SAGE Publishing and DEI: Where We Stand

A first annual report on diversity, equity, and inclusion in SAGE's US/UK workforce and its publishing program

> **"** Our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion at SAGE Publishing continues to be a fundamental tenet of our company in this decade. ... In 2020, I asked all of you to hold me accountable, and I would hold all of you accountable as well, and to judge us not by incremental change in any given year but judge us as an organization by our true progress in two years, five years, and 10 years from now.

That message from SAGE Publishing CEO Blaise Simqu reflects SAGE's determination to address diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) and acknowledgment that we have work to do to create positive change. This report is SAGE's first public accounting of our efforts, our shortcomings, and our successes from our offices based in the United States and the United Kingdom. We acknowledge the report as a first step, not our entire journey; we are continuing to find ways to better assess, quantify, and understand the impact of our publishing and will share that in subsequent reports.

Our workforce

While the social and behavioral sciences remind us that diversity encompasses every aspect of humanity – geography, class, background, age, family, ideology, religiosity, and more – we will focus on three dimensions of diversity – race/ethnicity, gender, and sexuality – to examine how well SAGE Publishing measures up in our workforce.
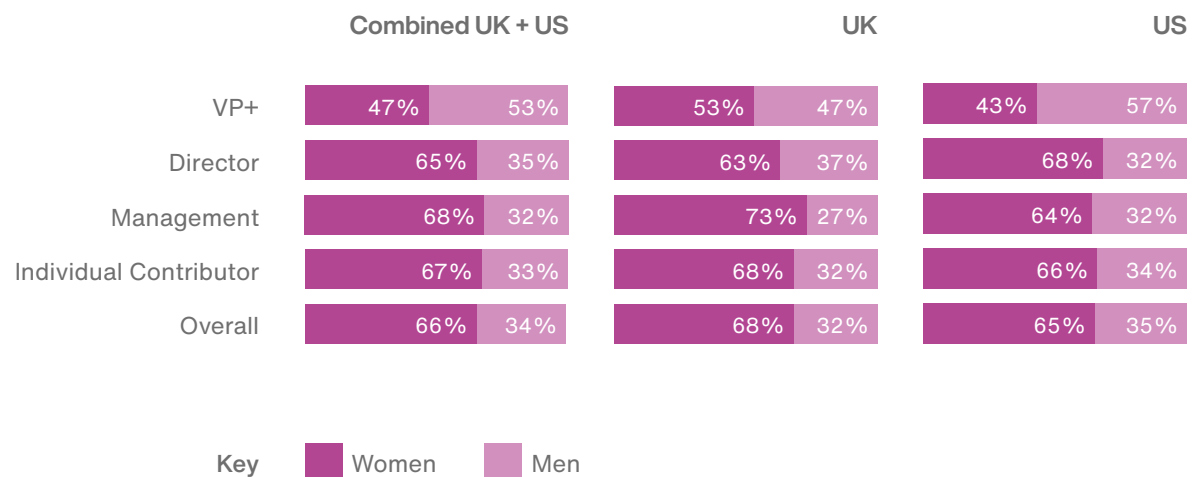
Gender

Publishing is a female-heavy industry and SAGE reflects this: two thirds of our workforce is female, as is a majority of our leadership. SAGE's goal is to have the top quarter of our workforce, based on pay, reflect our full staff's gender distribution.

Some 42 percent of our current board members are female, up from 33 percent in 2018. By comparison, the current average for Fortune 500 companies is 26.5 percent, and among FTSE 100 companies it's 38 percent.

42 percent of our current board members are female, up from 33 percent in 2018

The two-thirds female-male employee distribution is not even across job levels. SAGE's Global Technology, through deliberate recruitment, has moved from 18 percent of its staff being female in 2019 to 31 percent at the end of 2021. SAGE's goal in the historically male-dominated IT field is to reach 50 percent.

