

**Date: Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2023 10.00am – 12.00pm**

**Location: School offices, London, EC1V 9DD**

### **Attendees:**

Aaron Reid (Morgan Sindall) (from 10.15am), Belinda Blake (National Highways), Briony Wickenden (CECA), Cathryn Greville (SCSS), Christina Scant (Core Highways), Ella Anderson (Mace Group), Emer Murnaghan (Graham) (from 10.30am), Ian Heptonstall (SCSS – Chair), Jenny Simpson (SCSS), Lorna Brown-Owens (Network Rail), Osita Madu (HS2), Paul Aldridge (WJ Group), Peter Ball (Fortel), Stephen Cole (CITB).

### **Apologies:**

Antoinette Irving (SCSS), Charlotte Baker (Colas), Emma Shakespeare (Laing O'Rourke), Ripesh Patel (Network Rail), Sara Gouveia (SCSS), Shelley Caton (Bam), Stuart Coates (TfL).

### **ACTIONS:**

- ✓ **Action 244:** Osita Madu to provide ideas around potential case study examples to exemplify what partners are doing well.
- ✓ **Action 245:** FIR Team to investigate marketing of new e-Learning Modules and how to incorporate Inclusive Recruitment sessions.
- ✓ **Action 246:** Belinda Blake, Christina Scant and Paul Aldridge to discuss potentially running a joint Inclusive Recruitment session (earliest March or April).
- ✓ **Action 247:** FIR Team to prepare an expanded report for the next meeting on how FIR webpages and usage compares to other School topics.
- ✓ **Action 248:** Osita Madu to provide details of Costain's onsite flexible working project, as a potential case study.
- ✓ **Action 249:** Aaron Reid to provide a link to the Graham case study on Timewise's website.
- ✓ **Action 250:** Cathryn Greville and Lorna Brown-Owens to liaise directly (along with Ripesh Patel) regarding the Network Rail Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) initiative.
- ✓ **Action 251:** FIR Team to share the Diversity Calendar with FIR Ambassadors and add the calendar to the FIR website landing page, exploring the potential to link each calendar topic to relevant events and resources within the FIR Programme.
- ✓ **Action 252:** FIR Team to investigate the potential for training participants to download badges to their LinkedIn profile.
- ✓ **Action 253:** Cathryn Greville to add colleges/training bodies to the Funding and Proposed Activities Plan for 2023/24, and to seek assistance from Briony Wickenden to connect with the CLC Culture Group (as replacement representative for the FIR Programme).
- ✓ **Action 254:** Stephen Cole to connect Cathryn Greville with the London trainer/provider group to explore opportunities with colleges and training bodies.
- ✓ **Action 255:** FIR Team to add supplier diversity to the agenda for the next meeting.
- ✓ **Action 256:** FIR Team to send Inspiring Change calendar invite to the group.
- ✓ **Action 257:** Steering Group to help with promotion of Inspiring Change Conference and Awards.

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- ✓ **Action 258:** Steering Group to provide any contacts they have at industry associations, or comments on preference for a pledge or MOU in the Industry Collaboration proposal, to Cathryn Greville.
- ✓ **Action 259:** FIR Team to add Research Projects item (1 hour) to next meeting agenda, and invite Marcus Bennett, CITB and Dr Cheryl Hurst, lead researcher for National Highways research, to speak on the research at the next meeting.

### 1. Welcome & Introductions

Ian Heptonstall (IH) welcomed the group and new members, and started introductions.

### 2. FIR Action Log

Jenny Simpson (JS) took the group through the action log and gave updates on progress.

The Steering Group noted that CITB is providing 12 months of funding (from 1 April 2023) as an extension award, with the intention to go out to the market for a longer-term program commencing in 2024, following some research to be undertaken by CITB.

### 3. FIR Programme Activities

#### 3.1 Progress against plan

JS took the group through the contract targets against the overall achievements of various FIR Programme outputs. As of December 2022, for the contract period (April 2021 – Dec 2022), we exceeded our targets on unique companies trained; SMEs trained; unique individuals trained and training courses delivered.

The FIR Growth Assessment has not yet met the soft target set for 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. The FIR delivery team have arranged a marketing campaign to support the achievement of the target by this date.

Given the industry interest in case studies and good practice, Osita Madu (OM) will provide ideas around case studies to exemplify what partners are doing.

The Inclusive Recruitment sessions saw low uptake, therefore there are still a few sessions to book in before the end of March 2023. Belinda Blake (BB) suggested tying these into the marketing of the new e-Learning Modules (Attraction and Selection). The group also suggested holding these in person rather than online, which Murphy's have previously done – Briony Wickenden (BW) will discuss with Murphy's before she leaves and feed back to the team.

Paul Aldridge (PA), Christina Scant (CS) and BB will discuss coming together to run one of these sessions face to face in March.

JS continued the update by providing Google Analytics stats on the FIR webpages, during the October-December 2022 period, as well as our marketing focusses for the same period.

The group would like to see stats on how FIR compares to other School topics as well as unique active companies and individuals in comparison (year on year) to the wider School pages. The FIR Team will prepare an expanded report for the next steering group meeting.

