

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Totum 2024



Following a year in which Totum became a Certified B Corporation, we're delighted to publish our latest diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) statistics, compiled through 2023 – marking a further step in our commitment to make a positive difference in all that we do.



This is our seventh year of publishing our diversity statistics and analysis. It is based on information given by candidates who signed up with Totum from January to December 2023, covering areas including ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability and social mobility.

Through 2023 into 2024, there has been some encouraging progress across the professional services sector in areas like Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and DEI. We have seen many of the firms we work with continuing to develop their Responsible Business functions, and within that, initiatives focused on Environment, Social and Governance (ESG), CSR and DEI. There seems to be increasing recognition that today's businesses cannot hope for sustained success without ethical business values and inclusive practices.

Of firms that participated in our most recent research for our 'Business Services Reward Survey 2024', three quarters now have at least one dedicated professional in the Responsible Business function, a rise from two thirds in our research in the previous year. Our ESG Network, which we regularly host to bring together professionals in this space to share ideas and best practice, has also become a permanent fixture in Totum's calendar, enabling collaborative thinking to improve firm and sector-wide performance across diversity, inclusivity, wellbeing and environmental protection.

At the same time, we are doing our best to further progress Totum's reputation as a responsible business that is a force for good. In 2023, we became Certified B-Corp – the culmination of a year's worth of work across a broad range of activities. We have always believed that our business will only thrive in the long-term if we are recognised to be making a positive difference in all that we do. That we also celebrated Totum's 20th year in business in 2023 went some way to prove that point: caring about the people we work with, and our wider community, can go hand in hand with making a profit.



But the B-Corp now takes us further, reinforcing our commitment to act responsibly long into the future – as well as demonstrating our determination to measure and report on our progress, whether successes or areas requiring improvement. This is, after all, a journey not a destination.

It is in that spirit that we publish our DEI report for 2024. In our analysis below, we show our progress in DEI across a wide range of measures, tapping into figures going back many years and honestly reporting on our results as we endeavour to deliver true equity of opportunity across roles in the professional services sector.



Beyond Recruitment

Our DEI Report covers our work with candidates across the professional services sector, as we seek to support the best placements across firms large and small. But our activities go much further to support change across our sector and wider community.

Our [Totum Foundation](#), for instance, provides funds, resources and support to help individuals and organisations across employability, education, health and the environment.

The Foundation includes our work undertaken with the [Social Mobility Business Partnership](#) to support students from low-income backgrounds in pursuit of a career in business. One aspect of this is our [Totum Bursary](#), which supports a student, or students from a low-socio-economic background with the financial support to get to, or remain at University, or start their career in a business services role. In 2023, we were delighted to award the bursary to two



students who started their university studies in September 2023, and we are looking forward to repeating the initiative in 2024.

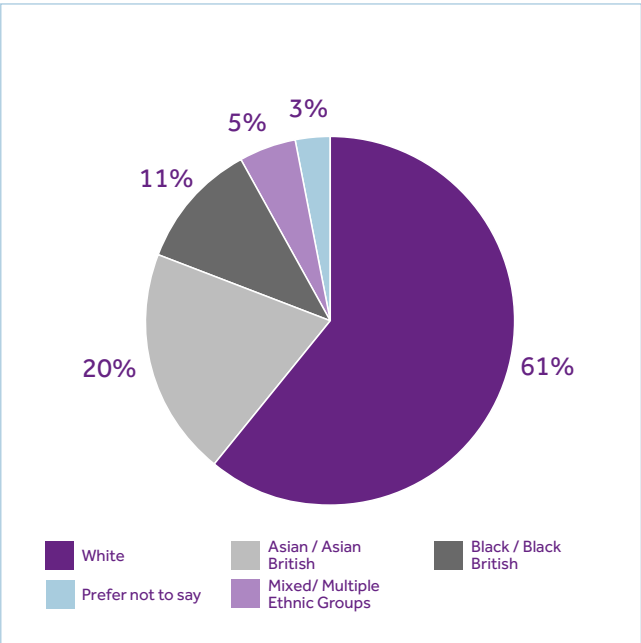
We also engage in charity partnerships (via chosen charities including [Support SEND Kids](#), [The Sickle Cell Society](#) and [Sarcoma UK](#)), to contribute to wider community goals and achieve fundraising targets. In 2023, these activities included our London to Brighton 100km charity walk, raising vital funds for Support SEND Kids. You can find out more about all of our activities by visiting our Totum [Foundation](#) or [Community](#) pages.

