

# Diversity and inclusion at Norton Rose Fulbright



# Norton Rose Fulbright

Norton Rose Fulbright is a global law firm. We provide the world's preeminent corporations and financial institutions with a full business law service. We have more than 4000 lawyers and other legal staff based in more than 50 cities across Europe, the United States, Canada, Latin America, Asia, Australia, the Middle East and Africa.

Recognized for our industry focus, we are strong across all the key industry sectors: financial institutions; energy; infrastructure, mining and commodities; transport; technology and innovation; and life sciences and healthcare. Through our global risk advisory group, we leverage our industry experience with our knowledge of legal, regulatory, compliance and governance issues to provide our clients with practical solutions to the legal and regulatory risks facing their businesses.

Wherever we are, we operate in accordance with our global business principles of quality, unity and integrity. We aim to provide the highest possible standard of legal service in each of our offices and to maintain that level of quality at every point of contact.

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## A word from Troy

Our diversity is a strength that benefits both our people and our clients. It fosters a welcoming, accepting and supportive environment where all our people can bring their whole selves to work and realize their career potential is a priority. This commitment is integral to our business approach. By encouraging our people to contribute their varied backgrounds, experiences and perspectives we embrace diversity. We can better understand our clients' needs in diverse markets and engage with the communities in which we operate. We believe our differences are what make us stronger and actively promote a culture that values each individual, encouraging and creating inclusion.

Our diversity and inclusion strategy has a particular focus on building a culture of accountability. We aim to discuss and integrate these core values in everything we do, by developing inclusive leadership, supporting diverse talent, and partnering with our clients to further our efforts collectively.

We can achieve more with an inclusive mindset that embraces differences and I want to thank all my colleagues for continuing to do their part in making everyone feel equally valued at our firm.



Troy Ungerman  
Partner and  
Chief Diversity and  
Inclusion Officer

## Strategy and action plan

Our vision and strategy is rooted in our firm principles of Quality, Unity and Integrity.



### Vision

We value diversity and strive to create an inclusive environment where all our people can bring their whole selves to work and realize their career potential.

### Strategy and objectives

1. Create accountability for diversity and inclusion in management's day-to-day actions through targets, metrics and KPIs
2. Ensure diversity and inclusion is part of the conversation during relevant decision-making processes including talent recruitment, work allocation, pitches, performance evaluations, promotion and internal roles
3. Champion inclusive leadership and promote the value of difference to create an environment that is welcoming of all people
4. Drive the attraction, selection, retention, greater inclusion and career advancement of diverse talent
5. Reflect to our clients and the external community how critical diversity is to our core values and business strategy



**Ethnicity**

**Objective**

Attract and retain visible minorities and Indigenous peoples to reflect the communities in which we do business



**Gender**

**Objectives**

Increase the number of women in partnership and leadership roles to achieve 30% representation in 2020

To be recognized as a leader and employer of choice within the legal sector



**Disability**

**Objective**

To become a disability-confident organization



**Sexual orientation & gender identity**

**Objective**

Create a more inclusive environment for LGBTQ colleagues



**Generations**

**Objectives**

Engage and re-engage with people taking and returning from parental leave and increase retention following leave

To embed flexibility and agile working practices to improve retention, engagement and well-being

## Building a culture of accountability

Taking responsibility for achieving goals is key to making progress. We have implemented a variety of initiatives to ensure we measure outcomes and continue to challenge ourselves by minimizing the opportunity for unconscious bias.

We do this by completing annual pay equity reviews, gender-blind reviews of partnership applications and by tracking the diversity backgrounds of student applicants and the candidates who receive employment offers.



