

News release

Law firms offered free mentoring on EDI approaches

16 July 2020

Law firms have the chance of free mentoring and support to help them develop their approaches to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI), in a [new scheme launched this week](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/diversity-toolkit/edi-mentoring-scheme/) [https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/solicitors/resources-archived/diversity-toolkit/edi-mentoring-scheme/].

The scheme will see small and medium-sized companies offered 12 months free support from those firms recognised as leaders in the field of EDI.

By helping them develop their approaches to EDI issues, the scheme is designed to support those who create more inclusive workplaces and businesses, which in turn should benefit staff, clients and the businesses themselves.

Each of those being mentored though the scheme will receive one-to-one monthly mentoring sessions with their mentor firm and be given access to a wider range of advice, support materials and networking opportunities.

Support will be designed around the individual needs of each participant, so could look at their overall approach to EDI, or focus on specific issues such as race, gender, sexuality or disability. The areas firms may wish to develop in will also be tailored, so they can choose to look at their policies, business practices, working environment and culture, training, recruitment, or a combination of all of these.

Paul Philip, Chief Executive of the SRA, said: The more inclusive a business is, the better environment it creates for both its employees and potential clients. That is all the more important at a time of uncertainty and against the backdrop of wider concerns about equalities in society as whole. By giving firms of all sizes the opportunity to learn directly from some of the most successful and largest law firms in the country, this scheme has the real potential to deliver meaningful and direct benefits to all those involved.

Mentor firms are all top performing law firms, many of whom have been nationally recognised for their approaches to EDI by organisations such as The Times or Stonewall. They include Baker Mckenzie, Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner, Clifford Chance, DWF, Eversheds Sutherland, Hogan Lovells, Norton Rose Fulbright and Thrive Law.

The mentoring scheme builds upon a similar [project \[https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/lgbt\]](https://higher-rights.sra.org.uk/lgbt), we ran in 2018, in conjunction with the Law Society and Stonewall, which focussed specifically on LGBT+ issues. To apply to take part in the scheme firms simply need to complete a short expression of interest form on the SRA website by 12 August 2020.