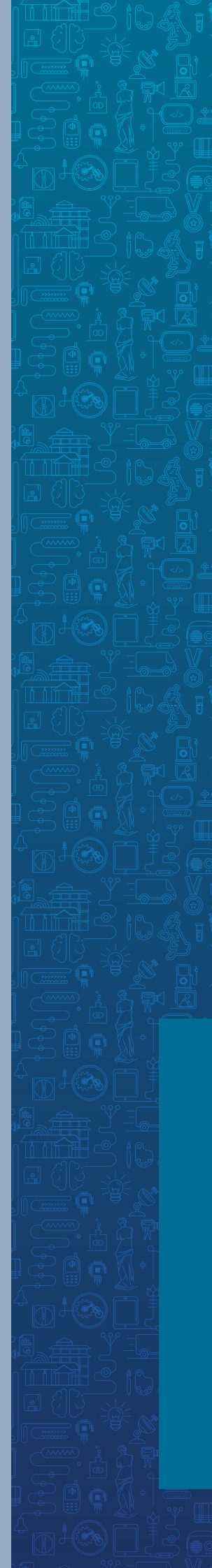
Working within a small team, I feel the support and the communication we have for each is paramount to our success. I am encouraged to be open and honest and do not feel any restraints if I need to challenge the normal process. I have total empowerment within my role, and never with the feeling of being micromanaged. People treat me with respect as I would do to others. If there is information I need, I always feel comfortable asking as someone will point me in the right direction.

The opportunities that have been given to me since joining the IPO have helped me in both personal and professional development. Just to be able to access training at your fingertips and with the more recent funding of my Level 7 CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development). Although I know what is expected of me to fulfil my role, I am encouraged to seek out additional responsibilities and that has allowed my confidence to grow.

I have built some strong working relationships within the IPO, which I feel has allowed me to develop a better understanding the organisation.


I am not a person who has had a variety of jobs over the years, so comparing between the 2 may be limited, but for me personally I would recommend the IPO as a brilliant place to work, I have always felt that I work within a small team but a much larger one too that being the whole organisation."

**(Anu Watkins)**



# Continuous Improvement

**Continuous Improvement (CI) is an integral part of us achieving the Culture we want in the IPO. The CI Team's purpose is to support the IPO to embrace, adopt and sustain a CI culture in line with the IPO ambition of being "The Best IP Office," particularly under the pillars of Delivering Excellent IP Services and making the IPO a Brilliant Place to Work.**



## What are we trying to do?

We work with teams across the business to embrace, adopt and sustain a safe environment where our people can challenge and take ownership of their service and its performance. Our inclusive approach ensures people at all levels have an opportunity to improve their work, and lead on improvements. We do this by:

- Providing access to training all our people, regardless of what grade they are, on how to use CI tools, helping them create better, simpler ways of working, keeping the customer at the heart of all we do.
- Continuously reviewing our approaches and actively making adjustments to programmes of work to accommodate all staff's working schedules and abilities etc.
- Provide training to our managers, clearly defining what their role is, moving away from a directive style to them leading with a coaching/mentoring style.
- Provide coaching/mentoring to managers people needing more support, listening to their concerns whilst providing them with suggestions to move forward considering individual needs.
- Meet with our managers monthly to establish team's progress, maximise understanding and impact.
- Engage with Senior Managers, influencing them to see the urgency for change and obtain buy-in for our CI vision.

We are clear on the behaviours required to develop and sustain a CI culture. We use an 'in house' built Maturity Framework to measure behaviours demonstrated of strength and key indicators for improvement that require action from the CI Business Partners in partnership with the manager and team to move existing culture to where the organisation wants it to be.

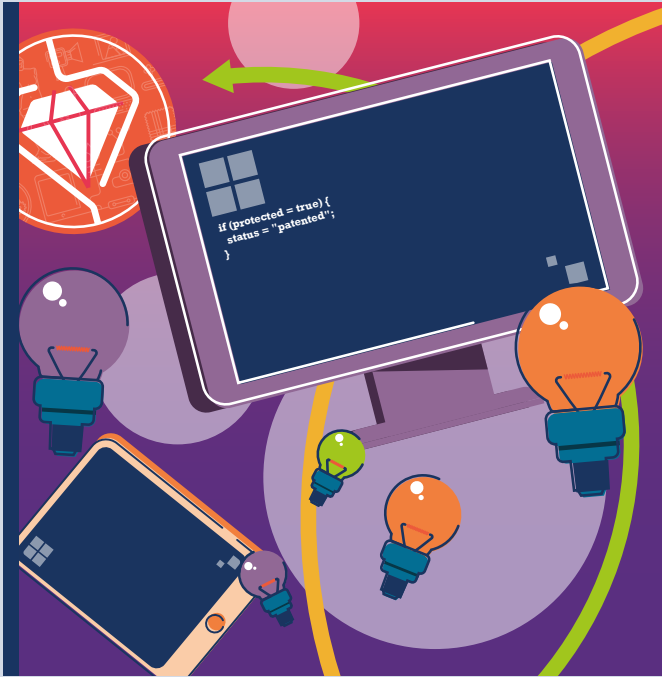
### Why is this important for the IPO?

Primarily, having CI as part of our culture is brilliant for our people and their characteristics. It gives them an opportunity to make their jobs more meaningful, opening opportunities to develop new skills, feel empowered and build their networks and communities. In addition, it gives us the best chance of delivering our strategy and fulfilling our ambitions, including regularly improving customer service, increasing efficiency and achieving greater people engagement. Being able to measure behaviours will enable us to manage performance better and sustain CI across the IPO.

### How do we use it?

The CI Maturity Framework shows a range of behaviours and levels of maturity and through change, teams will be able to advance to the desired 'Foundation' level as part of the journey to embed CI as part of our culture. Managers and the CI Business Partners will be able to evidence each level with CI activity such from their observations, feedback from the teams and other data such as benefits on the Portal (data provided to show the efficiency gained.)

**“ We are clear on the behaviours required to develop and sustain a CI culture ”**



## What difference will it make to the IPO?

The CI Maturity Framework allows teams to improve the standard in their performance and accumulatively improve the service the IPO provides to its customers, maximising the potential in our people and having a culture of continuous effectiveness and efficiency.

## What support are we giving to our managers?

Moving away from a one-off ‘sheep dipping’ session to a Peer Group community who meet regularly. CI Business Partners facilitate discussions about different leadership behaviours in a peer-to-peer environment. This has enhanced managers’ learning by building on each other’s experiences, sharing best practice, and advising each other on specific issues. In turn, providing ideas on how to create appetite for CI, keep the momentum going to ensure a CI culture is developed and sustained in line with our IPO strategy.

Our managers have given great feedback on the sessions:

- “My team takes part or leads on change to improve the service we provide to our customers” – 100% agree
- “I put trust in individuals within my team to innovate and continuously improve the service we provide to our customers” – 43% agree and 57% strongly agree

The survey responses give us insightful data to work to continuously improve our own service to our managers.

**“ My team takes part or leads on change to improve the service we provide to our customers ”**



## Achievements

The IPO Benefit Portal is an area where our people can celebrate the changes they have implemented. All staff have access to the portal and are encouraged to celebrate the brilliant work they have done. Analysis of the portal for 2021/22 showed:

Number of entries	145
Customer benefits	62
Financial benefits	54
People benefits	79
Risk Reduction	78
Environmental benefits	5
Cashable savings	£164,749.50
Non-cashable (time) savings	£2,594,558.14
Amount of time saved per annum in days	9910

## Promoting and Celebrating CI

We also promote and celebrate CI throughout the year, for example, articles on our Intranet site highlighting how our people have improved their services this past year as well as highlighting the efficiencies to show how much progress has been made. We have released podcasts talking about personal growth by leading on change activities which have been received well, as well as podcasts based on themes such as trust and other cultural topics.



