

Senior Leader's Pledge

Mike Jennings
AA Thornton



At AA Thornton we strive to be an inclusive organisation in which every employee can bring their whole self to work. A number of AA Thornton Partners have now decided to make personal pledges to actively promote and strive for equality, diversity and inclusion within AA Thornton and within the IP communities that we contribute to. The commitments include the below which have been developed within the IP Inclusive Senior Leaders' Diversity Think Tank.

I wish to make a personal pledge to promote diversity & inclusion within AA Thornton, and within the IP communities that we contribute to. By acting on this pledge, I hope to increase my contribution to the excellent work already being done by several of my colleagues. They are setting me a great example.

My pledge is set out below.

I, Mike Jennings,
commit to:

1. Providing visible and proactive leadership to improve D&I in my organisation

2. Taking D&I seriously at the highest level

I will demonstrate this commitment by:

- Being personally involved in, and contributing to, D&I projects and events
- Publicising my personal commitment in internal and external communications, and putting my name to a public statement of AA Thornton's commitment to and policies relating to D&I
- Acting as an ally to, and champion for, colleagues from under-represented groups
- Acting as, or working with, an appointed D&I champion at partnership level
- Including D&I as an agenda item at partnership meetings
- Encouraging my senior colleagues to provide visible and proactive leadership on D&I issues

- 3. Embedding and valuing D&I throughout the organisational culture**
 - Building a culture in which the whole of AA Thornton is involved in the quest for D&I
 - Recognising D&I-related achievements in performance evaluation and professional development systems
 - Encouraging all staff to:
 - seek out and value diversity in their teams
 - champion under-represented groups, in particular when allocating work within teams
 - Encouraging and allowing time for staff to work on D&I-related projects and training (including outreach and wellbeing initiatives)
- 4. Building trust and safe spaces throughout the organisation**
 - Maintaining AA Thornton's zero-tolerance policy on discrimination and harassment
 - Highlighting D&I issues whenever I identify them, and involving AA Thornton's Diversity & Inclusion Committee to advise me and to keep improving our D&I strategies and policies.
 - Encouraging all staff, at all levels, to bring their whole selves to work and speak openly about their identities
 - Encouraging discussion of D&I issues within AA Thornton's existing mentoring and buddy schemes
- 5. Educating myself and my colleagues about D&I issues**
 - Introducing a reverse mentoring scheme for senior staff to learn from more junior professionals and professionals in under-represented groups; participating in that scheme myself
 - Encouraging allyship, privilege awareness and unconscious bias training for staff at all levels (already provided to managers).
- 6. Sharing my privileges**
 - Supporting my colleagues who are already involved in outreach schemes to improve access to the IP professions (e.g. continuing to support AA Thornton's work with the Sutton Trust and AA Thornton's involvement in IP Inclusive's Careers in Ideas outreach initiative).
 - Encouraging staff in all roles and at all levels to get involved, and leading by example by increasing my involvement
- 7. Insisting on equity**
 - Checking that every person within AA Thornton is treated fairly and that we have fair, diversity-enhancing recruitment and promotion procedures
 - Regularly reviewing these procedures with HR colleagues and AA Thornton's Diversity & Inclusion Committee to evaluate their impact on D&I levels in the organisation and if necessary improve them

8. Working closely with HR and management colleagues to achieve this

- Involving HR personnel in partnership-level decision making on D&I-impacting issues
- Supporting colleagues who wish to access D&I-related training and professional development and valuing the expertise they acquire from it
- Giving them the mandate to effect D&I-related changes in the organisation, and providing visible and proactive support for their work