### Recruiting diverse students

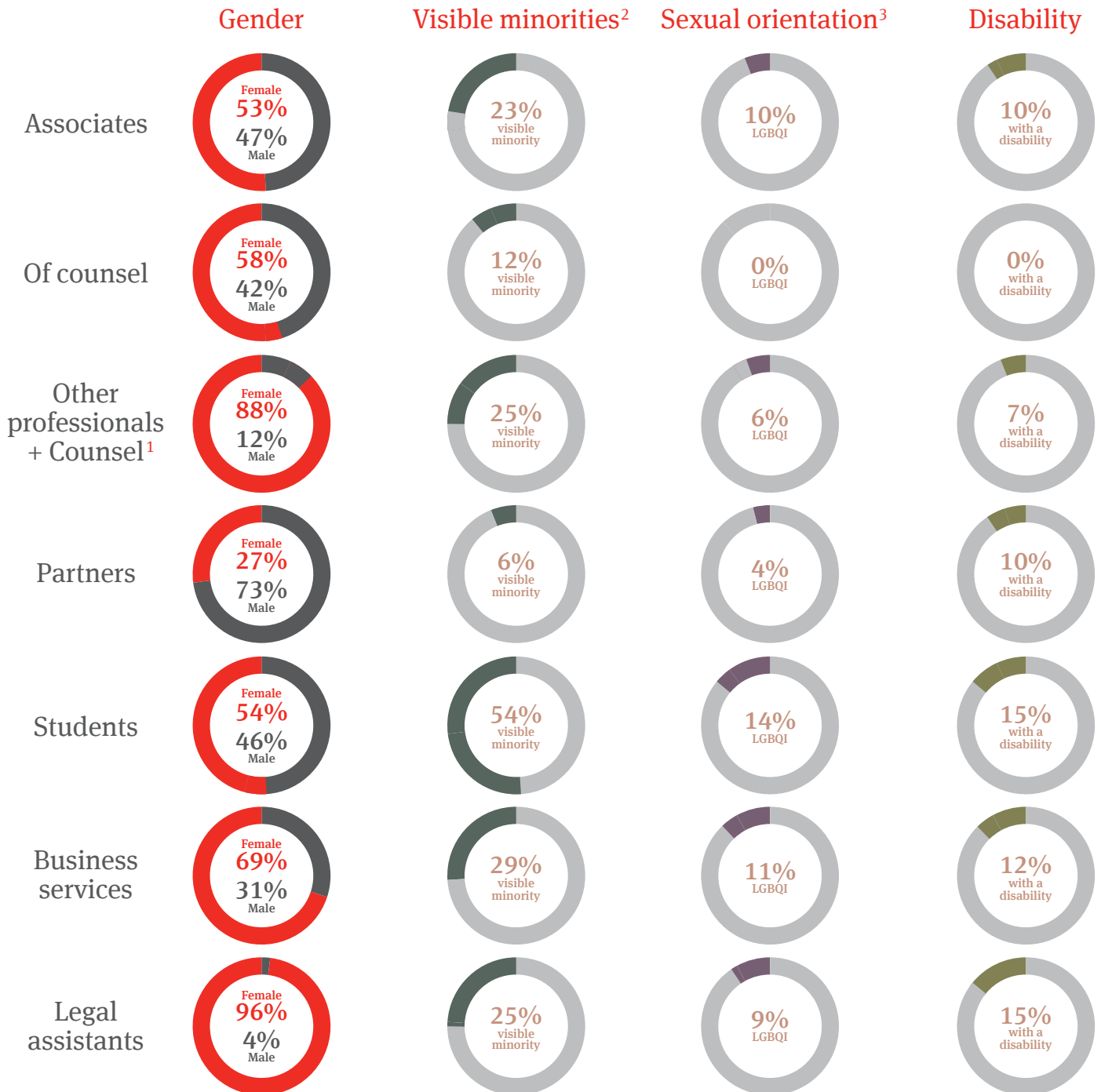
In 2016, we launched a diversity survey to learn about the backgrounds of our students. We now collect this information annually at both the on-campus and in-firm interview stages. Initially, we collected information on race and ethnicity, but we have more recently expanded the information collected to include other areas of diversity. The data collected is used to monitor our processes, identify potential for bias and adjust our practices accordingly. We also provide unconscious bias training for interviewers involved at any stage of our recruitment process.

### Diversity and inclusion survey

Norton Rose Fulbright was one of the first Canadian firms to begin conducting regular benchmarking surveys which it started doing in 2012. This exercise allows us to get a snapshot of the demographics of our partners and colleagues and measure our success in promoting the values of diversity and inclusiveness. Five years later, we again played a leadership role by being the first Canadian firm to publish its diversity survey results externally.