**“ Continuous Improvement (CI) is an integral part of us achieving the Culture we want in the IPO ”**

## What our people say about CI

“The CI tracker allows me to record and update new and ongoing projects carried out by myself and members of my team, I find it mentally beneficial to see all the work that TTMD are participating in that we do not all get to see as we are often busy in our roles.

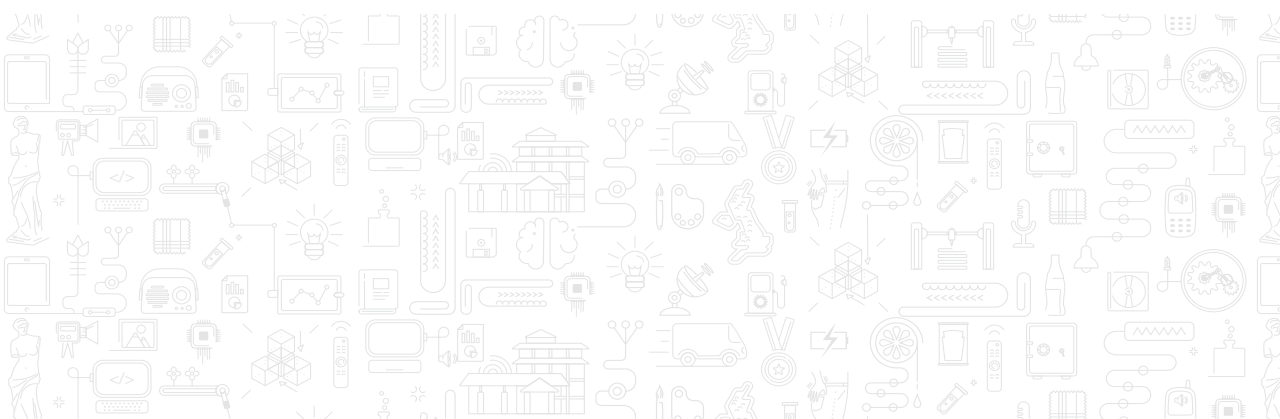
As the Trade mark Tribunal have looked at continuous ways to improve the way that we work it has given me the opportunity to work closely with Hearing Officer’s, the Tribunals Hearings and appeals Team, the information centre, and other areas of Intellectual Property such as Patents, Designs, and Trade mark examination. This has had a socially positive impact particularly during times like these when a lot of us still work from home as I have been able to engage with various people and departments.

Being able to engage with and interact with people from other areas of IPO, through CI, has given me the opportunity to deliver workshops and presentations which is something I struggled with during my studies at university. It has also improved the way that I am able to perform in my role as by engaging in the CI work with other teams, we have been able to change and improve the way that we do things whilst promoting a One IPO ethos.

Continuous improvement has also given me focus which has impacted on work and home life. I find it a lot easier to focus on tasks especially as I can see the progress made by recording it on the tracker. By recording all the brilliant progress being made by the office it gives me the impetus to keep improving.

We know we have more to do though, and over the next year as a team, we will be looking to improve our communications around CI successes and build on the relationships we already have with other teams across the IPO.”

**Janeve Morgan**



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# Recognising your best



# Pay & Reward

The IPO places significant importance on its reward and recognition offering and this continues to be one of the key enablers for making the office a ‘Brilliant Place to Work.’ Alongside our annual pay review process, which aims to ensure pay scales remain competitive to attract and retain the skills, experience and talent needed to transform our systems and improve the customer experience, the IPO offers a diverse and generous total reward package.

An integral part of the total reward package is the ‘Recognising Your Best’ scheme which provides managers and staff with a mechanism for rewarding colleagues for the excellent contributions they make at any point during the year. Over the last 12 months, the HR Pay Team have been promoting this initiative right across the organisation in parallel with working to update the nomination portal to make it easier for people to use.

Guidance around the scheme has been updated to include actual examples of the types of work that awards have been made for. This has helped give managers a feel for the types of contributions that have merited an award in different areas. There has also been a focus on promoting the scheme across directorates to ensure that as many people as possible receive recognition for the excellent work they are doing throughout the year.

The team has conducted an in-depth analysis this year to identify whether the scheme is having any negative impacts on particular groups of individuals across the organisation with the outcomes reported to IPOB (Intellectual Property Office Board) supported by recommendations for going forward.

Monitoring the impacts of reward initiatives and annual pay awards is something the HR Pay Team does on an annual basis and this year has been no exception. Prior to, and following the annual pay award, the team conducted an equal pay review to ensure that there were no adverse impacts on groups of people across the organisation once the pay award had been applied.

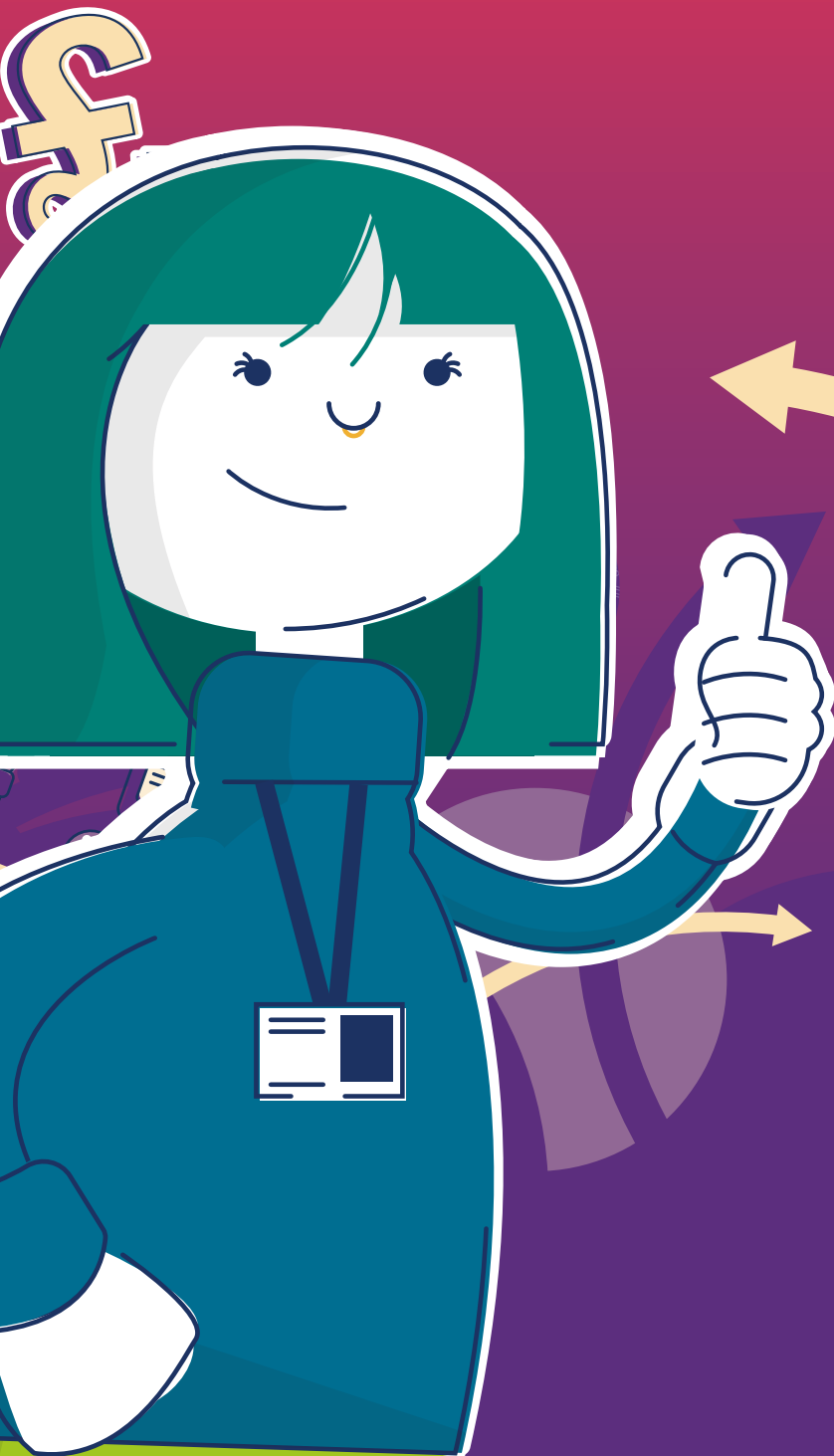
Whilst basic pay is considered by many people to be a key strand in maintaining a positive culture of feeling valued and recognised for the work, they do; the IPO has also been extending its wider benefits offering to staff by introducing the Cycle to Work scheme. This has provided employees with another option for purchasing a bicycle for use when commuting to work and is available via salary sacrifice. The team are also exploring other initiatives that could be introduced going forward which would improve the employee value proposition and reinforce the IPO's commitment to nurturing a culture where people feel valued.

