Welcome to the latest higher-education 30% Club newsletter. In this issue, we explore the recent activities of the Club in improving the gender balance in UK academic institutions, hear from Professor Simonetta Manfredi about the compelling case for more female researchers to lead spin-out companies, and showcase Dr Jill Armstrong’s reports: ‘Women Collaborating with Men – “Everyday workplace inclusion” and “Inclusive networking and sponsorship”’. Dame DeAnne Julius shares her insights on the diversity and inclusion progress made during her five-year term as Chair of the UCL Council, and we celebrate the news published on 2nd October 2019 that women now represent more than 30% of the boards of the UK’s FTSE 350 companies.

We’d also like to draw your attention to some upcoming events, which we hope you can attend.

Dr. Manfredi will be presenting her full findings at a discussion at Oxford Brookes University, Oxford. You’re warmly invited to attend – the discussion will be followed by a networking reception. If you’d like to go to this event or receive a copy of the full report, please contact Alexis Still astill@brookes.ac.uk.

Open trading at the London Stock Exchange to celebrate the launch of the 30% Club’s thought-provoking new report ‘Are You Missing Millions? The commercial imperative for putting a gender lens on your business’. There will be a discussion with Kevin Ellis, Chairman & Senior Partner of PwC UK, Alan Jope, CEO of Unilever, Nick Read, CEO of Vodafone Group and Noel Quinn, Group CEO of HSBC. This event is now full, but please look out for the news-feed from it on the 30% Club website, and on Twitter.
Our Campaign

The 30% Club campaign was set up by Dame Helena Morrissey in 2010 with the aim of achieving a minimum of 30% female representation on FTSE 100 boards. As of 2016, we extended the scope of this original target to a minimum of 30% women on FTSE 350 boards by 2020. The original target was reached in September 2018 and the extended target was reached in September 2019, with accelerated progress being achieved thanks to the leadership of our Chair and CEO members.

While we celebrate reaching these boardroom milestones, both our board targets were minimum objectives and there is still much work to do to achieve better gender balance at the top of businesses – 166 companies have still not reached 30% women on their boards and there are still three all-male boards in the FTSE 350 (down from 151 in 2010).

Now under the leadership of Brenda Trenowden CBE and Ann Cairns as 30% Club Global Co-Chairs, our energies are concentrated on supporting more women moving into senior management roles and taking action to reach our 2020 pipeline goal for every FTSE 100 company to have 30% of its senior management roles held by women.

The 30% Club believes that companies with a good balance of men and women in senior roles have better insights into their customers and market opportunities, make better decisions, and perform better financially.

We target a minimum of 30% women:

- **on FTSE 100 boards by 2015**
  Target reached September 2018 (percentage currently stands at 32.2%*, up from 12.5% when we launched the campaign in 2010)

- **on FTSE 350 boards by 2020**
  Target reached September 2019 (percentage currently stands at 30%*, up from 23% when we set the target in 2016)

- **at senior management level of FTSE 100 companies by 2020**
  Currently, women make up 27%** at FTSE 100 ExCo + direct report levels.

*Boardex, 30 September 2019
**Hampton-Alexander review | FTSE women leaders, November 2018
Introduction to the 30% Club for academic institutions

Although the focus of the 30% Club was originally directed at businesses, we subsequently extended the scope of the campaign via a number of sector-specific working groups. The Higher Education working group was established in 2015 to address the fact that academic institutions also face challenges around gender imbalance. For example, less than 22% of UK Professors are female\(^1\) and only 17% of institutions are led by a female Vice Chancellor / Principal\(^2\).

Would you like to join us?

In so doing, you would be joining circa 300 members (Chairs, CEOs and equivalents), of which 28 Higher Education are sector members whom we are thrilled to have already welcomed to the group.

University Vice-Chancellors/ Principals are warmly welcomed as members of the 30% Club. The role of the members is not onerous; there is no charge and the ‘asks’ are a belief in the value of better gender balance at all organisational levels and the view that collaboration, with men and women working together, is the best way to achieve this.

The University members of the 30% Club are invited to attend 30% Club events. You are invited to leverage your 30% Club membership, both internally and externally, to engage on gender balance. In particular, would encourage you to use your membership to engage with your employees and stakeholders on gender diversity to drive progress in your institution.

In addition, we work with Universities in four areas – but as you’ll see below, our approach is collaborative, not prescriptive:

1. Efforts around improving gender diversity within governing bodies over time.
2. Efforts around improving the proportion of female senior academic and professional staff over time.
3. Surveying female and male student attitudes to ambition, opportunity and University culture (pilot at Cambridge). Recent evidence suggests that female students feel less able to ask questions and are less confident about their future career prospects than their male counterparts, despite good performance at undergraduate level\(^3\), and that these issues have not been addressed by current gender equality strategies.
4. Raising awareness around academia as a source of talent for corporate boards.

