



CHARTERED INSTITUTE
OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

Levelling Up the Public Relations Profession

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Introduction

The Public Relations industry employs 100,000 people and contributes £16.7bn to the UK economy, but it does not reflect the society and communities it serves. Boardrooms are two-thirds male, in an industry which is two-thirds female. The industry is 89% white. (CIPR, 2022)

From the 2017 CIPR's *State of the Profession* survey to the 2022 study, equality, diversity and inclusion has never been listed a top five issue by respondents, nor has it considered its research findings through the lens of 'place' and social mobility.

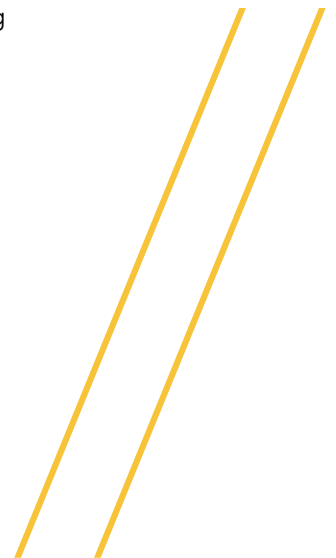
The 2022 *State of the Profession* report identified the challenges facing the industry. These included recruitment, as well as the lack of skills. It asked how the industry can engage with a wider pool of potential recruits (currently unrepresented) who are not university or privately educated, white, middle class and from London and the South East.

Consequently, this research study aims to:

- Create better understanding of the issues and barriers faced by different socio-economic groups and understand what prevents underrepresented groups from engaging with public relations
- Suggest potential and workable solutions for employers
- Propose initiatives to be led by professional bodies and other industry leaders
- Raise the issue of social mobility with individual practitioners

The Government's 'Levelling Up' agenda is intended to address the long-standing economic and social disparities across the English regions and by extension the whole of the UK. The challenge to the profession is how we level up access to public relations as a career.

What will create a sea-change in diversity in our workforce? Leadership, recruitment, engaging with young people earlier, recognising and addressing unconscious bias, setting and monitoring hard metrics can all be part of the way forward.



1. What is 'levelling up'?

'Levelling Up' is mainstreamed into British political language as a way of acknowledging and addressing the widening gap in opportunity within different sections of our society. One of the forerunners to the Levelling Up policy was an independent inquiry undertaken by the UK2070 Commission (see reference list) which saw industry experts, academics and politicians examine in detail disparities across the UK. Its initial diagnosis was stark.

The difference between London and the South-East and the rest of the country was, and is, more extreme than that between East and West Germany when it was unified in 1990. The Commission's research also showed that there can be a difference of up to 19 years of healthy life dependent on where you are born and live.

This research paper aims to provide a summary of how Levelling Up applies to the public relations profession, which employs nearly 100,000 people across the UK and contributes £16.7bn to the economy. Despite PR's consistent growth, the issue of a lack of diversity has been a concern for decades.

The research carried out for this report examines the regions and nations from which PR draws its people, how much social mobility has taken place at this point in time, the industry's views of social mobility, and examines what can be done to increase social mobility and diversity in our profession.

It also explores how important 'place' is within the profession at a time when regional and national identity has taken on a renewed importance for government for all political parties.

When the industry talks about diversity it gravitates towards race, gender, sexuality, disability and protected characteristics all of which are incredibly important and framed in the context of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI). But issues such as geography, social class, accent and education are often ignored.

According to the Creative Industries Policy & Evidence Centre, individuals from privileged backgrounds are twice as likely to land a job in a creative occupation. They dominate key creative roles in the sector, shaping what goes on culture, media, and television.

Class intersects with gender, race, disability, skills and place. This creates multiple disadvantage. This calls for an intersectional approach, recognising that promoting social mobility is integral to wider efforts to address inequality and exclusion.

It is recognised by the public relations profession and across multiple industries that a diverse workforce is better able to communicate effectively with the wide range of audiences in the UK and beyond.