### Progress this year

- Pay benchmarking against wider Civil Service and Private sector to ensure the value of our pay scales remains competitive and enables attraction and retention
- Supporting the recruitment of specialist skills into key roles by advising on pay policy and allowance principles.
- Supporting a flexible approach to working by introducing innovative solutions to reward e.g., home working allowance
- Raising the profile of the 'Recognising Your Best' (RYB) scheme and ensuring that managers know how to reward their teams for excellent contributions, what they can reward them for and that it can be done quickly and easily.
- Improving the RYB portal and working with the business to agree the reports required to inform future work and highlight any areas where potential bias might be occurring.
- Introducing the Cycle to Work scheme to expand the benefits offering for staff and improve the options available to employees for purchasing a bicycle via salary sacrifice.
- Working to integrate the performance management portal (Clear Review) with the RYB scheme to deliver more timely recognition and oversight of directorate data.
- Equal pay reviews completed prior to and following each pay award to assess the impacts of the pay award on protected characteristics







**“The IPO offers a diverse and generous total reward package”**



# Wellbeing

**There is a clear link between culture and wellbeing with any successful wellbeing strategy being backed up by a supportive culture.**

Supporting the physical and mental wellbeing of our people across all our activities is a key part of making the IPO a brilliant place to work as highlighted in our strategy. We maintain a wellbeing roadmap which outlines the campaigns that we will get involved in during the year. Alongside our mental and physical wellbeing programme, this year saw a return of our community and volunteering opportunities which IPO teams have found to be a great benefit. Highlights from this year include the following activities:

## Mental wellbeing

- We continued to provide a variety of mental health training for line managers, including i-Act Training to provide a greater understanding of mental health and wellbeing issues and Bereavement Training with Cruise to help them deal with and understand the needs of those bereaved.
- We continued to promote our 'Coffee Connect' programme, a chance for people from across the office to virtually connect over a coffee to network, collaborate and talk about resilience and share ideas as to how they are managing their wellbeing.
- Our Mental Health First Aiders continued to host regular, informal virtual sessions so staff can find out about the wide range of support available at the IPO.
- We have continued to fund the "Headspace for Work Programme" licences for staff which offers comprehensive mindfulness training, delivered via an app.
- We supported a virtual Christmas advent to give all staff opportunity to come together virtually and enjoy some light-hearted festivities including a virtual quiz.
- We implemented the recommendations from the Mind Workplace Wellbeing Report (including Wellness Action Plans (WAPs) and additional manager support).
- We launched several initiatives for staff to share experiences and benefit from the support of their colleagues. These include Mental Health First Aider open discussion sessions and "Stories from the Coalface" (talks by IPO staff members on topics including PTSD and OCD).
- During Stress Awareness Week we held a panel discussion hosted by key wellbeing contacts from throughout IPO.
- We have also seen the launch of our new, monthly Grief Café's, where staff are invited to come and discuss their grief and mental health issues surrounding it. Each month, we have had a constant stream of attendees (some new, some regulars) who have been referred by counsellors, colleagues, or managers for support. There is a lovely sense of community with the regulars which puts new members at ease, meaning they feel comfortable speaking up.

## Physical wellbeing

- Our annual flu vaccination programme saw over 250 staff take advantage of free on-site vaccinations.
- External speakers provided awareness talks on:
  - Men's Health (Movember)
  - Virtual yoga /relaxation sessions and Pilates
  - Loneliness seminar; easing lockdown anxiety
  - Challenging character traits
  - Sepsis
  - Marie Curie session
  - Time to Talk Day
  - Suicide prevention day where a staff member shared her personal story
  - Talk Money Week
  - Bowel/ cervical/diabetic eye/Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening programmes
- We promoted Civil Service Active Wellbeing Week – advertising local walks and wellbeing services and giving people the opportunity to win daily prizes.
- We participated in National Walking month

## Community

Virtual volunteering with: Bristol Zoo; local schools, supporting year 12 students with their 'Dragon's Den' and Global Conference' programmes, providing feedback on presentations for their Skills Challenge (Welsh Bacc) A level qualification

Outdoor volunteering, both as individuals and teams: litter picking as part of The Great British Clean Up; helping to restore a local Sea Cadets building that got damaged during floods; eradication of Himalayan Balsam at Brecon Beacons National Park

We raised a collective amount of more than £3k for our 'Charity of Choice', Alzheimer's Society, via a combination of team and individual virtual fundraising

# Recruitment

**Recruitment at the IPO is not just about getting the right people in the right job, we make sure we deliver for all our customers by taking a One IPO approach and working collaboratively with recruiting line managers, internal and external stakeholders, and listening to the needs of our applicant base. We acknowledge that building our culture starts with innovative, proactive and inclusive recruitment and attraction.**



## How do we do this?

Through cross departmental collaboration we have used a Continuous Improvement mindset by designing a Tactical Recruitment Squad with the aim to remove any barriers for both our applicants and recruiting line managers in IT (Information Technology).

## What results do we expect to see?

- A positive impact through shortening the time to hire by utilising the specialist’s knowledge of our Recruitment Officer to pre-empt any barriers and manage the expectations of recruiting line managers and candidates.
- Our Talent Acquisition Specialist works to reduce the pressures and resources that comes from advertising and not filling posts.
- The role of our Onboarding Lead feeds into the retention aspect of the employee lifecycle creating a positive impact by providing a memorable experience and great first impression for new starters.
- Lastly, all our recruitment activity is delivered compliantly, inclusively, fairly, and open, in line with the Recruitment Principles due to the management of our HR Resourcing Manager.

## Innovating for Success

The IPO not only believes in its values but sees it as a driving force for all our customers and people focussed action. One of these values includes innovating for success. In recruitment we are proud to form innovative and collaborative projects with our Diversity and Inclusion team, external comms and social media, and our HR MI team.

Certainly, in the last year, we are most proud of the impact our recruitment team and processes have had on Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI). Pre pandemic, the IPO were quite fresh in commencing our journey on outreach beyond Civil Service Jobs to make a difference on the demographics we appoint, and subsequently how we diversify the IPO.



To broaden our diversity levels, a recruitment dashboard was created inhouse through collaboration with and the HR MI team. This dashboard is built from anonymised system reports pulled from Civil Service Jobs, which then feed into Power BI (Business Intelligence) to visually show the diversity levels of each applicant status against each external vacancy. This has proved a useful tool which now enables us to examine each stage and understand where, and at what stage, changes could be made.

We have not only built on our attraction methods, but we have also built on trust within our applicant base. Our applicants disclose their protected characteristics because they trust in us as an organisation to remain inclusive and impartial, which in part is due to the anonymised sifting. In turn we as an organisation trust that our applicants will honestly disclose these details. Whilst we still receive a minority of non-disclosers, we hold attraction and trust accountable for the rise in diversity rates.

