



Building foundations: the future of legacy

Notes from IRLA Congress 2018

It's Tuesday May 15th and I'm waiting nervously for the post lunch panel session to start ... the topic, Diversity. Usually, this slot is reserved for a sports personality to come in and talk to us about life skills they've acquired that could be adapted or utilised in our market, perhaps with a motivational element but this year the Events Committee have boldly gone with tackling a hot topic, which some fear may not be overly well received. In the build-up to Congress I honestly wondered how many people might skip the post lunch session altogether. Was that me being pessimistic?

In preparing for the panel session, it was clear that the topic of 'Diversity & Inclusion' is so broad, with so many facets and differing views that the panel would struggle to cover them all in any detail, so it was agreed the focus would be on gender with acknowledgement that there are other key issues such as race, religion, sexual orientation and disability. This is also highly topical given the recent publication of



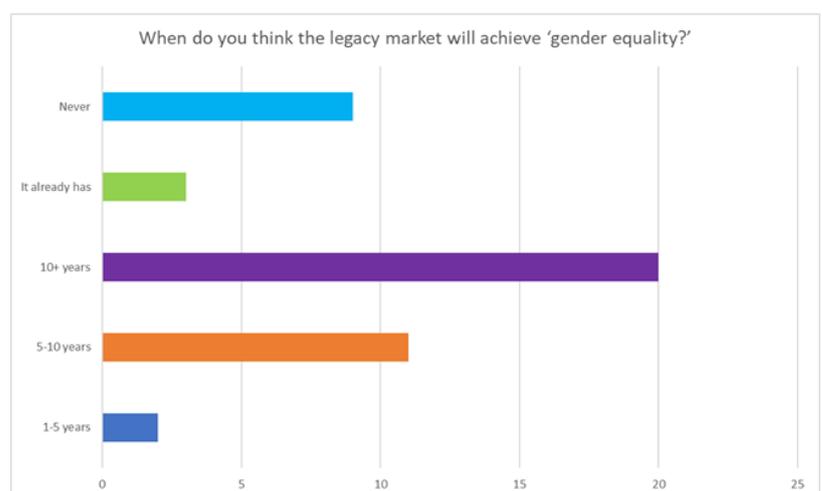
Gender Pay Gap Stats, the uptake in recent years of women's networks across the financial services and insurance sector (and others) and of course not to mention the wider media storms surrounding us all at the moment centred on inequality in all its forms.



The panel followed Rule #1: A gender balanced panel. This was achieved thanks to participation from Tanguy Le Gouellec de Schwarz (Foran Glennon), Charlotte Echarti (Hannover Re), Vivien Tyrell (RPC) and Jamie Stacey (RMSL). The panel chair was Hannah Farrer Fisher, the recently appointed COO for Armour UK. I'd invited Hannah to join Leslie-Ann and I to discuss the topic, wanting to tap into her experience from the Women in Insurance Network that she was involved in at KPMG. After a really productive and enthusiastic discussion, Leslie-Ann popped the question about driving the panel, and Hannah said yes. We all know you can't really say no to Leslie-Ann. A dig through the IRLA membership stats and a few conference calls later, the framework and content was set for today's discussion. Let see how this goes...

I was pleasantly surprised! Great turnout for the session and unlike some sessions this year and in prior years I've attended, the Diversity panel generated a lot of engagement and interaction with the audience and although many questions were asked and debated, there are still more for the team to review and feedback on. Hats off to the MCC and Secretariat teams for the introduction of the App and the ability to ask questions anonymously, as that has really worked at Congress for many of the sessions. It was interesting to hear the personal perspectives from the panellists, being from different parts of the legacy market and with the variety of experiences, with a little humour thrown in too to lighten things up. (See our [blog](#).)

Picking up with colleagues after the session, I heard how some resonated with the shared experiences and others have different stories to tell. What we all agree on is that the business case for a diverse workforce is proven and some ideas about how to get there were discussed however when we'd get there, seemed a little less certain. The disappointing note to end on has to be the outcome of the audience poll ... with 10+ years to achieve gender equality in our sector, gaining the most votes.



The important thing is that we've started the conversation and IRLA wants to work with members on these issues. In a relatively small market, which is collaborative in nature and possesses a real sense of community spirit, we are keen to harness the collective knowledge and ideas, to see where we can add real value. Regardless of whether we act or not, this topic isn't going away anytime soon. The hope is to use this opportunity to kick off a working party to look at what we as IRLA can do to support our members and our industry in tackling these challenges and promoting best practice.

If a Congress panel session was Step 1, then Step 2 is the survey that was recently issued to members on this subject. Not completed it yet? Please do so now by [clicking here](#). We want to understand a bit more about what stage our members and their organisations are at and more importantly how you view that. If you have done so already, then thank you. Step 3 will be what we do next. Stay tuned.

If you're interested in getting involved, then please reach out to leslieann.giovnilli@irla-international.com 0203 363 4233.

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