A diverse workforce can also explore problems and issues in new and innovative ways.

The vast majority of those working in public relations are white, middle class and educated to a high level. At the top of organisations this is even more stark with white middle class men dominating the board rooms. 66% of senior leaders in the industry are men, in an industry that is two-thirds female. (Pawinsima Sims, 2022).



London and the South-East represents 35% of the workforce, in the East Midlands and North East, it's 3% and while the average salary is £64,000 in London, it's just £40,000 in Northern Ireland (*State of the Profession, 2022*).

The UK Creative Industries are missing more than 250,000 working class voices: a deficit almost equal to the increase in jobs in the sector over the past five years according to Social mobility in the *Creative Economy: Rebuilding and Levelling Up?* report by the Creative Industries Policy & Evidence Centre.

The *PRCA 2020 Census* identified a fifth of the 97,300 practitioners that work in the industry attended a fee-paying school versus seven percent of the population. That's an employment gap of practitioners from a lower socio-economic background of almost 13,500. (PRCA 2020)

The *CIPR State of the Profession report (2022)* revealed the major concern around sustainability and specifically a significant lack of skills with recruitment becoming the primary concern of employees. Indeed, the headline of the report was A Growing Industry Stunted by Skills Shortage.

However, from 2017 to 2022 in the annual CIPR State of the Profession reports, equality, diversity, and inclusion has never come up as a top five industry challenge.

When the industry is crying out for more recruits, more skills and a broader base, why are we looking in the same areas we have always drawn from?

There are notable exceptions of people and organisations seeking to make a difference at both a foundational stage and as part of career progression, but there is a sense that there is no industry wide co-ordination nor co-ordinated delivery plan to address imbalance.

Where we are born/raised can have lifetime influence and is a core part of peoples' identity. This is acutely so in our nations and in our English regions. But we accept as a profession that diversity of voice is powerful, that creativity springs from all kinds of outlooks and perspectives.



2. The research objectives

We wanted to gather data and evidence which would examine and understand the importance of place and social mobility in the public relations profession. We also wanted to understand how the industry can create a diverse workforce which represents a wide range of backgrounds, understands the value of diversity, and enables social mobility.

This research explores the current state regarding social mobility in the public relations industry and how the profession can avoid the risks of homogeneity which arise when talent and activity are drawn from or centred in locations which are not necessarily representative of national or regionally diverse outlooks.

The most deprived communities in inner cities for example are also the most ethnically diverse, but social mobility is also constrained in post manufacturing communities, typically described as 'white working class' and in our rural communities.

The acceleration of remote or virtual working should enable a more diverse workforce which organisations such as the Government Communications Service and NHS England communications had been promoting well before COVID. However, 'place' can still work against people as some regional accents and certain locations are still seen as less suitable for client work.

Our approach used a mix of research techniques including primary and secondary sources (industry and academic) and was a partnership between BakerBaird Communications, a CIPR award winning Nottingham based PR consultancy which specialises in university research projects and Sheffield Hallam University's PR teaching team.

We sought to complement and support the continuing focus of the CIPR's diversity and inclusion committee.

This Chartered Institute of Public Relations-funded research commenced in Autumn 2022. The findings are presented within the extent and scope of the research grant, resources and time allocated.



3. Research Methodology

Structure and objectives were refined with key members of the industry through 1 to 1 discussions before an extensive desktop review of existing industry and academic material.

i. Primary research

- Interrogation of past State of the Profession surveys and other data (CIPR membership plus company worth etc) to define locations of industry
- Analysis of the current location of CIPR members, focusing on where they originate, their level of education and that of their parents to analyse the levels of social mobility
- Targeted 1 to 1 interviews with those who are passionate about social mobility in the public relations profession and cognate industries
- A structured survey of public relations professionals (not necessarily members of the CIPR) to discover their views on social mobility, diversity and levelling up
- A structured survey of first year public relations undergraduates to understand their background and ambitions for the future

ii. Secondary research

- Quantative survey on place of both work and origin; socio-economic background
- Interrogation of the KPMG “Mind the Gap” report (2022), published in December 2022. This is the most in-depth industry-led research undertaken on social mobility