Our great work on outreach is also beginning to return desired outcomes. Although we know we still have lots more to do, 21/22 quarterly data shows that 15.9% of appointed candidates were from an ethnic background. This has more than doubled since we implemented our diverse recruitment strategy in 2019 which really shows in the data below:

2019/20	Headline Fair and Open appointed candidates	Declared Ethnic Minority	Total % of ethnically diverse new starters in financial year
Q1	8	1	
Q2	21	2	
Q3	32	2	
Q4	17	0	
Total	78	5	6.4%

2020/21	Headline Fair and Open appointed candidates	Declared Ethnic Minority	Total % of ethnically diverse new starters in financial year
Q1	36	5	
Q2	101	10	
Q3	117	11	
Q4	52	9	
Total	306	35	11.4%

2021/22	Headline Fair and Open appointed candidates	Declared Ethnic Minority	Total % of ethnically diverse new starters in financial year
Q1	85	7	
Q2	91	21	
Q3	70	13	
Q4	63	8	
Total	309	49	15.9%

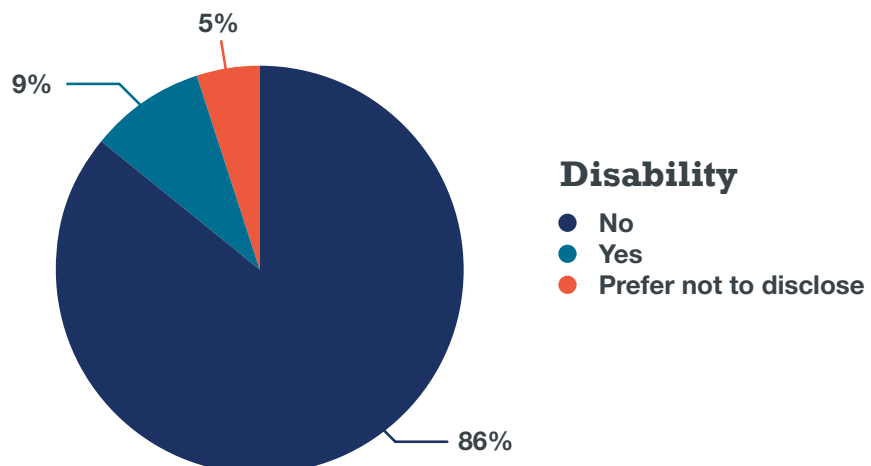
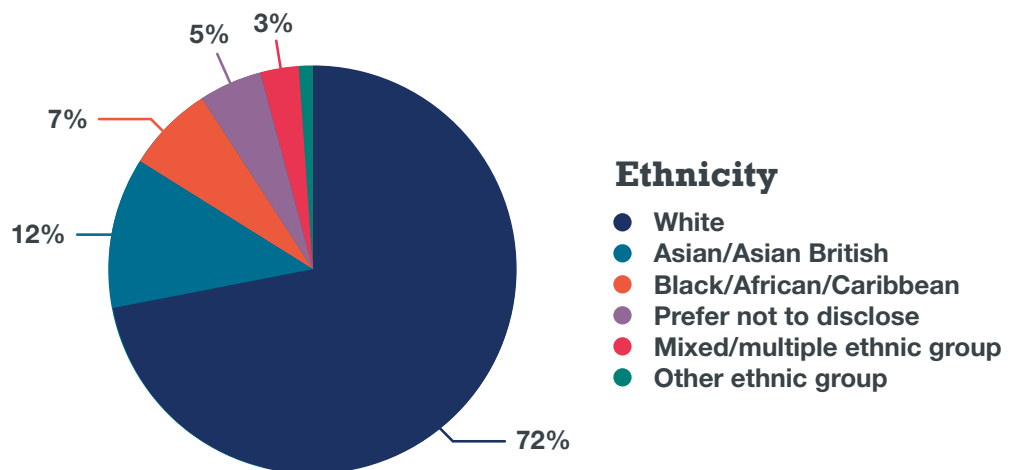
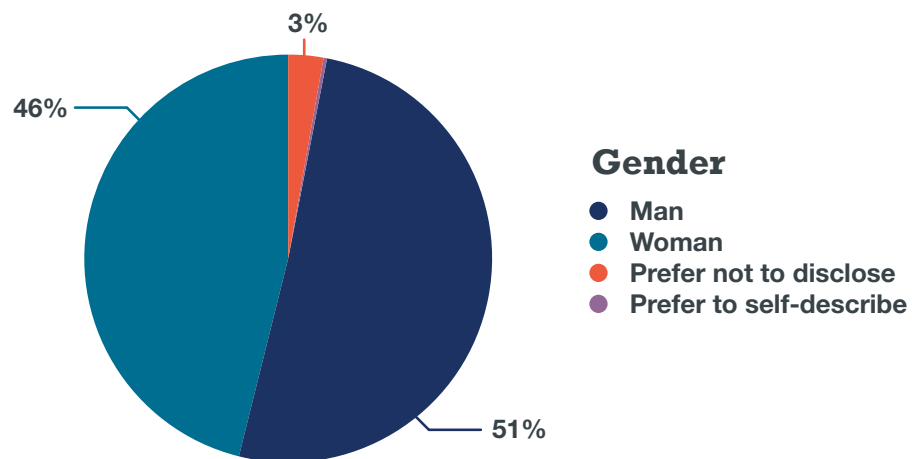
## New and Inclusive Recruitment Schemes and Initiatives

To diversify our talent pools, we have implemented several new and innovative schemes:

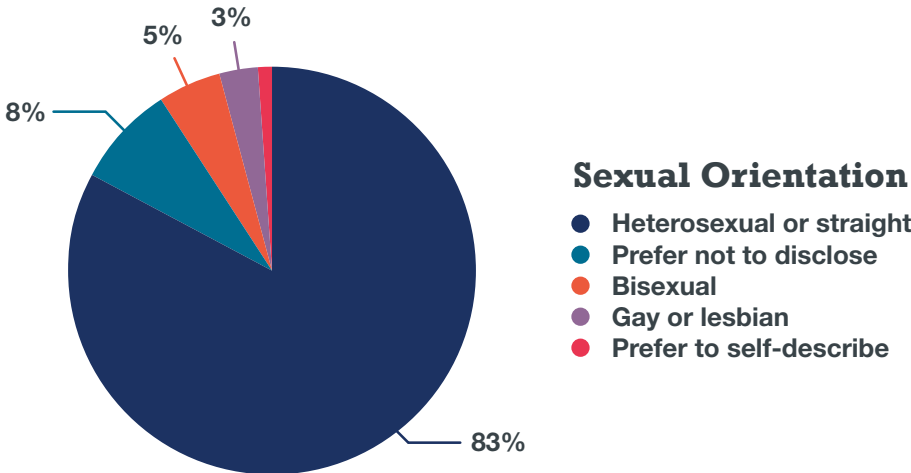
- **Life Chances Scheme**
  - Recognising inclusion for all, the IPO have embarked on several inclusive recruitment initiatives, one of which includes a successful appointment via the Life Chances Prison Leaver Scheme. The IPO acknowledge that feeling supported, valued, and included, all contributes to high engagement and a positive outcome of our culture, we therefore are proud to be a part of this inclusive scheme and see that any appointments are an asset to the business and the way we work.
- **Code First Girls (CFG) Programme**
  - To support the IPOs (Intellectual Property Office) values in innovating for success, we have invested into Code First Girls (CFG), a Not-for-Profit Social Enterprise that trains women in IT (Information Technology) skills and helps companies to develop more female friendly recruitment policies. Running this CFG programme will not only help us to build our IT capability and grow our future talent, but it will also help to promote us as a diverse STEM employer and improve our gender pay gap. It is our hope that by investing in the STEM Pipeline in this way, we are removing some of the barriers women and non-binary people face moving into a tech career, increasing the diversity for every organisation in the UK, not just the IPO.
- **STEM Returners Scheme**
  - We also saw the comeback of our previously successful STEM Returner scheme. This scheme provides individuals with an opportunity to return to STEM by offering training, mentoring, coaching and opportunities to build their confidence. It is recognised that any gap in career history can be detrimental to a person within a STEM based role, as technologies and knowledge bases move so quickly in technical fields. We see that life offers lots of challenges that can impact work and we do not believe it should prevent individuals from reaching their full potential. Overall findings of this scheme showed that 75% of successfully appointed applicants were women, all of which had a gap in their STEM career.
- **Great Place to work for Veterans Initiative**
  - To aid the Government's commitment in maximising the support and recognition for veterans in society, we executed a swift and successful implementation of an exciting initiative, a Great Place to Work for Veterans as soon as it became available. We see that Veterans can immerse themselves with the IPO's culture as they tend to adopt great teamworking skills and tenacity, as well as bringing diversity of thought and experience to the IPO. Additionally, with a high percentage of veterans identifying as male, this scheme will contribute to filling our gender pay gap. We are excited to see this initiative unfold and successfully make appointments.