We are also open to any other suggestions that you feel would be helpful to the sector.

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1. [https://www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php?option=com_pubs&Itemid=&task=show_year&pubid=1717&versionId=27&yearId=298](https://www.hesa.ac.uk/index.php?option=com_pubs&Itemid=&task=show_year&pubid=1717&versionId=27&yearId=298)
Women board directors hit 30% milestone on FTSE 350

As reported in the Financial Times (paywall) on 2nd October 2019, women now represent more than 30% of the boards of the UK’s FTSE 350 companies. The Club’s Co-Chair, Ann Cairns, remarked that “Once you have that percentage of women’s voices in the boardroom, women’s voices are going to be heard, and the whole tenor of the boardroom changes. It becomes normal to appoint women”. We are delighted that the 30% Club has helped to drive this progress.

“Women now represent more than 30% of the boards of the UK’s FTSE 350 companies.”

New research: women collaborating with men

We’d like to highlight some groundbreaking new research from Murray Edwards College, which explores how men and women can work together to transform workplace culture barriers to women’s progress into leadership positions.

Unveiled in September 2019, the report “Women Collaborating with Men: Everyday Workplace Inclusion” presents evidence from a gender-balanced survey across 25 organisations on the gender gulf in perceptions about the impact of unintentional gender bias on career progress. The report suggests how to involve men in working with women on gender issues. The report also provides practical suggestions on what individuals, leaders and people managers can do to behave in a more inclusive way. Examples include how to give more gender-neutral feedback, how to intervene when people are interrupted or not credited for their contributions in meetings, how to call out everyday gender bias and what to do when you are called out. These ideas come from the research and draw on case studies from organisations going beyond unconscious bias training to deliver everyday inclusion.

The second report is “Women Collaborating with Men: Inclusive Networking and Sponsorship”. It includes suggestions and actions for individuals and managers on how to build gender inclusive informal networks and how to attract sponsors. The report also presents a number of case studies on how to run effective sponsorship programmes across the private and public sectors.
Women and Spinouts: A Case for Action

Too few women researchers are leading spinout companies, writes Professor Simonetta Manfredi. There has not been enough attention focused on the progression of women researchers at all career stages from research to spinout leadership. Encouraging and understanding women’s engagement in spinout companies is of strategic importance to the UK Industrial Strategy, which aims to increase investment in science, research and innovation and to support new business and growth.

The Centre for Diversity Policy Research and Practice (CDPRP) in the Business School at Oxford Brookes University is undertaking a project in collaboration with the University of Oxford to gain a better understanding of the pathways for women researchers to spinouts.

This project is funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) under its Inclusion Matters Programme. As part of this project, the Centre for Diversity Policy Research and Practice has compiled a report, Gender and University Spinouts in the UK: Geography, Governance and Growth, that provides an overview of the UK spinouts landscape from a gender perspective. This work shows that across the UK, the average number of active spinouts with at least one woman founder is 13%. On average, there are 4.6 individuals listed as members of the C-Suite in each spinout, consisting of 4 men and 0.6 women. Further, 59% of spinouts have no women C-Suite members at all. The more women founders a spinout has, the less financial investment it receives.

This report has been developed by Dr Heather Griffiths and Dr Anne Laure Humbert, Director of the CDPRP, and is based on data provided by Beauhust. Its full findings will be presented and discussed at an event on 7 November at Oxford Brookes University 17.00 for a start at 17.30 until 19.00, Headington Hill Hall, Oxford, followed up by networking reception 19.00-20.00. If you would like to attend, or receive a copy of the full report, please contact Alexis Still (astill@brookes.ac.uk).

Would you like to get involved in this project?

Over the next year, the project team will be running a series of free initiatives to promote greater participation of women as scientists, engineers and mathematicians in spinout leadership. These will include:

- focus groups with doctoral students, early career and mid-career researchers to explore their thoughts and awareness around enterprising possibilities and spinning out
- roundtable discussions on action to achieve more gender inclusive spinout leadership
- examples from universities of women working as researchers and who have successfully founded a spinout

We hope that some of these initiatives may support your university equality objectives and Athena SWAN action plans. If you would like to get involved or find out more about the project please contact Professor Simonetta Manfredi, Project Director, (smanfredi@brookes.ac.uk) or visit the website https://www.brookes.ac.uk/women-and-spinouts/.

"The more women founders a spinout has, the less financial investment it receives."
Increasing diversity, reducing bias

In January, the 30% Club Higher Education Initiative, together with Standard Chartered Bank, hosted a small roundtable for University, Corporate, Regulatory and Search Firm leaders to explore the opportunity for greater diversity and talent between the sectors.

