

MBS Intelligence

# Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the Beauty Sector

In-depth research and analysis from CEW UK,  
The MBS Group and ScienceMagic



ScienceMagic

# Contents

Forewords	04
Executive Summary	08
How diverse and inclusive is the Beauty industry?	10
Industry insights	22
About us	23

# Forewords

Two years ago, The MBS Group partnered with ScienceMagic and CEW to hold a mirror up to the Beauty industry and explore if companies were adequately prioritising diversity and inclusion. What we found was a real hesitancy to engage in the topic; a fear of saying the wrong thing was holding companies back from making meaningful progress.

Today, we are delighted to have once again joined forces with ScienceMagic and CEW to take stock of how the industry is performing on D&I.

After all, few industries are better placed to embrace inclusion. There is a pressing commercial imperative to build products and brands that speak to a new – broader – definition of Beauty. And the industry is powered by a workforce made up predominantly of women, creating excellent conditions to develop pipelines of diverse talent.

Over the past few months, MBS has undertaken in-depth research, measuring the representation of women and leaders from an ethnic minority background at Board and executive committee level in Beauty. We've also held detailed conversations with Chairs, CEOs, HRDs and Heads of D&I to hear the steps companies are taking to make their organisations more inclusive.

Our analysis paints a mixed picture. On the one hand, Beauty is home to some of the most comprehensive D&I strategies in the entire consumer-facing sector. Policies are underpinned by data, backed up with budget, and often led right from the very top. And leadership teams are becoming gradually more diverse, with Beauty outperforming many of its adjacent consumer industries on the representation of minority groups.

But on the other hand, the most strategic senior leadership positions in Beauty are still held by men – despite the fact that most customers,

and most colleagues, are women. And while 87% of companies we spoke to had a coordinated strategy, there is still notably less engagement in the topic of D&I than in industries like retail, fashion, or hospitality, travel and leisure.

Through this report, we hope to shine a light on D&I in Beauty, and highlight examples of best practice for others to learn from. It has been a privilege to sit down with leaders over the past few months to discuss this critical topic, and we're delighted to be highlighting a few companies at different stages of their journeys as case studies.

We'd like to thank every industry leader who took the time out of their busy schedule to participate in our research, and to Julietta Dexter at ScienceMagic and Sallie Berkerey at CEW for their commitment to making a positive impact on the Beauty industry. We'd also like to thank the team at MBS for their contribution to delivering these insights.

We hope that this report can inspire progress and encourage more open conversation on diversity in the Beauty industry.



**HUW LLEWELLYN-WATERS**  
Partner,  
Consumer Goods Practice  
The MBS Group



**FRANCESCA SEVILLA-REBELDERIA**  
Associate Consultant,  
Consumer Goods Practice  
The MBS Group

The UK is home to a dynamic Beauty and wellbeing market, and nurturing and celebrating inclusivity and diversity must be at the heart of maintaining and growing our industry as we move forward.

In the past few years, the industry has made steps in creating products relevant to all ethnicities, skin colours, tones and needs, yet it continues to face some challenges to become an inclusive industry to work in.

In conducting this second report in partnership with The MBS Group and ScienceMagic, we have seen that while the level of responses and willingness to discuss D&I strategies has increased, there is still less open engagement in the topic than we would like, despite approaches and programmes in Beauty being highly advanced in comparison to other adjacent sectors.

As we move forward, we hope to encourage the whole industry to be more confident and active in the discussion.

The Beauty industry is multi-disciplined and includes many small, independent businesses as well as much larger multi-national, global corporations. This makes for natural differences in practices, with some stand-out companies displaying best-in-class examples for making tangible, positive changes in D&I.

Since our first year of research in 2021, the proportion of women at Board and Executive Committee level has climbed steadily. On the Board, 44% of roles are held by women, placing the Beauty industry ahead of its adjacent consumer industries. However, we are still a long way off reaching the 50/50 gender split which exists in society – and considering that the industry is made up predominantly of women, companies must focus on increasing the pace of change.

This report is crucial in understanding the industry's current landscape and challenges. I hope that businesses, both big and small, will find it helpful for providing practical and actionable advice and guidance when implementing effective broad-reaching DE&I strategies to make dynamic, measurable and positive change that will transform and shape the industry in 2023 and beyond.

CEW is committed to being a force for good in the beauty and wellbeing industry, and this second cross-industry report is an essential step in measuring change and identifying the challenges we face and how we can support individuals and businesses from across the sector in overcoming these.



**SALLIE  
BERKEREY**  
Managing Director  
CEW UK

Beauty, often seen as a reflection of external aesthetics, carries the profound responsibility of portraying values, beliefs, and the tapestry of diverse communities. As the globe grapples with the ever-present challenge of fostering diversity and inclusion, the beauty industry finds itself at an exhilarating crossroads.

Societal movements have spotlighted the voices that once lingered in the shadows, urging industries, Beauty included, to recalibrate and embrace a more inclusive tomorrow. Yet, where precisely does beauty stand amidst this whirlwind of change?

The MBS Group, in partnership with Cosmetic Executive Women (CEW) and ScienceMagic, for a second year, have embarked on a journey to reflect upon the beauty industry's strides and stumbles in championing diversity and inclusion. Derived from comprehensive data and enriching dialogues with industry leaders, this report paints a vivid picture. It tells a story of progress, of an industry awakening to the importance of diverse leadership, yet also revealing areas begging for greater attention, particularly gender dynamics in pivotal roles and the embrace of varied socioeconomic narratives.

Amidst the figures and insights, readers will unearth the true potential of an industry adaptive and committed. The beauty realm, in its essence, is about championing diversity, and our shared duty is to mould it into an emblem of inclusivity for all sectors to emulate.