## Recruitment Diversity Statistics

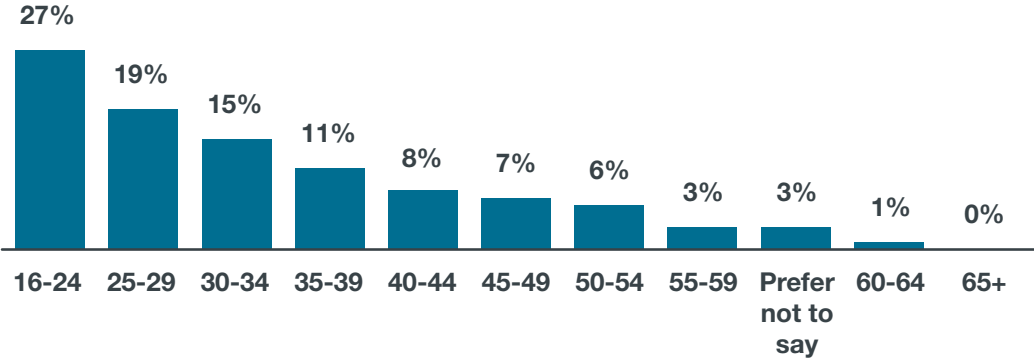
Overall, we attracted **3405** people who either applied or completed an online test where relevant. Below shows the attraction percentage split by protected characteristics for applicants that applied to IPO vacancies in 2021/22:





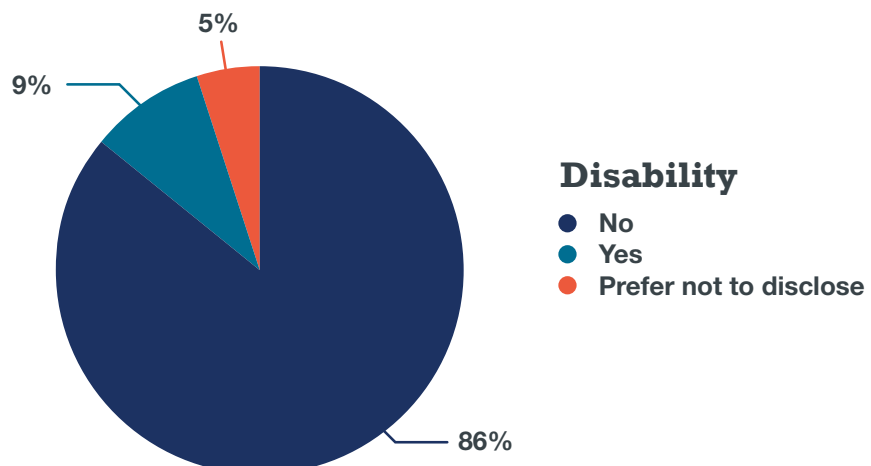
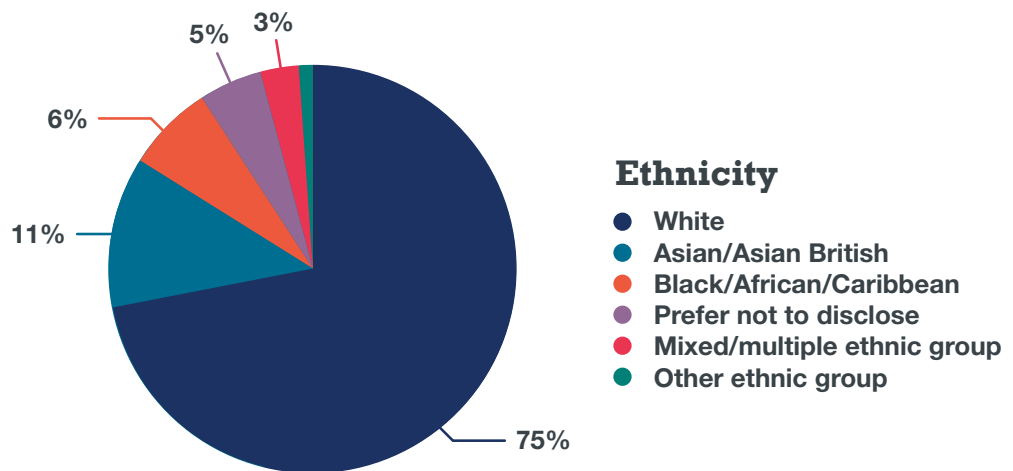
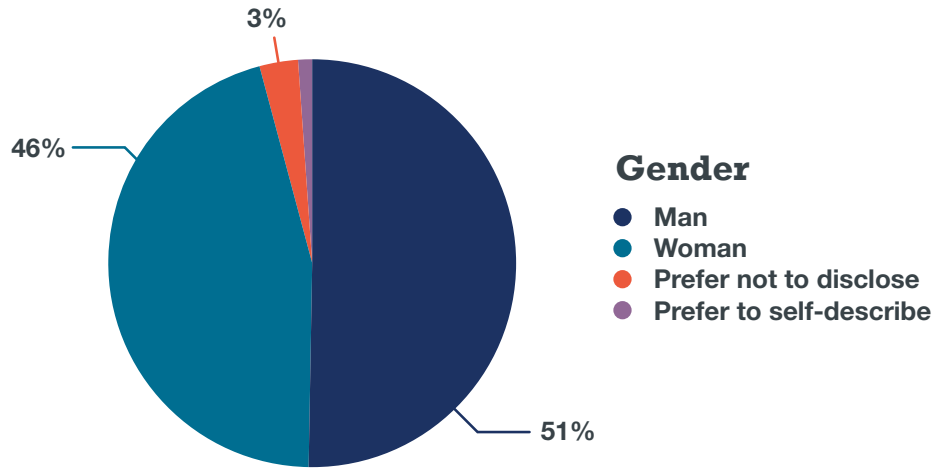


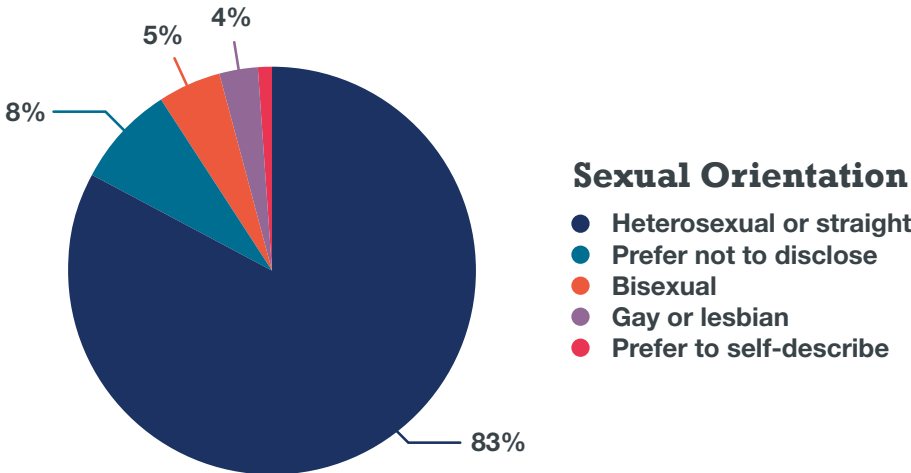
**Age Range**



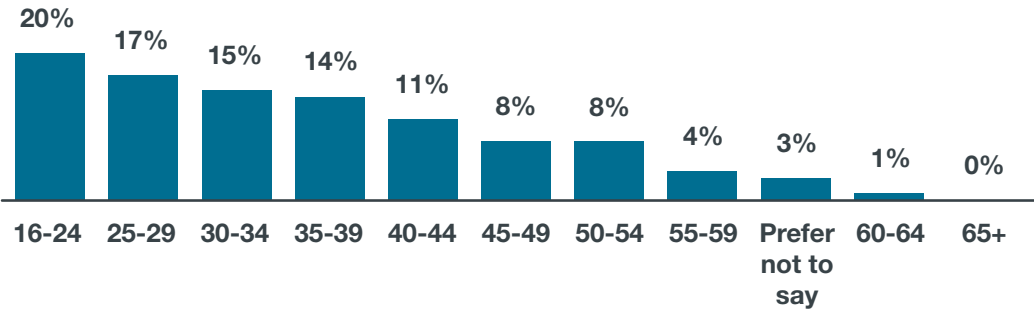
We saw a total of 995 successful applicants at sift. Percentages of protected characteristics are listed in the table below and show that we retain a balanced outcome at sift for all protected characteristics, although we would particularly like to improve this stage for candidates from ethnic minority backgrounds.

