



**Diversity  
Task Force**

# Interim report

January 2022

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# 1. Foreword

**Steve Nash FIMI**

IMI CEO



The automotive sector in the UK is facing a skills crisis and it is one that cannot be solved by simply doing what we have always done. To have any chance of addressing our growing skills needs, we must significantly widen our appeal and find ways of attracting people that have not traditionally seen automotive as a career of choice. That means achieving far greater diversity in our workforce through the inclusion of formerly under-represented groups. This can only be achieved by truly understanding the challenges and barriers that those individuals face when working in, or trying to enter into, our sector.

There is a massive body of evidence to support the assertion that diverse workforces are more effective, more creative and lead to greater profitability. However, achieving and sustaining a truly diverse workforce will require significant change, and that change needs to be informed by those with real life experiences of trying to make their way in automotive as part of an under-represented minority. This is why we have sought to hear and represent their views in this study. There is much to be learnt, and much to be gained if we take their views on board and act accordingly.

Our industry is going through unprecedented change. Our workforce must do the same...



## **Professor Jim Saker FIMI**

IMI President

The Diversity Task Force has brought together representatives from all parts of the industry and in this first part, its activity has focussed on three main strands within the context of diversity and inclusion – Gender Identity, Disability (both physical and non-visible) and Race and Ethnicity. The challenge was twofold – firstly we were aware that there was much that we didn't know – for example how many dealer principals are there in the UK who are either female, Black or have a disability or any combination of the three? The second was that we didn't know what we didn't know – it has been a salutary journey trying to put ourselves in someone else's shoes and trying to see the world through their lens. Our level of cultural competence was limited and uninformed.

Like many other sectors the automotive industry suffers from what the sociologists call 'homophily,' basically we are attracted to people like ourselves and as a result have a limited view of society and our industry. The term 'birds of a feather flock together' means that we tend to surround ourselves with people like ourselves. As a result, we recruit people in our own image and the industry remains white and male. The initial aim of the Task Force was to come up with some formal recommendations, and these will be forthcoming later this year. However, these proposals should not be ones filtered and generated by entitled white males like myself, but from people in the industry who already have an insight and understanding that I don't. The aim is to amplify their voice and in so doing come up with recommendations that are practical and make a difference.

## 2. Executive Summary

The interim report describes the activity and the progress that has been made by the Industry Expert Panel and the three working groups that make up the Task Force. A key theme that comes through all the activity is the need for cultural competence to be developed, by endeavouring to see the world from the perspective of someone who does not share your gendered or ethnic/racial or enabled position. Some of the most telling feedback has come from the Working Group Chairs, who despite a wealth of experience in the industry, have been challenged and energised by the discussions with their group members. The race and ethnicity working group have identified the requirement to better understand diversity pay gaps, identify inclusive employers, and establish how diverse the sector's senior leadership groups are. The physical and non-visible disabilities working group found the input of the subject matter experts invaluable, as they challenged the group to see the employee perspective. One of the key take-away points from early discussions was – small adjustments can make a big difference. Under the theme of attraction, the gender identity working group recognised the need to gain a better understanding of the workplace environment and needs of Gen Z in order to inspire them to join the sector.

The report ends with some initial headline proposals. These early recommendations range from agreeing the common fields of employee data that automotive businesses can collect to baseline and monitor progress, to the development of a competency framework toolkit for recruitment.

The need to continuously learn from the experience of others is fundamental to the success of the Task Force. More work is still to be done over the next couple of months and will be included in the final report. We are actively seeking the input of a diverse range of people, so please do share your experiences, strategies, success, and failures, with the Task Force.

## 3. Background

The Diversity Task Force was an initiative from IMI President, Professor Jim Saker. Professor Saker's proposal was to engage a group of senior industry stakeholders in the diversity agenda, to discuss how the sector can be made more attractive to under-represented groups in the workforce.

There is both a moral and an economic case for the work of the Task Force. The industry cannot be discriminatory in either its recruitment or its people development processes. This means that there needs to be equality of access both into the industry and to the career development opportunities on offer.

With the changing dynamic of the automotive industry, in terms of technological advancements and the shifting nature of the sales model, it is critical that the industry builds and retains a highly skilled and diverse workforce. Studies show that companies with diverse teams, particularly at leadership level, outperform companies with less diversity. Research shows that organisations with greater workforce diversity are likely to be more profitable because they make better decisions, are quicker at problem-solving and benefit from a more satisfied workforce.