Like many companies, ScienceMagic is on its own EDI journey. We are a creative and strategic company, and we wear our B Corp badge with pride, believing in businesses that aren't just prosperous but that matter in a better world. The beauty industry's responsibility? Reflecting the diverse mosaic of the communities it touches. We're not just participants in this evolution; we're fervent advocates and students.

To all entwined in beauty's embrace – from founders and employees to stakeholders sculpting its landscape – I hope you get something positive from these pages. Let's not just envision but actively sculpt a future where beauty is synonymous with inclusivity.



**JULIETTA  
DEXTER**  
Co-Founder and Chief Growth  
& Purpose Officer  
ScienceMagic

# Executive summary

## Methodology

For the second time, The MBS Group has partnered with Cosmetic Executive Women (CEW) and ScienceMagic to measure progress on diversity and inclusion in the Beauty industry.

Our research aims to hold a mirror up to the Beauty industry, to provide in-depth analysis on the representation of minority groups at leadership level, and to explore how companies are moving the dial.

The analysis in this report is based on research from The MBS Group, which draws on data captured from the 100 biggest companies in the Beauty industry, plus in-depth conversations with industry Chairs, CEOs and HRDs.

## D&I in context

In 2021, we detected a real hesitancy to discuss D&I in the Beauty industry. The response rate to our research was low, and leaders were nervous to openly talk about their progress and challenges relating to D&I. Our research found that a fear of saying the wrong thing was holding many companies back.

Two years later, executives in the Beauty industry are considerably more willing to openly discuss their D&I strategies. However, there is still far less engagement in the topic in Beauty than in other consumer-facing industries – despite the strategies in Beauty being highly advanced.

### 1 Most Beauty companies have a coordinated D&I strategy...

Today, 87% of Beauty companies have a joined-up strategy to promote a culture of inclusion and increase the representation of minority groups such as women, leaders from ethnic minority background, and Disabled people. This shows improvement from 2021, when 75% of companies had a strategy.

### 2 ...and strategies are highly comprehensive

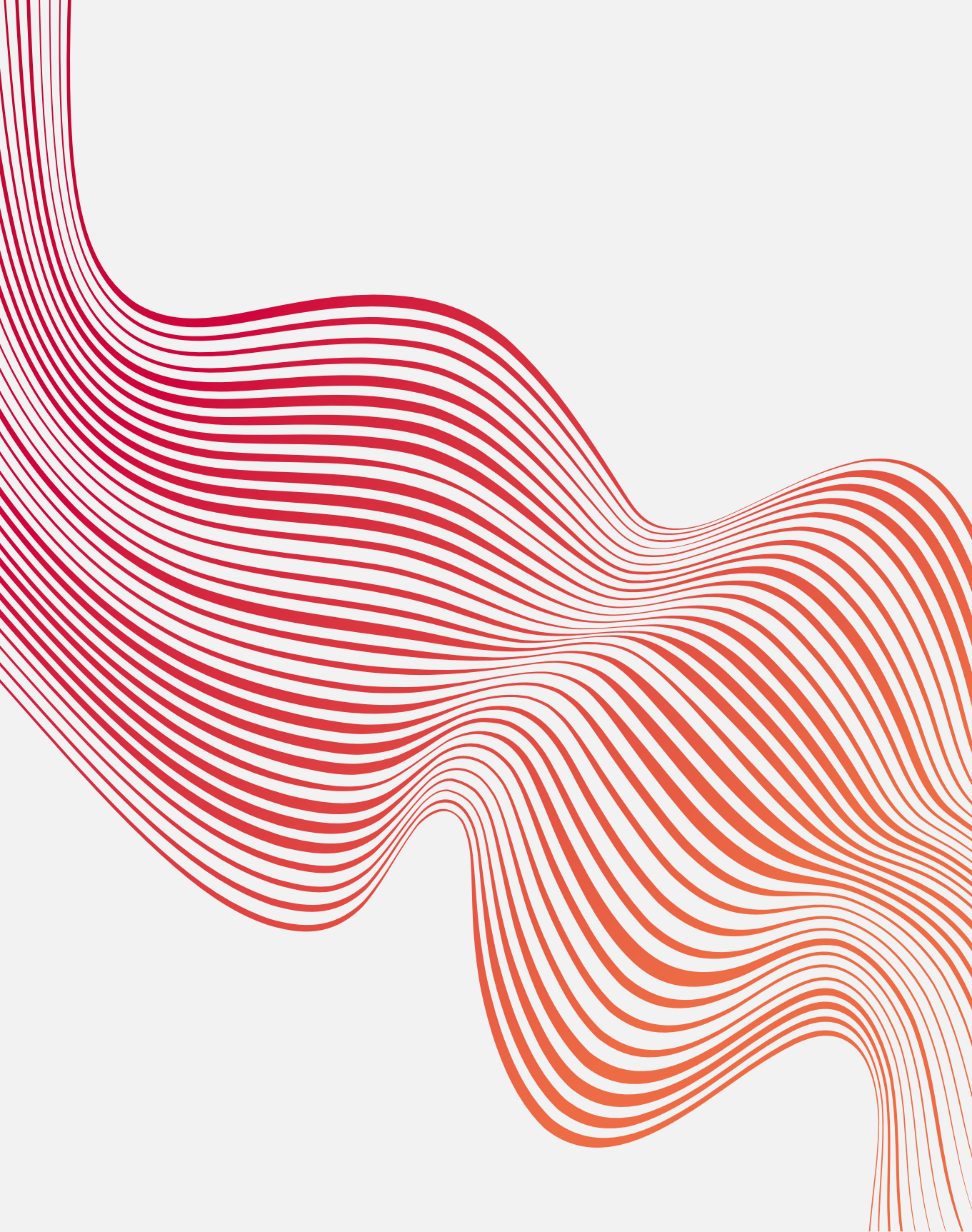
Most policies (82%) are backed up by a specific budget, a high proportion of companies (62%) have goals and targets in place relating to D&I. Moreover, 80% of companies are collecting data on the diversity of their organisation.

