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## **Bank of Ireland to deliver diversity training to 9,800 staff**

### **Bank of Ireland, one of Ireland's largest employers, has launched a series of initiatives to promote greater ethnic diversity.**

Bank of Ireland has revealed a range of initiatives to promote greater ethnic diversity within its workforce.

The initiatives – which build on steps already taken including sponsoring the development of the Race Equality Guide for Hiring with DCU – are designed to further support and encourage greater ethnic diversity within the Bank of Ireland Group.

By the end of 2021, all people managers in the Bank of Ireland Group – some 2,200 colleagues – will have completed Unconscious Bias training. This training, designed to help colleagues recognise often unconscious attitudes which can affect how they engage with each other, will help build a stronger, more diverse, and more inclusive organisation.

In addition, in the second half of 2021 Inclusion Diversity Training – including modules on Diversity at Work, Unconscious Bias, and Respect at Work – will be introduced as required training for all Bank of Ireland colleagues, or around 9,800 people.

### **Recruitment Charter**

The bank has introduced a Recruitment Charter which sets out clearly its commitment to diverse hiring, with ethnicity monitored at application, shortlisting, and hiring stage.

Bank of Ireland has made changes to its HR systems to record diversity data among its workforce, provided by employees on a voluntary basis. This will give the Bank a better understanding of how ethnic diversity within its workforce compares to diversity in both its customer base and in the communities where it does business, and will allow the Bank to track its progress over time.

The bank has also introduced an Ethnic Minority Talent Programme (RISE), the first of its kind in Ireland, designed specifically for colleagues whose ethnicity and race are not those of the majority group. The programme aims to equip colleagues with the skills and knowledge to support their progression into management positions. Bank of Ireland will also participate in the BBBA (Black British Business) Talent Accelerator programme, the first time an Irish company has partnered with BBBA to deliver a programme of this kind.

The new initiatives being introduced in 2021 build on a range of developments already in place across the Bank of Ireland Group.

In 2020, Bank of Ireland Group become a signatory to the UK Race At Work Charter UK which supports employers to ensure that ethnic minority employees are represented at all levels in the organisation, across all jurisdictions. This was followed earlier this year by the launch of the Race Equality Guide for Hiring by Dublin City University (DCU) – sponsored by Bank of Ireland – which provides guidance, tips and insights on how employers can take action now in terms of removing systemic bias that may exist in a company’s processes, practices and attitudes.

“Ensuring that we are doing more to attract and recruit candidates with diverse backgrounds is very important to Bank of Ireland,” said Matt Elliott, chief people officer at Bank of Ireland.

“Any successful company should be reflective of its customer base and the communities it serves. That delivers better customer outcomes and a relationship with your customer over the much longer term.

“In addition, diversity also challenges ‘groupthink’ and that is especially important when we consider how we will develop our business into the future. If everyone – broadly speaking – looks the same, sounds the same, has the same world view, and the same set of experiences, that is a risk for any company.

“When looking at both challenges and opportunities, companies need diversity of views, background, and life-experience. That’s the type of diverse community we are seeking to build at Bank of Ireland,” Elliott said.

***Main image at top : Pictured at the Bank of Ireland College Green are RISE Ethnic Minority Talent Programme participants Bongile Mellon, Deputy Manager, Corporate Banking and Vinil Thombrey, Senior Data Analyst, Advanced Analytics along with Zoe Deverell, Inclusion & Diversity Specialist, Bank of Ireland.***

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Published: 4 June 2021