

**AUTISM FORWARD'S
FIRST RECRUITMENT
ROUNDTABLE AT
HERBERT SMITH
FREEHILLS**

**OVER 300 SCHOOLS
ACROSS THE COUNTRY
PARTICIPATE IN
NEURODIVERSITY
CELEBRATION WEEK**

**EMPLOYMENT
SUCCESS FOR
AUTISM FORWARD
GRANT HOLDERS
ACROSS THE UK**

**"CAFE TRACK HACK"
SPONSORED CYCLE
FROM LONDON TO
NORTHAMPTON ON
30 JUNE 2019**

AUTISM FORWARD NEWS

Recruitment Roundtable at Herbert Smith Freehills

Herbert Smith Freehills hosted Autism Forward's first recruitment roundtable event on 1 May 2019. The event brought together senior executives, HR teams and autistic employees and professionals from over 20 different employers including law firms, banks and other organisations to discuss how employers can improve recruitment processes to ensure more autistic people can enter the workforce. The discussion was led by David Perkins of AS Mentoring and focused on changes that can be made to job adverts and the interview process to benefit autistic candidates. The full notes from the discussion can be found [here](#).



Employers are increasingly recognising the value of a more neurodiverse and inclusive workforce. By holding regular roundtable events which bring together employers, autistic people and professionals, we hope to develop a network of people who are keen to drive change in this area.

Our next roundtable discussion will be held on 3 July 2019 at Latham & Watkins. For details please email jane@autismforward.org.uk

Employment success for our beneficiaries

We have now awarded over 60 grants to autistic job seekers around the country to enable them to access support to find employment and fulfil their potential. Of those who have had at least 6 months' mentoring, 80% are now in employment (38% paid employment and 42% voluntary employment), 90% have made job applications and attended interviews and 65% have joined new clubs or groups. We are very grateful to our donors who have enabled so many autistic people to access this life-changing specialist support.

Details of our current mentor partners and our grant application procedures can be found on our website www.autismforward.org.uk

**AUTISM
FORWARD**

APPGA on Autism & Employment

Employment was the focus of the latest All Party Parliamentary Group on Autism held on 16 May 2019 led by Thangham Debbonaire MP which heard evidence from activists including Janine Booth (author of [Autism Equality in the Workplace](#)) and Jonathan Andrews of Reed Smith and organisations including Autistica, the National Autistic Society and Care Trade.

Autistica have also recently released an [Action Briefing on Employment](#) which summarises the most important scientific findings about employment in the autistic community, developed in collaboration with leading researchers and autistic people, including our mentor partner in Hull, Carl Cameron. The Government, public research funders and public, private and third sector employers are urged to act on this information to reduce the autism employment gap, our ultimate goal at Autism Forward.

Neurodiversity Celebration Week

Over 300 schools participated in the first ever [Neurodiversity Celebration Week](#) this month, the brainchild of 16 year old Siena Castellon, whose aim is to promote the value of neurodiversity and create a more positive perception of what it means to be neurodiverse. Autism Forward were delighted to take part in Capco's Neurodiversity Celebration Event which brought together neurodiverse role models including Helen Needham of Capco and founder of [Me.Decoded](#), Amy Walker of Group M and Lucy Hobbs, founder of [The Future is ND](#).

Cafe Track Hack

In June 2016 two teams of intrepid cyclists from Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer raced from Oxford to Manchester to raise funds for the [Lodge Shop](#) in East Finchley which provides work experience for autistic pupils from Oak Lodge school. Three years on, the Lodge Shop is thriving and the teams are reassembling for the [Cafe Track Hack](#) to Northampton, this time joined by a new team of Autism Forward supporters from across the City.

The ride will take place on 30 June 2019, starting at the Lodge Shop and ending at [Cafe Track](#), a cafe run by our mentor partner in Northampton which also provides work opportunities for autistic people. The cyclists will all be raising money for Autism Forward to enable autistic adults to access employment.

Please do support them here:
[Cafe Track Hack Fundraising](#).



Thanks to all those who sponsored us on our 106km Ultra Challenge around the Isle of Wight on the blustery May bank holiday weekend.

We raised around £3500 for Autism Forward and are already looking forward to next year's challenge!

Jane & Gemma