

Bird & Bird

Diversity & Inclusion

2025 Year in Review



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Introduction

It is a pleasure to reflect on how our offices and teams have continued embedding inclusion into the way we work over the past 12 months – whether it’s through initiatives, training and development, policies, partnerships, or simply the everyday interactions we have with each other and our clients.

This year we built on the Wellbeing and Mental Health pillar of our strategy with the launch of Wellbeing@Birds – our firm-wide approach to supporting all aspects of wellbeing at work. The legal industry is fast-paced and high-performing, and at Bird & Bird we are fortunate to work on exciting, complex projects that demand collaboration across borders and disciplines. While this work is rewarding and impactful, we recognise the pressures that can accompany it. Wellbeing@Birds brings together our resources, benefits, training, policies, support networks, and external partnerships under one umbrella – helping people to navigate what’s on offer, and creating a strong foundation to explore what more we can do.

Among the global highlights this year, we finished the initial roll out of our Working With Respect training, which has been completed by 347 (82%) of our partners, and is now part of our ongoing partner curriculum. We ran another successful iteration of the Global Women’s Development Programme, and extended a similar opportunity for our clients who took part in our Inspire Programme. Across our offices, teams have continued to run initiatives such as development programmes, internships, mentoring opportunities, and an ongoing calendar of events and training. We have also placed particular emphasis on fostering conversation and connection through our ‘culture club’ approach, pioneered by the StandOUT network.

Building an inclusive firm takes time and dedication, and we are grateful to the many people across Bird & Bird who make this possible. Whilst there is always more to do, we are proud of the progress we have made together and look forward to building on this in 2026.



Aylie Ewing | Chief People Officer



Christian Bartsch | CEO



Graeme Maguire | Chair & Partner



Jess Kaye | Head of D&I & CR



Deborah Emuchay | D&I Senior Executive

D&I Strategy – In all that we do

There is no single version of a Bird & Bird person, everyone is unique and adds something different to our firm. We want to make sure we celebrate that fact and make it possible for a wide range of people to be successful here, across all our offices, and all our teams. Inclusion should be embedded into all that we do – the decisions we make, the way we run our teams, the way we manage our business, and how we interact with each other and our clients.

Our D&I ambition

- To have a culture built on empathy and respect, where identity is never a barrier to success, and we all have the freedom to be ourselves.
- To be inspired by the possibilities that diversity offers our people, our clients and our firm.
- To reflect the diversity of the communities and societies we operate in and to be inclusive in all that we do.

Our approach

Culture & behaviours: empowering all our people to contribute towards an inclusive environment, focusing on everyday interactions, behaviours, and decisions. Setting the tone from the top – establishing our leaders as champions and role models.

Policies & processes: deliberately designing our operations to be equitable and inclusive, so that we attract, hire and retain a diverse range of talent at all levels. Utilising our processes and policies as an enabler for inclusion.

Impact & inspiration: using our influence and client partnerships to champion inclusion within the communities we operate in, and the wider legal industry. Working alongside clients to progress their inclusion agenda and amplify our own.

Governance & accountability: setting ourselves transparent goals that we monitor and report against. Establishing a governance structure and support network with responsibility for driving progress towards our goals.

Our diversity pillars

- **Gender balance:** improving the retention and progression of women, particularly at leadership and partner levels, and ensuring all genders are supported to reach their full potential.
- **LGBTQ+:** ensuring that our ways of working are LGBTQ+ inclusive, and that anyone who identifies as LGBTQ+ is comfortable being themselves at work, without fear or hesitation.
- **Racial, ethnic and cultural diversity:** improving the attraction, retention and progression of racial and ethnic minorities at all levels of our business.
- **Social mobility:** providing opportunities to those who may not otherwise have the means or inclination to pursue a career in the legal industry and ensuring that anyone can thrive regardless of personal circumstances or background.
- **Wellbeing and mental health:** supporting the wellbeing of our people, and removing any stigma regarding discussing and addressing mental health in the workplace.
- **Faith:** celebrating and embracing all religions and faiths.
- **Family and carers:** supporting people to balance their working life effectively with family and caring responsibilities.
- **Neurodiversity:** creating a workplace that can adjust to the needs of people with neurodiverse conditions, enabling them to thrive.
- **Age and generations:** harnessing the perspectives of people at different stages of their life and career, and recognising the unique support they may need at each point.
- **Disability:** ensuring our firm takes the necessary steps to be inclusive of anyone living with a disability.