The leadership of Scottish, English, Northern Irish and Welsh institutions was represented, and topics included HE leaders on US corporate boards, how regulators look at diversity, and how to reduce unconscious bias in the promotion and selection process.

US companies appeared to be doing more to incorporate academic or University-related leadership into their businesses than UK companies, particularly at non-executive level. Chevron was an example where, of the four female non-exec directors, three had PhDs. It was speculated that periodically the contribution of academics in these roles was as ‘subject matter expert’, to which the generalist governance role of a non-exec was appended. Some companies who were heavily dependent upon graduate recruiting for their talent pools, periodically considered Non-Executives with University leadership experience for their board roles. Other talent acquisition from the University sector was more limited. The growing sense of a need for collaboration between sciences and the liberal arts for greater outcomes, and student attraction, was characterised as being similar to the potential for collaboration between the HE and the corporate sector. Syllabuses and courses could better foster translational activities, co-creation and shared ownership with the corporate world.

Regulators had one of the most broad perspectives on diversity, as they engaged on the topic from multiple angles – as employers, regulators and overseers, and organisations with public sector duty. The group discussed voluntary versus mandatory diversity targets, and pondered how an ‘intelligent regulator’ should intervene should the need be deemed to arise. They also spoke about whether they could intervene with positive reinforcing, rather than penalising, tools. In addition, regulators have been recently reviewing ‘psychological safety’ and how that affected decision-making criteria.

In the Higher Education sector, it was felt that confident leaders appeared more ready to embrace diversity, than those less sure of their ground. ‘Confident’ was felt to refer not only to the emotional characteristics of the leadership, but also the financial stability of the institution. Some felt that “the downside of taking a risk in middle management is greater than the upside available from that risk.” By operating from a position of quiet confidence (with a stronger sense of ‘secure base’) a leader could explore suggestions that might otherwise be uncomfortable to those around them, and or themselves. This might allow them to promote individuals with what might previously have been viewed as a less ‘conventional’ set of talent precedents.

Both sectors were continuing to evolve, but as with any role with a finite tenure, the process needed to be more robust, so that should the enlightenment of existing leadership begin to wane, or their roles expire, their successors could not ‘pull up the ladder’ and retrench back into un-diverse practices. Codified principles on diversity were considered, so that forward-thinking initiatives were not ripped up by subsequent generations less acutely aware of the impact of a lack of diversity. The cycle length of Universities (annual reporting) vs the corporate world (quarterly reporting) was also thought to be significant here.

Some universities had too narrow a pool from which to draw talent, with one being quoted as only promoting from their ‘heads of school pool’. Where that pool was already gender imbalanced, the leadership biases persisted – in this instance, only two female nominees were put forward out of a cohort of 28. The pool from which to draw senior leadership talent was insufficiently diverse, and it was hard to change the biases in the nominations process. Some considered the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the selection process, while others argued that even AI tools exhibited bias as they pool from which programmers were drawn to create them suffered gender bias too. Research by Murray Edwards College, Oxford, into recruitment processes and questions was highlighted.
Assuming hidden biases could be overcome, and the outcome was to promote more non-academic leaders, the cultural balance of universities was likely to shift. True diversity would require recruiting from non-academic pools in HE or non-revenue generating pools in the corporate sector. Both pools were pivotal to the fabric of the university, but the former suffered a lack of visible recognition, with a perceived sense of ‘risk’ on promotion, and might require stronger CEO / VC skills to create the cultural change.

Search firms observed that university leaders’ appetite to take on external independent board roles was felt to have been tempered by The Committee of University Chairs’ guidance on external non-exec roles for members of the University leadership. The ‘search’ community felt concerned that this guidance would hinder important external leadership validation and experience, particularly given the sector’s need to behave more commercially in order to survive in a tough funding environment. The concentration of female VC appointments in the hands of only one or two search firms implied that search firms had a strong role to play, not only in the search for talent, but also in the need to challenge appointment committees (not the candidates) to think more laterally, and not incorrectly attribute risks to ‘diverse candidates’.

Innovation and entrepreneurship was thought to be a great goal shifter, with the Women Entrepreneurs ‘Innovate’ (WE Innovate) at Imperial College and their White City Campus Ikea project being well regarded among the community. This sort of ‘breaking the mould’ was felt to be important in furthering progress, and setting examples up and down the sector’s leadership hierarchy.

The role of young people was forefront in the University attendees’ minds. Most (if not all) University Courts or boards had student representative members, and their insights were felt to be invaluable and pivotal. Age diversity (at both ends of the spectrum) was an innovation from which it was felt the corporate sector could benefit, and if the corporate sector didn’t know where to find board level candidates from among younger generations, those who had been members of court provided a great pool of candidates with whom to start. Several search firms had placed student court or board members in commercial positions. Norma Jarboe highlighted her research on the outcomes of student court members / student leaders.

