Pathway to Board

#ZeroRacismWales

Applications open for flagship Board member programme

Are you ready to make a difference?

The Pathway to Board programme is a groundbreaking initiative designed to equip Black, Asian, and minority ethnic individuals with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to excel on boards across Wales and beyond.

77% of our most recent cohort are now serving on boards. Are you ready to take the next step in your leadership journey?

Head to www.bit.ly/PathwayToBoard to find out more or scan the QR code at the end of this pack.

A movement, not just a programme

This isn’t about ticking boxes. It’s about shifting the culture of leadership in Wales. In 2020, five housing associations working across Cardiff and the surrounding areas took a hard look at their boards and saw two truths:

1. **Their boards lacked diversity, which limited their effectiveness.**
2. **When they took steps to recruit more inclusively, the response was overwhelming proving that the talent was there, just waiting for opportunity.**

The Pathway to Board programme is a direct response to these findings. It’s not just about training individuals; it’s about challenging the status quo and building leadership structures that are fair, inclusive, and representative.

We’re driving a movement to transform leadership in Wales, one that amplifies unheard voices and ensures no one is left behind. This is our commitment: to create a stronger, fairer future where boardrooms reflect the brilliance and diversity of our communities.

The five original member housing associations has since grown to nine. Are you ready to be part of this change? Together, we can redefine what leadership looks like — for Wales, for business, and for generations to come.

Why Board Diversity is Essential for Wales' Future

Diverse boards are more than just a goal, they're a necessity for a fairer, stronger future. For our communities to thrive, leadership must reflect the diversity of those it serves. When organisations embrace a wide range of voices, they can:

- **Make better decisions:** Different perspectives inform better decisions. A diverse board brings fresh ideas and approaches, helping organisations navigate challenges more effectively.
- **Build innovative and inclusive cultures:** When we bring together people from different backgrounds, we spark new ways of thinking. This kind of innovation strengthens organisations and creates positive change within communities.
- **Connect more deeply with people:** A board that represents the people it serves is in a better position to understand their needs. This builds trust and strengthens relationships.
- **See the full picture and manage risks better:** Diversity helps organisations anticipate and respond to risks in a more balanced way. It brings insights that help make decisions with the long-term wellbeing of Wales in mind.

True progress in Wales means creating leadership that reflects the communities we represent. Embracing diversity at board level means a future where everyone's voice counts.

Why does this matter?

Research is clear: **Diverse boards make better decisions, deliver stronger outcomes, and improve organisational performance**.

Yet, a 2020 report revealed that only 2% of director positions in FTSE 100 companies were held by Black, Asian, or minority ethnic individuals. This staggering disparity highlights a failure in leadership systems that affects not just organisations but society as a whole.

If diverse boards perform better, why does representation remain so low? Because traditional recruitment practices are broken. The Pathway to Board programme exists to fix this flaw, creating a pipeline of talented, empowered leaders ready to drive real change.

The Programme

This nine-month programme offers comprehensive training, practical insights, and ongoing support, specifically tailored to springboard your new board journey. Participants will have networking opportunities, and a placement within an organisation in Wales where they can practise, observe and maximise their learning journey. They will also receive:

- **Expert-Led Training Modules**
- **Mentorship**
- **Real Boardroom Exposure**

By partnering with Pathway to Board, you will:

- Champion Diversity and Inclusion: Demonstrate your commitment to creating a more equitable leadership environment.
- Shape the Future of Welsh Leadership: Contribute to the development of skilled, diverse leaders who can bring fresh perspectives to decision-making.
- Enhance Your Board: Gain insights from individuals with unique lived experiences and ideas that can strengthen your governance.
- Boost Your Reputation: Position your organisation as a leader in advancing social equity and inclusive growth.

Board diversity can lead to more effective risk management, good governance, better alignment with tenants, trading partners, employees, wider communities, and a more innovative corporate culture.

What We're Asking from You

The Pathway to Board programme is calling on forward-thinking organisations to partner with us in creating a fairer, more diverse leadership landscape. Designed to empower Black, Asian, and minority ethnic individuals with the tools, knowledge, and confidence to succeed on boards, this programme is not just about training, it's about driving real change.

As a partner, your organisation will play a vital role in this transformative journey by:

1. **Providing a Mentor:**
- Someone with board experience who is open, supportive, and willing to share their expertise.
- A mentor who can guide and inspire participants throughout the programme.
2. **Offering Boardroom Observations:**
- Allow participants to observe real board meetings, giving them invaluable insights into decision-making and governance.
3. **Supporting Progression Plans:**
- Work with participants to explore potential opportunities within your organisation.
- Create pathways for long-term growth and leadership development.
4. **Hosting a Participant:**
- Welcome one participant into your organisation for a set period of time, offering them practical exposure and support.

Training programme

- The role of a Board Member
- Treasury Management
- Internal Assurance
- External Assurance
- Leadership
- Confidence building
- Interview skills

Partnering with Pathway to Board means being at the forefront of a movement to transform leadership in Wales.

Interested in joining us?
Contact Afshan Iqbal today to discuss how your organisation can make an impact:
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Help us shape a leadership culture that reflects the communities we serve. The time for change is now.

Scan the barcode for more information.

Thank you

Thank you to the founding members, partners and supporting organisations who have committed their time, money and expertise to making this project a success.

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