

Browne Jacobson wins Equality and Diversity Award at the National BCC Business Awards

 19 October 2023

Browne Jacobson's dedication to being at the forefront of society's biggest issues has been recognised by the National British Chamber of Commerce (BCC) Business Awards, after the firm was named 'National (British) Winners of the Equity Trailblazer' on 18 October 2023.

The UK & Ireland law firm which opened its Cardiff office in July was nominated by Chambers Wales, and was presented with the national award which recognises the achievements of those organisations that actively champion diversity and promote inclusion in their workforce and with their clients and customers, and also puts a spotlight on any community outreach work they do.

Partner Tim Edds, who heads up the firm's Cardiff office and **Partner Laura Hughes who is Executive Lead for Wales at Browne Jacobson** jointly commented on the win:

"We are thrilled that Browne Jacobson has been recognised as the national winner of this significant award, underpinning our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and our dedication to O Shaped, where we want to support the mission to drive positive change in the legal sector.

"We have as a firm been committed to promoting equality and diversity through our work for a number of years, so it is great to see that this is recognised both nationally and in the local communities we operate in.

"We also want to give special thanks to Chambers Wales for nominating us for this award and their support.

"Browne Jacobson are proud to describe ourselves as the law firm for positive impact across business and society. This award further establishes our national reputation for its commitment to promoting social mobility in the legal profession, evident through a series of ground-breaking and award-winning initiatives we have implemented over the last few years."

Browne Jacobson Managing Partner, Richard Medd added:

"This is a fantastic achievement for the Welsh team and for the firm, we are delighted to be recognised as a national champion for our continuous work in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

"This is a central pillar in our firm strategy and values and has been a key driver over the last few years. We have seen first hand the transformative and positive effect it has had on our business, our clients, our people and the excellent talent we attract and nurture. The journey towards inclusivity and diversity is a collective endeavour embraced by all employees across the firm's seven regional offices, and we are committed to and passionate about getting it right. We are always looking at new innovative ways we can improve and ensure it is kept it at the forefront of what we do, and this award endorses that."

Paul Butterworth CEO, Chambers Wales, said:

"Huge congratulations to Browne Jacobson being announced as the Equality Trailblazer as the winners at the 2023 British Chamber of Commerce Chamber Business Awards.

To be recognised nationally, pitching against 52 other Chambers entries, is a significant achievement in highlighting the valuable contribution & dedication Browne Jacobson do to make diversity & inclusion the norm in the workplace. A fantastic achievement & Chambers Wales are proud to support their efforts & work."

Sarah Howard, Chair of the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) said:

"In the last seven years Browne Jacobson has increased the number of junior lawyers it has hired from ethnic minorities by a factor of six. They have reviewed the entire lawyer candidate journey to identify areas of improvement and have also made impressive progress on social mobility. It truly is a trailblazer in the legal sector."

This follows the firm being named the Wales 'Regional Winner of Equality Trailblazer, Diversity and Inclusion Award' 2023 earlier in the month. By placing at the regional awards, Chambers Wales nominated Browne Jacobson for the national BCC Business Awards, which saw the overall champions announced this morning at the London Stock Exchange.

Since 2016, Browne Jacobson has implemented various initiatives including revolutionising its trainee recruitment processes by removing academic barriers, anonymising applications and focusing its outreach work on social mobility 'cold spots'.

In 2021, the firm launched [FAIRE \(Fairer Access into Real Experience\)](#) – a unique programme offering work experience opportunities to candidates specifically from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Its annual FAIRE events have now attracted 23,500+ students from 2000+ schools, and its virtual insight event in 2022 was the largest legal virtual work experience event in the UK, with 3300+ attendees taking part.

The firm also launched a dedicated mentoring scheme for aspiring black lawyers, partnered with Forage to launch an interactive online work experience programme to broaden access for aspiring young lawyers and was chosen to be one of only 13 UK businesses who will form the Social Mobility Commission's (SMC) new Employer Advisory Group.

Recently, the firm signed up to the Women in Law pledge and the Business in the Community Race at Work charter, demonstrating our commitment to gender and race equality across the legal profession. We were also recognised in the 'Race at Work charter report 2023: 5 years on' as one of the best practice firms for the meaningful actions we are taking as part of our commitment to the Race at Work Charter.

In recognition of its work, the firm has been named the UK's leading employer in the Social Mobility Foundation's Employer Index for the last two years.

Browne Jacobson's Cardiff team works across the firm's government and corporate sectors, and specialise in public law, regeneration, risk and inquiries, planning, environment and construction. The [firm's move to Cardiff in July 2023](#) demonstrated its commitment to the Welsh market, having delivered legal advice to clients in Wales for over 25 years which includes Welsh Government, Natural Resources Wales, Local Government Association Wales, Sodexo, Qualifications Wales, Sasa, the Independent Monitoring Authority for Citizens Rights, Ogi and various other Welsh Local Authorities and Local Health Boards.

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