Ethnicity

In 2023, we have been particularly pleased to see that the proportion of our candidates coming from the Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic population has increased further to 36% – from 34% last year, which was in itself a rise from 2021 when this figure was 27%. When we signed up to the Race Fairness Commitment not long after its launch in 2020, we joined a number of law firms, internal HR and recruitment firms like Totum, in signing up to nine specific pledges to engage in activities to ensure equity in access to opportunities for all.



Figure one: Ethnic background of candidates



A major element of this was to commit to ensuring that our candidate pools and shortlists at least match the UK’s ethnic diversity mix and aspire to the local population if greater. The last census statistics from 2021, showed that Black, Asian, Mixed or other Ethnic groups make up 18% of the population of England and Wales and 46% of the London population. We are delighted to remain well ahead of national statistics and pushing ever closer to the diverse make-up of London’s population, where we continue to make many placements.

While it’s difficult to pinpoint any one initiative that might have improved our results here, we work hard to represent all communities in our recruitment activities. In addition, we have hosted webinars providing career advice for Black and Ethnic Minority professionals, as well as training for our staff on how to avoid unconscious bias in recruitment.

Specific activities to promote understanding and inclusivity in 2023 included our Black History Month Campaign and Newsletter, featuring an interview with a Solicitor Apprentice and Social Media Officer for the Black Apprentice Network, and recommendations to enable people to learn more about Black history. We also hosted an internal knowledge-sharing session, led by Adrian Lock of the White Allies Network, to share insights into the importance of White allyship against racism.

Gender equality

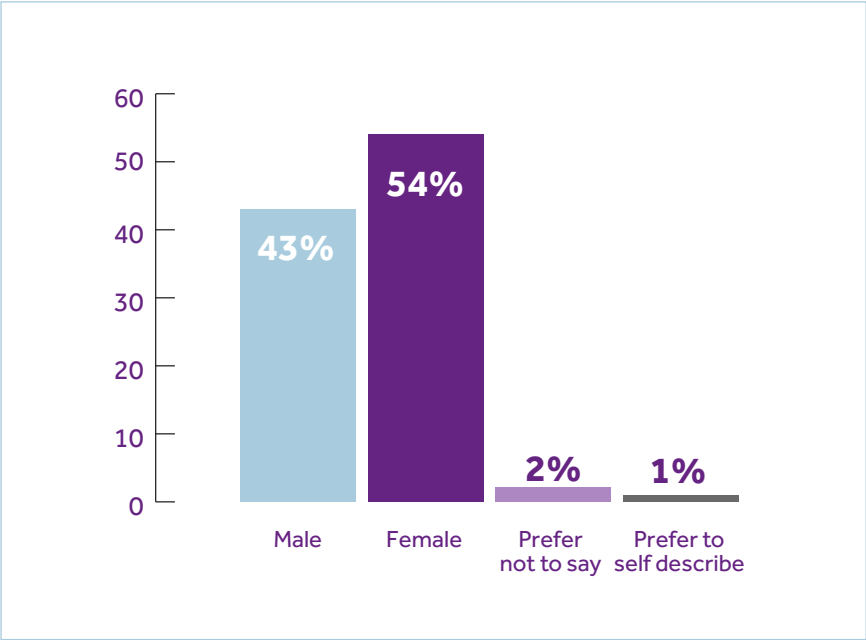
We are delighted to once again report that our candidates consistently represent a good balance of men and women. In 2024, 54% of our candidates were women and 43% men, compared to the previous year, in which we had 59% women and 37% male. We are pleased to see the numbers of men and women coming back closer to 50/50 following a couple of years in which female numbers spiked – to a high of 60% in 2021. This year, we also added a category of ‘Prefer to self describe’, which was selected by 1% of candidates.



From 2018 when we first started reporting these figures, we have continued to lead the way in supporting and placing women at all levels of seniority in the professional service sector. Separate research of our leadership placements, conducted towards the end of 2023, showed that we placed an average of 47% men to 53% women from 2020 to 2023, while for our most senior ‘Chief’ roles in 2022/23, which include COO, CEO, CMO, CPO, CTO and CKO roles, we placed 56% women to 44% men.

We will continue to strive to ensure that we source and place an equal balance of men and women at all levels of business services functions, ensuring that we maintain our fantastic record in delivering gender equality throughout business services functions.