Gender Representation by Level

	Combined UK + US		UK		US	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
VP+	47%	53%	53%	47%	43%	57%
Director	65%	35%	63%	37%	68%	32%
Management	68%	32%	73%	27%	64%	32%
Individual Contributor	67%	33%	68%	32%	66%	34%
Overall	66%	34%	68%	32%	65%	35%

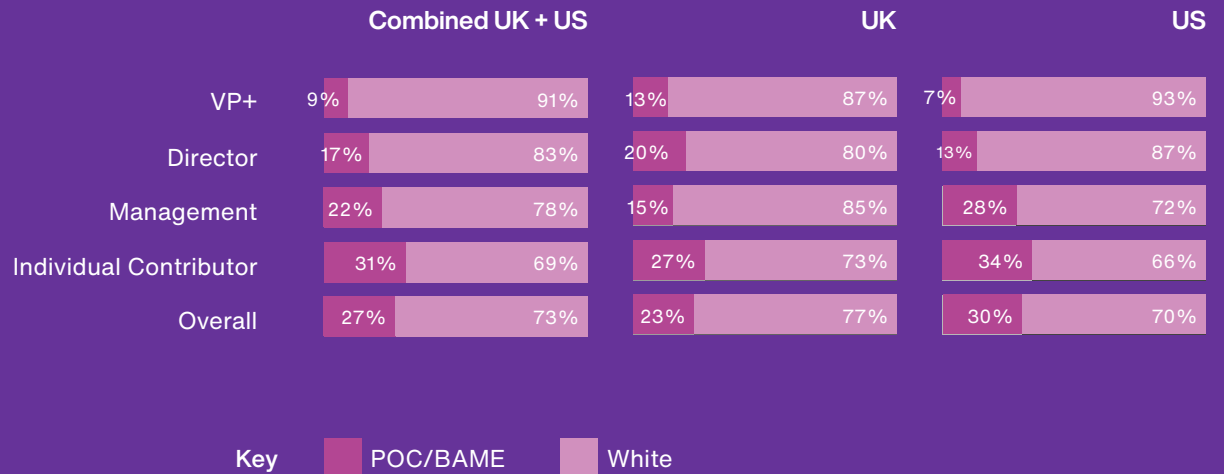**Key** ■ Women ■ Men

Race/Ethnicity

SAGE's goal is to see the percentage of Black, Indigenous and employees of color across all levels and within each department equivalent to the general population in the communities where our main US and UK offices are located.

SAGE is focused on improving the representation at the top, but the upper levels of the company, apart from the board of directors, do not currently reflect the company as a whole or the workforces in their communities. While 31 percent of the non-management workforce are people of color (27 percent in the UK and 34 percent in the US), progressively fewer people of color are found as we ascend the ranks: 22 percent at the manager level, 17 percent at the director level and 9 percent at the vice president and higher level. At 23 percent, the percentage of Black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) employees at SAGE UK exceed the figures for the UK as a whole (13 percent). In the US, the 30 percent of SAGE's workforce who are people of color equals the US publishing industry and exceeds the official figure of 22 percent of the overall US workforce.

One third of SAGE's board of directors are people of color, up from 8 percent in 2018 – double the average for Fortune 500 companies and approaching three times the 12.4 percent average for FTSE100 companies.

Parsing the POC portion of the SAGE US workforce, 9 percent of the people of color identify as Asian, 5 percent as Black, 12 percent as Hispanic or Latino, and 4 percent as multiracial. By comparison, the Census Bureau estimates that 13 percent of the total

US population is Black and 6 percent is of Asian descent; 19 percent identifies as Latino or Hispanic.

Looking to the future, both SAGE US and UK brought in new employees of color at about a 10-percentage point higher rate in 2021 compared to the current workforce composition. Looking just at the United States hiring figures, 14 percent of new hires were Black, 12 percent Asian, 9 percent multiracial and 8 percent Hispanic or Latino. Specific efforts to establish and maintain diversity within SAGE include starting a new top-level Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, anonymizing resumes, new training for managers, creating new recruitment processes, and entering mentorship and internship programs.