There is a strong and well documented economic argument for workforce diversity so why isn't the automotive sector more diverse? And, perhaps more importantly, what will the sector miss out on if it lags behind other sectors in the competitive employment landscape?

These key questions and the proposal to establish a Diversity Task Force was taken to the IMI's Vice Presidents who fully endorsed the need to commission a study on the subject.

## 4. Aims and objectives

The aim of the Diversity Task Force is to undertake a study to understand how the sector can be more attractive to work in for all individuals, and specifically for those groups currently underrepresented in the workforce. It aims to bring the issue of diversity and inclusion to the top of the agenda for automotive businesses, and to propose actions that will support real change.

### TASK FORCE OBJECTIVES

- Establish the size of the issue of the lack of diversity in the automotive sector.
- Broaden the diversity discussion beyond simply a focus on gender.
- Understand the barriers faced by individuals in certain groups in society.
- Clearly demonstrate the economic benefits of a diverse workforce.
- Understand young peoples' perception of the automotive sector.
- Draw up actions that will make a difference.

### KEY MILESTONES

- **May – June 2021**  
Industry Expert Panel established, meeting between June and December 2021.
- **June 2021**  
Working Groups established and meeting between June and December 2021.
- **July 2021 – January 2022**  
Research window.
- **January 2022**  
Interim report published.
- **March 2022**  
Diversity Task Force report and recommendations published.

## 5. Approach

### INDUSTRY EXPERT PANEL

Senior industry leaders were engaged through an Industry Expert Panel (IEP). It was important to work with business leaders in order to gain full commitment and support for the work, and to be guided by the broad experience across sectors.

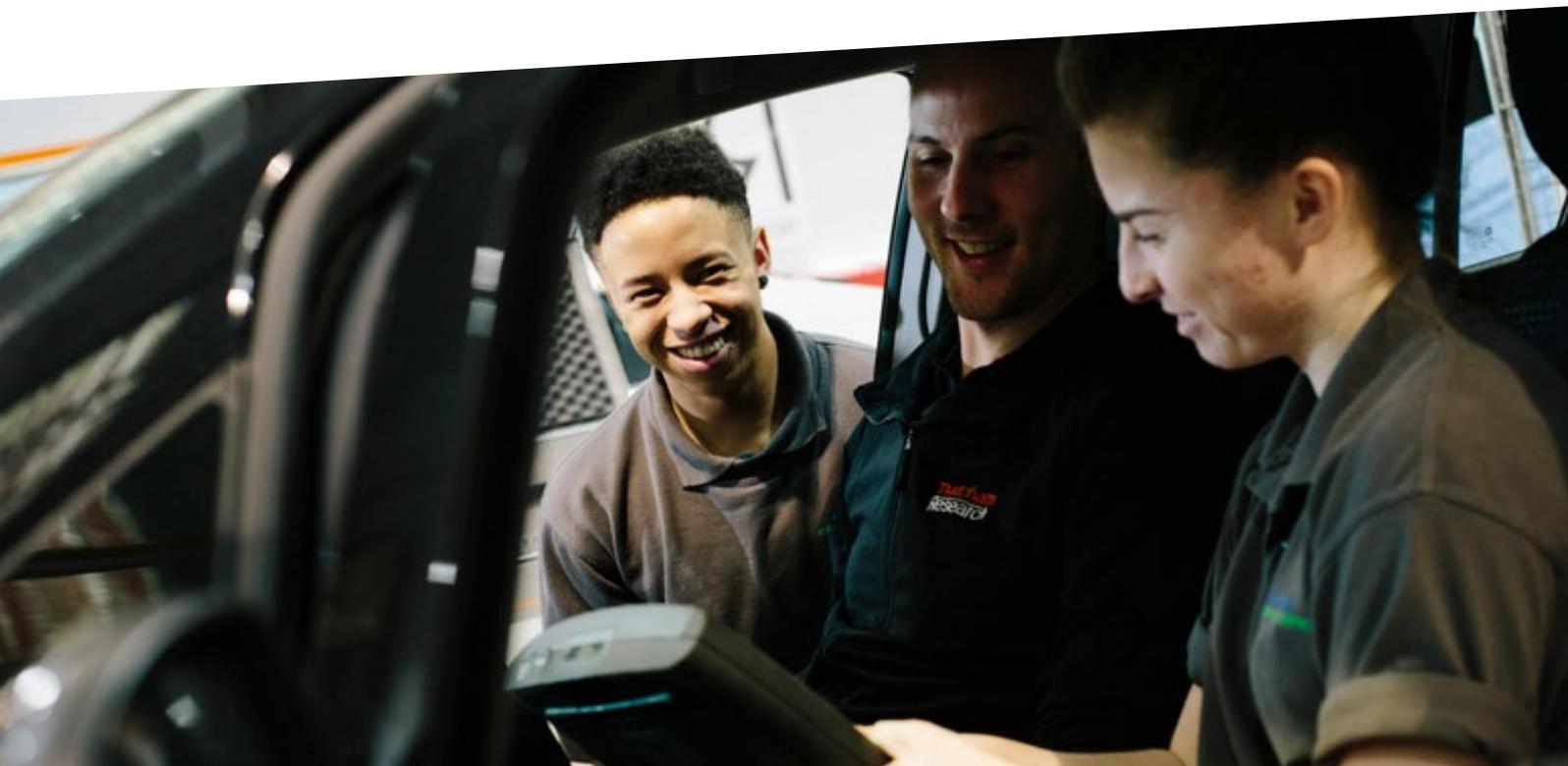
The Industry Expert Panel has met twice between June and December. There has been a good level of interest and engagement from the senior stakeholders and the meetings have been well attended. The IEP will also meet in January 2022 to engage with Subject Matter Experts, and amplify the voice of those in the industry that have real insight into what will make a difference.