The information we gather is used to better understand the needs of all groups and to advance initiatives and programs that meet those needs. Follow-up diversity and inclusion surveys are conducted at regular intervals to assess our progress on these issues.

Diversity and inclusion survey 2019



\*Survey data is based on a voluntary survey conducted in 2019. The response rate was 65 per cent and these results are representative of this sample only.

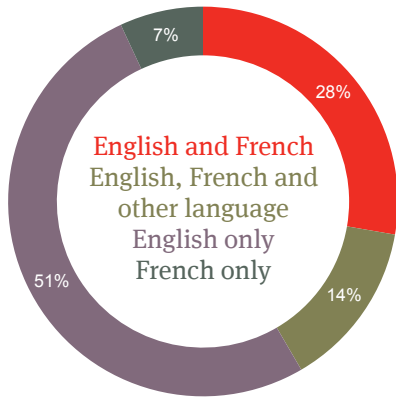
<sup>1</sup> Other professionals include law clerks, consultants and knowledge lawyers

<sup>2</sup> Increase of 4% since 2018

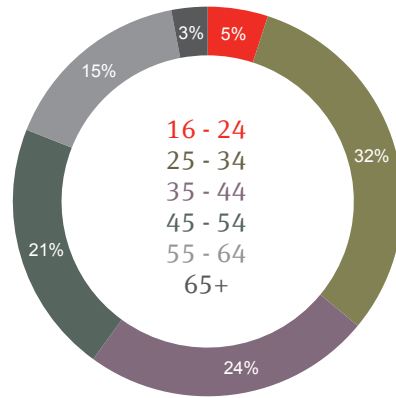
<sup>3</sup> Increase of 2% since 2018

## Diversity and inclusion survey 2019

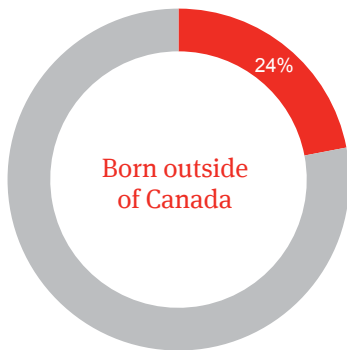
### Language



### Age



### New Canadians



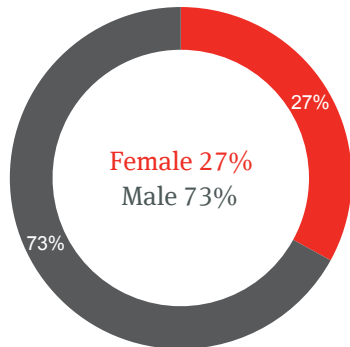
### Gender identity and expression



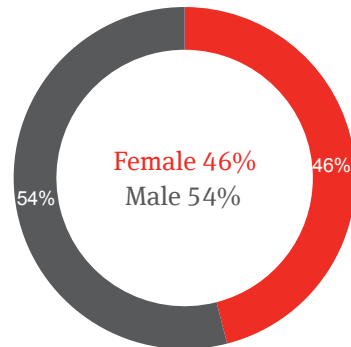
### Aboriginal or Indigenous



### Partnership committee



### Management committee





## Talking about diversity and inclusion



### Diversity and inclusion blog

Our global internal blog, Perspectives, is a way for everyone at our firm to contribute to the diversity and inclusion dialogue by offering insights, opinions and experiences, and by taking part in discussion and debate.

We welcome comments and posts from any colleague who wishes to share information or thoughts and reflections, through text, photographs or videos. Since launching Perspectives, we have published nearly 200 blog posts from our people sharing their own experiences on a number of topics related to diversity and inclusion.

### Celebrating our cultures and religions

Our colleagues come from many different cultural and religious backgrounds. We believe in learning about and showing solidarity through various initiatives. We highlight important holidays and observances (such as the Jewish Holy Days, Eid, Ramadan and Diwali) on our video screens. We have also made a guide to Ramadan available to raise awareness and support colleagues and clients. In past years, our Vancouver office hosted a Lunar New Year party and in Toronto, colleagues were invited to sample traditional sweets as part of a Diwali event.