4. Research findings

i. The UK2070 Commission

The starting point for the research was much wider than the public relations profession. In 2019, the UK2070 Commission, an independent cross party, industry and academic commission led by Lord Kerslake, highlighted that the UK is one of the most regionally unequal countries in Europe. The Commission's work was so influential that some of its recommendations were mirrored in the policy of 'Levelling Up'.

At the initial launch in 2019, Lord Kerslake said: "The UK's regional inequalities are well-known and there have been many well-intentioned efforts to address them. These inequalities have built up over many decades and many different governments. Without a radically different approach and conscious effort to rebalance, the gap will continue to widen." (UK2070 Commission, 2019).

The relevance to the public relations profession is that according to the State of the Profession survey (2022), there is a worrying gap in the recruitment of PR professionals and a gap in the skills people have when entering the profession. And a key plank of the CIPR's strategy is to lead change in professional practice... [and lead] the development of a genuinely diverse profession.

The Commission found for example that a child poor enough to qualify for free school meals in the London borough of Hackney is still three times more likely to go to university than a similarly disadvantaged child in Hartlepool in County Durham.

As Lord Kerslake commented: "There is no logical reason why people and places in one part of the UK are bound to perform more poorly than others. There is tremendous untapped potential in the regions in particular and that we need to put the structures and resources in the right places to release it."

ii. A UK systemic problem: bigger than just public relations

The UK2070 Commission's interim report contrasted the poor performance of the UK's regions with the wealth and pre-eminence of a London region whose productivity is 50% higher. Based on current trends, it says half of the UK's future jobs growth will be confined to London and the South East, even though it accounts for only 37% of the population.

Imbalance is not unique to public relations. The Social Mobility Commission (2020) has done extensive research and in its 2020 report found that:

- Social mobility in England is a postcode lottery, with large differences across areas in both the adult pay of disadvantaged adults, and the size of the pay gap for those from deprived families, relative to those from affluent families



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- Disadvantaged young adults in areas with high social mobility can earn twice as much as their counterparts in areas where it is low – more than £20,000 compared with under £10,000
 - Pay gaps between deprived and affluent young adults in areas with low social mobility are 2.5 times larger than those in areas with high social mobility
 - In areas of low social mobility, up to 33% of the pay gap is driven by family background and local market factors, over and beyond educational achievement

In December 2022 KPMG produced its 'Mind the Gap' paper on social mobility, a journey which started for the company in 2006 with the introduction of the Living Wage with further work to highlight the gender pay gap.

In this extensive report it has used workforce data to accurately assess progression through a socially inclusion lens, examining multiple factors. While this is easier done within one large corporate organisation, and not from a Membership led Institute, it provided superb guidance in which metrics to look at, as well as how to turn insights into actions.

There are many others who are passionate about change, the Nottingham-based law firm Browne Jacobson scores as one of the highest organisations to not only care about Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), but embed it throughout its recruitment and corporate structures. (Browne Jacobson, 2022)

iii. The views of industry leaders

We reviewed industry papers on demographics as well as spoke to those with expertise in equality, diversity and inclusion.

In summary these echoed the instinctive feelings of the Government's own Social Mobility Commission and what we all 'sense' is true, intelligence and ability is not the domain of those who happened to be born in a certain parts of the country, with a certain amount of wealth behind them, and a certain colour.

The country, and any profession, does itself a great disservice if it just keeps rewarding those who have always been rewarded and not create chances for those in our areas of deprivation across the country whether they are urban or rural. It places self-imposed and reductive limits on the available workforce which will constrain growth.