### 3 Gender diversity is steadily improving – but the most senior strategic roles are still held by men

At Board level, 44% of positions are held by women, and at executive committee level, 37% of companies are held by women. While this represents steady improvement from last year, our research found that the most critical roles in the industry are dominated by men: in the top-twenty Beauty companies, there are only three woman Chairs, three woman CEOs, and four woman CFOs.

### 4 Ethnic diversity has more than doubled at executive committee level

Encouragingly, the proportion of leaders from an ethnic minority background at Board and executive committee level has jumped since last year. On the Board, 16.5% of roles are held by those from an ethnic minority background, compared with 9% last year. On the executive committee, 15.2% of roles are held by leaders from an ethnic minority background, up from 7% last year.



## How diverse and inclusive is the Beauty industry?

Our analysis in this chapter is based on research from The MBS Group, which draws on data captured from the 100 biggest companies in the beauty industry, plus in-depth conversations with industry Chairs, CEOs and HRDs.



# Most Beauty companies have a coordinated D&I strategy

**Today, 87% companies have a coordinated strategy, compared with 75% in 2021**

Promisingly, our research found that D&I strategies in Beauty are well-developed and comprehensive. Most policies are backed up by a specific budget, and 62% of companies have targets and goals in place to drive accountability. Today, most Beauty companies are collecting data on the diversity of their organisation. Interestingly, and despite the maturity of strategies in the sector, there is less engagement on D&I in Beauty than in other consumer industries, and a high level of hesitancy to discuss the topic.

**The Beauty industry is uniquely placed to embrace D&I**

Most leaders recognise that D&I presents both an exciting opportunity, and an urgent imperative. Firstly, the Beauty workforce is made up predominantly of women, creating good conditions to develop strong pipelines of diverse talent who can step up into the most senior roles.

Secondly, and most importantly, Beauty products relate directly to external appearance. As the definition of beauty evolves to become more diverse, companies need teams which reflect this change. Moreover, developing an inclusive and wide ranging product line (to suit different skin or hair types, for example) will have a direct commercial impact.

**Encouragingly, there is a high level of Board sponsorship on D&I**

Throughout our conversations, companies reported strong support from the Board and executive committee on the topic of D&I. HRDs and D&I Leads told us that they feel pressure from the CEO to drive D&I forward, while some Chairs told us that D&I is often discussed around the Board table. In the most forward-thinking businesses, executive bonuses are linked to goals on D&I, and executive leaders act as chairs of Employee Resource Groups.

“I would say this is a top-three agenda at any given time.”  
CEO, Beauty brand

“Our D&I League report into the Board on a monthly basis.”  
Head of D&I, online Beauty retailer

**Companies are collecting data on diversity in their organisation – but few have a full picture**

While 80% of companies are gathering information on the diversity of their colleague base, a lack of data remains a key barrier to progress on D&I. Using legacy HR systems and navigating EU regulation on collecting personal information were frequently cited as blockers.

“One of the things we struggle with is data collection around things like ethnicity and social mobility. It’s all voluntary, so it’s hard to know whether to push colleagues for that information. Forty percent of our team don’t disclose their personal information.”  
HRD, Beauty retailer

**The furthest ahead companies are:**

- Rolling out training for hiring managers
- Focusing on recruitment from outside the Beauty industry
- Supporting and formalising Employee Resource Groups
- Investing in third-party auditing services

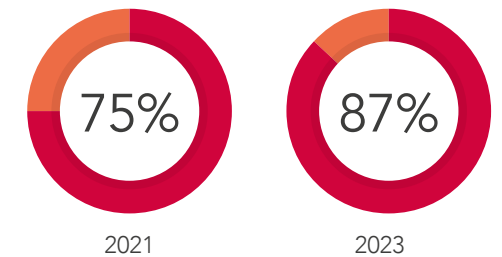
**A homogenous talent pool was frequently cited as the biggest blocker to progress**

Leaders told us that one of the biggest barriers to building a diverse team was the lack of diversity in the current industry talent pool.

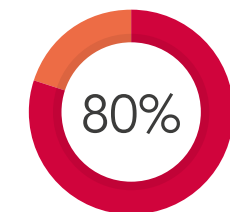
Across the industry, steps are being taken to diversify the talent pool, like academy programmes and partnerships with charities to tap into different groups. Many companies are also re-thinking their hiring strategies, and looking outside the sector to agencies like retail and fashion to find more diverse talent.

“You may have the intention to hire diverse talent, but when you look at the talent pool that’s available, well, where are they?”  
HRD, Beauty brand

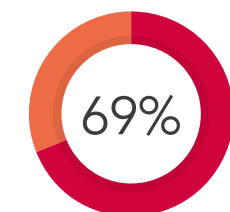
**COMPANIES WITH A COORDINATED D&I STRATEGY**



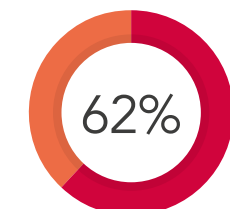
**COMPANIES COLLECTING DIVERSITY DATA**



**COMPANIES WITH A DEDICATED D&I BUDGET**



**COMPANIES WITH D&I GOALS AND TARGETS**



# Beauty's most senior strategic roles are still held by men

There is a relatively high proportion of women in senior leadership teams – but the sector's most senior strategic roles are still held by men

Since our first year of research in 2021, the proportion of women at Board and Executive Committee level has climbed steadily. On the Board, 44% of roles are held by women, a figure which places the Beauty industry ahead of its adjacent consumer industries.