## From our diversity and inclusion blog

Issue 148

### It's time we focus more on inclusion by Ahmed Labib

When he is not too busy trying to convince his cat to love him, Ahmed loves writing about his feelings while sipping one too many Americanos, capturing the day-to-day Toronto in photos, and perfecting his dance moves to all of Queen's songs.



#### It's time we focus more on inclusion

Diversity and inclusion are increasingly becoming a priority for organizations. Improving diversity and inclusion in the workplace isn't just a moral obligation, it also translates to better business, both in terms of financial performance, as well as better innovation and consumer understanding.

However, a recent Deloitte study warns against conflating diversity with inclusion. Diversity can be viewed as having a variety of people and ideas within an organization. Inclusion, on the other hand, is about creating an environment in which all individuals feel valued and connected, regardless of their differences.

The study argues that some diversity and inclusion initiatives are ineffective because they wrongly rely on diversity solutions to address inclusion problems, and measure progress on inclusion using diversity metrics. Such metrics are focused on counting and comparing differences based on demographic traits or socio-cultural identities. In other words, firms are focused on having differences, as opposed to uniting them. Doing so leads to members being put into groups, as opposed to being focused on as individuals.

The advantages noted earlier cannot be achieved merely by improving diversity. In fact, highly inclusive (as opposed to just diverse) companies are more likely to: be prepared for adversities, have better financial performance, be more equipped to compete on an international level, have higher employment growth, and encourage entrepreneurialism.

How then, can a firm ensure that its diversity and inclusion program effectively enhances inclusion? The Deloitte study suggests five concrete actions:

#### 1) Set expectations for specific, inclusive leadership behaviours

Leaders should be encouraged to make clear that inclusion is a top priority for their firm. This should be exemplified through their own inclusive behaviours, both inside and outside their work. Accountability for such behaviour should be rewarded both at the moment, and through compensation and performance reviews.

#### 2) Protect against diversity backlash

Organizations must be prepared for resistance that may arise from any systemic inclusion-oriented changes, and positive conflict and dialog should always be encouraged. Also, members from historically underrepresented groups should be prepared for leadership roles through mentoring and support that is tailored to their individual needs. Similarly, senior leaders from traditionally underrepresented groups should be encouraged to actively and visibly mentor people from the same groups as them without fear of backlash.

#### 3) Empower the younger generations

Given that millennials will become the dominant group in Canada's workforce by 2025, firms should aspire to have a deeper understanding of their millennial and Gen Z members (including their goals and strengths), and be dedicated towards supporting their individual life circumstances. This includes providing their

members with more flexibility on how they work, as well as reimagining what diversity and inclusion means based on their inputs.

#### 4) Don't leave future inclusion issues for future generations to solve

To achieve this, organizations should be critical of their current talent development processes. This means that people should be hired based on how they will meaningfully contribute to the workplace, as opposed to relying on an ill-defined cultural fit. It also means utilizing available technology to eliminate bias from all stages of the organization's hiring process.

#### 5) Own inclusion inside and outside the office

All members of the firm (not just leaders) should be encouraged to publicly champion inclusion on a constant basis. This includes standing up for inclusion to clients and suppliers when they demonstrate exclusive or biased behaviour. It also includes collaborating with other organizations to share tips, experiences, and lessons.

As the above shows, creating a truly inclusive workplace requires an individualized understanding of the needs of the organization's members. It also requires significant courage and dedication. However, the positive implications of doing so, both on the organization and on society, are clearly worth the effort, and far outweigh the consequences of not focusing on inclusion.





## Global Inclusion Week

Global Inclusion Weeks are held globally across all of our offices every year to celebrate the various perspectives, experiences and cultures that our people bring to Norton Rose Fulbright. Recent events and activities in our offices have included an inclusion art competition in Calgary, a privilege walk in Ottawa, and a national event on unlocking the power of authenticity with a prominent and well-respected author and speaker.