And we were told that by and large images of our profession, in their view, were dominated by entire teams and agencies made up exclusively of white, middle class, highly educated people.

One of them, Natalie Gasson-McKinley, of the Federation of Small Business, was awarded an MBE for her work in the New Year Honours, 2023, and undertook a 1 to 1 interview as part of this research. She helped transform diversity in the workforce at the nationally renowned Nottingham's Playhouse theatre from 3% to 15%.

We asked why this was such a critical issue: "Given the natural diversity of the planet and the people on it or any locality, is it right for people to be excluded based on disability, gender, skin colour? The answer is clearly no, and that must be the starting point. People who identify with an EDI trait will sniff out organisations paying lip service.



“There are numerous reports and papers that say if you have a diverse range of lived experiences you get better problem-solving skills and better outcomes.

“In marketing or PR campaign, you get a wider range of views as an organisation, and when you put that out you will naturally be more inclusive. You don’t have this sense of one person or one view dominating the conversation.

“If you limit yourselves to one demographic of people or a particular geographic outlook, then you are actively excluding people. To them, you will be putting forward a potentially unattractive proposition so you will lose market share.

“So diversity increases ideas, productivity and it makes commercial sense.”

As KPMG Chief Executive Jon Holt said from his company’s report (2022):
“Building an inclusive and diverse workforce is not only the right thing to do, it delivers better outcomes for our clients, communities and our people.”

It would be easy for our profession to say ‘this is a systemic and cultural issue, we are product of it’ – but the harder and ultimately more rewarding task would be to grab the challenge and become a leader in the field. By leading by example, the public relations profession can become the ‘conscience’ of its clients having a wide effect on the industry and other industries as well.

iv. Primary research findings: PR Professionals

172 PR professionals and PR students responded to our survey over a period of five weeks with questions designed to supplement the State of the Profession 2022 national research which attracted 886 respondents.

We know from the national survey that the PR profession is 89% white but our research looked at education and background specifically.

Of those public relations professionals who responded nearly 86% attended university and of those the majority (70%) also had parents or guardians who had also attended university. When practitioners were asked to think about their parent or guardian’s background, the overwhelming majority were from higher, intermediate, supervisory or skilled background (68%)¹.

If these figures are representative then it would indicate the PR profession draws from those in relatively wealthy, middle class and educated backgrounds. Furthermore there was a marked increase in those who compared their upbringing to where they perceived their skills and standing are now – in short public relations has increased their place in society (as defined by the Office for National Statistics) with a move from their parents of 68% to over 94%.

From the responses we obtained, there was a very even split between those who thought their progress was limited, and those who did not. Of those who did respond to say they thought progress was limited, their age (either too old or too young) was cited as the major factor (53.7%). After that someone’s gender or where a respondent came from was seen as the primary limiting factor (24.1%) with race and sexuality only scoring 3.7% as a restricting factor.



¹ The definitions used in the research are those recognised by the ONS

We also wanted to know when people became aware of public relations as a profession – the majority were unaware until working life (52%) with another 29.2% only becoming aware at university, suggesting that by the time people think or turn to the profession their education, life choices and skills are almost fully formed.

Of our respondents, 65.1% entered the profession between the ages of 19 and 25, with a further 22.6% entering public relations between the ages of 26 – 35, again suggesting that the pool of recruits the profession draws from is competing against other disciplines or entirely other professions.

v. The views of undergraduates

A questionnaire was shared with lecturers at UK universities teaching public relations to give to their first-year students during their first few weeks of study. We wanted to explore the aspirations of first-year students and where they thought their career would take them.

The establishment of public relations degree courses across the country over the last three decades has enabled a wider geographical spread of those taking an interest and building the knowledge and skills to enter the profession. However, while the public relations profession requires students to understand the industry and practices and build key skills there is still a degree of suspicion or ambivalence around PR degrees (e.g. PR Week, 2022)

Responses spread from Norwich to Halifax, across the Midlands and north with 67 students taking part. Of the findings, there was a marked drop in those whose parents had attended university compared to established practitioners (54% as opposed to 70%).

