

Tech Nation launches new Diversity & Inclusion Toolkit to create equal opportunity and increase representation in UK tech

- UK tech companies contribute to Toolkit to help others implement successful Diversity and Inclusion strategies
- The Diversity & Inclusion Toolkit is a guide for tech founders and their employees to help them build more diverse and inclusive businesses, and provide equal opportunities for everyone aspiring to work in UK tech
- Created from interviews conducted with UK tech leaders, each section of the toolkit contains checklists, links to tools and resources, and case studies highlighting examples of companies who have enacted positive change.
- Continually updated, it will reflect the changing tech landscape, new D&I initiatives and companies which have already implemented successful D&I frameworks.
- The toolkit comes at a pivotal stage of growth for UK tech, as it is now in a prime position to boost job creation, strengthen the economy and close gender and ethnicity diversity gaps.
- The tech sector is responsible for 1 in 10 UK job vacancies, and reached record investment heights this year (\$7.6bn by Q1 2021)
- However, data shows continued disparity in representation and venture capital investment for underrepresented groups, illustrating the need for practical Diversity and Inclusion guidance for tech businesses.

London, 16th June, 2021: Tech Nation launches the Diversity & Inclusion Toolkit; a comprehensive guide to address diversity challenges in tech companies and the UK tech sector, in order to help build a strong, diverse and inclusive tech sector.

Many UK tech companies have taken significant steps in implementing diversity & inclusion strategies, and are now seeing positive results in not only the makeup of their workforce, but in the productivity and success of their companies. With a growing number of UK examples, this toolkit aims to celebrate success already achieved in tackling diversity and inclusion, while providing the resources for others to do the same.

Diversity and inclusion cuts across every part of a tech company, ranging from gathering diversity data, hiring for diversity, setting a D&I budget, creating an inclusive culture and minimising bias in product development. There are many examples of what it looks like if companies, and if the tech sector at large, fail to take these important steps. Data also shows just how far the sector has to go. For instance, data from Extend Ventures shows that in 2019, entrepreneurs from Black, South Asian, East Asian and Middle Eastern backgrounds received just 1.7% of UK VC investment, while over the past decade, only 3% of VC funding went to all female teams.

To achieve maximum impact, diversity and inclusion strategies must be implemented as early as possible in a company's growth journey. But for founders scaling their businesses, it may seem like a daunting challenge. This is why we have created the Diversity & Inclusion Toolkit. In our work at Tech Nation, we heard from large numbers of founders, asking for resources and a guide to successfully implement these changes in their businesses. Created from interviews conducted with UK tech

leaders, the toolkit offers insights and guidance to help founders scale diverse and inclusive companies. Each section of the toolkit contains checklists, links to tools and resources, and case studies highlighting examples of companies who have enacted positive change. Continually updated, it will reflect the changing tech landscape, new D&I initiatives and companies which have already implemented successful D&I frameworks.

As the nation looks to rebuild a stronger economy and society, equal opportunity and representation within the tech sector has never been more important. The tech sector is driving growth in jobs and investment across the UK, scaling rapidly over the past year. VC investment in tech broke new records in the first quarter of 2021, reaching \$7.6bn (Dealroom, 2021), while today almost 10% (2.89mn) of all UK jobs are now in tech (Tech Nation, ONS, 2020), demonstrating the tech sector's opportunity and responsibility to boost diversity in the UK.

The toolkit was created in partnership with The Unmistakables, an award-winning Diversity & Inclusion consultancy, and is supported by talent and training partner Futureproof. Alongside the toolkit, we are also partnering with the [All In](#) Commitment & Community for diversity & inclusion. All In is a cross-industry effort to encourage startup founders to pledge their commitment to creating diverse and inclusive work environments, whilst building a community of committed peers who can share questions and advice in a safe space.

Quotes:

Digital Infrastructure Minister Matt Warman said: "With one in 10 UK job vacancies in the country's booming tech sector, firms have a golden opportunity to bring about real change by closing gender and ethnic diversity gaps through their hiring.

"A diverse workforce is not only good for society, but it also makes good business sense. I urge businesses to use these insights and guidance to lead the charge in creating a fairer, stronger and more diverse tech industry."

Rowena Knapp, COO at Tech Nation, commented: "When it comes to achieving equality in the UK's tech sector, we still have a long way to go. Tech companies and their founders need to have a comprehensive toolkit they can turn to to help them address diversity issues head-on. As we look to rebuild a stronger economy and society, equal opportunity and representation within the tech sector has never been more important.

This is why I am pleased to launch the Diversity & Inclusion Toolkit today, which we will continue to refine and build on over the months and years to come. Creating a truly diverse and inclusive tech business is an ongoing and iterative process, and the D&I Toolkit is a fantastic place to start."

Asad Dhunna, Founder and CEO of The Unmistakables, commented: "Building organisations that are inclusive from the inside out takes concerted time, energy and effort. It's important we continue to iterate and refine this toolkit as language and society evolves and as founders continue to provide examples of the systems, structures and processes they are putting in place to grow their businesses inclusively."