## Employee resource groups

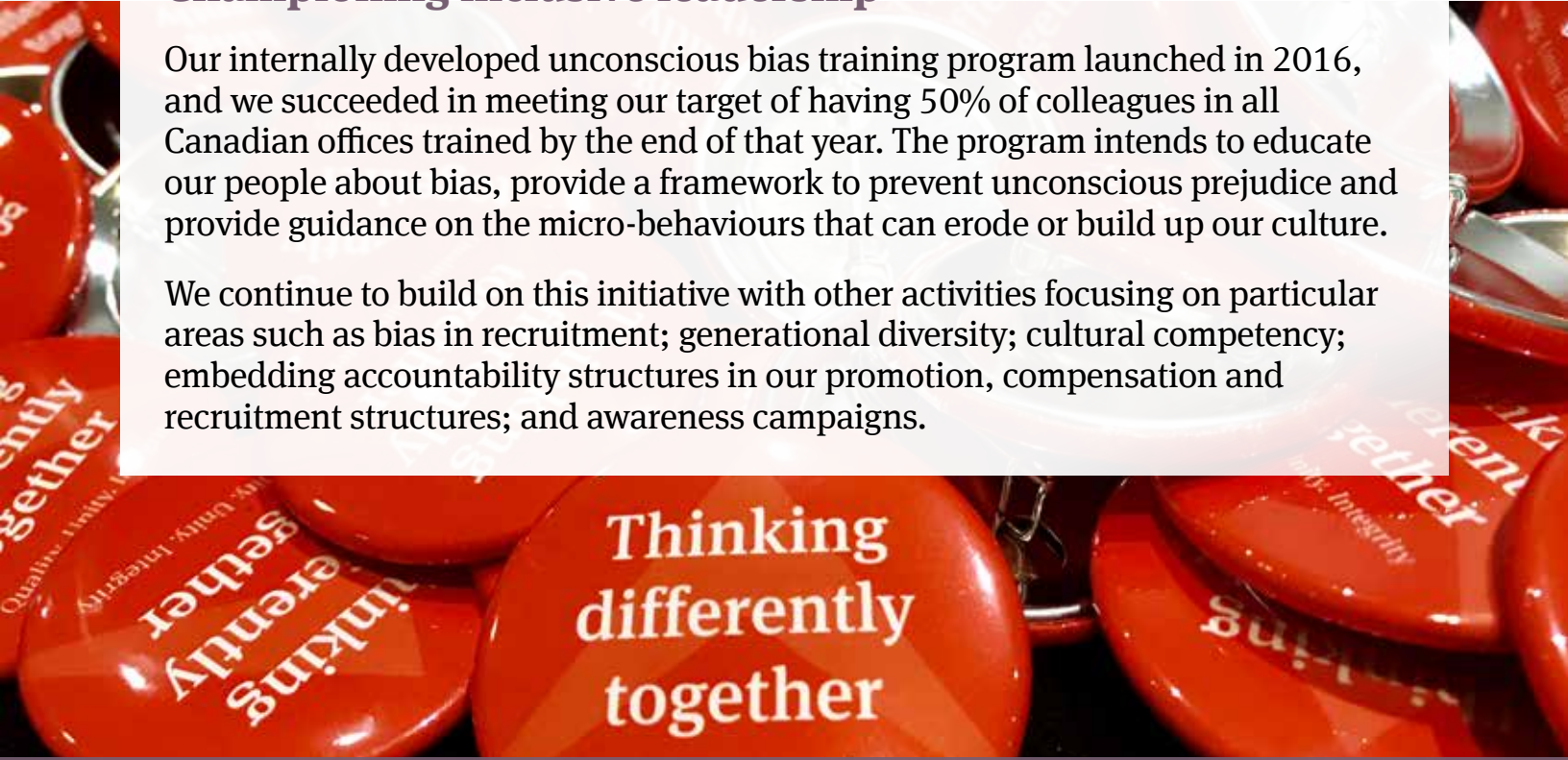
Employee resource groups are available in most of our offices to help foster a culture that allows our people to be themselves at work. They host a range of inclusive events and activities designed to raise awareness, create role modeling and networking opportunities – all to promote an open culture that values differences. Groups across Canada include:

- **Pride** – aims to create a more inclusive and accepting environment for LGBTQ individuals
- **WiN** – supports the personal and professional development of women
- **Indigenous Relations** – advances our commitment towards reconciliation through awareness, understanding, respect and inclusiveness
- **Novel** – increases awareness of social issues and perspectives surrounding diversity and inclusion through literature and dialogue

## Championing inclusive leadership

Our internally developed unconscious bias training program launched in 2016, and we succeeded in meeting our target of having 50% of colleagues in all Canadian offices trained by the end of that year. The program intends to educate our people about bias, provide a framework to prevent unconscious prejudice and provide guidance on the micro-behaviours that can erode or build up our culture.

