

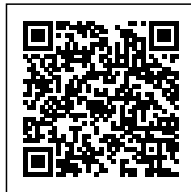
DLA PIPER COMMITS TO TALENT INCLUSION

Posted on 11/07/2022



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by **ilaria iaquinta**

Diversity and inclusion is an increasingly important issue for law firms. For this reason, firms are investing in recent years on the implementation of programmes that guarantee inclusion and are joining projects and initiatives carried out by third parties. This is the case of DLA Piper, which at the end of May signed the "Código de Buenas Prácticas para la Gestión del Talento y la Mejora de la Competitividad en la Empresa" (Code of Best Practices for Talent Management and Improving Competitiveness in the Company, *editor's note*) of the Asociación Española de Ejecutiv@s y Consejer@s (EJE&CON, the Spanish Association of Executives and Consultants, *editor's note*), thus joining the more than 150 organisations from all sectors that have already adopted its principles and recommendations. For the signatories, this means a public commitment to promote equal opportunities in access to positions of greater responsibility.

The law firm has also signed the "Fundamentos de Igualdad" (Foundations of Equality) manifesto, an initiative that has been backed by the General Council of Spanish Lawyers, the Bar Associations of Madrid and Barcelona, Esade Women Initiative and the Inkietos association, and which has been adopted over the last year by thirty leading national and international law firms with offices in Spain.

Iberian Lawyer discussed this initiative and all of DLA Piper's efforts in the diversity and inclusion field with **Pilar Menor**, Global co-chair of DLA Piper's Employment practice and senior partner in the Madrid office and the law firm's ambassador for talent inclusion initiatives.

Why did DLA Piper join this project?

We have signed up to this manifesto for equal opportunities in the legal sector because its commitments are also part of our diversity and inclusion policies as a law firm. The manifesto is based on the premise that losing the value of diversity and plurality of perspectives creates a loss of talent and a drain on resources within organisations. We share this view, we believe that as a major business law firm, we need to be committed to initiatives that promote the advancement of equality.

Why is it so important for DLA Piper to engage on these issues?

Because they are part of our commitment to social justice and sustainability. Anything related to diversity and inclusion is also a very important part of our social pillar of sustainability. In general, we are not only committed to delivering value to our clients and lawyers, but also to the community in which we operate.

What commitments did the law firm undertake with the manifesto?

We are committed to fostering transparency and promoting mentoring programmes for women. At DLA Piper we already have a mentoring programme and we also have a sponsorship programme, called "Elevate", which I run together with the international head of corporate. The sponsorship programme is much more advanced as it pairs senior partners with protégés to help develop their careers. We subscribe to the commitment to promote the participation of women in the partnership. It is also part of the manifesto's commitments to promote, communicate and share experiences and best practices within the legal sector to achieve gender equality.

Which other projects does DLA Piper carry out to promote equality within the law firm?

At DLA Piper, these issues are embedded in the firm's senior management commitments and strategy. We have a Diversity and Inclusion Committee, the Diversity Council, chaired by our CEO, which leads and drives all the firm's diversity and inclusion policies and we have working groups in Asia Pacific and EMEA. We also have employee networks that focus on a variety of topics, for example: social mobility, that is the inclusion of traditionally disadvantaged groups in the legal profession; LGBTQ+; carers who have family responsibilities and gender balance. We address the various angles of diversity so that everyone has the same opportunity to work and we can all bring our personalities to the table without adapting to the mainstream model. We are also committed to the wellbeing and health of professionals.

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