Most of the students had not travelled far to attend their course – 73.4% had moved less than 100 miles from their hometown. A fifth travelled less than 20 miles, meaning local access was important to them, which would suggest the choice of home living to cut down on student debt.

Most interestingly, when asked where they thought they would work after graduating nearly 70% (68.8%) said either London or another large metropolitan city. And when asked in a qualitative question why not where they come from these three comments sum up the responses:

- No opportunities
- New experiences
- Too small no opportunity

In an occupation where there is a disproportionate number of employees from private schools and privileged backgrounds, it is interesting to note that PR degrees – which encourage the less privileged to enter the world of public relations – are not having a great impact on the socio-economic make-up of the occupation.



vi. What can public relations leaders do to increase diversity? Whose responsibility is it to increase diversity within our profession?

Through this research we have retained verbatim comments to our two key questions from those taking part:

1. What can public relations leaders do to increase diversity? and
2. Whose responsibility is it to increase diversity within our profession?

We undertook thematic analysis of the responses offered. The majority fell into the themes of

- Recruitment
- Promotion
- Placements
- Engagement with schools
- Flexible working/working conditions

Of those the three main areas were:

- Improve recruitment practices
- Improve/change working conditions
- Engagement with schools

Respondents gave lots of practical solutions, but implementation will be tricky without industry-wide buy-in and training, for example around progressive recruitment, setting hard metrics and monitoring them over time, or introducing unconscious bias training for those in recruiting positions.

While we have retained and will use all comments, we offer just a few here from the survey:

vii. What can public relations leaders do to increase diversity?

- Be more open minded when it comes to recruitment, and actively try and hire people from different backgrounds with different views, to be more reflective of the audience(s) you are trying to reach. What matters are skills and personality, not necessarily formal training. People who are good at public relations don't necessarily have to have a degree, for example. Experience is something which comes in time. Be willing to invest that time to train staff and reward loyalty.
- Stop recruiting/promoting in their own image. Offer more flexible working conditions
- Provide internships and suitable living expenses to people from a range of backgrounds - not just concentrating on ethnic diversity but also being more inclusive to people from different parts of the country
- You can't be what you can't see! Upskill talented people from different backgrounds to enable them to reach leadership positions
- Offering more apprenticeships, on the job training
- Look hard at the barriers to joining and progressing in the profession
- Be more open to hiring away from the PR stereotype and a candidate's background, focusing on transferable skills and knowledge that could improve team dynamics and delivering on comms



- Get better at promoting the role and potential - we're great at doing this for clients but not ourselves, our businesses or our profession. Use diverse approaches to pitch recruitment opportunities
- Allow qualified/skilled employees to apply with remote working or hybrid working opportunities. It seems to be a postcode lottery - with main hubs for PR agencies and professionals based in London, Surrey, Berkshire and North - Manchester. Applying from out of these regions is much harder to get your foot in the door
- Be diverse. Take risk with appointments. Do not presume your way is the only way and be prepared to be challenged. Not looking for versions of what we've already got (male centric idea of success, always on work culture, best people not necessarily the ones who best project themselves)
- Become more inclusive, smash down barriers and prejudice, listen to those at an earlier stage in their career and give them a voice
- Work harder to reach more diverse parts of the community - not just be lazy and include people we already know. Ensure there are visible role models to inspire other people
- Get into schools - make sure pupils know what public relations is, and its role in society; Develop more apprenticeships, and work experience opportunities too
- Make the profession accessible to as wide a range of people throughout the country at a young age, through a range of local and sectoral schemes, and at the very least, being at school careers fairs and talks

viii. Whose responsibility is it to increase diversity within our profession?

The answers were very straight forward in that most people that everyone has some part to play increasing diversity within public relations, with the emphasis on those in leadership and recruitment positions.