This work has been built into our intersectional pay gap action plan:

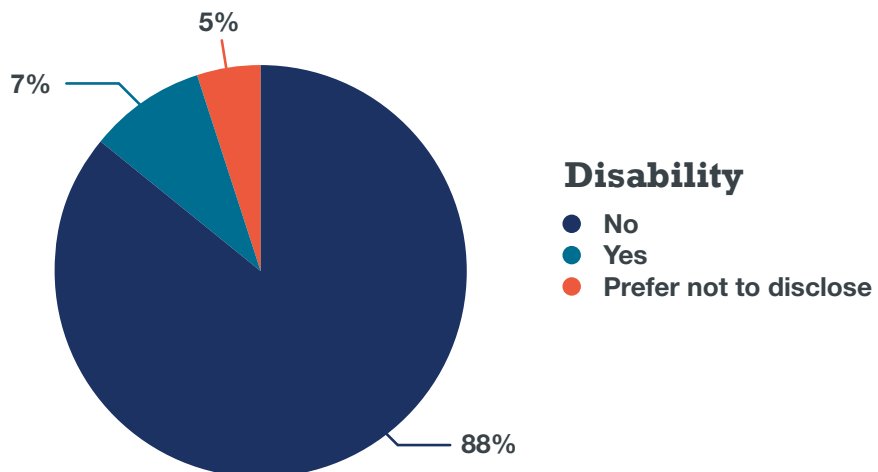
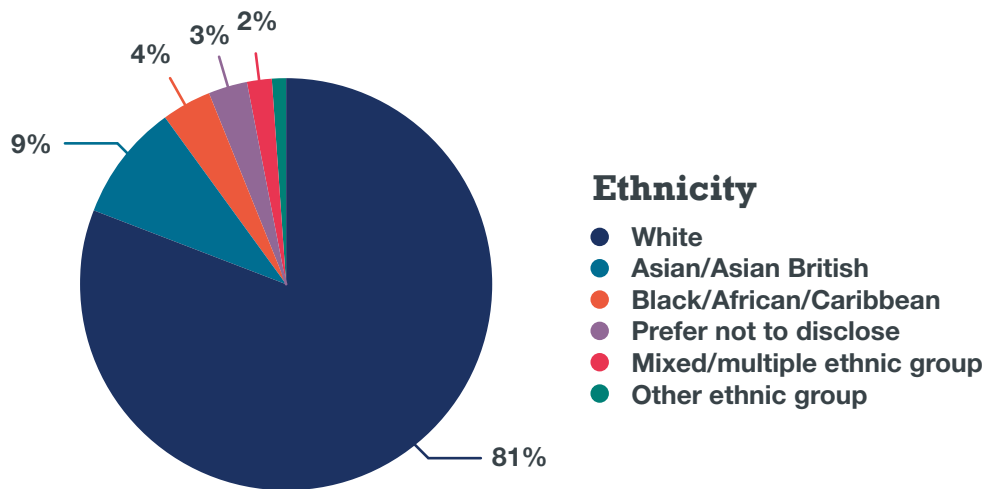
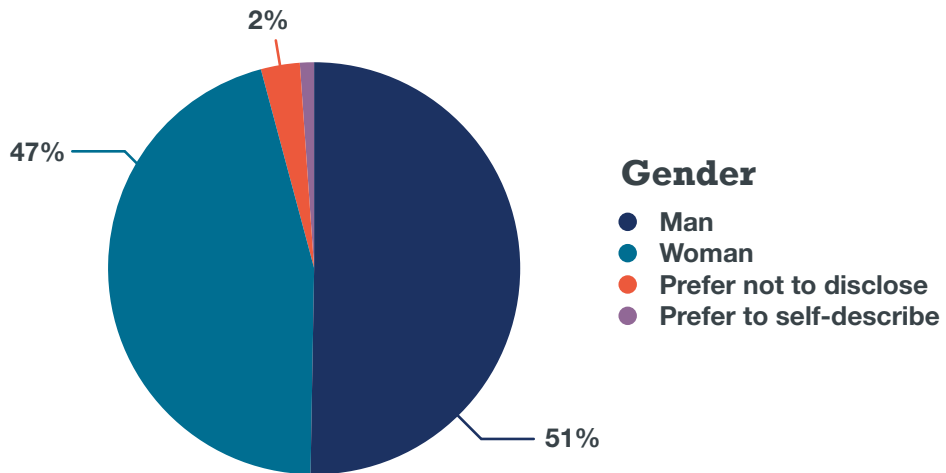


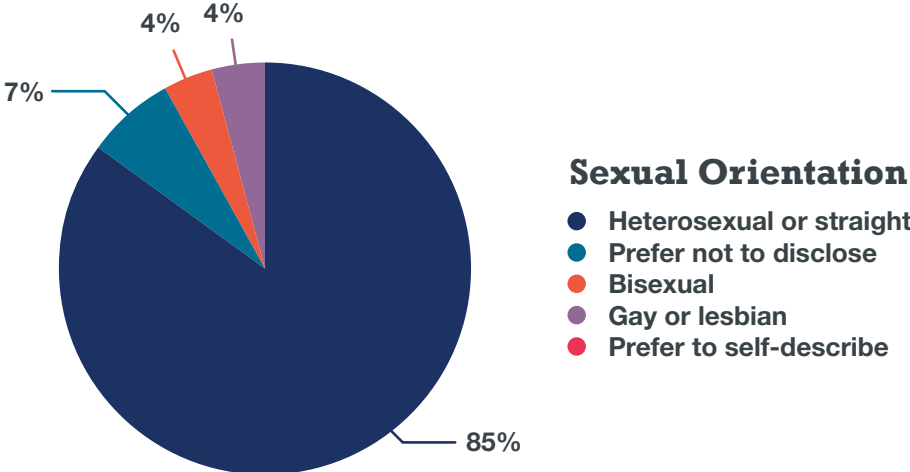


**Age Range**

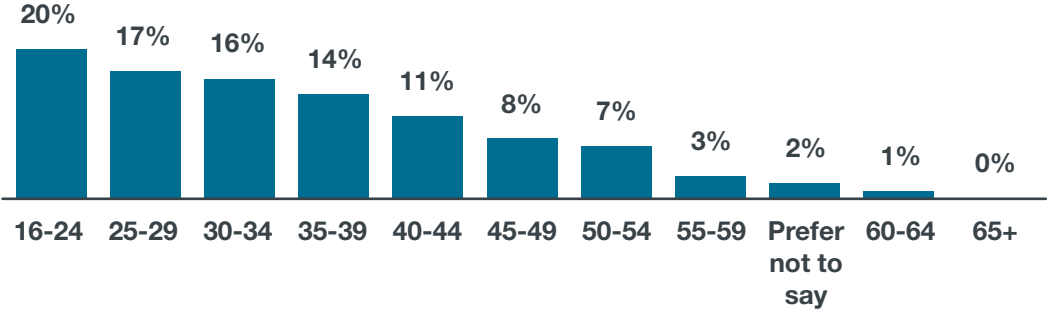


We saw a total of **448** successful applicants at interview. Percentages of protected characteristics are listed in the table below. As above, we see consistent levels of success throughout the characteristics. Disappointingly though, we still see higher drop out rates amongst candidates from ethnic minority backgrounds, work to tackle this issue has been built into our pay gap action plan:

