

# PRESS RELEASE



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## CIC Chief calls for the Industry to be more inclusive

CIC (Construction Industry Council) today launches a report highlighting the issues facing businesses in competing effectively in an increasingly diverse employment marketplace. The report includes best practice case studies from PRP, an award winning multidisciplinary architectural practice, Mott MacDonald a management, engineering and development consultancy and Boyes Rees, one of the three largest architectural practices in Wales.

The record of employing and retaining women in the construction industry is poor. Although the construction professional services performed far better than the industry as a whole, the percentage of female employees has only improved at the miserly rate of 1% in three years - only 23% of the 270,000 people employed are female. Other high pressure professional sectors do much better in providing a more appropriate work/life balance.

The report outlines five key recommendations:

**Develop the Talent Pipeline-** there is a lack of young people studying science, engineering, technology and maths and progressing to higher education. More role models in the industry are needed to actively partner with schools and higher education institutions to encourage more students to consider careers in the built environment.

**Develop Emotional Intelligence-** this is a core skill for leading collaborative teams and one that women demonstrate more than men in a different way.

**Create Diverse Teams and Networks-** innovation relies on diverse mindsets, professional firms need to increase the diversity of their project teams and networks.

**Create Agile Workplaces-** adopting flexible working is key to greater company agility and attracting and retaining women.

**Create Inclusive Cultures-** built environment firms need to analyse their cultures and take steps to make them more inclusive, women have long considered the cultures of built environment firms as being very masculine with long hours that are not family friendly.

Graham Watts, CEO of CIC, said, "We work in an increasingly multi-cultural environment with clients, stakeholders and the users of our projects frequently demonstrate far better gender balance than the professional firms that deliver their built environment. It makes sound business sense to not only employ woman professionals, but to put in place working practices and fair policies in recruitment, career development and promotion that are inclusive for all staff."

Judith Cherry, Head of Research and Insight at Opportunity Now, the UK's leading membership organisation working towards gender equality and diversity in the workplace, believes that inclusive work cultures are good for business, "Equality and diversity are business critical issues. When employers develop and encourage truly diverse work cultures they can make their organisations more successful. Having more diversity within organisations helps avoid *identikit thinking* and encourages a dynamic mix of experience, perspectives, attitudes and approaches."



## Notes to the editor

1. CIC is the representative forum for the professional bodies, research organisations and specialist trade associations in the construction industry. It provides a single voice for professionals in all sectors of the built environment through its collective membership of 560,000 individual professionals and 25,000 firms of construction consultants.

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