



Press release

For immediate release - 26th August 2015

Networks at Lloyds Banking Group, PayPal, Parliament, Dyfed-Powys Police, Fujitsu and more are recognised as 'Awesome Networks' by 'Inclusive Networks'

Inclusive Networks, a hub for celebrating diversity and inclusion, is delighted to publish their second and final Awesome Networks list of 2015 – sixty new networks making up their 2015 **#Awesome100**. The first list of its kind, it aims to celebrate the positive impact that network groups of all types and from all sectors have and also thank those people who selflessly coordinate the networks, with many doing this on top of their day jobs.

Networks are an integral part of the diversity, inclusion and engagement agenda in many organisations and play an important role in providing a welcome space for their members to meet new people, network, offer opportunities to increase their members knowledge and understanding of many topics as well as supporting with business, career and professional development. It's only right that we celebrate their inspiring and important work and the positive impact they have. There are also many groups and organisations that facilitate valuable networking events and these should be acknowledged and rewarded too.

We wanted to hear about networks that have done something special. This could have been hosting an inclusive event that was a real highlight, supporting an internal

or external initiative, making a positive difference to the workplace or beyond, fundraising for charity or just generally being awesome through the work they do.

Following the publication of the first list in February, network members and their supporters have been enthusiastically nominating their networks to be recognised. The list represents the diversity of network groups from all over the UK, ranging from employee networks including the 'Breakthrough' network at Lloyds Banking Group and 'Shine LGBT+', the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) network at Fujitsu to the 'Defence Stammering Network' at The Army and the 'Fraud Women's Network' who bring together women involved in all aspects of fraud prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution.

To view the full list of new Awesome Networks, visit www.inclusivenetworks.co.uk/awards/awesome-networks-2015-pt-2/

Thomas Anderson, Inclusive Networks Founder and Chief Executive, said :

"Following the publication of our first Awesome Networks list in February it has been wonderful to hear of many of our Awesome Networks connecting and supporting each other, as well as many organisations without networks approaching them for tips and advice."

"The diversity of the nominations received is a celebration of the many authentic networks around the UK that have each made their mark and have a real positive impact on those people who engage with them. From my personal experience, it is very clear that networks of all types can enhance the lives of those people who engage with them, as well as be of great value to the organisations that many of the networks represent."

"More and more organisations are seeing the value of investing in network groups. That's a great thing as we know that many people are attracted to organisations who have visible and active network groups or visibly support them. They also have a positive impact on employee engagement and staff retention. They really shout 'that's a great place to work, where all employees are supported, can be themselves and there is investment and commitment to workplace inclusion'. It makes business sense to support and develop network groups."

On receiving their Awesome Networks recognition, **Nikki Humphrey**, Co-Chair of the 'Breakthrough' network at Lloyds Banking Group said :

"We are delighted that Breakthrough has been recognised as an 'Awesome Network'. Our aims are to maximise the potential of female colleagues at all levels and to support the Group to achieve its goal to increase the number of women at senior levels. We have dedicated workstreams for mentoring, role models and for parents. We run a successful national and regional events programme and held over 50 events last year to support our 12,000 members."

Ann Moghaddami, Chair of the ParliAble Workplace Equality Network at Parliament was thrilled to hear of their recognition and said :

"We are delighted to have been named as one of the Awesome Networks for 2015! The ParliAble committee has been working hard for the past four years to raise awareness of disability issues in Parliament, and our membership has steadily grown. Currently we are hoping to be an exciting agent for change, by making the workplace adjustment process more visible, and easier to navigate, for employees. Thank you to anyone who nominated us."

Speaking to Inclusive Networks, **Nicky Morgan MP**, Secretary of State for Education and Minister for Women and Equalities, said :

"It's clear that network groups can make a very real contribution to the workplace, helping create a culture which values diversity and attracts the best talent. It is of course up to individual firms how they recognise the work that network groups do, both inside and outside of the organisation, but I would certainly encourage any company to reward staff who give something back to the workplace and their communities."

"We know that networks are important – we've seen how the 'old boys' network' used to dominate the workplace at senior levels. Luckily, things are now changing and there is much more diversity in the world of work. However, there is still a lot of benefit from both formal and informal networks."

Nominations to be recognised as a 2016 Awesome Network are now open. You can nominate up until 11:59pm on 31st March 2016 and we'll be announcing the first 2016 Awesome Networks in May 2016.

If you know of a network you think is awesome and should be recognised and celebrated, then let us know about them. For more information visit www.inclusivenetworks.co.uk/awards/awesome-networks/

Inclusive Networks will announce the shortlist of their inaugural **Inclusive Networks Awards**, supported by organisations including Contracts IT and Action for Children, on 3rd September. The awards will recognise the people who make the networks live and breathe, many of whom volunteer substantial amounts of their own time, as well as thank the organisations that support and encourage their work and that of an inclusive society.

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Notes for Editors:

Launched at the end of October 2014, Inclusive Networks aims to bring networks, charities, community groups and inclusive employers of all diversity strands and sectors together, to learn from each other, to share, to collaborate and most importantly, to celebrate the many successes of network groups, the people who make them come alive and the employers and organisations who support them and

help them flourish. A vibrant feature and interview driven website is updated frequently and a bi-monthly online magazine, 'Network Buzz', is produced by Inclusive Networks. A number of quotes from our Awesome Networks can be found at www.inclusivenetworks.co.uk/awards/awesome-networks-2015-pt-2/

Inclusive Networks announced their first list of forty Awesome Networks, including networks from Tesco, John Lewis Partnership, BBC, The Co-operative Group, IBM, RBS and more in February 2015. You can view the inaugural list here www.inclusivenetworks.co.uk/awards/awesome-networks-2015/

Logos :

High resolution logos are available on request.

Photographs :

Attached is a selection of photos of some of our Awesome Networks who were recognised in our inaugural list in February.

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