Figure two: Candidates by gender



Age groups

We are again pleased to see we registered candidates across every age bracket in 2023. Most (36%) were aged between 25 to 34 years of age, a rise from 28% in this age bracket last year, while 25% were 35 to 44, and 19% were 45 to 54 years old. There are few surprises here given these are the prime years for career change and development.

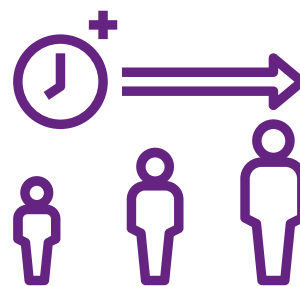
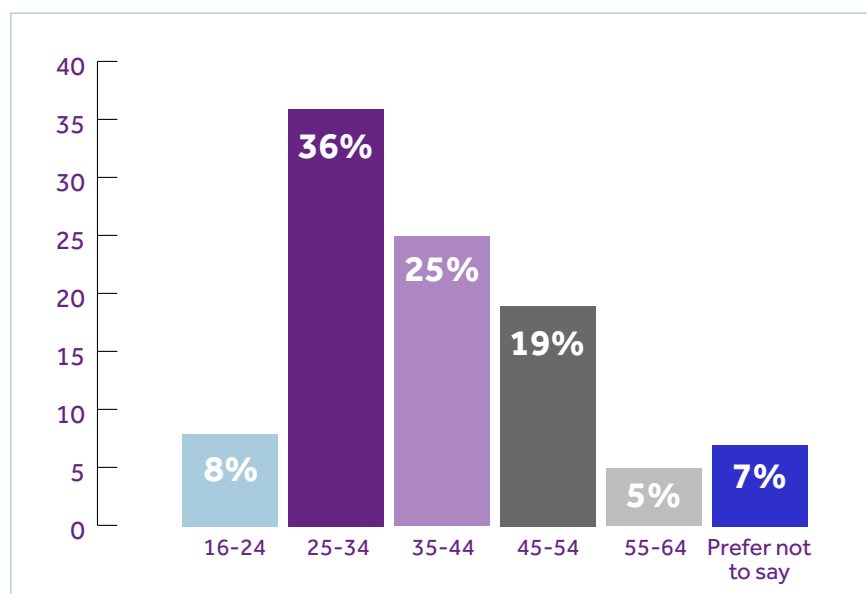


Figure three: Age groups of candidates



As a recruitment firm that covers all age ranges ourselves (see later section on Team Totum), we are delighted to continue to support candidates of all ages. These figures also show the ability of the professional services sector to cater for professionals at all stages of their career development, from entry level roles right up to leadership positions at board level.

In 2024, we will be working with the [Purpose Xchange](#), as an additional focus for our Totum Foundation, supporting people via workshops to make positive life and work changes at every age. We will continue to spread the word on the many career paths for people of all ages across business services functions in the professional services sector.

Sexual orientation

In 2023, 7% of our candidates registered as gay or bisexual, a rise from 5% last year – but very much in keeping with figures we have published since 2018 (the average over five years is 6%). In addition, 78% of candidates in 2023 registered as heterosexual/straight and 15% selected 'Prefer not to say'. According to 2021 Census data, 3.2% of the UK population (over the age of 16) identified with an LGB+ orientation, with the proportion rising to 4.3% in London. Our figures, therefore, continue to represent the wider population.



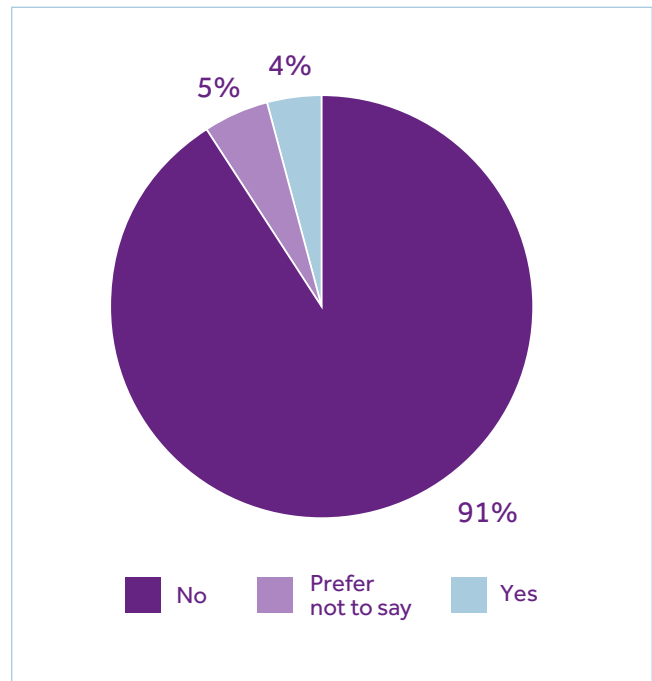
We hope our inclusive and welcoming culture continues to be one in which all candidates and employees feel comfortable to be themselves, regardless of what is entered on a diversity form.

