

WEQUAL

PRESS RELEASE

TALENTED WOMEN ACROSS THE FTSE 350 RECOGNISED AT “WeQual” AWARDS

Awards backed by Dame Inga Beale, DBE and Sir Ian Cheshire

Designed to identify and recognise talented women one level below the executive committee across the FTSE

EIGHT businesswomen across a variety of FTSE 100 and 250 companies have been recognised by WeQual Awards, which are specifically designed to boost the number of women sitting on the executive committees of the UK's biggest companies.

More than 250 senior executives - including 18 CEOs - of FTSE 100 and 250 companies were at The Savoy last night (Thursday 26th September) for the inaugural WeQual Awards, hosted by Sandi Toksvig.

Aimed at those who are one step away from executive committee level – the ‘ExCo minus one’ – these awards honour women who are on the cusp of leadership at a time when FTSE companies have yet to significantly increase representation of women on executive committees.

Despite growing calls for change, women still represent only 25% of the Combined Executive Committee and Direct Reports across the FTSE 250. The majority (60%) of new appointments to senior roles continues to be men.¹

The awards’ unique judging process involved a blind assessment procedure - aimed at taking out any natural bias - followed by interviews of shortlisted candidates by a panel of prestigious judges, which included chairmen and women, CEOs and executive committee members of FTSE 350 companies.

Katie Litchfield, Founder and CEO of the WeQual Awards, said:

"Celebrating these outstanding women on the cusp of leadership positions for their talent and hard work is truly what the WeQual Awards are all about. Our aim is not only to provide much needed recognition, but also to help to facilitate the progression of these women and their peers as they move towards the top roles of UK businesses, bringing them a step closer to reaching the Hampton-Alexander target of 33 per cent representation of women across executive committees and direct reports by 2020."

Dame Inga Beale, former CEO of Lloyd's of London, said:

"I look today, and I see how few women are running FTSE companies here in the UK. I get so disappointed. The WeQual Awards are all about actually wanting to make a difference for women in the workplace and changing the statistics about the number of female CEOs there are in the world. That's why I think it's different to many of the other awards that are out there."

Sir Ian Cheshire, Chairman of Barclays, UK, said:

"It is tougher being a senior female in an organisation than it is a male, that's just a fact of life. I think we're seeing an acceleration, but probably not still quite fast enough: if you haven't grown the population of potential successors, you won't see the dial move fast enough and that's why the WeQual Awards are so important."

John Amaechi OBE, founder of APS, said: "These awards have shone a light on just how much talent and ambition there is among women at this level. I've spoken to our judges during this process, eminent people in their field, who have looked at some of these finalists and said that they would be willing to call the candidates' CEOs to tell them that they should be in the C-Suite. That tells us that we're really onto something and that these people have been overlooked for too long."

WeQual Awards categories are mapped against eight roles on the Executive Committee.

¹ Hampton-Alexander Review, 2018

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The 8 WeQual winners for 2019 are:

- **Pearson**
Cindy Rampersaud, Senior Vice President, BTEC and Apprenticeships (Financial & Commercial)
- **Marston's plc**
Sharon Singh, Head of Operations (Operations)
- **Just Eat**
Amanda Roche-Kelly, Managing Director - Ireland (Customer and Marketing)
- **St. James's Place plc**
Liz Kelly, Director, CEO Office & Company Secretary (Legal)
- **Diageo**
Hina Nagarajan, Managing Director, Africa Emerging (Diversity & Inclusion)
- **PageGroup**
Esther Roman, Global Talent Director (People and HR)
- **Spirax-Sarco Engineering plc**
Dr Sarah Peers, Group Corporate Communications Manager (Communications)
- **Just Eat**
Storm Fagan, Product Director (Digital, Cyber Security and Technology)

The awards were founded by Katie Litchfield, formerly of the Financial Times, and backed by Dame Inga Beale, former CEO of Lloyds of London and Sir Ian Cheshire, Chairman of Barclays, UK.

The judging panels included Sir Ian Cheshire, Dame Inga Beale, Charlotte Hogg and Dame Cilla Snowball among others. The Award's sponsors include Rolls Royce, Baker McKenzie, Direct Line Group, InterContinental Hotels Group, Just Eat, London Stock Exchange and National Grid.

The awards' charity partner is Crisis, a UK national charity for homeless people.

Further information contact Katie Litchfield, Founder & CEO WeQual, Katie@WeQualAwards.com, +44 (0)7796 147 466.

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Notes to editors:

Founder and CEO, Katie Litchfield, launched the WeQual Awards to help aspiring women in business make that final step to the ExCo, and plans to bring the awards to other markets.

Having worked alongside FTSE 100 senior leaders throughout her 18-year career at the Financial Times, Katie has witnessed first hand the challenges companies are facing in developing people into senior roles.

The WeQual Awards have been created to identify and recognise world-class female executives one level below the executive committees (ExCo) in businesses across the FTSE.

The awards aim to go further than current targets for female representation at the top of businesses, driving a change in the ExCo appointment rate from 30 to 50 per cent women, recognising women reporting into the Executive Committee.

WeQual Awards judges:

Dame Inga Beale, Former CEO, Lloyd's of London
Sir Ian Cheshire, Chairman, Barclays UK
Charlotte Hogg, Chief Executive Officer, Visa Europe
Rita Clifton CBE, Chairman, BrandCap and NED of Nationwide, ASOS & Ascential plc
Maria da Cunha, Non-Executive Director, De La Rue
Amanda Cusdin, Chief People Officer, Sage
Yasmin Diamond, EVP Global Corporate Affairs, InterContinental Hotels Group
Sharon Doherty, Chief People Officer, Finastra
Peter Flavel, Chief Executive, Coutts
Sarah Gregory, Inclusion & Diversity Partner, Baker McKenzie
Rob Guyler, Chief Financial Officer, EDF Energy
Karen Hubbard, Chief Executive, Card Factory plc
Rachael Legg, Group Chief Procurement Officer, Johnson Matthey
Ron Kalifa OBE, Vice Chairman, Worldpay
Maria Kyriacou, President of International, ITV Studios
Roger Whiteside, Chief Executive, Greggs
Shahzad Saleem, CEO, Cost Transformation Consultancy
Dame Cilla Snowball, Former CEO & Chair of AMV BBDO and Chair, Women's Business Council
Allyson Stewart-Allen, Chief Executive, International Marketing Partners Ltd.

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