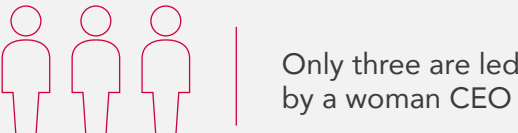
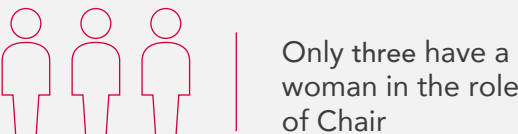
However, we are still a way off reaching the 50/50 gender split which exists in society – and considering that the industry is made up predominantly of women, companies must focus on increasing the pace of change.

Moreover, the most strategic senior roles are overwhelmingly held by men. Of the top-twenty Beauty businesses in Europe, only three have a woman in the role of Chair, only three are led by a woman CEO, and only four have a woman CFO.

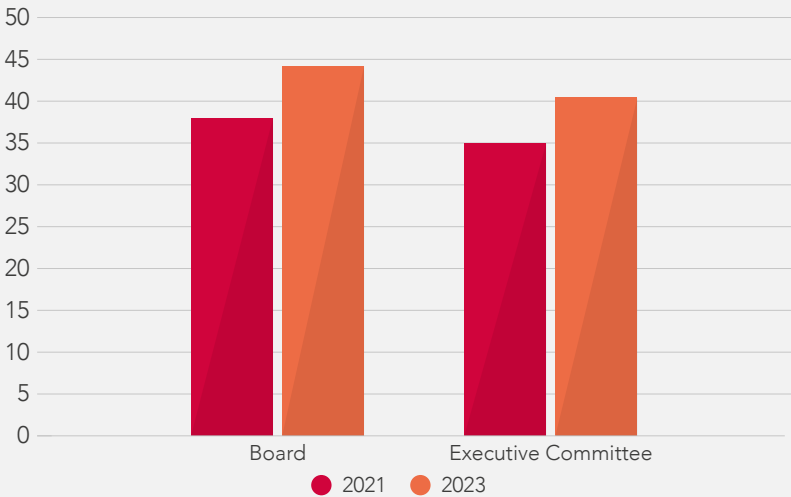
Key actions include

- Building menopause policies and launching D&I activity designed to support and educate colleagues
- Specific initiatives to encourage women into tech roles
- Updating fertility and parental leave

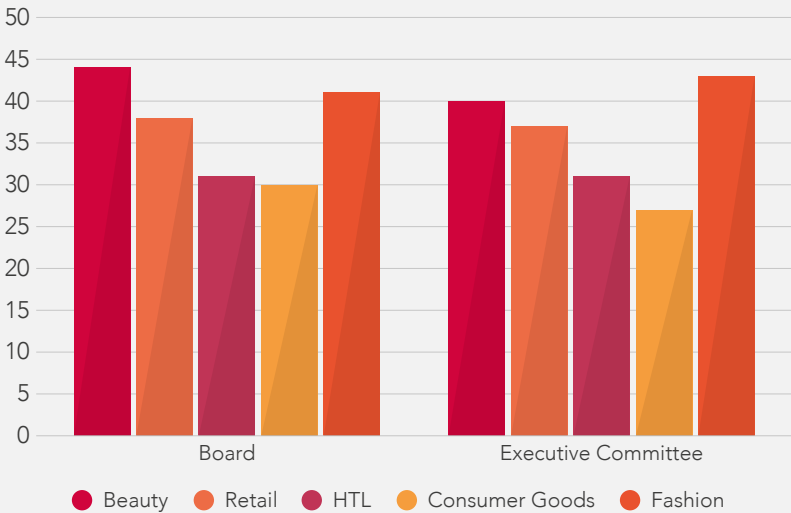
Of the top-twenty Beauty businesses operating in Europe...



GENDER DIVERISTY HAS IMPROVED STEADILY



BEAUTY IS MORE GENDER DIVERSE THAN MOST CONSUMER INDUSTRIES





# Ethnic diversity has almost doubled at both Board and Executive Committee level

Since 2021, the proportion of leaders from an ethnic minority background has climbed on Beauty Boards and executive committees

Our research shows that solid progress has been made on ethnic diversity at the most senior levels in Beauty.

On the Board, more than 16% of Board seats are held by leaders from an ethnic minority background, compared to 9% in 2021. And on the Executive Committee, the proportion of people of colour has more than doubled to 15.2%.

Clearly, deliberate action has been taken to appoint leaders from an ethnic minority background into the most senior positions.

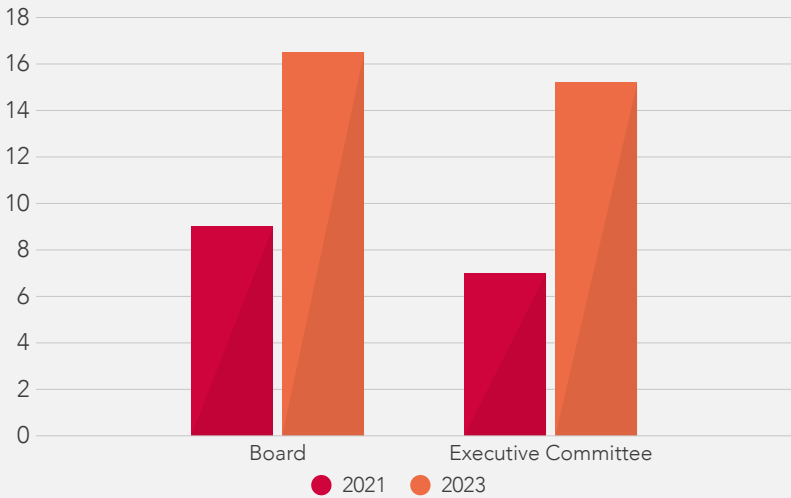
Key actions include:

