

AUTISM FORWARD PARTNERS WITH CREDIT SUISSE FOR WOMEN IN DATA UK CONFERENCE

AUTISM FORWARD FOURTH RECRUITMENT ROUNDTABLE AT RIVER & MERCANTILE

UNIVERSAL MUSIC LAUNCHES CREATIVE DIFFERENCES HANDBOOK TO INSPIRE CHANGE

NATIONAL AUTISTIC SOCIETY LAUNCHES AUTISM AT WORK SUMMIT 4 JUNE 2020

AUTISM FORWARD NEWS

Women in Data UK Conference

We were thrilled to have the opportunity to partner with Credit Suisse for the Women in Data UK Conference which was attended by over 1000 women from across the data industry.

Pioneering businesswoman and philanthropist, Dame Stephanie Shirley, was one many inspiring role models speaking at the event and mentioned the work Autism Forward does to improve employment opportunities for autistic people in her conference address.



We highlighted the internship programme Credit Suisse launched last year for autistic candidates in their UK Strategic Change group, discussing the adjustments they made to their recruitment processes and in the workplace to widen the pool of talent available and develop an inclusive environment.

Our mentor partner in London, AS Mentoring, worked with Credit Suisse to implement the programme which is being expanded to other departments this year, improving opportunities for autistic candidates across the firm.

Employment Success for Autism Forward Beneficiaries

We have now awarded over 120 grants for mentoring support and we continue to see excellent employment outcomes for our grant holders across the country. Over 85% of our first year grant holders are now in paid (55%) or voluntary (30%) employment and over 67% of our new grant holders (who have only had between 3 and 9 months mentoring) have already secured paid (42%) or voluntary (25%) employment.

Recent positions secured by our grant holders include roles at the University of Bedford, Sheffield University, the Highways Agency, Rail Gourmet, the Eden Project, Brighton Council, Nottingham Council, the Civil Service, Herbert Smith Freehills and Credit Suisse.



Creative Differences Handbook

A recent [BBC article](#) examines initiatives employers are taking to nurture neurodiverse talent and highlights the [Creative Differences Handbook](#) developed by Universal Music's CEO, David Joseph and his HR team, which contains recommendations for change in ten areas including recruitment, mentorship and career progression which is a useful guide for HR and D&I teams across all sectors.

Impact Stories

We have updated the [Impact Stories](#) on our website to include recent feedback from Autism Forward beneficiaries and mentors which illustrate the importance of the support we are able to fund thanks to the amazing generosity of our donors.

Karen-Anne Manghan, our mentor partner in Brighton, who has been providing specialist mentoring support to autistic people since 2002, comments:

“Autism Forward is offering something unique, it is providing support at a time when autistic graduates are at their most vulnerable, facing another huge transition and often unsure of the next steps. It is indeed a time when autistic people feel that they are ‘falling off a cliff’ in terms of support, much of the progress we have made at university in terms of being independent can then be undone very quickly, especially if we have no purpose and ‘back peddle’ into a place of anxiety and reliance.

As an autistic person, supporting autistic people, I am very proud to be involved with Autism Forward and have the opportunity to support autistic graduates through an often tricky time and be part of their journey towards success.”

Recruitment Roundtable at River and Mercantile

River and Mercantile hosted Autism Forward’s fourth recruitment roundtable on 15 January 2020 led by Ian Iceton, Group HR Director at River & Mercantile (who is currently also undertaking a Doctorate (DBA) in Autism and Employment) and Dr Brett Heasman, who leads the DARE project relating to employment and neurodiversity, which is a collaboration between Autistica and the Centre for Research in Autism and Education (CRAE).

The presentation focused on practical insights from their research (including survey responses from over 500 autistic people) and recommendations to help employers improve their recruitment and retention of autistic people. Full notes from the discussion can be found on the [Employer page](#) of our website.

Please email jane@autismforward.org.uk for details of future events or if you would like to host a roundtable at your organisation.

AUTISM at WORK

The National Autistic Society are holding their first ever Autism at Work Summit on 4 June 2020 at the British Film Institute in London.

This will be a unique opportunity to hear about leading initiatives from UK and international employers who are benefiting from the autistic talent pool.

Speakers include Helen Needham, Daniel Aherne and Ian Iceton, all supporters of Autism Forward who have helped us improve awareness among employers of the strengths autistic people bring to the workplace.



Who should attend?

- D&I professionals
- HR and recruiters
- Business and industry leaders
- SMEs & large corporates
- Line managers

Tickets available now:

<https://bit.ly/2DMAwQ>

