

## CASE STUDY

# CMS

Our **10 CEO Commitments on Diversity** have been a flagship Real Estate Balance policy for more than five years.

Setting out 10 inclusive actions that each member CEO agrees to take on diversity, the Commitments are designed to be interpreted and implemented by our member organisations in ways that are most appropriate for them.

We know our members are all at different stages in their journey with the Commitments, so we wanted to showcase some of the fantastic work already taking place and inspire and encourage others to find new and creative ways of engaging with them.

Here, we look at Commitment number five. **CMS**, a global law firm specialised in real estate, shares how they are taking steps to implement change.



## Commitment 5

Use promotional opportunities for your company to **represent a diverse** image

**10** **CEO** Commitments on Diversity

# CMS

## How did you implement this commitment?

### Recruitment, community engagement and branding

Access to the legal profession is a closed door for many young people. We promote a range of programmes aimed at increasing access, for example, a scholarship programme (as a result of which 200 students have received financial or other support), and PRIME work experience for year 12-13 students from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

As part of our graduate recruitment programme we undertake a number of promotional activities to broaden the diversity of applicants (in particular focussing on non-Russell Group universities) including:

- Appointing brand ambassadors (students on campus to help promote the firm and what we are doing).
- Sponsorship of student societies (and supporting initiatives like the 93% Club and NRG Lawyers).
- Targeting through online events.

We ensure that the panels/individuals we select for the full range of external marketing and promotional opportunities are diverse in their makeup and showcase the views and experiences of our diverse teams.

We also operate blind CVs for a number of roles and adopt inclusive language on job adverts and across communication channels. We advertise roles on

[BMEjobs.co.uk](https://www.bmejobs.co.uk), providing access to three diversity job boards: BME, LGBT+, Disability.

We encourage our lawyers to be involved with a wide range of external networks (real estate and legal sectors) which support diversity and sponsor a number of inclusive events (e.g. Pride) and client initiatives. We have launched a range of events and podcasts including one by our Women's Network which profiles a range of inspirational female leaders about the challenges they encountered during their careers.

### Clients and Pitching

We regularly work with our clients to specifically enhance the diversity of their teams, sometimes agreeing to monitor specific diversity targets.

We have developed a D&I framework for assembling teams when pitching to clients, ensuring that we are putting forward teams that are representative of our diversity.

## What were the outcomes and how did you measure this?

### Client and market recognition

As part of our commitment to our clients, we often track the diversity of the teams we field and provide real-time diversity data to our clients. In awarding CMS its top 'law firm diversity performer' award, Microsoft highlighted the results of our efforts – which included increasing

the diversity of CMS' Partners on the Team by 3% to 41.7% – with Microsoft concluding that “these highlights emphasise the critical achievements that CMS is making in diverse representation and is a great example to other organisations/firms who are also aspiring to diversify.”

CMS was named by GCs from major businesses including FTSE 100 companies as among the UK's best law firms for diversity & inclusion. Legal Week stated that CMS “walks the walk on diversity & inclusion”.

We have been regularly recognised in a range of Awards/ Listings (e.g. The Times Top 50 Employers for Women, Top 75 Social Mobility Employer Index and The European Diversity Awards).

### Recruitment

We constantly monitor performance in terms of recruitment by collection and analysis of data. For example, in relation to our graduate entry programme over 25% of participants this year were from non-Russell Group universities; nearly one third identified as being from an ethnic minority; over 55% were female and 48% had one or more RARE flags (under our contextual recruitment system which puts qualifications in the context of the individual schools students attended) – an increase of 7% over the past 2 years.