- Accelerator programmes for ethnically diverse candidates
- Partnerships with charities or not-for-profit groups to support ethnically diverse young people into the Beauty industry
- Creating pipelines for creative talent to move into more corporate roles, as is it typically easier to hire ethnically diverse creatives than in other functions

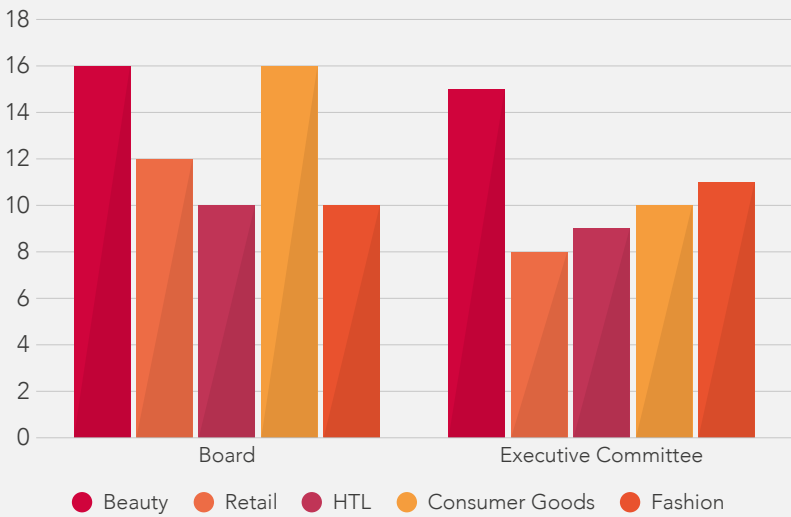
Companies are doubling down on ethnic diversity as a commercial imperative

Today, industry leaders recognise that not embracing ethnic diversity in their business risks missing out on talent, creativity and revenue. Across the sector, there are many instances of accelerator programmes for Black-owned brands, for example, and specific investment in product R&D to bring new shades or formulations to market.

DELIBERATE ACTION HAS BEEN TAKEN TO INCREASE ETHNIC DIVERSITY



BEAUTY IS MORE ETHNICALLY DIVERSE THAN MOST CONSUMER INDUSTRIES



# Beauty is an inclusive place for the LGBTQ+ community

## Historically, there has always been a high level of LGBTQ+ inclusion in the Beauty industry – especially in colour cosmetics

Anecdotally, we know that there is a high level of LGBTQ+ representation right the way through Beauty businesses. This is particularly true in colour cosmetics.

Leaders told us that LGBTQ+ networks are often the furthest-developed Employee Resource Groups, and that events like Pride are deeply engrained in the company calendar.

## The furthest-ahead companies are rolling out policies related to trans and non-binary inclusion

One of the most significant developments in the past two years is the introduction of D&I activity relating to trans and non-binary colleagues. Our research found that colleagues in Beauty are much more open to discussing issues relating to gender identity than they were in 2021. Some leaders told us that they introduced training for managers, and education offerings for their entire teams around how to be a good ally.

## Key actions include

- Training for managers and team-members on how to support trans and non-binary colleagues
- Appointing members of the LGBTQ+ community as ambassadors for the brand



“I think one of our strengths is that the LGBTQ+ community has always been very well represented. So many of our retail artists are from the community.”

HRD, Beauty brand

# The Disabled community is underrepresented

## Only 13% of businesses have a Disabled senior leader their organisation

Few businesses reported to have Disabled senior role models in their organisation, and even fewer businesses have any specific policies in place to promote accessibility or disability inclusion. In a small handful of Beauty businesses, Disability employee resource groups have been established.

## Failing to embrace Disability inclusion is a missed opportunity

Disability inclusion should be seen as an investment, not a cost. Around 15% of the global population have a disability, and it's a community which spends \$1.7tr every year. By encouraging disability inclusion internally, Beauty companies will ensure they are not discriminating against or overlooking the Disabled community.

# Social mobility may be the next, and biggest, opportunity

## The Beauty industry has typically attracted talent from a privileged background

While the Beauty services sector is known for being an accessible industry to those from different socioeconomic groups, corporate roles have historically been dominated by people from a privileged background.

This dynamic is driven by the industry's historic reliance on internships as vehicles to entry, many of which take place in expensive metropolitan cities. Our research found that this trend has been sustained over the past two years, but that more leaders are aware of the need to disassemble these structural barriers.

“We tend to get interns that all fit a similar profile. We recruit from specific universities, and find ourself hiring people whose parents can support them, for example.”

CEO, Health and Beauty brand

“Personally, I’m just trying to now get my head around how we think about diversity and social mobility.”

CEO, Beauty retailer

## Key actions include:

- Partnerships with schools and colleges in different regional areas
- Partnerships with charities like The Princes Trust
- Academy programmes to upskill entry-level workers from different backgrounds



## Industry insights

Examples of best practice can be found right across the sector, in companies of all sizes and scopes. In the case studies over the next few pages, four businesses at different stages of their D&I journey share insight on how they are harnessing diversity in their organisation.





BEAUTY PIE

**VICTORIA  
FOLEY**  
VP People & Talent

### Where is Beauty Pie in its D&I journey?

Like many other businesses, the subject of DE&I has been an increasing focus for us over the last few years, as we've reacted to global events, recognised the areas where we want to do better, and committed to creating a meaningfully inclusive culture.

To do this we've looked at the topic from a number of different angles. With it being such an all-encompassing topic, we wanted to ensure that we were tracking real change across the organisation. Our approach was aimed at identifying a series of key areas we wanted to address. We considered how we integrate D&I into everything we do, from how we hire to what sort of education and training we offer. We wanted to make sure D&I felt like the constant drum-beat rather than a one off 'tick box' exercise.