Data and accountability

There are a number of ways we can keep ourselves accountable, and use the data we have to help target our initiatives, as well as track our progress.

Role	Male	Female
Partners	71%	29%
Associates	42%	58%
Other Fee earners	55%	45%
Business Services	31%	67%

As of June 2025

Goals



30% women in the global partnership – significantly progress our journey towards greater gender balance, as part of our wider global five-year strategy.



10,000 hours pledge – partners collectively pledge to record a minimum of 10,000 hours over the next five years to the pursuit of responsible business education or action, including D&I alongside CSR and pro-bono activities. So far, partners have recorded over 3,270 hours towards this goal.



Mansfield Certification – in July 2021 we were one of a handful of firms to participate in the Mansfield Certification UK pilot programme, representing a public and bold commitment that we can hold ourselves accountable to. We have achieved certification every year since, most recently in 2025. The initiative aims to boost diversity and inclusion in law by asking that firms measure and commit to considering at least 30% of historically underrepresented lawyers for a variety of roles, including equity partner promotions, senior lateral hires, client pitches and leadership positions. This has required us to review our recruitment, staffing, promotion and selection processes, with a view to mitigating bias and increasing the chance of having a more diverse candidate pool.

Data and reporting



Gender, ethnicity and social mobility pay gap report – in London we are required to report our gender pay gap. In 2021 we started voluntarily reporting our ethnicity pay gap, and this year we added the social mobility pay gap. You can find the latest report on our website [here](#), alongside previous reports since 2018.



Diversity data report – we report on the diversity of our London office every two years, including data on gender, age, race and ethnicity, LGBTQ+, disability, caring responsibilities, and social mobility. This relies on people voluntarily completing a diversity data questionnaire – our latest report can be found on our website [here](#), based on an overall completion rate of 90%.



Global diversity statistics – globally, we are able to report on gender and we publish this data on our website [here](#). In 2024, we launched a data collection exercise outside of London for the first time, in Sydney.

Wellbeing@Birds

This year we launched Wellbeing@Birds, our global approach to supporting a healthy, productive workplace, where people are able to perform to the best of their ability and manage the day to day demands of their role, without compromising their wellbeing.

Wellbeing@Birds brings together our full range of resources, initiatives, policies, and support under one umbrella, and includes a focus on mental, physical, financial and social wellbeing across our offices.

Through Wellbeing@Birds, we want to ensure everyone:

- Is supported to proactively manage their wellbeing
- Operates in a way that reduces unnecessary stress for themselves, colleagues and clients
- Is mindful of the wellbeing of their teams and colleagues, and encourages healthy working practices
- Feels able to raise concerns and challenges regarding their wellbeing – or the wellbeing of others – without judgement
- Receives the support they need if they are struggling

Highlights from Wellbeing@Birds this year include:

Expanding our network of Mental Health First Aiders

We expanded our Mental Health First Aiders network internationally for the first time, so that we now have 36 Mental Health First Aiders across 15 offices, who can provide support in times of crisis. We'll continue growing this network over time to ensure that we have at least one Mental Health First Aider in all our locations.

Launching Worklife Central globally

Worklife Central is a platform offering expert lead resources and live sessions on careers, family, inclusion and wellbeing. The platform is now available to all our people globally, and provides colleagues with on demand talks, podcasts, and articles designed to support both professional and personal wellbeing.

Supporting conversations about stress and burnout

To mark the launch of Wellbeing@Birds we held a webinar focused on how to identify early signs of burnout, understand some of its causes and offer practical support. The session was attended by over 145 people globally, and encouraged open discussions about mental health, addressed some of the challenges with approaching these conversations, and highlighted the importance of creating a compassionate and supportive workplace.



Championing wellbeing across our offices

Throughout the year, a range of wellbeing initiatives and events were held across our global offices, from puppy therapy sessions in London and mental health workshops in Italy, to the launch of a new wellbeing committee in Australia and resilience workshops in Hong Kong. These efforts help to keep wellbeing firmly on the agenda and reinforce its importance as a core element of our workplace culture.



World Mental Health Day, Spain



World Mental Health Day, Singapore



Global highlights

Working with Respect Training

We completed our rollout of our Working With Respect training for partners, bringing overall completion rate to 82%. This training covers the importance of leadership in creating an inclusive environment and how to address non-inclusive behaviour if it does occur, using real life case studies. This has now become part of our business as usual training for partners, and our goal remains 100% completion.