Disability

In 2023, 4% of our candidates registered as disabled, compared to 2% in the previous year. We are pleased to see that we are showing a little improvement here, given that it is an area in which we are working hard to ensure Totum is seen as a recruitment firm that supports equity of opportunity for disabled and/or neurodivergent employees.

Apart from our charity work in this area, we regularly undertake knowledge-sharing activities with DEI experts and disabled employees who have shared with us their experiences and learnings to improve our processes and communication strategies here. We have also published articles in recent times to explore ways in which employers can improve opportunities for disabled and/or neurodivergent employees – and we are incorporating these learnings into our own approaches. In 2024, we are integrating neurodiversity-related questions into our candidate registration forms, the results of which will be monitored as part of our annual DEI reporting. We will also be attending manager training on ADHD, the learnings from which we will share with the team.

Figure four: Candidate disability



We know that recruiters play an important role in supporting disability in the workplace and will continue to work in partnership with our clients to develop more opportunities for this significant talent pool in the workforce.



Social mobility

We are pleased to be able to publish more detailed social mobility figures for our registered candidates in 2023. These show that most (53%) come from a professional or high-socio-economic background, with 43% having parents who went to university before they turned 18 (see figures five and six). This isn't surprising given the professional services sector in which we work and reflects Totum's own social mobility statistics for our employees over the past year (see below).

However, it is encouraging to see that we have a good proportion of candidates from an intermediate or mid-socio-economic background (26% in 2023) and 38% of our candidates' parents did not go to university, showing a good breadth of people from a range of backgrounds. Given that 47% of Totum's employees come from a mid or low-socio-economic background, we feel we are in a good position to represent candidates from all backgrounds and walks of life.

Figure five: Candidate backgrounds – did either of your parents attend university (by the time you were 18)?