We value this level of participation as the businesses that have engaged with us on this project have great power to influence positive change. Combined, they represent a significant percentage of the automotive workforce. Many have well developed Diversity and Inclusion strategies, and have learned valuable lessons from implementing initiatives within their businesses. This is valuable insight that can be shared for the benefit of the wider sector.

### WORKING GROUPS

We have developed three working groups to focus on areas of gender and sexual orientation, race and ethnicity and physical and non-visible disabilities. Each working group is supported by subject matter experts who bring first hand, or 'lived' experience to the groups as well as, in some cases, specific diversity and inclusion knowledge and experience. The membership of each working group includes individuals who bring personal insight and experience, HR professionals as well as business leaders.

We are fortunate to have three influential chairs supporting these working groups, whose role it is to facilitate and drive debate and action.



## RESEARCH

Underpinning the study, and complementing the working groups output, is a broad research programme which includes establishing baseline data, understanding perceptions, collating case studies as well as curating existing studies and research.

The Diversity Task Force research elements are outlined below.

### Baseline

The initial focus of the Diversity Task Force was to establish the actual picture of diversity in the automotive sector, and to test the hypothesis that that the sector does not currently reflect the diversity of wider society. Work was done in March to establish the extent to which data is available to define a baseline. Analysis of publicly available data from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) as well as data from Emsi UK was carried out.

This data was used to update the IMI's report: Automotive Labour Market Baseline Report: 2019 Profile. This general baseline information was shared with the Industry Expert Panel at its first meeting in June.

Relevant baseline information was shared with the working groups and tailored to meet the scope of each group. This baseline information was shared at the first meeting of each working group.

Whilst some gender, age and ethnicity data was available in a number of specific occupations, for example *SOC5321 – Vehicle technicians, mechanics and electricians*, it was clear that access to more granular data was required. This requirement prompted the IMI's application to the ONS for special accreditation to access micro-level government data sets.

In parallel to the IMI's ONS data access application, one of the requirements from the working groups is to identify data gaps, as well as potential solutions to fill these gaps. This could be, for example, carrying out retrospective employee demographic data capture surveys. These surveys could inform the future direction of the Task Force into 2022, and beyond.