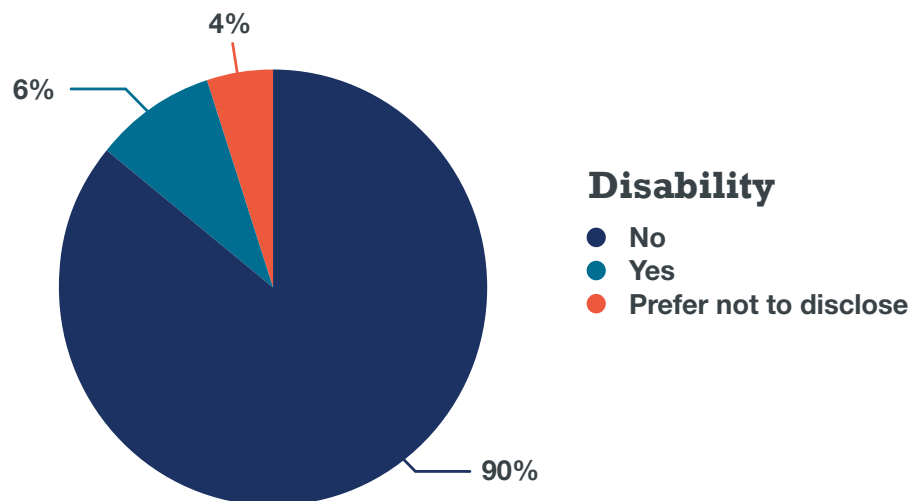
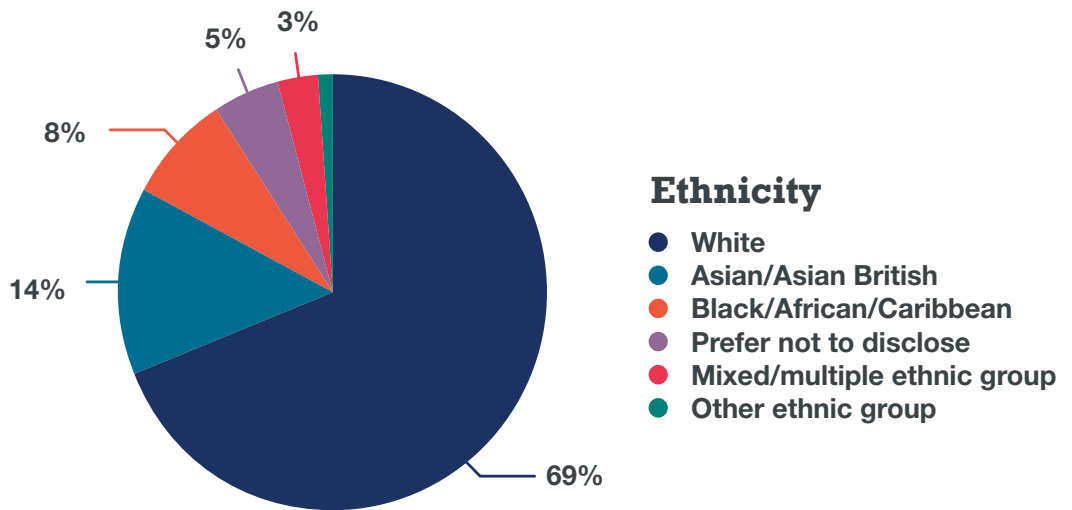
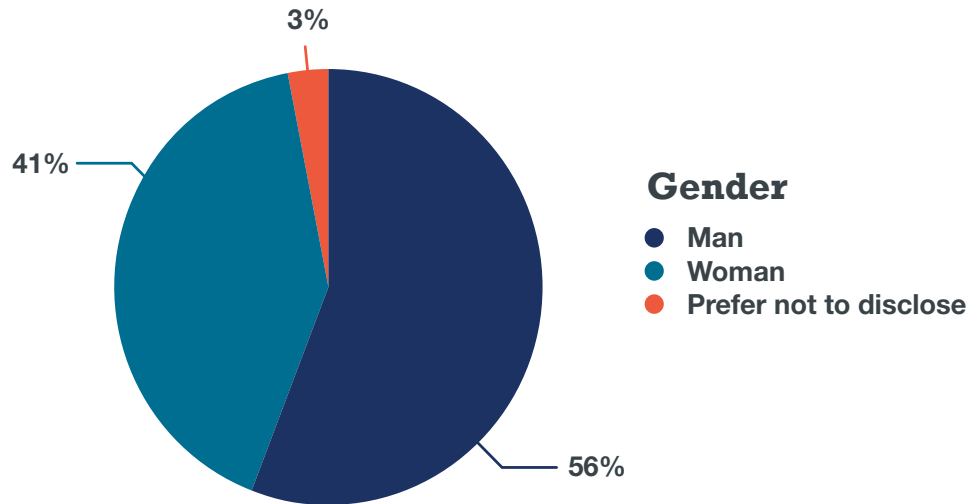


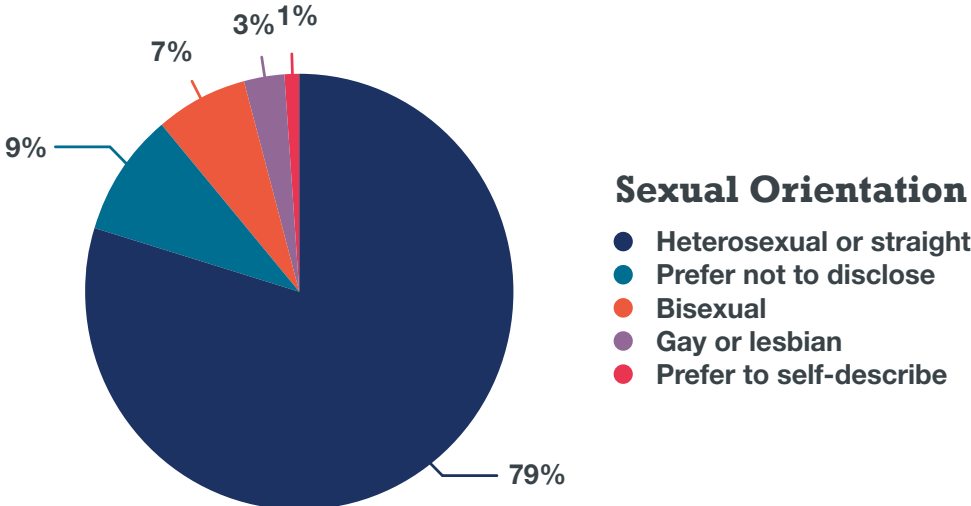


**Age Range**

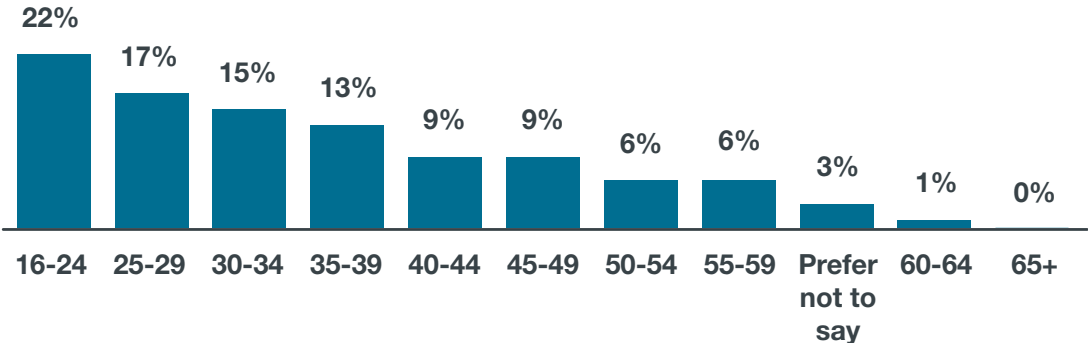


Lastly, we saw a total of **143** applicants that withdrew at interview. Percentages of protected characteristics are listed in the table below and show varying results, with higher withdrawal rates of men than women, and higher withdrawal rates from applicants from ethnic minority backgrounds. Again, actions to tackle any unintentional barriers will be tackled under our pay gap action plans:





**Age Range**



## What is our greatest achievement in recruitment in 2021/22?

At the IPO we are pleased to announce that we were shortlisted for the Commissioners 'Mark of Excellence Award' which launched for the first time this year.