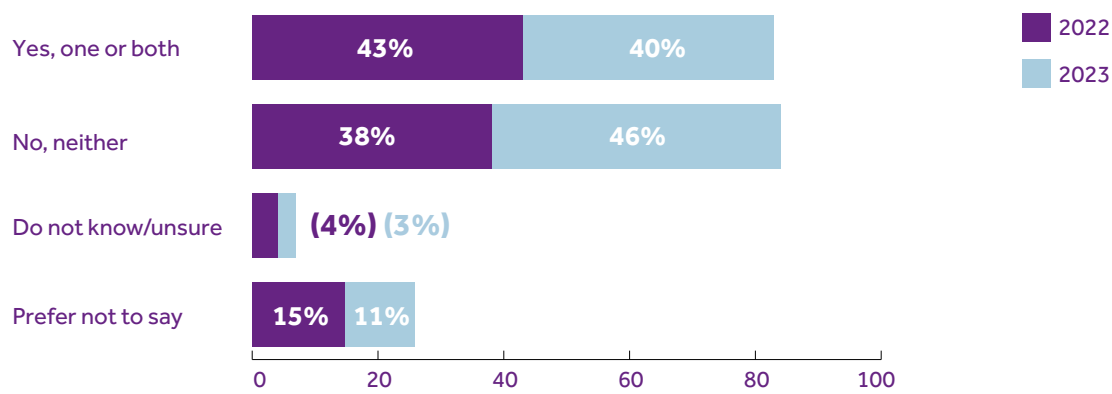
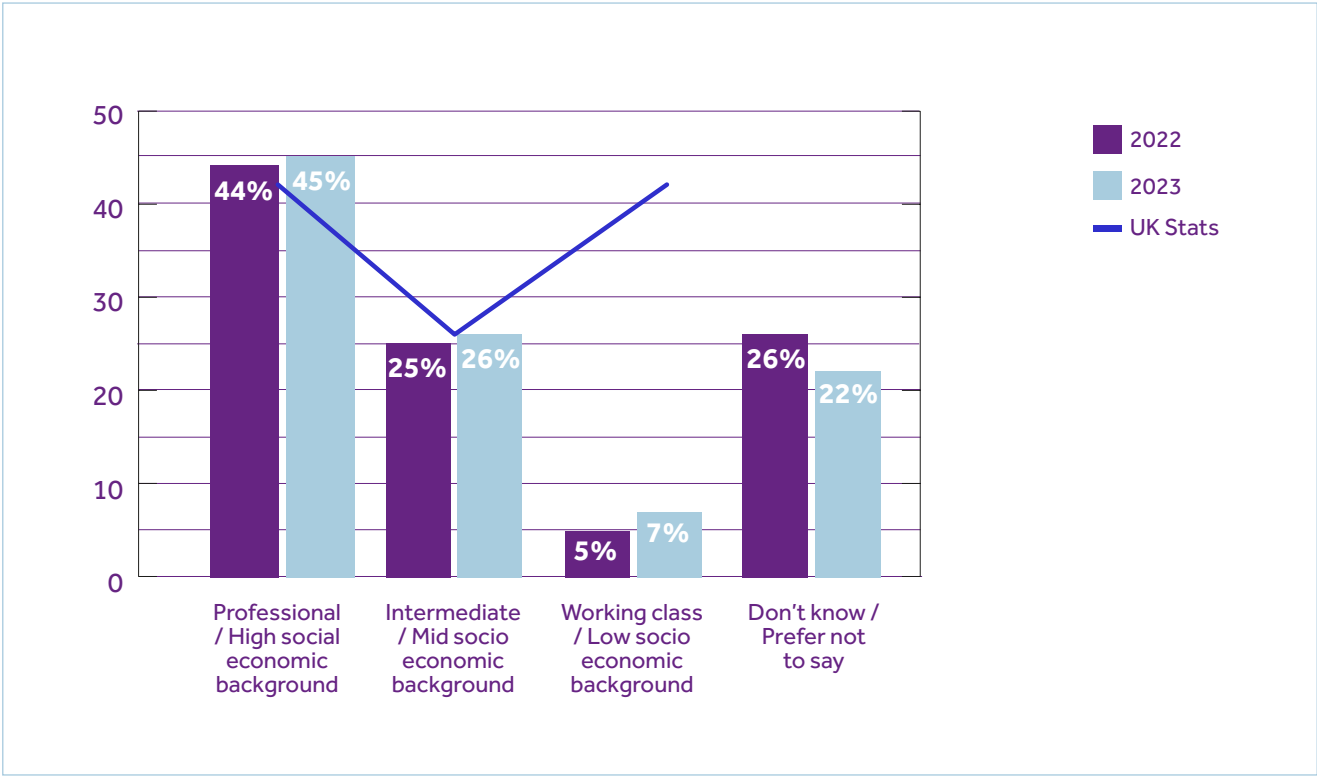
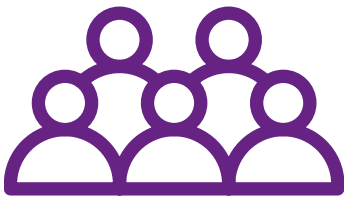


Figure six: Candidate backgrounds compared to national statistics



Team Totum

Reflecting our very low attrition rate, figures for our own team do not vary much from last year. Most of us (69%) are aged between 35 and 54, with an even distribution of those aged 35 to 44 (33%) and 45 to 54 (37%). A good proportion of us are younger, however, with 20% aged 25 to 34 and 7% aged 16 to 24. It is good to see us spanning all age brackets to some degree.