### Perception

From a question raised by the IMI's Vice Presidents, the Diversity Task Force is trying to understand the perception of the automotive sector. In order to achieve this we created two strands of research:

#### ***Strand 1 – Children and Young People***

- This study encompasses Key Stage 1 to 4 and 16-18 year olds. The survey tool has been adapted to be age-appropriate.
- Strand 1 was piloted at the British Motor Show in August 2021. This was an excellent learning opportunity to understand how the surveys might operate in a live environment. One of the key learning points during the pilot stage was that younger respondents approached some questions as if it were a puzzle, therefore looking for clues to solve the puzzle. Older respondents to the same questions had a different approach. Because of this result, we reviewed the questions against our original research brief, and ultimately removed these questions to avoid diluting the results.

#### ***Strand 2 – Influencers***

- The survey respondents here include teachers, careers professionals, parents, family members, guardians and friends. This strand has been separated into two surveys which makes it easier to understand from the respondent perspective as well as providing us with an opportunity to gather more data. The surveys are:
  - 2.1 – Careers, school and college influencers.
  - 2.2 – Personal influencers.

The surveys have been sequenced in such a way as to optimise engagement and analytical resources. The next phase of the Task Force's work will be to analyse the data from all of the surveys to inform recommendations for the final report.

### **Best Practice**

As part of their work, the working groups are identifying automotive best practice examples using organisations that have already developed and implemented Diversity and Inclusion initiatives. A number of organisations involved in the Task Force have mature Diversity and Inclusion strategies and will have learning points from both development and implementation. We aim to bring this learning to the wider sector as part of the broader recommendations, as well as practical hints and tips based on first-hand experience.

As well as identifying automotive sector best practice examples, the working groups are looking to other sectors such as the financial services sector. The approach that other sectors have taken to improving workforce diversity and inclusion can help our sector accelerate progress by adopting successful strategies that have been tried and tested.

### **Case Studies**

#### **Individual**

Each working group has identified a number of potential case study candidates who, through their stories, will help identify barriers to entry and progression. Their experience could help us discover what changes need to be made in terms of business policies, culture, or behaviour to support a more inclusive workplace. Showcasing individual success stories, as well as highlighting role models could also help to encourage others from under-represented groups to consider automotive as a positive career choice.

#### **Business**

The working groups are using organisational case studies to help identify and disseminate first-hand experience of developing and implementing Diversity and Inclusion strategies and initiatives. Understanding and learning from those experiences will enable the Task Force to give other organisations very practical advice and guidance that comes with the benefit of hindsight.

The findings from both individual and business case studies will be included in the final report.

### **SUPPORTING WORKING GROUP REQUIREMENTS**

In addition to the strands of research that have been scoped and planned, the working groups identified additional research requirements. Research requests from each working group are reviewed in order to maximise the limited resource available as well as avoid duplication with any other working group activities.

Examples of research requirements identified by the working groups:

1. Analysis of demographic data collected by employers in the sector.
2. Role models – researching and identifying individuals currently working in the sector from under-represented groups.

This work is on-going and will inform future stages of the project.

## 6. Progress

### INDUSTRY EXPERT PANEL

The first meeting of the Industry Expert Panel (IEP) was held in June 2021. The purpose of the IEP is to engage the senior leaders in the industry in skills and diversity-related discussions. It was important to have engagement across the automotive sector.

The project team identified individuals and organisations considered to be critical to the success of the Task Force. These individuals were invited to join the Industry Expert Panel. Overall, the responses to the invitations were positive, and only a small number of individuals declined the opportunity to participate due to the time commitment or business priorities.

Wider interest in the Diversity Task Force was developed through trade press and social media activity. This generated positive interest and participation in the Industry Expert Panel, as well as in the working groups.

It was important that the Task Force represented as much of the automotive sector as practicable, including representation from the franchised dealer network and independent businesses. Representation was encouraged from large, medium, small and micro businesses as well as achieving representation from some of the larger automotive sub-sectors. These included:

- Light vehicle maintenance, repair and sales.
- Heavy vehicle maintenance, repair and sales.
- Motorcycle maintenance, repair and sales.
- Roadside repair and recovery.

The purpose of the Industry Expert Panel is to:

- Bring together senior representatives from businesses across the largest segments of the industry to better understand current diversity challenges.
- Help identify examples of best practice.
- Enrich the project with insight and data.
- Initiate change with business leaders.
- Allow the project to engage directly with employees.
- Utilise their own networks to raise awareness of surveys.