We continue to build on this initiative with other activities focusing on particular areas such as bias in recruitment; generational diversity; cultural competency; embedding accountability structures in our promotion, compensation and recruitment structures; and awareness campaigns.



### Case studies

We partnered with Catalyst to promote the #Biascorrect hashtag on international Women's Day.



Our Inclusive Meetings e-Learning promotes meeting practices that encourage contributions from everyone.



## Recruiting and keeping diverse talent



### Gender parity

In November 2014, we set a global series of targets for our leadership and partnership. Our gender targets are an important part of our overall approach to achieving greater gender diversity. We have already partially reached this target by attaining parity on our management committee.

Data from July 2019 shows that women make up 27% of our partnership nationally, an increase of 4% from 2010.

Targets on their own would be insufficient. Our supporting gender programs are instrumental to increasing diversity. They address unconscious bias in decision-making processes; offer targeted assistance to women, including through maternity transition coaching; and strengthen professional networking through our women's networks.

Our women's network organizes a broad range of activities, including a coaching program in Montreal for female associates and a panel discussion on demystifying sponsorship in Calgary, and we support L'effet A, a Quebec-based leadership program for women.

### Supporting women to partnership

As part of our drive to pursue and retain the best talent, we run a modular development program for high-performing female lawyers. Our Career Strategies Program (CSP) has been tailored to the needs of our culture, systems and processes. The program is staffed with experts in women's development and has been designed and delivered by women, for women. Our CSP was the first of its kind in the legal sector, intended to develop women's confidence in aiming for partnership, and to help managers see the important role they have in empowering them to reach that goal. Launched in May 2010, the CSP runs annually.



## Disability

We are committed to becoming a more disability-confident firm and our “Let’s get the best from each other” campaign encourages our people to break down communication barriers, challenge assumptions, understand disability and be compassionate.

## LGBTQ inclusion

In collaboration and consultation with our Pride network, our firm has launched a number of initiatives in recent years including:

- a survey to measure attitudes towards LGBTQ inclusion and obtain feedback that will help shape the network’s strategy and future activities;
- a campaign engaging straight allies;
- a global Pride rainbow shoelace photo campaign to promote LGBTQ inclusion.

We also launched a gold standard Trans Inclusion Policy and resources in 2018 to provide information for people who are transitioning and their colleagues. All of our offices now have gender-neutral washroom options.

## Visible minorities

Attracting, retaining and ensuring that visible minorities thrive in our firm is an essential part of our strategy. We partner with external organizations and student organizations to support and attract visible minorities to the firm and increase the diversity in our pipeline to partnership.

We have partnered with organizations such as the Federation of Asian Canadian Lawyers (FACL), the Black Law Students’ Association (BLSA) and South Asian Bar Association (SABA) to attend and host events supporting visible minorities. In Toronto, we have provided student interview practice surgeries to members of diverse student associations and we host an annual event to promote recruitment and inclusion of diverse students.



# Allies

## The five Pride Ally Commitments

### I sign up!

### Be Visible

Carl S...  
 Andrea...  
 Mala Mansour  
 Kareem...  
 Shan Arora  
 Sugame Wood  
 Joseph Palmini  
 Nicky...  
 Labib...  
 Emily Weston  
 Lynne...  
 Fahad...  
 Lynn...  
 Joff...  
 Anne...  
 Julia...  
 Michelle...  
 Liora...  
 Sam...  
 Michelle...  
 Sam Keen  
 Michelle...  
 Adam...





## Showing what diversity means to us

Norton Rose Fulbright is a leader in diversity and inclusion in Canada and the legal sector. Recognized as one of Canada's Best Diversity Employers in both 2018 and 2019, our firm has also been awarded the Platinum Gender Parity Certification by Women in Governance.