To help support the business we formed the D&I League, a group of representatives from across the business who meet together on a monthly basis. They're really the mouthpiece for D&I in our business; they inform our policies but also call us out when we get things wrong.

### How has your strategy developed in the past year?

Something that's been a real area of focus in the past twelve months has been the diversity of our models in our marketing. We're thinking more deliberately about how we cast our models, where they come from, and who they represent. We're asking ourselves how we can measure what success looks like and how we are ensuring a wide and authentic representation of our community and customers

### We know that gathering diversity data is fundamental to a successful D&I strategy. What does this look like in your organisation?

We think very carefully about the demographic makeup of our team, how we collect information, and how we measure progress. We do an annual DE&I survey which asks for people to volunteer information in an anonymised way for us to get an annual snapshot of the organisation.

We also track data on the representation of minority groups in our hiring. We measure at every stage of the journey, from application through to offer stage. The idea is that we can track over the course of the year the applicants we're getting from certain groups, and then in the quarter that follows how many of those have gone on to become colleagues. We can keep an eye out for any red flags: if 50% of applications are coming from underrepresented minorities, but only 5% of interviews, then that's something we can spot and address.

Crucially, we set ourselves targets for representation of different groups, and every team has objectives relating to D&I. So while the D&I League drive this agenda, it is carried by everyone in the business.

### Beauty Pie is a beauty tech business. How does this impact your approach to D&I?

We've got two really interesting push/pulls happening. Like many beauty businesses, we've got a very high representation of women, so in many cases we're looking to redress the balance by hiring a more gender-balanced team.

But at the same time, we have an internal tech team that makes up about 35% of our organisation, and we are very passionate about ensuring representation of women in tech. This means



we work hard to ensure we have diverse talent pipelines – we often have visibility at events that are specifically aimed at women in the tech space, for example. And in November, we're participating in the Women of Silicon Roundabout event to increase our awareness and reach. Essentially, it's about finding that balance, and catering our hiring strategies to different areas in the business.

### How are you striving to build an inclusive culture at Beauty Pie?

We receive a lot of guidance from the D&I League, and they play such a critical role in forming our internal company culture. For example, they advise on how we celebrate cultural touchpoints, give feedback on our marketing campaigns, and discuss wider DE&I issues with us.

And we're constantly evolving. We've tried to ensure that we are consistently reviewing and refining our inclusive policies, like fully equitable parental leave. It doesn't matter if you're carer one or carer two, what kind of relationship you're in – if any – or your gender, you get exactly the same amount of paid time off.

We've also brought in flexi bank holidays, where

colleagues can choose not to take the core UK bank holidays, which tend to celebrate Christian festivals. So instead of having a day off at Easter, any team member can opt to have a day off at, say, Eid or another religious festival.

### How does D&I factor in to your product strategy?

It's so important, and also one of the biggest opportunities for the entire industry, because it's all about building a diverse consumer base. If you don't make a certain shade of foundation, for example, you're immediately cutting out certain members of the community.

It's about trying to strike a balance between creating commercially viable product lines that also have D&I front of mind. So, considering different types of hair texture, skin qualities, and how people might want to personalise their products. I think personalisation will continue to be huge going forward – and if you think about it, personalisation is a highly inclusive offering.

I really think beauty businesses are just scratching the surface here – there's so much more to be done!



**GURINDER SAGOO**  
HR Director, Europe & Oceania

### Where is Edgewell on its DE&I journey?

Here at Edgewell Personal Care, we're proud of our development on DE&I. We are a Global Consumer Goods Company operating in over 50 countries, with 6,000 teammates globally. Our purpose is to Make Useful Things Joyful.

We have made great strides in Diversity and Inclusion over the last five years including setting up a Diversity and Inclusion team called DICE (Diversity and Inclusion Committee at Edgewell) which focuses on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion specifically for the UK.

Whilst we are very much on a journey with DE&I, over the last 5 years, DICE has created a safe space for multiple topics to be discussed, shared and raised amongst our teams from different cultures, religions, experiences, as well as encouraging us to look at our much-loved brands through a DE&I lens.

### You've made particularly good progress on your menopause inclusion policies. Can you tell us a bit about that?

Over the past year, we've been investing in raising awareness of the menopause, educating our teammates on what it is and how they support themselves, other teammates, family and friends. We made a clear decision that the menopause would not be a one-time event but it would be a Launch & Love: an ongoing dialogue on the topic.

Based on the statistics (Office for National Statistics, Social Survey Division 2021) there are almost four million women aged 45 – 55 in the workplace in the UK, and these women will all transition through the menopause whilst working, which is why it is so important for employers to fully understand

the impact it can have on their people. With 9 out of 10 menopausal women saying their symptoms impact their work and 1 in 4 saying that they don't feel supported by their manager (The Menopause Charity), I believe we have a duty as employers to upskill and educate our teams and people managers to help support those impacted by the menopause.

### What steps did you take to support and educate teammates around the menopause?

We partnered with Anjanette Fraser (MSc Nutritional Medicine) from The Natural Alternative Health & Wellbeing Ltd to educate all teammates on what the menopause is and how we can support our friends, families and our teammates. Here's what we did:

- We kickstarted with a webinar on the science and information related to the menopause, which was led by Anjanette
- We designed and delivered People Manager training on how managers can better support their teams, and how they can approach and handle discussions relating to menopause. We received such positive feedback on the educational side of our menopause initiatives – from both women and men
- We introduced a new menopause policy making it clear on all the support available to our teammates.
- We introduced new resources and materials for teammates to use, borrow and share including reading materials and recommended podcasts
- We held quarterly discussion forums called Tropical Moments for teammates to come along and discuss the menopause in a safe space



We received fantastic engagement in bringing the menopause to Edgewell. It's enabled our teams to have an open dialogue in a safe environment on a topic which was previously never spoken about.

