

HERBERT SMITH FREEHILLS RANKS IN TOP 10 UK FIRMS FOR SOCIAL MOBILITY

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Firm news

Herbert Smith Freehills has today been ranked 7th in the Social Mobility Employer Index 2020, rising from 19th place last year.

Created by the Social Mobility Foundation in 2017 the Index ranks UK employers on the action they take to ensure they are open to and progressing talent from all backgrounds. It highlights the employers who are doing the most to change how they find, recruit, and advance talented employees from different social class backgrounds.

Herbert Smith Freehills was assessed across key areas such as how the firm works with young people and what routes into the company are offered. Assessment also involved analysis of how talent is attracted, recruitment and selection processes, data collection, progression, experienced hires, and advocacy.

By achieving 7th place, the firm has maintained its position as a top employer for social mobility every year since the Index was launched in 2017. This year, Herbert Smith Freehills was recognised for its broad range of social mobility programmes, with highlights including:

- supporting over 400 young people through our work experience and employability programmes across London and Belfast. These include the PRIME programme, the Networked Scholarship Scheme and partnerships with the Social Mobility Business Partnership, Princes Trust and Queens University Belfast
- providing access and opportunities for diverse talent through programmes such as Rare Discuss, Aspiring Solicitors and a number of open days to support students from low-income backgrounds

- participation in collaborative research projects such as The Bridge Group's 'socio-economic background and progression to partner' report.

Alison Brown, executive partner at Herbert Smith Freehills, says: *"We are delighted to have been recognised for our work in trying to facilitate and improve social mobility in the UK. Climbing the rankings, as we have done this year, is a fantastic acknowledgement of the progress made to date – but there remains more to do. Social mobility continues to be a strategic priority for us and we look forward to continuing to work with partners and clients to make a real difference."*

This year saw 119 employers from 17 sectors, who collectively employ almost one million people in the UK, answer around 100 questions. In addition to the employers' responses, over 14,000 employees also took part in a voluntary employee survey.

Sarah Atkinson, chief executive of the Social Mobility Foundation, said: *"I am delighted that Herbert Smith Freehills committed to entering the Index this year despite the challenges they have faced in the wake of the pandemic. Now more than ever, we need to see business play their part in the levelling up agenda."*

The Rt. Hon. Alan Milburn, chair of the Social Mobility Foundation, added: *"As the Covid-19 crisis continues and the UK descends into a sharp recession, more will need to be done to avoid a job catastrophe, for young people particularly. Already 60% of the jobs that have been lost since the pandemic began have been among 18-24 year olds. I urge those sectors of our economy that are not represented in this year's Index to participate in 2021 and commit to joining the ranks of those employers who are already making such a difference to young people's life chances."*

KEY CONTACTS

If you have any questions, or would like to know how this might affect your business, phone, or email these key contacts.



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