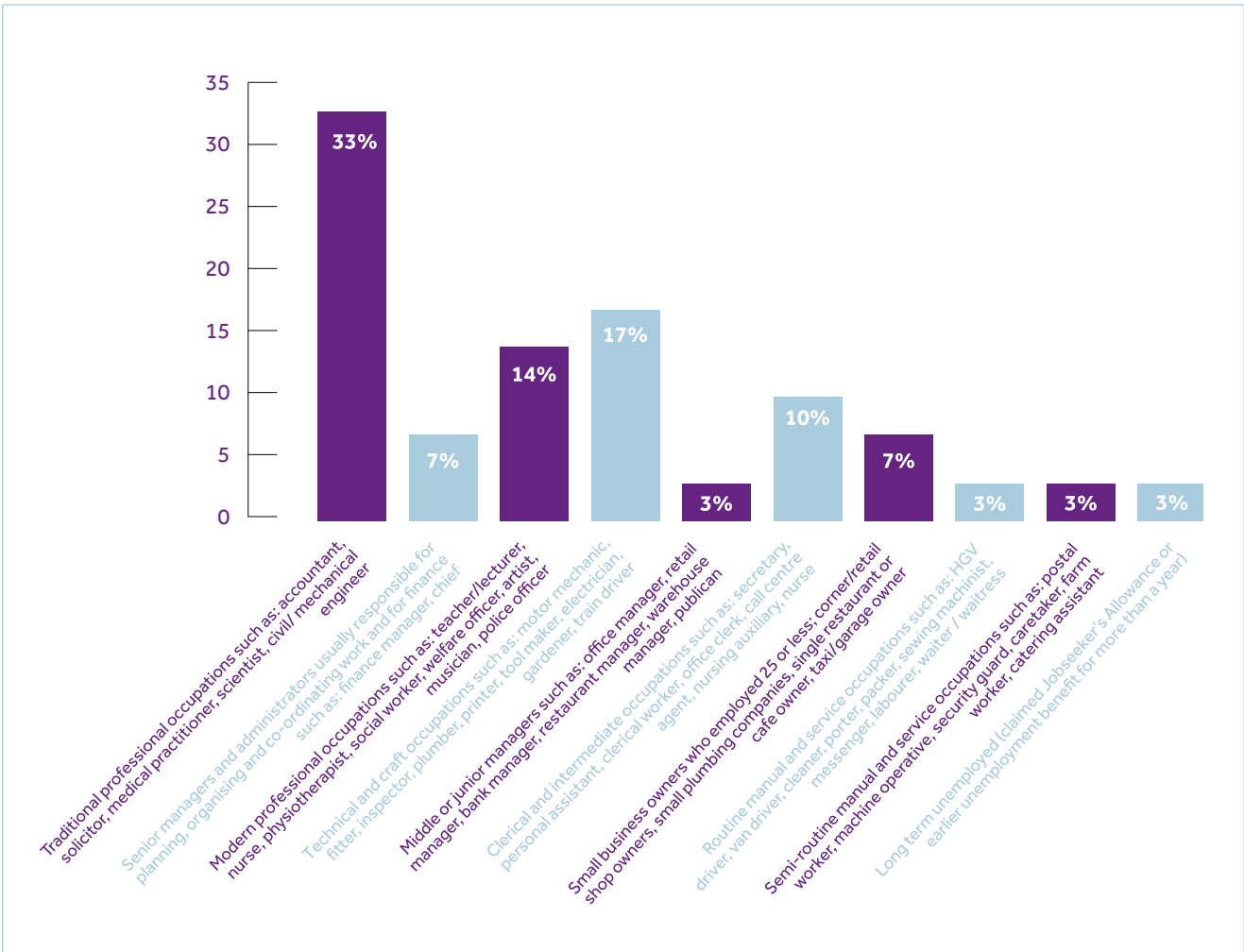


We are mainly made up of female employees (83% female to 17% male), but we enjoy a completely even 50/50 split at leadership level, with two male and two female directors. We are largely White British although 10% of our team have a Mixed Ethnicity, Caribbean or British Indian background.

Based on the occupation of the main household owner when we were 14, just over half of us (53%) come from a professional or high-socio-economic background; 37% from an intermediate or mid-socio-economic background; and 10% from a working class or low-socio-economic background. It isn't surprising that many of us come from a professional background, including having parents who were solicitors

and accountants, which would naturally draw us to our kind of work in the professional services sector. But it is good to see that we cover all backgrounds to some extent, with a good number of employees falling into the mid-socio-economic range.

Figure seven: What was the occupation of your main household earner when you were 14? (Team Totum)



Looking ahead

This has been an exciting year for us at Totum. Our B-Corp Certification, as well as Totum's 20th anniversary, were opportunities for us to reflect on our journey over the years as well as our ambitions for the future. We have always been committed to building a business that would be successful for the right reasons: delivering equity of opportunity for all; working with clients and candidates to achieve potential not just short-term profit; and doing our best for our wider community.

The past year has been an important milestone for us to renew that commitment. We look forward to working with all our candidates and clients to ensure we can all do business better in the years ahead.



For more information, please contact:

Sarah Broad, Head of Marketing & Projects
sarah.broad@totumpartners.com



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