JS also updated the group on the additional resources that have been added to the FIR Toolkit ('Flexible Working' and 'Just a bit of Banter'). The group discussed onsite examples of flexible working including several pilots run through a Build UK initiative to trial flexible working on site. Stephen Cole (SC) mentioned [this report](#) on the subject, and the group discussed the [Graham case study](#) on Timewise's website, along with Costain's pilot conducted as part of its joint venture which was successful and has now been rolled out onsite. Aaron Reid (AR) will send a link to the Graham case, and OM will obtain details of Costain's onsite flexible working project to provide to the group and note as a potential case study.

### **3.2 Proposed training activities**

JS took the group through the upcoming training sessions that have been booked in throughout February and March 2023, which include both public and Partner sessions. February is LGBTQ+ History month, so we have scheduled some training activities on LGBTQ+ inclusion.

Lorna Brown-Owens (LBO) is leading a Network Rail initiative on their Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) delivery training. Soon, contractors bidding for Network Rail work will need to demonstrate they are carrying out DIA processes within their practices. LBO spoke about the work she is doing around this and the upcoming launch, played a first preview of one of the videos for Network Rail's supply chain. Cathryn Greville (CG) to liaise with LBO and Ripes Patel on how the School can support, and the linkages to the FIR Programme for Network Rail's supply chain.

### **3.3. 2023 Diversity Calendar**

JS gave an overview of our Diversity Calendar for the upcoming year, highlighting that we will focus on some of these dates for marketing, and that the FIR Team will continue to align our training activities with this calendar.

BW suggested sharing this calendar with FIR Ambassadors and added to our webpage The group discussed the benefits of linking these dates with resources and events relevant to each subject, to signpost to relevant content.

Ella Anderson (EA) discussed the potential of downloadable badges following completion of learning that people can add to their LinkedIn profile. The FIR Team will investigate this further.

#### 4. Programme for 2023 onwards

CG gave a brief run through of the Funding and Proposed Activities Plan 23-24, which was agreed by the steering group by email prior to the meeting. CG discussed how to move the programme forward and what should be a key focus through FIR activities.

The group suggested that colleges and training providers should be a focus for the Programme, as many have started to implement EDI content into their apprenticeship and traineeship routes. SC noted that CITB has started to embed it into all of their standards also. BW advised that the CLC Culture Group has discussed embedding FIR training internally and then externally, and that this will be included as a focus of the next CLC Skills plan which is about to be reviewed. BW will connect CG to the CLC Culture Group. SC will invite CG to the London trainer/provider group to explore this further.

CG will add colleges/training providers as a seventh point on the Funding and Proposed Activities Plan.

The steering group briefly discussed supply chain diversity and ownership of business, and whether it belongs as part of the business. The FIR Team will add supplier diversity to the agenda for the next meeting.

CG asked for input on the unallocated amount within the budget, suggesting this be held off until the next meeting when we will be better placed to decide on additional needs for the programme after initial outreach begins. The steering group agreed, and we will discuss this further at the next meeting.

OM suggested industry collaboration should include Federation of Small Business and Local Enterprise Businesses, which have good reach into SMEs. A different approach is required with SMEs, particularly minority owned businesses, who are not working under a compliance requirement, often do not know basics around client work and the bidding process, and are unaware of opportunities and how they can bid for work. Membership bodies provide an additional engagement route to direct engagement through the client's supply chain.

#### 5. Inspiring Change Conference and Awards

CG gave a brief update to the group on the Inspiring Change Conference and Awards which will be held on Tuesday 27 June 2023. The FIR Team will be in touch with a calendar invitation for the event and with further information on the programme and nominations for the awards in due course.

Steering Group members to promote the Awards to their networks and supply chains when the nominations open.

## 6. Industry Collaboration Proposal

CG gave some background on the Proposal, and asked the group for their thoughts, including whether a pledge or MOU would be best. The steering group supported the proposal and following discussion around the table and will contact CG directly if they have any further feedback on whether a pledge or MOU would be the best approach.

Steering group members with contacts at industry associations to also pass them onto CG.

## 7. Research Projects Update

Due to lack of time, this item was not covered in full.

BB and SC suggested asking Marcus Bennett (CITB) to attend the next meeting to give an update on CITB's research projects.

A minimum of 1 hour should be allocated to this research item for the next meeting agenda.

BB gave a brief update on the National Highways research, and will provide a report of the key summary findings (eg the need to replace unconscious bias training with allyship and bystander training), to the FIR Team to circulate with the meeting notes. BB noted that the lead researcher, Dr Cheryl Hurst, may be able to attend the next meeting to speak on this.

We will add this research item to the agenda for the next meeting (1 hour timeslot).

## 8. Diversity Survey Update

The steering group noted the slides summarising the key findings of the Diversity Survey but did not have time to discuss further.

## 9. Any Other Business (AOB)

IH and the steering group acknowledged and thanked BW for her considerable impact through the FIR Programme.

## 10. Future Meetings

- 9<sup>th</sup> May 2023
- 9<sup>th</sup> August 2023
- 8<sup>th</sup> November 2023

*Please accept/reject the calendar invites.*

The group agreed that the next meeting should be held in-person and extended to a half day meeting.