### Any challenges?

The biggest challenge we faced was getting started. We discussed the topic with our Business Leader Katharine Goodchild (Business Director for North West Europe), and the DICE team got full support from leadership. We definitely took a risk in talking about a topic that may make people feel uncomfortable, but once we put it out there, we were pleasantly surprised and overwhelmed by the engagement and interest. People welcomed the topic and started to share their own experiences.

Reflecting on our journey, I am so incredibly proud of the progress we have made as an organisation at a local level as well as globally.

We're continuing to bring new topics to life, and we're committed to engaging everyone in important discussions. It's critical from an education side, but it's also just the right thing to do.

As a team, DICE continue to meet on a monthly basis and continue to have highly engaged discussions as a group and with the local leadership

team. There are opportunities to share and engage the great work DICE have done across our other Edgewell European markets and across the world to widen the discussions and connections.

### What advice would you give to other leaders looking to start their DE&I journey?

To get started in Diversity and Inclusion, I would highly recommend any organisation to create a cross-functional team on DE&I so that people can get involved. As the scope of DE&I is so wide, small steps can make a big difference. Consider engaging your leadership teams in DE&I as well as understanding what matters most to your teammates. Regular communication is key to understanding what matters most to your organisation.

The biggest challenge in fostering an inclusive culture is ensuring that no-one is excluded from the conversation. After all, people always remember when they felt left out.

Discussing the menopause has been a game-changer for us. We have equipped each and every teammate with knowledge that they can use professionally at work, as well as in their personal lives.





**Glossier.**

**ROYA  
SHARIAT**

Director of Social Impact and Communications

### What does D&I look like at Glossier?

Our D&I strategy covers every area of our business. Internally, we consider corporate and retail employees, our culture, our hiring and our leadership development. Externally, we think about how we impact our community at a retail level, and then we have a US and UK grant programme which aims to leave a positive mark on the wider beauty industry.

In the past five or six years, we've undertaken a real push on our D&I strategy, and made it much more cohesive. But really D&I is part of our brand's identity, and this work has been going on since Glossier was founded. From the outset we were set up to democratise beauty. Everyone at Glossier has signed up to that mission, and so we're all prepared to be disruptive, to be progressive, to shake things up, and to speak out for what we believe in.

**We know that what gets measured gets done, and that data collection is critical to real progress on D&I. How are you gathering information on the diversity of your business?**

We collect comprehensive data on our team members at retail level, at corporate level, and within our executive-level team. Roughly once a year we launch a survey which gathers further information on the diversity of our business and inclusion. We're constantly looking to measure and evaluate our progress over time.

**What initiatives can you describe that have made an impact at Glossier?**

We try and be both proactive and reactive when it comes to inclusion initiatives. One example that really resonated with our teams was our rapid

response to the overturning of Roe vs Wade in the US in 2022. This ruling effectively limited many women's access to critical reproductive care, including abortion.

When that ruling was made, we acted quickly, and created an emergency access fund. If any colleague needed to travel out of state to access reproductive care, including an abortion, the travel and their medical care would be covered.

We established this policy on the same day that the ruling was announced – we were thinking of our retail employees in certain states like Pennsylvania, Florida and Georgia. We wanted them to know we would take care of them, that we were thinking of them and that we were showing up for our communities.

**In collaboration with Black Girl Fest, Glossier has launched the Black Beauty Grant, a 12-week learning programme designed to support Black women founders in the beauty industry to grow their businesses. Can you tell us a bit more about this?**

The Black Beauty Grant programme has been such a huge success, and we're all so excited by it. The program actually started stateside – after running two successful grant programmes in the US, we wanted to create a similar scheme in the UK to help Black women entrepreneurs launch and expand their beauty businesses. We are so grateful to have Nicole Crentsil, who runs Black Girl Fest, in our community. She is an absolute force, and we knew we wanted to work with her on something, as our values align so well with those at Black Girl Fest. We developed this partnership and program together, and it's been an amazing collaboration.

## The Black Beauty Grant Programme

2023 GRANTEES



We've created an incredible 12-week long programme. If you're part of the scheme, you receive a £10k grant, get expert advice from industry leaders, and participate in workshops on topics like how to gain investment and receive in-person guidance from our CEO and CFO.

At the Black Girl Fest annual festival, our grantees sat on a panel and spoke about their experiences. It was so fantastic to hear about the impact the programme has had, and we're looking to do it again. It's not about charity, it's about solidarity, and being hand in hand with those founders.

**What advice would you give to other businesses looking to drive up D&I?**

I'd say make sure you're living your values. Maybe one brand has a mentorship programme, and another has a grant scheme – what makes the most

sense for your business? How are you uniquely positioned to make a difference?

We're about democratising beauty and changing the industry, and everything we do is with that in mind. But we're only nine years old, and still quite scrappy in lots of ways. Lots of what we do is with partners, and that makes sense for us, but we can be highly reactive in our efforts.

By contrast, if you're a 100-year-old heritage brand, it might be harder to make bold moves quickly. But bigger budgets mean more resources to pour into long-term projects, like scholarships for underrepresented minorities, for example.

So I'd say identify what you're good at. Find your voice in the conversation. Everyone has a role to play in this, it's just about finding out what it is.



**JESSICA  
GILBERT**

Global Head of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

### How is the D&I strategy structured at IFF?

IFF has four publicly stated goals as part of our 2030 Do More Good plan: gender, people of color, LGBTQ+, and people with disabilities. We've built a global framework that overlays this and looks at our global goals holistically, allowing room for local customisation and adaptation.

