

Date: Tuesday 9th February 2021 - Location: Teams Call

Attendees:

Aaron Reid (Balfour Beatty), Antoinette Irving (SCSS), Belinda Blake (Highways England), Briony Wickenden (CECA – chair), Dale Turner (Skanska), Emer Murnaghan (Graham), Ian Heptonstall (SCSS), Jo Pottinger (BAM), Joanne Mercer (Vinci Construction), Paul Aldridge (WJ Group), Richard King (Osborne), Sara Gouveia (SCSS), Stephen Cole (CITB)

Apologies:

Kevin Mcloughlin (K&M McLoughlin) & Lorna Brown-Owen (Network Rail)

ACTIONS:

- ✓ **Action 191:** Ian and Stephen to discuss future FIR funding through CITB
- ✓ **Action 192:** Ian to discuss funding with Network Rail, HS2 and Highways England
- ✓ **Action 193:** Ian to send Mark details of individuals who will participate in wider accreditation conversations with Clear Company
- ✓ **Action 194:** Mark Lomas to make introductions between Clear Company, Aaron Reid (Balfour Beatty) and Ian Heptonstall (SCSS)

1. Welcome & review of minutes of last meeting

Ian Heptonstall (IH) introduced the group and set the scene for the meeting, outlining the agenda items. Sara Gouveia (SG) talked through outstanding actions as per the action log. Briony Wickenden (BW) confirmed that the Inspiring Change Conference will be taking place on the 9th of November 2021 and further details will be circulated.

2. FIR programme activities

2.1 Progress against plan for this FY

Outputs	Target to Dec 2020	Actual to Dec 2020	Target to March 2021	Project target
Overall number of learners ¹ (classroom + e-learning + webinar)	3,880	6,469	4,180	5,000
Overall number of companies	1,600	2,240	1,700	2,000
Overall number of companies that are SMEs ² (60%)	960	1,095	1,020	1,200
Number of FIR Ambassadors ³	425	Trained: 1,073 Active: 456	450	500
Marketing campaign - number unique visitors reached	13,000	27,673	14,000	18,000

SG outlined progress against target as per the above figures. SG was pleased to report that all intended outputs were achieved/exceeded as highlighted in green. It is particularly positive to see continual progress through all virtual training, which has allowed the programme to reach a wider pool of learners.

2.2 Proposed training activities for rest of year

SG updated the group on proposed activities for Q4, highlighting that the “Understanding Unconscious Bias” webinar had a significant 223 bookings and appeared to be the most popular session the programme has seen to date.

3. FIR Programme Business Planning

3.1 Budget proposal

IH ran through the proposed business plans for 2021/22, highlighting the programme’s core activities as:

- Engaging the industry
- Upskilling the industry
- Expanding the Ambassador programme
- Aligning the BeFaIR framework and FIR Growth Matrix
- Diversity Monitoring Tool
- Monitoring Impact

IH also addressed the funding criteria for the FIR programme, highlighting confirmed or requested funding:

- Supply Chain School Industry Partners - £40,000 (confirmed)
- Client Partners: Network Rail, HS2 and Highways England - £75,000 (confirmed)
- CITB - £200,000 (discussions in place)
- Total funding required £315,000.

IH highlighted the four funding scenarios and potential outputs as per the deck (slide 17). Funding will permit varying levels of activity and scope for the programme as outlined. Stephen Cole (SC) confirmed that he is persisting with internal discussions to hopefully be able to firm future FIR funding. IH addressed the importance of maintaining a baseline partner funding structure for the FIR programme to minimise the potential future risks.

The group discussed the outputs, outcomes and impacts that the FIR programme utilises as baseline measures. The group had a lengthy discussion around the best ways of measuring the programme’s impact and a few suggestions were made with regards to editing the FIR survey, which the team have actioned. Jo Pottinger (JP) highlighted that it would be worth reflecting on flexible working as a metric within the survey and IH agreed that this should be included. The group agreed that a significant ‘output’ metric would be the number of people/organisations that participate in the self-assessment/diversity maturity matrix once developed.

3.2 Training schedule

IH outlined the proposed training schedule between slides 22 – 24. The group agreed that the topics proposed were relevant and were happy to proceed as planned. SC mentioned that there could be an opportunity to align a Mental Health project that CITB have funded with the FIR programme. It would be great to reach a place where industry knows where to

go for this type of learning. JP also mentioned that BAM have been heavily involved in the Time Wise study and there have been valuable learnings from that so if anyone requires more details on this, please contact Jo Pottinger.

4. EDI Assessment & Accreditation: merging Be Fair and HE Growth Matrix Update

Aaron Reid (AR) provided an update on where the subgroup got to with regards to this agenda item. AR explained how the subgroup would see the Be Fair Framework and the HE growth matrix aligning to provide a common approach to supply chain. AR mentioned that if cost were to be a barrier, it would always cause limitations as to who could gain access. As such, the proposal has been made to the group that a “self-assessment” version of the framework is built on the School website, meaning it would be freely accessible to everyone. This would mirror the Be Fair Framework and organisations could then opt for a 3rd party accreditation if necessary.

Mark Lomas (ML) briefly outlined HS2’s approach to diversity and inclusion requirements and the use of the Clear Company. ML mentioned he is interested in how HS2 could collaborate with the School on this piece of work. AR outlined that the self-assessment would be suitable in bridging gaps for organisations who aren’t mature enough in their FIR journey and would provide them with specific learning journeys to prepare them for any 3rd party accreditations.

Paul Aldridge (PA) mentioned that from his perspective, framework requirements usually get lost in translation and don’t filter down to tier 2/3. It’s therefore vital to hear one common simplified approach to EDI requirements. He agreed that that School’s maturity matrix suggestion would work well as it provides a simple model to follow. AR suggested picking up further conversations on this with Clear Company/HS2 to determine compatibility around creating the FIR self-assessment.

5. Process for Gold Ambassadors

Briony talked us through the status of this, reminding the group of the proposed FIR Ambassador learning journey. Briony suggested introducing FIR allies for those who promote FIR extensively but may not have the opportunity to fulfil full FIR Ambassador requirements (see slide 44 for full details). The group agreed on this idea.

6. AOB

ML highlighted that HS2 have devised some inclusive job description templates and that he will be able to share this with the School. IH confirmed that this would be a useful addition to the School resource library and proposed hosting a lunch and learn on this topic also.

Meetings for next year:

- 27th April 2021 from 10am – 12:30pm
- 24th June 2021 from 10am – 12:30pm
- 14th Sept 2021 from 10am – 12:30pm
- 25th Nov 2021 from 10am – 12:30pm