The Industry Expert Panel met in June and September. The meetings have been well attended with much of the focus being on the topic of attracting the best talent into the sector as well as retention and skills development strategies. The next IEP meeting will take place in January 2022.

## WORKING GROUPS

The engagement and insight from senior leaders through the Industry Expert Panel added immense value to the study. We needed to engage on different levels to understand the detail of the challenges holding the sector back from realising the full business benefits of having a diverse workforce.

### Remit

Looking at the available data, as well as reflecting on general sector experience, the working groups focused on the most under-represented groups. However, in order to be as inclusive as possible, the remit of each working group needed to be expansive within their areas of focus.

For example, the gender identity group included sexual orientation, gender expression, LGBTQ+ as well as the more recognised and accepted female under-representation. The other two working groups are: race and ethnicity and physical and non-visible disabilities.

### Chair

The role of the Chair is to facilitate discussion and drive actions forward, as opposed to being a diversity and inclusion specialist, so it was important to identify the right individuals. The Chairs needed to be good leaders, active listeners and be able to adapt quickly to the evolving nature of the working groups.

We were pleased when Linda Jackson Hon FIMI, Sarah Sillars OBE, Hon FIMI, and Kevin Finn FIMI all accepted roles as working group Chair.

### Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)

Whilst the role of the working group chair is to facilitate discussions, guide the work of the group and drive forward the actions and recommendations, the role of the subject matter expert is to bring lived experience and insight to discussions. Their role is arguably more important than that of the Chair. Their contribution is critical to helping identify the barriers and to steer potential solutions.

To support the SMEs and Chair, the working group members come from a variety of backgrounds. Most have first-hand experience of working in the automotive sector and are either currently employed in the sector or have worked in the sector in the past. They come from different sub-sectors and different occupations, but all share a passion for improving workforce diversity. Some bring specific diversity and inclusion knowledge and experience, and there are also a number of HR professionals involved across the working groups.

### Project Support

The Diversity Task Force is supported by a core IMI project team with a broad range of skills and experience covering HR, project management, research and careers information, advice and guidance.

A member of the project team is assigned to each working group as project co-ordinator to provide support and guidance. These individuals have become a valuable and integral part of each group beyond the work they do as co-ordinators.

## 7. Task Force Progress and Early Insight

The purpose of the working groups is to:

- Bring together individuals with real world experiences.
- Identify case study candidates.
- Hear from subject matter experts.
- Help design the research and identify channels.
- Identify existing research.
- Provide practical support and guidance.

The working groups were established quickly, with everyone highly engaged. All working groups have adopted a sub-group structure where smaller groups worked on delivering specific tasks or activities.



## Race & Ethnicity Working Group

“As a business leader, I want to make positive changes, and so wanted to fully understand the challenges and issues around diversity and inclusion. This is why I wanted to have first-hand involvement in the Diversity Task Force. Chairing the Race and Ethnicity working group has given me that experience, and I’m delighted to be working with a group of talented and inspirational individuals. Our group has been a reality check for me, and I look forward to being part of a long-term drive for change.”



**Kevin Finn FIMI**  
Chair, Race and Ethnicity Working Group

**Chair:** Kevin Finn FIMI, Chair of the IMI Board  
**Subject Matter Experts:** Nathan Sawbridge MIMI, Dealer Principal – Lexus and Toyota Nottingham at Inchcape and Jodie Williams, Head of Diversity and Inclusion, Sytner Group  
**Project co-ordinator:** Dee McHugh MIMI

The Race and Ethnicity Working Group met four times between June and November with an engaging and thought-provoking kick-off meeting in June. At this meeting, interesting discussions, experiences and ideas were shared amongst a diverse group of inspirational people.

Early on, the group agreed the importance of data collection and establishing what data is already collected across sector employers, as well as identifying any data gaps. The group discussed Black, Asian and minority ethnic role models within the industry, and how influential these can be, albeit there is currently a lack of them. As well as issues, themes and obstacles, the group discussed the labels given to individuals that are not “White British”.

The group also identified how specialist diversity and inclusion support through charities such as Ben could be beneficial, if widened to a national level.

By the second working group meeting in September, Jodie Williams, Head of Diversity and Inclusion at Sytner Group had joined the programme and the group welcomed her on board as an additional subject matter expert.