The sector had suffered reputational challenges in recent years, and it was felt that the UK Higher Education sector, and its leadership, was not as cherished as it should or could be. This opportunity lay in the hands of (and was the responsibility of) both sectors, given the overlap at Board level, and the talent pool that fed both sectors from the bottom up. The corporate sector was also not without blemish, and greater sharing of experience could strengthen both sectors for the better.

**Recruiting Activity**

The group was reminded of the University Court / Board ‘Lay member vacancies’ portal on the Committee of University Chairs website, and all readers are encouraged to visit it, and consider making their own contribution to the diversity of the sector. [https://www.universitychairs.ac.uk/vacancies/](https://www.universitychairs.ac.uk/vacancies/). At the time of writing, 24 board vacancies are listed from board / Court roles at institutions including St Andrews, SOAS, Wrexham Glyndwr, Portsmouth, Glasgow School of Art, York, Royal Northern College of Music, Cambridge, Herriot Watt, Dundee, West of Scotland, Liverpool, Architectural Association School of Architecture, Queen Margaret University, Roehampton, Winchester, Plymouth, Chichester, de Montfort, Royal College of Estate Management.

Although the corporate sectors roles are not so centrally listed or visible, the search firms and appointments committees were invited to step up and make their roles more widely visible to the full pool of Higher Education & Corporate sector talent.
Advance HE and the Club

The 30% Club Higher Education chapter and Advance HE are proud to continue their partnership in support of the advancement of women in higher education. Advance HE has a strong focus on gender diversity through the Athena Swan gender equality charter mark, and its activity in regard to board diversification. We are also driving women’s leadership development through Aurora (the largest women’s development programme internationally) and its Senior Women’s Leadership Development programme. We are always seeking role models and inspirational stories, so if you would like to get involved, as a speaker or to share good practice or in other ways, please contact Tracy Bell-Reeves, Director of Programmes and Events – tracy.bell-reeves@advance-he.ac.uk.

Reflections on the UCL Council

by Dame DeAnne Julius

As I step down from my five-year term as Chair of the UCL Council, I am happy to report that our focus on diversity and inclusion (D&I) at senior levels is yielding results. This is not to say that we can rest on our laurels or that there is not more to be done – especially in the senior professorial ranks. However, at the level of Council and the Senior Management Team, whose leadership and decisions cascade throughout our large institution of over 13,000 staff and 42,000 students, we have in place a solid cadre of highly experienced professional women. This has resulted from building D&I considerations (but not quotas) into recruitment, selection and promotion panels for all senior appointments.

Our Council is composed of 11 external and nine academic members, with eight of the latter elected by their peers. For the external members, the Nominations Committee of Council advertises externally and specifies the professional experience that is needed for effective governance. Often this involves financial and managerial skills to provide robust challenge and oversight on the Audit and Finance Committees of Council. The Nominations Committee also oversees the gender and ethnic balance of the full Council, as well as the diversity of academic backgrounds. Forty percent of our current Council members are female, including the Vice Chair and the Chair of the Audit Committee. One of our academic members is designated as the ‘Council champion’ for bringing gender issues anywhere in the university to the attention of Council. Our chief concern over diversity on Council at the moment is the preponderance of elected members from the Life Sciences and Medical School in UCL, whereas more than 70% of our students are in other faculties which are not represented. Discussions are underway with the Academic Board on this issue.

At the executive level, the Senior Management Team is led by Michael Arthur, the President and Provost. It comprises the Vice Provosts, Deans and the Heads of Professional Services Departments, such as Finance. Of the 28 members, 36% are female, compared to just 21% five years ago. This is the body that discusses key strategic and personnel issues before they come to Council, and it is strongly committed to gender balance and equal opportunity across the university.

I leave UCL feeling confident that the processes, as well as the commitment, to deliver D&I are firmly in place, and that the many capable women in decision-making roles will keep this train on the right track!
## Membership updates

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<th>Name</th>
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<td>Professor Elizabeth Treasure</td>
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<td>Professor Sir Paul Curran</td>
<td>President</td>
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<td>Professor Andrea Nolan</td>
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<td>Rob Woodward</td>
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<td>Professor Paddy Nixon</td>
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Contact us

We’re always keen to hear your feedback and ideas for new initiatives. Contact Francoise Higson (francoise@30percentclub.org) if you’d like more information on the 30% Club’s current and upcoming activities, and Mercedes Hogarth (Mercedes.Hogarth@advance-he.ac.uk) for information on the 30% Club Higher Education Initiative. We welcome representation from all UK Universities as members of the 30% Club Higher Education Initiative. If your University is not currently a member, and would like to be, do please be in touch.
30% Club
GROWTH THROUGH DIVERSITY

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