Global Women's Development Programme

Launched in 2016, the Global Women's Development Programme is our bespoke firmwide programme to support and empower women lawyers on their path to partnership. The programme runs annually, with the aim of retaining high performing female lawyers, promoting an inclusive culture, and addressing gender related challenges women face in our Firm. The programme continued in 2025, held over 2.5 days, bringing together a new cohort of women lawyers from across our international offices. Since its launch, more than 230 women have participated with 45% progressing to senior roles including Legal Director, Counsel or Partner.

230

women participated
since 2016 launch



 Global Women's Development Programme

Inspire Programme

The Inspire programme builds on the success of the Global Women's Development Programme, but is aimed at in-house lawyers within our client organisations who are at a similar career stage and have the potential to move into senior positions. It has been designed to help participants identify their career priorities, develop leadership skills, and provides practical tools to drive their careers forward. Inspire also creates a cohort of women who can offer peer support, share insights, and broaden their networks. The programme ran for a second time this year, comprised of five workshops over three months, with excellent feedback.

Culture Clubs

Culture Club is an informal discussion format where colleagues in each office come together to watch, read or listen to something thought provoking, whether it be a short article, Ted Talk or podcast, then share their reflections in an open conversation. First introduced by our StandOUT Network, the sessions are designed to be engaging and meaningful, encouraging colleagues to share perspectives, challenge ideas and connect beyond day-to-day work. In 2025 Culture Club continued to grow in reach and impact with offices around the world hosting sessions linked to International Women's Day and Pride Month. Colleagues explored content such as "The Likeability Dilemma for Women Leaders" and "Rethinking the Closet: Coming Out vs Inviting In," sparking reflection, empathy and laughter while reinforcing that inclusion starts with everyday conversations.



 International Women's Day Culture Club, Ireland



 Pride Culture Club, Hong Kong



 International Women's Day Culture Club, Singapore

Local highlights




 LGBTQIA+ student acceptance event



 Career Impact Programme



 Pride, Germany

Career Impact Programme in UK

In January 2025, we launched the Career Impact Programme in London, designed to support the progression of junior and mid-level associates from ethnically and racially diverse backgrounds. The two-day, in-person programme combined group coaching, practical workshops, and peer discussions to build career clarity and a sense of community. Developed in collaboration with Collective Insight, the sessions focused on building careers in the corporate legal space and developing a strong professional brand. Feedback from participants highlighted the value of having a supportive space to share experiences, exchange ideas, and gain practical tools to progress their careers.

Celebrating Pride in Germany

In July 2025, our Frankfurt office took part in Christopher Street Day parade (CSD), one of Germany's largest Pride celebrations. For the first time our Firm joined 10 other law firms to take part in the parade with a co-branded law firm truck. The day was filled with colour, music and celebration as colleagues joined the nearly 200-person group dancing and cheering alongside the local LGBTQ+ community. The event was a powerful collaboration and show of support between all the law firms involved.

Raising Awareness on Invisible Disabilities in the Workplace Workshop in France

Our Paris and Lyon offices hosted sessions with the co-founders of Petite Mu, a platform raising awareness of invisible disabilities. The discussions encouraged open conversations about how invisible disabilities affect people at work and explored the ways colleagues can better understand and support one another.

The Path to Greater LGBTQIA+ Student Acceptance in Belgium and The Netherlands

In January 2025, our Brussels office - in collaboration with LDIA and FORWARD - hosted a seminar exploring the path to greater LGBTQIA+ student acceptance in Belgium and the Netherlands through theatre, storytelling and music. The event highlighted the impact of discrimination of LGBTQIA+ students and the importance of building inclusive environments.

Equilibrium Mentoring Programme in Czech Republic and Slovakia

The Equilibrium Mentoring Programme is run by the British Chamber of Commerce and focuses on empowering and supporting women in business through mentoring, seminars and discussions with inspiring female leaders for 10 months. This year marks the 15th anniversary of the programme and the third year of our involvement. Building on its success, the 2025-2026 edition has now been extended to include our Slovakia office, with two mentees from Slovakia and four from the Czech Republic office, supported by three mentors from the Czech Republic office.