### Clients and diversity and inclusion

Clients increasingly require regular reporting on the makeup of the teams of lawyers working on their files; request collaboration on diversity and inclusion initiatives; and favour firms based on their inclusive culture.

We collaborate with a range of our clients on diversity by providing unconscious bias training, sharing information about challenges and successes and collaborating on joint events through our employee resource groups.

In 2018, we joined forces with a client's LGBTQ network and presented a joint workshop at the "Pride at Work" conference on how to apply change management theories to the work of LGBTQ employee resource groups to transform organizational culture.

We collaborated with another key global client by delivering a keynote on unconscious bias to members of its women's network in Montreal and by organizing a series of brainstorming sessions to come up with ways to raise awareness of diversity in its legal teams across North America. We also hosted the chair of its women's network for a panel discussion in our Toronto office.





### Supporting girls in our community

- As part of 2018’s International Day of the Girl, we invited a youth ambassador for Plan International Canada to step into our Canadian chair Walied Soliman’s shoes for a day. Plan International Canada is focused on global child rights and gender equality. It pairs girl ambassadors with leaders in various sectors, such as politics, business, law, and media, to demonstrate the power and potential of female leadership and the need for girls to be visible in society.
- We have a longstanding relationship with Famous5 in Ottawa and sponsor the foundation’s Mentoring Program for young women. It helps young women improve their confidence and public speaking skills. As part of our support, we also provide presentation skills training to the program participants.
- Partnering with G(irls)20, we hosted the Girls on Boards Forum in our Toronto office in October 2018. We brought together 40 young women from across Canada, each selected to take part in the governance board-matching program because of her personal commitment to community and leadership skills. The participants heard from inspiring leaders, learned about everything from governance to negotiating and had the opportunity to network with female executives from the corporate and social profit sectors.

## From our diversity and inclusion blog



### Issue 151

## The day I became Chair of Norton Rose Fulbright Canada by Maitland Shaheen

For one day Maitland stepped up into the role of Chair for our firm in Canada. She is a youth ambassador for Plan International Canada, a senior at the University of Ottawa studying a Joint Honours BA in Communication and Political Science and is interested in the intersecting aspects of each: the pursuit of justice, human rights, and fair and equal society. Maitland is passionate about human rights, women's empowerment, and girls' access to education.

Find out how Maitland spent her day at the firm as Chair for the day.

My name is Maitland Shaheen. I'm twenty years old and a student at the University of Ottawa. On Tuesday, September 11, through Plan International Canada and Norton Rose Fulbright Canada, I was given the opportunity to step into some of the biggest shoes in Canadian corporate law: the role of Chair of Norton Rose Fulbright Canada.

For the past three years, global child rights and gender equality organization, Plan International Canada, has been celebrating International Day of the Girl by teaming up girl ambassadors with Canadian leaders in various industries such as politics, business, law, and media to demonstrate the power and potential of female leadership and the need for girls to be visible in society.

They have supported girls in having first-hand experiences on Parliament Hill, Toronto's Bay Street, at the United Nations, and many more spaces where girls' voices deserve to be heard. This is part of Plan International's global mass initiative, with girls from across the world making meaningful contributions to business decisions, leading meetings, hosting broadcast television or radio segments and interacting with stakeholders.

This year, I was selected by Plan International Canada's Youth Advisory Council to share the role of Walied Soliman, an established lawyer and leader. The day kicked off a month of seat-shares, which will conclude on October 11, International Day of the Girl.

It was a perfect match for me, as I'm in the process of law school applications. Spending a day in one of the world's most successful law firms was an experience I was incredibly excited for.

It was a busy day, from sitting in on client meetings, chairing the partnership committee, and lunching some of the firm's senior women. Walied even set up a meeting with me and the newly appointed Attorney General of Ontario, Caroline Mulroney.

It was so valuable to hear stories from women and men from different Norton Rose Fulbright's offices about their experiences working in law. As a young student and aspiring lawyer, mentorship is increasingly important to keep me motivated for my future.

I am so grateful for Norton Rose Fulbright's generosity for hosting me, and for their leadership in advancing gender equality in the field of law. It is incredibly important that global leaders take initiative to promote and support women in the workforce, and I'm thankful that Walied and his partners are taking the steps to create meaningful change.