At this meeting, the working group reported back on data gathering and research reports. They found a lack of robust data on diversity. The group identified a strong case for establishing the common fields of employee data in order to identify commonality and gaps. The group also sought to better understand diversity pay gaps, identify inclusive employers, and to establish how diverse senior leadership teams in the sector are.

By the third meeting of the working group the scope of activities continued to broaden. A decision was taken to share the work by creating sub-groups to manage all activities. The sub-groups covered:

- Data.
- Attraction.
- Culture.
- Support and wellbeing.
- Progression.
- Learning, development and best practice.

In November, the group met to review and analyse all the sub-group findings and to begin to pull together themes and recommendations. The group is considering categorising the recommendations into different levels, with a roadmap of policies, processes and tools. This would give all organisations, at whatever stage of their diversity journey, the opportunity to make positive steps forward.

To complement the roadmap, toolkits and templates will be developed, so that all organisations will have somewhere practical to start, build upon and grow their diversity and inclusion activities. The working group will meet again in January to begin to develop the toolkits and templates ready for launch in March.

Two individual case studies have been collected which provide insight into personal *lived* experience, and highlight both positive and negatives experiences. Two business-focused case studies are being planned, with the research window closing mid-January.

## SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS

### **Nathan Sawbridge MIMI**

#### **Dealer Principal, Lexus and Toyota Nottingham at Inchcape**

Nathan Sawbridge is 33 years old and is currently Head of Business for Lexus and Toyota Nottingham (Inchcape). He has been a General Manager for the past six years having joined the motor industry in 2009 through Pendragon's Undergraduate scheme. Nathan graduated in Business and Human Resources Management at SHU and he aspires to reach Director level in the near future. He firmly believes that his success in the motor industry has been driven by mixing diverse teams with a customer centric approach.

His passion for Diversity and Inclusion has been motivated by lived experiences and he believes that there is 'a mountain' of untapped potential that is not yet being realised in the industry.



### **Jodie Williams**

#### **Head of Diversity and Inclusion, Sytner Group**

Jodie Williams is an Equality, Inclusion and Diversity professional who has worked across various sectors with the aim of making businesses and services more accessible and inclusive. Jodie has created and executed diversity and inclusion programmes and strategies across TV and Radio, for industries such as engineering and utilities, transport, and now automotive, all with the aim of creating more inclusive businesses, services, and a more equitable society for all.



Throughout Jodie's career she has held a number of roles including managing charity TV campaigns, sustainability roles, managing development programmes for women in STEM, managing talent schemes to bring more diversity to various sectors and much much more. Jodie was previously a Leeds Melanin Festival Director. The Melanin Festival Leeds was a series of events celebrating communities of colour and Black history. In addition, Jodie also runs a diversity and inclusion forum, which focuses on bringing businesses together to share best practice across all Diversity and Inclusion matters.

In 2019, Jodie was listed in the top 100 Northern Power Women future list and was also nominated in the Head of Diversity category at The European Diversity Awards. Jodie is passionate about race equality and in 2020 created an online exhibition about White Privilege which was then turned into a book – A Definition of White Privilege. The feedback was phenomenal and has been used to really help people understand everyday examples of white privilege and how racial inequality can impact day to day lives.



## Physical and Non-Visible Disabilities Working Group

“The amount of time, energy and commitment that our extensive group has shown over our four meetings has been breath-taking. The whole subject raises so much emotion and we have had a few side conversations where people have expressed their views, especially where they don’t feel everyone really understands the impacts of either physical or in particular non-physical disability. We are in the position now of needing to define what our recommendations are – there is no real data in our sector but some great case studies, policies and best practice to help share our thinking. However, the real upside is the group have new ideas. The next stage is to try to bring together the abundance of input from all the group together. We’re thinking “small change for big wins.”



**Sarah Sillars**  
**OBE, Hon FIMI**  
**IMI Vice President**  
 Chair, Physical and Non-Visible Disabilities Working Group

**Chair:** Sarah Sillars OBE, Hon FIMI. IMI Vice President

**Subject Matters Experts:** Andy Kent FIMI, published author and Tony McKillop, Regional Office and Claims Manager, Autoguard Warranties

**Project co-ordinator:** Sally-Anne Hodder FIMI

The Physical and Non-visible Disabilities working group has met four times since June 2021. The first group meeting examined the current position, which revealed a very low base of available data in general, and especially in the automotive sector. At this meeting, the group also agreed to use the experiences of working group members to focus on two or three areas that would have the biggest impact.