- It should come from the very top. The heads of organisations set the tone, as do senior managers, team leaders, and other managers. The most important factor is recruitment, and this should be considered very carefully, as the most crucial strength of any organisation is the people who run it
- Team leaders, particularly those who recruit, have the ability to make decisions on diversifying their teams. They need to adapt their recruitment processes and thinking to ensure they remove or are aware of unconscious bias and they need to actively identify aspects of their candidates' qualities that enrich their teams' diversity
- More emphasis should be placed on the richness of a candidate's background (and therefore thinking and creativity) than many interview processes allow
- CIPR leadership, local committees. Need to ensure we are maintaining idea of professionalism whilst also opening doors to more practitioners
- Anyone with any kind of power, from recruiters to bosses, but also clients should be expecting it of agencies, as that would really pressure them to change
- Everyone - but particularly HR and middle/senior management who can influence things like apprenticeships, work experience and paid internships
- A call to arms throughout the profession. Professional bodies can take the lead, but individuals could volunteer to do their bit with if provided with relevant supporting materials



5. Conclusions and next steps

One of the key pillars of the CIPR Vision is promoting diversity and social inclusion, addressing social mobility. And yet former president of the CIPR Sarah Waddington, reflecting on her time at the helm later said *"I could see that as an industry, we weren't becoming more open, in fact we were becoming more closed. In terms of diversity, we weren't getting better, we were getting worse."*

When the industry is crying out for more recruits, more skills and a broader base, why are we looking in the same areas and communities we have always drawn from?

It is clear from our research and others' evidence that the UK struggles to tackle equality, diversity and inclusion. It is also crystal clear that where we are born and our parents background can have a huge advantageous, or disadvantageous, watermark on peoples' lives.

The scope of this research did not allow us to touch on those who suffer multiple challenges to their social mobility, especially race, disability or sexuality. Specifically in terms of BAME recruitment, we would point to the excellent *CIPR 2020 report on Race in PR* as further reading.

There are those who have gone out to champion social mobility, as their life's work, to give others the chance that they have either created for themselves through happenstance, hard work or been lucky enough to be born in the right place or had the right support.

Individual organisations and institutions have created solutions which have a local impact either within their own corporate sphere or on others as well.

Our professional organisations can use their influence, but others also need to step forward and take the lead in terms of their recruitment, training, mentoring programmes, or in their flexibility of location. While the responsibility lies on the entire profession, those who employ larger workforces and can exert more influence must take the lead: and this is not 'EDI-washing' statements of intent, but hard evidence of change.

The UK's public sector communications organisations, including the Government Communications Service, the NHS, local government and blue light services employ tens of thousands of communicators, and we suspect that their recruitment policies are more enlightened and progressive than the private sector.

In the case of the Government Communications Service there is an award-winning apprenticeship programme which draws from all over the UK. Its post-COVID recruitment policy has shifted from the 'London glass ceiling' to actively seeking to place senior posts outside the M25.



Natalie Gasson-McKinley MBE who has lived experience of making a real difference in organisations told us:

“If you want to bring people in, you do it in a way which doesn’t make others feel obsolete. Organisations have a responsibility not to go in as bulldozers ‘we will do diversity this way’.

“There is a change-management process here, which is about buy in, communication, feedback, bringing hearts, minds and people with you.”

Public Relations is lagging way behind when it comes to social mobility. Other professions are leading the way, in the legal sphere or in finance, there needs to be a step change and commitment from all to make a difference. We are not blind to the fact that what we advocating is cultural change and cultural change is never easy, nor achieved over the short-term.