The first pillar focuses on building an inclusive talent pipeline that considers how we attract, hire, develop, and promote our people. How are we building a workforce that reflects the communities of which we are a part – at all levels of the organisation?

Fostering an inclusive culture is another key priority. I think of it as building and supporting an inclusive ecosystem, from strengthening our ability to collaborate, team, and lead inclusively to all our colleague communities, as well as our DEI governance structures. This also includes looking at our policies. And within this ecosystem, how are we communicating our values internally? And how can we best deliver a strong, clear message on DEI?

And then we have our external engagement activities. That's how we tell our stories, how we communicate with our customers, and how we build our consumer base. It's about how we create a sustainable world, and about creating strategic partnerships to do more good.

We're constantly measuring and continually benchmarking our progress to assess ourselves. For example, we are proud to be EDGE Certified globally at the Move level twice, the first company to achieve that. This requires third-party auditing services to check and validate our efforts. Workplace Pride and DisabilityIn are additional

groups we work with. We're keen that any and all activity is actually making a difference and advancing the conversation.

### Some businesses are hesitant to put D&I-related goals in place. How are you using goals to drive your D&I activity?

We have public-facing DE&I goals based on our four focus areas (gender, people of color, LGBTQ+, and people with disabilities). Having goals is one thing, but we really need to hold ourselves accountable. So, the targets are factored into the bonus structure for our seniormost leaders, and we regularly hold conversations around our DEI metrics – including how we collect data and measure progress.

We're currently in the process of evolving our HR system. That will happen in 2024, and it will help us to collect data in a more thorough and perhaps more thoughtful way. At the moment, I'm working on collecting DEI information and designing DEI metrics in the most responsible way.

### The D&I conversation has evolved considerably in the past few years. Are there any new areas that you're focusing on today?

We're having so many different discussions today compared to five years ago. For example, considering how we can support our trans and non-binary colleagues. Thinking about pronouns was just not something people did a few years ago. Now, one of the things we've been able to do in partnership with our IT teams is turn on a Microsoft Office feature whereby colleagues can display their pronouns. It's small, but it makes such a difference to feelings of inclusion in that community.



### IFF is a global business. How do you navigate this in your leadership in D&I?

It's fascinating and requires leaders like me to ask the right questions of teams in different markets, different functions and to be constantly learning. We need to know where groups are in the journey. What are the cultural, political, and legal nuances that exist?

Whenever I converse with someone in a different country, I ask "What are the differences that make a difference here? Who is in your population but not in your workforce? What can we be doing as an organization to create sustainable jobs and opportunities for different groups in society?"

Leading D&I in the UK, for example, means understanding the Windrush generation and how their experience is translating into today. In the US it's about grasping the historic ties to slavery and the impact of racism and segregation still felt today. Recently I learnt that 1st July is Keti Koti in the Netherlands marking the end of slavery in the Dutch colonies.

So it's really about being open to learning, coming into every conversation with a sense of curiosity, and being open to constant growth.

### We know that the most forward-thinking businesses are leading from the top. What does senior sponsorship look like at IFF?

Deborah Borg is our CHRO and Chief Diversity Officer reporting directly to Frank Clyburn our CEO. She sits on the executive leadership team, so diversity is really an executive committee topic at IFF. All our colleague communities (ERGs) have an Executive Sponsor who is an ELT member, which also makes a real difference.

### What advice would you give to other businesses looking to drive up D&I?

DEI must be a strategic mindset that is integrated into how your organisation operates. It must be tackled with intentionality and commitment to the journey. It must be part of the long-term vision for who you are as an organization with resources invested to achieve that. Use data to drive your strategy – both your people and perceptual data so that you know where you are, where your opportunities lie, and progress is measured. Drive accountability – holding leaders responsible for making progress on goals but also for behaviors that form the day-to-day experience of your employees. Ultimately successful businesses are the ones where DEI is part of everyone's responsibility – not just a team, not just HR, not just leaders – it's how people at all levels of your organisation create a place where everyone and the business can thrive.



# About us

## About The MBS Group

The MBS Group is a leading sector-specialist B-Corp executive search firm advising all consumer-facing industries, with a particular focus on the Beauty industry. Clients consider us to be the partner of choice when searching for critical leadership roles that make a difference. We work at Board level and on executive positions across all functions of strategic importance.

For more information, visit  
[www.thembsgroup.co.uk](http://www.thembsgroup.co.uk)

## About CEW UK

CEW UK is part of an international professional membership organisation of over 10,500 individual members who represent a cross-section of beauty and related businesses. CEW's primary purpose is to provide programmes to develop the careers and businesses in, and knowledge of the beauty industry for all of its members and to recognise exceptional talent, achievement and innovations in the industry. CEW provides opportunities for its members to connect and gain industry knowledge through networking events, mentoring programmes, trend reports, industry newsletters, workshops and industry leader talks.

For more information, visit  
[www.cewuk.co.uk](http://www.cewuk.co.uk)

## About ScienceMagic

ScienceMagic is a strategic and creative agency that connects Brands and Talent to their communities to drive growth and enduring value. ScienceMagic is a B-Corp company with offices in London and NYC, listing clients such as Glossier, Diptyque, Pleasing, Creed and Molton Brown.

For more information, visit  
[www.sciencemagic.inc](http://www.sciencemagic.inc)

## The MBS Group

3 Primrose Mews  
Off Sharpleshall Street  
London, NW1 8YW

+44 (0) 20 7722 1221  
info@thembsgroup.co.uk

**[www.thembsgroup.co.uk](http://www.thembsgroup.co.uk)**

© Copyright 2023, The MBS Group.  
All rights reserved.



**Certified**



The MBS Group is committed  
to accountability, transparency,  
and continuous improvement.