The working group looked at what other research and data is available for automotive and other sectors, what employers in automotive are already doing, what other industries are already doing, and which charities and other organisations could support the work of the group.

From its second meeting in August, the group started to identify the key areas of focus which will have the biggest impact. For example, locating data from group contacts, looking at best practice in other sectors, the good work already going on in automotive, plus potential case studies from an individual and an employer perspective.

The SMEs were invaluable by challenging the group to see the employee perspective, as most of the working group were unconsciously seeing things from an employer perspective. One of the key take-away points from the second meeting was – small adjustments can make a big difference.

Another positive and energising working group meeting was held in September. The topics covered generated passionate and productive discussion, with commitment to explore topics such as:

- Recruitment experiences of people with disabilities.
- Charity advice on non-visible disabilities in the workplace.
- How technology can help.
- Support for employers.

The fourth and final working group meeting took place in October where the group discussed:

- Communicating to different audiences.
- How to raise awareness, empathy and understanding.
- Competency frameworks and toolkits.
- Ambassadors and key industry supporters.

There was also a focus on what had been learned so far, and what could be further recommended for data, research, insight and practical tools to support employers and employees.

The working group covered a broad spectrum of topics over the course of its meetings and gathered expansive knowledge, information and insight. Much has been highlighted through the work so far and the upcoming focus will be on how to bring forward recommendations that are realistic, achievable and valuable for the sector and its workforce.

## SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS

### Andy Kent FIMI

Former MD of Andy's Kars Limited, a family run business specialising in service and repair of vehicles and mobility adaptations, Andy trained and employed individuals with disabilities in his business. He is also the founder of Andy's Ark, teaching confidence in the workplace to people with disabilities so that they can have the tools and confidence to work in the automotive sector.

A long standing member of the IMI, Andy Kent is a past IMI award winner. In 2015 he was awarded the IMI's award for Outstanding Individual Achievement. Andy's life story is inspiring and is captured in his biography, White Light.



### Tony McKillop

#### Regional Office and Claims Manager, Autoguard Warranties

Tony started out with a Masters in Automotive Retail Management from Loughborough University and is currently working for Autoguard Warranties as their Regional Office and Claims Manager.

Having previously worked for manufacturers and franchise dealerships, mostly in the after sales departments, Tony has also held business development roles within franchise dealerships with many years of experience in construction and commercial business.



## Gender Identity Working group

**“It is a pleasure to be working with an enthusiastic group, passionate to make steps forward in encouraging more diversity. We are pulling on the “real life” experience of our group members and also looking across best practice already in place. Our combined ambition is to make a difference and offer pragmatic proposals to our industry.”**



**Linda Jackson**  
**Hon FIMI**  
 Chair, Gender Identity Working Group

**Chair:** Linda Jackson Hon FIMI, CEO, Peugeot & IMI Vice President

**Subject Matter Expert:** Julia Muir, founder of The Automotive 30% Club

**Project co-ordinator:** Joanna Hollingdale MIMI

The Gender Identity working group met four times since September. Group members cover a broad mix of seniority and the group was fortunate to be able to build upon the progress already made by The Automotive 30% Club in terms of the sector’s commitment to readdressing the gender imbalance.

The first working group meeting brought together a team with real passion and an ability to draw on their “real world” experiences. A sub-group approach was formed early on to focus on Analysis, Attraction, Culture and Progression, with volunteer team leaders identifying the scope, ideas and deliverables for each theme.

These sub-groups met separately and fed back to the working group in December. The working group were so passionate about the work that they also wanted to share ideas across the other two working groups. Everyone on the working group was eager to make a contribution, to demonstrate the tangible benefits of gender-inclusive teams, and to identify key actions required for lasting change.

The second working group meeting was held in October where feedback from the sub-groups was considered and next steps scoped. The group also discussed changing the name of the working group to better reflect its remit by including reference to sexual orientation. Group members collated evidence and generated ideas in-between the formal meetings, and the sub-groups met between working group meetings. Progress was reviewed at a third working group meeting held in November.

