

Aspire in Partnership (AiP)



Newsletter – July 2025



This report provides a quarterly summary of EDI-focussed activity, aimed at supporting employers to diversify their workforces.

Aspire in Partnership (AiP) is a Growth Company (GC) service designed to help businesses attract and retain best-in-class talent from a diverse range of backgrounds – creating a productive workforce and opportunities for all.

Overall Impact

Over the months of April to June 2025, we’ve proactively supported 26 employers to widen their candidate pools, placing 135 unemployed people into work in the process. All placements are with employers paying at least the Real Living Wage (RLW).

Below is a breakdown of the key D&I metrics:

RLW Job Starts	Male	Female	Non-binary	16-24	25-49	50+
135	43%	56%	1%	16%	62%	22%
Arab	Asian/ Asian British	Black	Mixed heritage	White		
0%	9%	45%	4%	42%		

Employer Case Study

HSS Pro Service

In May, AiP began working with HSS Pro Service in Trafford Park. They had identified a role in their Accounts department that they felt might be a good role for someone who enjoys repetitive tasks within a structured process. This work is ideal for some autistic people as they enjoy activities with structure and repetition.

Following an initial meeting to understand the role and the business, AiP collaborated with the Salford Supported Employment (SSE) service which supports residents with autism and/or learning difficulties to find suitable employment.



Prior to submitting candidates, SSE met with the hiring managers to help them understand the personalities of those shortlisted and AiP met with them to deliver a workshop on Understanding Neurodiversity to help them understand common neurotypes and how to be neuro-inclusive. Four candidates were submitted for consideration and interviewed. Of those, one candidate was selected who began employment on 27th May.

Here's what HSS Pro Service had to say about the experience:

"Working with Aspire in Partnership has been a genuinely valuable experience for HSS ProService. From the very start, their support has been second to none — thoughtful, practical, and consistent every step of the way.

Aspire in Partnership took the time to understand our workplace and came in to assess our environment to ensure it was set up for success. They provided tailored training to our managers on how to support colleagues who are neurodivergent or have been out of work long-term, helping us build confidence and capability across the team.

They were hands-on throughout the recruitment process — from shortlisting candidates to being physically present in our office to chaperone and support individuals as they settled in. Their presence and partnership made a real difference, not just to the candidates but to our whole team.

We're proud to have worked with Aspire in Partnership and are incredibly grateful for the positive impact they've helped us make. We're hoping to have a long-standing relationship working to make a great, welcoming place for all talent in HSS ProService."

Inclusive Practice Workshops

Requests for Inclusive Practice workshops continue to be popular again this year. This quarter alone, AiP has delivered workshops to 164 delegates across 32 organisations. There are currently three programmes to choose from:

- Entry to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (DEIB)
- Inclusive Recruitment Best Practice
- Understanding Neurodiversity

Funded by GC, the sessions are free and can help to meet Social Value commitments relating to workforce education. Aimed at hiring & line managers, the first workshop is a holistic overview of DEIB in the workplace. In addition to a general overview of DEIB, the Inclusive Recruitment workshop looks at each section of the recruitment process to help recruiters understand how to shape their procedures to



attract a diverse candidate pool that receives equitable treatment through the process. Understanding Neurodiversity covers the range of neurodivergent conditions, strengths and challenges faced, disability & reasonable adjustments, neuro-inclusion and wellbeing. The workshop is for all employees to help understand what neurodiversity is and how to be neuro-inclusive.

In addition to delivery within individual employers, AiP has also delivered Inclusive Recruitment Workshops to the Stockport & Salford Care Provider Networks.

To enquire about workshop delivery, contact Adrian Bird (details below).

Colleague Representative Groups Network

The latest in-person event of the Colleague Representative Groups Network was held on 16th May in collaboration with the University of Manchester. Following a networking lunch on arrival, there were three presentations:

Isabel Távara, Imran Saqib, and Saleema Kauser from Alliance Manchester Business School introduced a self-assessment tool designed to help ERGs evaluate and strengthen their collective voice. The tool functions like a “personality test” for networks, offering tailored insights across seven dimensions from leadership support to operational effectiveness. Attendees had the opportunity to explore the tool and provide feedback during interactive table discussions.

We also heard from Tatiana Bentley, who is the Neurodiversity Network lead at Electricity North West and Neha Sawant, the Women’s Empowerment lead at THG. They both gave overviews of their respective network activities, the changes implemented and how the organisations have benefitted.

After the presentations there were table discussions and feedback on leveraging the diagnostic tool to enhance network effectiveness, building engaged and sustainable communities, identifying key support needs for network success, brainstorming future initiatives and collaborative opportunities.

Online affinity group meetings are quarterly, and the next in-person event of the network is scheduled for 19th November, at City Labs One, Manchester.

To join the network, contact Adrian Bird (details below).



GM Modern Slavery Business Network

June saw the relaunch of the GM Modern Slavery Business Network, which brought together people from over 40 organisations to learn about the key aspects of modern slavery in the UK and to work together to tackle instances of modern slavery in GM.

Attendees heard from Greater Manchester Police who outlined the criminal activity, situations and trends currently prevalent. They also covered some of the key signs that someone maybe a victim of modern slavery, which are:

Physical and Emotional Indicators

- Unkempt appearance or malnourishment
- Untreated injuries
- Signs of psychological trauma
- Substance misuse

Living and Working Conditions

- Workplace used as accommodation
- Restricted movement
- Lack of personal possessions or documents

Behavioural Signs

- Distrust of authorities
- Limited social interaction
- Inability to speak freely

Control and Coercion

- No knowledge of home or work address
- Signs of control over finances or identification

As an inclusive recruitment service, AiP often advises employers to engage with communities as a means to attract diverse talent. It's through community engagement that you may spot signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery.

To report suspicions, call the Modern Slavery Helpline on 0800 0121 700 or online at modernslavery.gov.uk.

To join the network, contact events@stronger2gether.org



Enquiries

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