This mark of excellence award sets out to champion diversity work within the Civil Service. Departments and agencies were invited to submit entries in their annual returns to the commission.

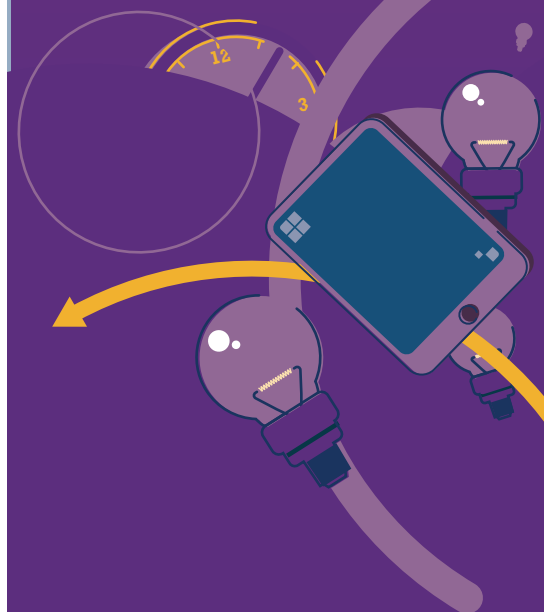
The Commission are an independent body who oversee recruitment in the Civil Service ensuring recruitment is run on fair and open grounds, and appointments are made on merit. They launched the award to recognise recruitment campaigns that show outstanding innovation and commitment to improving diversity across all civil service grades.

The IPO were personally acknowledged by the Commissioner who noted the quality of innovation in recruitment was extremely high, and the standard of our entry was very strong. We certainly will be entering again next year.

Lastly, as the commission come to the end of the 2021/22 compliance period, they produce a Balanced Scorecard for each Civil Service department which contains a yearly rating and trajectory for the following year, this will then feature in the Civil Service Commission's Annual Report. We are incredibly pleased to announce that the IPO has consistently improved year on year since 2019 to now be awarded the highest rating with a static trajectory and zero recorded breaches.

If you would like to read more on our entry for the Commissioners 'Mark of Excellence Award,' or even check out our performance in the Civil Service Commission's Annual Report, you can access these here:

[Shortlist announced for recruitment excellence award \(civilserviceworld.com\)](https://civilserviceworld.com)







“ At the IPO we are pleased to announce that we were shortlisted for the Commissioners ‘**Mark of Excellence Award**’ which launched for the first time this year ”

# What our people say about working in the IPO

I feel a real sense of pride and belonging working for the IPO. The IPO is a great place to work, it has given me flexibility, support and development. I am actively encouraged to share my ideas and have been fully supported in taking them forward. I have built great friendships in work and have great role models. The culture is very inclusive and I am proud to be an employee.

**(Tracy Hourahine)**

Having worked in the IPO for 30 years, I have seen a change or two! I have seen the growth and change in culture. I am proud to be part of an organisation that values its staff and treats each person with respect. The IPO instils the importance of embracing diversity and being inclusive, it is an extremely supportive and family friendly environment. Whatever is going on in your life, you can rest assured that they've got your back.

**(Joanne Trueman)**

I've worked in numerous organisations across the private and public sector and the IPO is by far the best employer. The culture, benefits package and opportunities which the IPO provide is second to none with excellent onsite training courses to help me develop myself and my skills further. On top of this the office has also paid for me to be a Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR) and Institute of Internal Communications (IOIC) member allowing me to develop my full potential. Additionally, I have had coaching provided through the IPO which helped me when I was working out my career path.

Outside of the office I have utilised the IPO's generous volunteering policy which allow us to take up to six days leave per year for volunteering activities. This allowed me to participate in the Welsh Three Peaks challenge raising money for the St David's Hospice, litter picking across multiple areas, volunteering at the National Trust and putting in a new bench for the Canal & River Trust to name a few.

**(Kristian Crowshaw)**

I have worked for the IPO for nearly 9 years and think it is a brilliant place to work. I am encouraged to develop and train and have just completed by CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development) level 5 in People Management. I have support from my manager that has helped me grow in confidence. The IPO looks after the wellbeing of staff which is important to me as a carer for my mother and everyone is encouraged to bring their whole self to work. I would highly recommend working at the IPO for a great work life balance, for an employer that trusts their people and values their work.

**(Allison Hurn)**

I joined the IPO as an apprentice in 2018 having previously trained as an electrical engineer, and I have to be honest, I was blown away with all the IPO offers its staff, from training courses to office wide events and even providing volunteering days! It really felt the office did all it can to ensure this is a brilliant place for us to work. It wasn't long until I noticed how different the culture is here also, I have never worked in an organisation before that strived to be the best at what they do not only in the UK but in the world! I was fully supported by my manager and senior leaders to develop my skills as I saw fit and totally in control of my own workload. Having never experienced this kind of culture in work before I felt empowered to want to prove what a great job I could do and really become part of our One IPO approach.

**(Connor Evans)**

What makes the IPO a great place to work are its people and its culture. I feel proud to be working for an organisation that not only truly supports and care for its staff but is continuously working very hard to improve its diversity and inclusivity. There is a lot to say about IPO being flexible, family friendly, supportive, but what I find most impressive is the culture of being transparent and accountable. Our organisation knows its flaws, is open about them and work hard to address them – this level of transparency is not seen often, and I value that a lot. We have a culture of 'listening' where there are a lot of opportunities for staff to be part of the conversation and make or influence decisions about the direction of the organisation.

**(Pauline Beck)**



# Reflections from an outgoing CEO

**As my time at the IPO draws to a close, I have been reflecting on the last 5 years, how we have changed as an organisation, and how our culture has matured along with us.**

When I joined the IPO in 2017, I was already pleasantly surprised by how much attention and importance was given to supporting and including people. Bringing your whole self to work was already starting to take hold as a core principle of inclusion and I got to see first-hand how the IPO values people-driven innovation through their award winning #adaptive project<sup>1</sup>. I was happy to further enshrine this commitment when I launched our new strategy, with a people and culture focussed pillar. That award wouldn't be the last time we were recognised by our peers and experts in the field for various aspects of our culture.

The 'Brilliant place to work' pillar included a specific commitment to strengthening our culture, celebrating our diversity, being inclusive and trusting our people to deliver for our customers and each other. We have developed a principles-based approach for our people and created "The Deal" as part of this work, and I'm hugely proud of the impact it has had. Never has that been more clear than during the two years of the coronavirus pandemic, where our ability to give people tailored support, according to their individual circumstances, alleviated much stress and meant our people felt personally supported, valued and included.

The IPO is a fantastic place and I have thoroughly enjoyed my time here. It has been great to be part of a welcoming, inclusive, and high performing team. We have achieved a lot together, both for each other and for the customers and stakeholders who rely on us for our services and we are inclusive organisation. I thank all my current and previous colleagues for the part they have played in this.

The IPO will continue to improve and strengthen its culture long after I leave, and I have every confidence that they will continue to deliver the goal; of making the IPO a brilliant place to work.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Tim Moss', written in a cursive style.

**Tim Moss**

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<sup>1</sup> #adaptive won the Cabinet Office's TW3 award for People and Culture in 2016.

**“ The IPO is a fantastic place  
and I have thoroughly enjoyed  
my time here ”**

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