The working group met again in December and examined in more detail the information relating to the themes, Attraction and Progression. For example, under the theme Attraction, it was agreed that it would be beneficial to gain a better understanding of the workplace environment needs of Gen Z, in order to develop the right ‘hook’ to inspire them to join the sector. Within the theme of Progression, one of the recommendations is for employers to develop a holistic approach to reviewing and updating policies and programmes. This would mean that a new policy, such as one for Trans Inclusion, would be developed and implemented as part of the whole diversity strategy, helping to fully embed diversity into the corporate culture.

Work is on-going, with a survey for industry leaders in development. This survey will identify gender and sexual orientation across leadership teams. Case studies for businesses and individuals have been identified. The group will meet again in January to collate findings, identify best practice and prioritise recommendations which will effect lasting change.

### **SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT**

#### **Julia Muir**

Founder of the Automotive 30% Club, a network of CEOs and Managing Directors aiming for a minimum of 30% representation of diverse women in key roles by 2030.

Driven by her passion to see more women promoted to leadership roles, specifically in the UK automotive sector, Julia is the leading voice on gender balance in the sector, one which has historically been seen as stereotypically male.

Julia is the author of *Change the Game*, a valuable guide to creating a more inclusive workplace and addressing gender imbalance.



## **8. Barriers to progress**

The biggest barrier to progress for the Diversity Task Force has been the lack of demographic data available in the public domain. This has resulted in no clear baseline data being identified. To unblock this issue, the IMI sought approval from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to access more detailed data on particular characteristics. The accreditation process has multiple approval stages. This has been a lengthy piece of work and has diverted key research resource away from the project research and onto the accreditation application process itself.

However, we are pleased to report that the IMI application to the ONS to enable us to access micro-level government data was successful. During the accreditation application we have not been privy to the type or volume of data that the ONS hold but we hope it contains sufficient statistical information for us to identify baseline data of Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, those with disabilities as well as females, males and those from LGBTQ+ communities.

By using key representative indicators for these communities, we will test the hypothesis that that the sector does not currently reflect the diversity of wider society.

The data will enable us to create a baseline to assist in monitoring the effectiveness of any measures implemented following the launch of the Task Force report in March 2022.

This work will take place in early 2022.

## 9. Findings and reporting

The full findings and recommendations from the Diversity Task Force will be published on 17 March 2022. The report will be showcased at a launch event at the InterContinental London, Park Lane. Following this launch the report will be disseminated to all Task Force stakeholders, IMI members and the wider automotive sector.

### EARLY RECOMMENDATIONS

Whilst the work of the Diversity Task Force continues until February 2022, there are some clear recommendations from the working groups, some of which we are able to share in this interim report. Highlighted below are some examples of recommendations which will feature in the final report.

#### Race and Ethnicity

- Agreeing the common fields of employee data that automotive businesses collect and using the data to baseline and monitor progress.
- Introducing reverse mentoring for leaders.
- Educating people on what an ally is and understanding how to practice being an ally.
- Creating supportive networking groups.

#### Physical and Non-Visible Disabilities

- Using personalised messages and social media campaigns to raise awareness, empathy and understanding.
- Developing a competency framework toolkit for recruitment.
- Developing an ambassador programme.

#### Gender Identity

The culture sub-group have identified the five key principles of: Development Programmes; Promotions and Recruitment; Visibility; Sponsorship; and Data and Reporting.

- Developing a better understanding of the workplace environment needs of Gen Z in order to inspire them to join the sector.
- Identifying a clear career pathway for those joining the industry mid-career.
- Renaming the working group the Gender and Sexual Orientation working group, to better reflect the diversity of the work.

#### General Recommendations

The working groups will put forward recommendations which relate to the challenges and barriers highlighted within their groups as well as general recommendations. Here are some examples of recommendations that are common to all working groups:

- Benchmarking professional standards against cultural competency.
- Developing CPD to support diversity and inclusion within the automotive sector.

All of these recommendations will be further developed in the final report in March.

## Contributors

We are enormously grateful to everyone involved in the Diversity Task Force, this has been a huge undertaking. Individuals and businesses have been generous with their time commitment which has enabled the work to move at such a fast pace.

We would like to give particular thanks to the following individuals and companies who have supported the work.

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