School Outreach in Finland

Our Finland team has continued their school outreach work, visiting local schools to introduce 14 and 15 year olds to the world of law. Since 2020, they have regularly delivered sessions to schools through sharing personal stories, answering questions and highlighting opportunities in the legal field. Teachers from the schools highlighted that these conversations have already made a real impact, helping students focus on their goals and consider careers they hadn't thought were for them. The team has also hosted work experience to give students insight into working at a law firm.

Emotional Intelligence and Resilience Workshop in Hong Kong

Colleagues in Hong Kong took part in an emotional intelligence and resilience workshop facilitated by FELIZ Consulting. The session focused on building self-awareness, emotional regulation and resilience making sure to build on practical skills that support personal wellbeing and help create a more empathetic and supportive environment.

Partnerships, collaborations and training



This year we delivered over 490 hours of training and workshops related to D&I and wellbeing, to over 670 participants, across our international network. Topics have included:

- Being burnout aware
- The importance of sleep
- Raising awareness on invisible disabilities in the workplace workshop
- Dealing with stress
- Creating LGBTQ+ inclusive homes
- Recognising and supporting stress and burnout in colleagues
- Working with respect
- D&I: Engaging with others
- Mental health first aid
- Emotional intelligence and resilience workshop



We partner with a host of organisations across the globe to support, enhance and amplify our D&I agenda. Here is just a selection of the incredible partners we have worked with, sponsored, and supported, this year:



Leaderships and networks

We have a number of groups and committees across the firm who actively drive D&I progress.

Networks

Our networks are led by employees, and supported by the business to create safe spaces based on shared identities or experience related to D&I. They help raise awareness, celebrate our diversity and provide a collective voice to feed back to D&I leadership and support the D&I strategy.

NeuroNetwork: Our neurodiversity network raises awareness and promotes better understanding of neurodivergence in the workplace. The network also consults on training sessions and webinars, ensuring our approach is inclusive and supportive of our neurodivergent colleagues.

StandOUT: Our LGBTQ+ network raises awareness and represents the LGBTQ+ staff and allies. We recently globalised the network, and currently have 12 representatives in eight countries. StandOUT runs events throughout the year during times such as Pride Month. The network members act as mentors and champions, as well as providing input into our broader D&I strategies.

Faith Groups: Our Faith groups celebrate and support colleagues of different religions across the firm. The groups include our Christian Network, Jewish Network and Muslim Network. These networks provide spaces for colleagues to connect, share experiences and celebrate their faith together.


Beyond Backgrounds: Our social mobility network highlights the importance of equitable opportunities in the firm. The network aims to increase awareness of social mobility challenges, champion initiatives that break down barriers and provide a platform to support employees from underrepresented backgrounds.

Embrace: Our multicultural network supports and celebrates multicultural experience within the firm. The network raises awareness of important cultural and historical moments (such as Black History Month) and gives back to multicultural communities through community engagement. Recognised for its impact, Embrace was nominated by the Inclusive Awards 2022 for an Outstanding Diversity Network Award.



 International Rainbow Laces campaign



 Neuronetwork coffee morning



 Embrace network Sip n' Paint event

Responsible Business Committee

In 2025 our Global D&I Leadership Group merged with the Sustainability Committee to form a single unified Responsible Business Committee. This brings together work on diversity and inclusion, community impact, pro bono and environmental sustainability under one structure, strengthening our shared commitment to purposeful business. This committee operates as a subcommittee of the Board, which enables a more strategic and integrated approach to Responsible Business, streamlining decision making and improving how we track our progress.

D&I Advisory Group

The Global D&I Advisory Group was established in 2021 to advise the Global D&I Leadership, providing input and feedback into key elements of our D&I strategy. The group represents a cross section of our firm globally and membership is by nomination only, every two years, with the second iteration of the group announced in February 2024. The group brings diverse perspectives to discussions, acting as a sounding board, and is a forum for new ideas or alternative approaches for our D&I strategy.

D&I Country Partners

Each country has appointed a D&I Partner who leads the local D&I agenda, coordinates D&I activities and chairs the local D&I Committee. Their role is to:

- Raise the visibility of D&I topics with country leadership to ensure they remain a priority
- Chair the local D&I Committee, and work with them to create and implement local plans
- Ensure local plans maintain alignment with global priorities
- Facilitate collaboration with other D&I Partners and committees across the network.

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