Nikhil Shah, Co-Founder of Mixcloud and the All In Commitment & Community, commented: “As a founder and advisor to startups, I have witnessed firsthand the importance of being an empathetic leader: building inclusive cultures and diverse teams is a social responsibility but also better for business. Now is the time to provide founders with the support they need to achieve this in their own companies. That’s why we’re building All In, and we’re delighted to be partnering with Tech Nation on their practical toolkit to empower positive change across our industry.”

Graham Mills, Co-founder and Managing Director at techspert.io, comments: "It's vital that D&I is incorporated into everything we do as a business and not factored in as an afterthought. Last year we introduced a D&I committee to ensure we achieve this, which has resulted in companywide sessions on unconscious bias and an introduction to LGBTQIA+, an equal pay review, and improvements to our recruitment process. What encourages me the most is that techspertians are passionate about creating and being a part of a diverse and inclusive team, it's part of our ethos. This has meant a more engaged team through times of societal uncertainty, and a group laser-focused on our company vision to democratize access to global knowledge."

Izzy Obeng, Managing Director at Foundervine, commented: “In June last year, the world changed. Institutions of all kinds voiced their support for the Black community, the Black Lives Matter movement, and were denouncing racial injustices. As Managing Director of Foundervine, I’ve found myself committed to addressing the complex challenges that make UK tech feel disconnected from diverse communities, many of whom are often excluded from the growth taking place around them. I’m very excited to see the launch of this new D&I toolkit from Tech Nation and hope it will contribute to new, actionable steps forward in our sector.”

David Roberts, Director of futureproof, commented: “Diversity and inclusion is the starting point for welcoming new perspectives and experiences; it’s the backbone of an innovative, caring, and high-performing business culture. The UK needs to lead the world in setting the pace of change. futureproof is really excited to be partnering with Tech Nation on their D&I toolkit, as we are both committed to democratising access to tech careers and want to build a technology ecosystem that reflects the extraordinary diversity of the UK.”

END

A link to the D&I Toolkit can be found [here](#).

Today, Tech Nation’s COO Rowena Knapp will moderate the CogX Festival in a panel on ‘[How to build an inclusive workplace](#)’, speaking alongside Creative Entrepreneur and Co-Founder of Mixcloud Nikhil Shah, [Foundervine](#)’s Managing Director Izzy Obeng and [futureproof](#)’s Head of Client Services Claudia Cohen. This event will be an opportunity to discuss how founders and businesses can work towards building a tech sector that becomes not only a global leader for innovation and profitability, but for real diversity and inclusion.

About Tech Nation:

Tech Nation is the leading scaleup accelerator. Tech Nation fuels the growth of game-changing

founders, leaders, and scaling companies so they can positively transform societies and economies. We provide them with the coaching, content, and community they need for their journey in designing the future. Tech Nation has years of experience facilitating and helping UK tech companies scale, both at home and abroad. Over 20 cohorts and 600 companies have successfully graduated from Tech Nation's growth programmes. Alumni include Skyscanner, Darktrace, and Monzo.

About Tech Nation's Libra Growth Programme:

Libra is Tech Nation's growth programme for underrepresented founders based in the UK who are growing and scaling despite market failure. The inaugural programme will focus on the Black founder experience, helping them navigate the scaling journey. The programme's main aim is to level the playing field for Black founders to scale to their fullest potential. The free, non-residential, six-month programme is centred around themed insights sessions, delivered by some of the most established entrepreneurs, covering topics such as raising series A, selling into corporates, scaling your operations and expanding internationally.

About The Unmistakables:

The Unmistakables is an award-winning strategic consultancy, delivering inside out inclusion that builds cultural confidence for brands, businesses and teams. Our offer is built around three key service areas: building inclusive cultures that create a sense of belonging for everyone in the team; delivering inside outsights that create evidence-based insight to transform organisations; and creating and executing inclusive campaigns that resonate with more audiences and open up more creative opportunities. Our team is made up of consultants who are full-time, part-time, freelance and partners, bringing together both professional and personal experience. As professionals we deliver deep D&I expertise; as people we bring lived experience as representatives of specific communities by protected characteristics. Find out more: www.theunmistakables.com

About futureproof:

futureproof is a technology training company that launches and develops the tech superstars of the future. We directly address two key problems in our industry: a critical skills gap and a lack of diversity. We carefully assess and train the top 2% of over 1,000 applicants before placing them into two-year contracts in companies such as Babylon Health, OVO Energy and Coca Cola, mentoring and coaching our associates throughout. Our service is free for students, helping to attract a diverse pool of candidates and allowing us to choose the best people based on ability, rather than the ability to pay. futureproof creates a sustainable pipeline of highly skilled and motivated junior talent, helping our clients to increase diversity within their technology teams.