We would call on the CIPR to spearhead a campaign on these issues, with a Manifesto based on our findings:

i. Metrics

One of the biggest learning points is the lack of data around social mobility from the State of the Profession Survey: our recommendation is that using existing industry leading guidance this is built into the survey or is treated as an annual survey within itself. The Social Mobility Commission, the KPMG and the Federation of Small Business told us that without those insights it will be impossible to set stretch targets to make a real difference. The CIPR is in a unique place to gather regional activity and data on the background and progression of practitioners.

ii. Learn from others

Public relations is not an island, other areas of the UK, other industries, face similar challenges, we recommend further work, research and reports be produced so learning can be taken from those with greater resources – from Higher Education, the Government or large corporate organisations or industry bodies. This is not just about insight for its own sake but the actions that have been taken – for example unconscious bias training for recruiters.

Organisations like Socially Mobile and the Taylor Bennett Foundation (see reference list) have walked the walk: we recommend taking their experiences and practical solutions and applying them to our own profession.

iii. Make it possible to see ‘People like me’

If people don’t see themselves in our professions’ promotional activities, how can they think ‘this is for me’? This is about protected characteristics, but it is



also about place. Some of our very best communicators come from the four corners of the United Kingdom, we need to see role models who have been socially mobile, to inspire the next generation. This is particularly important where people suffer multiple disadvantages to their social mobility.

iv. Show leadership

In the public relations profession do our best award winners, the Board, the Committee chairs, the Presidents reflect the diversity of our country or draw from those who have the advantage of time and money to be leaders in the first place. How can we encourage more early-stage professionals into leadership and be visibly championing the profession?

v. Listen to members

We have the most creative workforce in the UK, and we need to listen to them more.

We are grateful to all those who guided us in this research, their suggestions on how to make real change were incredibly clear:

- Improve recruitment practices
- Improve/change working conditions
- Engagement with schools

vi. The role of professional bodies

Our research showed that while many PR professionals are aware of the benefits of diversity and the problems that those from diverse backgrounds face, awareness is not universal. We propose widening access to unconscious bias awareness for example videos, training manuals and online CPD modules. Wider than this we believe EDI is such a fundamental issue that it should be treated in the same way as ethics, a mandatory part of the CPD cycle.

The two interventions which we repeatedly saw from our research and from our survey respondents was at the two ends of the scale:

1. Broadening awareness of the public relations profession at a school-age level, potentially working with the DfE/Skills Funding Agency/DCMS to achieve both industry objectives as well as meet political and policy objectives in Whitehall.
2. Management intervention identified and addressed by other professional leaders such as Browne Jacobson and KPMG.



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To all those who gave their time to complete our surveys and those who took part in 1 to 1 interviews with particular thanks to Natalie Gasson-McKinley MBE.

And to all who care about this subject and want to see change. Never be discouraged, support one another, always remain positive.



About the authors

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Stuart has worked in the media and public relations for 30 years, with 16 years in Whitehall including working on national campaigns such as Think! Kill Your Speed, Change4Life and many others. He was seconded to work in the No10 Strategic Communications Unit three times, was regional director of Government communications for the Midlands, and worked with dozens of Ministerial departments, Secretaries of State and the Royal Family.

He went onto work as a Director of Communications for the NHS in England and in Scotland before forming his own public relations company in 2015 which has won nine CIPR awards over that time. He published research into regional Government communications in 2011 as part of a Masters in Public Communication from the University of Leeds.

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Liz is co-editor with Dejan Verčič of Experiencing Public Relations: International Voices and recently contributed a chapter, 'The impact of diversity initiatives on practitioners and practice' to Platinum: Celebrating the CIPR and its members at 70. She has just published an article on the flaws in the pitching process 'Pitch imperfect: Power relations and ceremonial values in the public relations pitching process' in the Journal of Media Practice and Education and contributed a chapter on why women leave public relations to Martina Topić's new book Towards a New Understanding of Masculine Habitus and Women and Leadership in Public Relations. She is currently editing a book featuring on a collection of essays on the daily lives of women in public relations around the world: Women's Work (in Public Relations): An edited collection' addressed by other professional leaders such as Browne Jacobson and KPMG.



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