BAME/POC Representation by Level

	Combined UK + US		UK		US	
	POC/BAME	White	POC/BAME	White	POC/BAME	White
VP+	9%	91%	13%	87%	7%	93%
Director	17%	83%	20%	80%	13%	87%
Management	22%	78%	15%	85%	28%	72%
Individual Contributor	31%	69%	27%	73%	34%	66%
Overall	27%	73%	23%	77%	30%	70%

Key ■ POC/BAME ■ White

LGBTQIA+

We only have data on LGBTQIA+ representation for SAGE UK, where the numbers are in line with the publishing industry (SAGE 10 percent vs. industry 11 percent) and far exceed the 3 percent of the UK population that the Office of National Statistics says identifies as lesbian, gay or bisexual. Some 20 percent of hires in 2021, meanwhile, identify as LGBTQIA+.

20 percent of UK hires in 2021 identify as LGBTQIA+

Our employees' view

How do SAGE employees themselves perceive SAGE? A survey of our employees conducted in early 2021 found that nine in 10 say the company is average or better at 'making them feel like they belong,' with five in 10 saying the company does very well. Looking at responses from various internal constituencies, lower scores were given by groups that have been marginalized in society. Hence, the aggregate responses for women, non-managers, BAME and POC, disabled and LGBTQIA+ all came in lower on a 7-point scale – although at no point lower than 5 – than responses from their non-marginalized peers.

With this in mind, SAGE engaged the professional development firm Blue Ocean Brain to create accessible learning modules centered on diversity, equity, inclusion and unconscious bias for all US staff to engage with every week. In the UK we offer modules on diversity through our SAGE Learn professional development portal. And our Global Culture Collective offers events and initiatives to build a positive and inclusive environment at SAGE.

One way we hope to see all employees feel that they belong at SAGE is by creating a safe space for employees themselves to interact with their peers, develop principles and goals for the company, and to sponsor events, such as talks and films, to educate the full SAGE community, through voluntary, regional, employee-led groups.

These groups actively promote awareness of cultural issues and the experiences of otherwise marginalized groups in our workforce.

Employee Resource Groups

UK

- BAME
- Disability, Accessibility and Wellness'
- Menopause
- LGBTQIA+

US

- BIPOC
- LGBTQIA+
- Accessibility and wellness
- Gender Equity
- Jewish Network and Allies
- Mothers' Group

Women in Technology (global ERG)

Nine in 10 SAGE employees say the company is average or better at 'making them feel like they belong'

Wider impacts

Publishing is the obvious way SAGE impacts widely and externally. Globally, we publish more than 1,000 journals and 600 new books each year, alongside library products and services such as archives, data, case studies, video, and discovery tools. Our Corwin division provides books, training, and consultancy services for professional development to K-12 educators. We expect our passion to support diversity, equity, and inclusion in wider society to be evident throughout our activities.

Historically, SAGE – founded by a woman, Sara Miller McCune, in 1965 – has been at the forefront of promoting new fields such as gender studies and ethnic and Black studies and concepts such as intersectionality. We believe that justice and equity for people of all backgrounds are essential to a vibrant, healthy society, and we aim to promote those values through our publishing activities and through our partnerships with academia and the publishing industry.

Our goal is to increase the number of authors of color from the current 9 percent to 25 percent by 2025

Publishing

That said, who we're publishing as authors and contributors, and who is involved at junctions such as the editorial board and peer review, has not always been diverse or transparent. These are gaps in our data we are seeking to fill. But we have not sat still. SAGE, for example, created editor and author guidelines for identifying and remedying bias in all content. We created eight discipline advisory boards to support in-depth DEI reviewing and consultation. We offer training for our staff and our authors in areas such as voice, language, photo choice, accessibility, and on disrupting engrained social injustice.

We have set a goal of increasing the number of authors of color from the current 9 percent to 25 percent by 2025. We also aim to have half our authors be female, a mark we've reached across our US College portfolio but which lags in some specific disciplines. SAGE has started or joined efforts to increase participation by underrepresented groups, to spotlight efforts by scholars from those communities, and to measure progress. This starts with our own publishing, whether of new titles such as *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Trans Studies*, new journals like *Equity in Education & Society,* or examining legacy content both to highlight material with a DEI focus or to address problems in past published material. For example, in 2021 we released two edited volumes by Cherise Harris and Stephanie

McClure – the third edition of *Getting Real About Race* (first published in 2014) and the new volume *Getting Real About Inequality*. This year we are launching an international book series, Social Science for Social Justice, with titles focused on social justice topics and written by authors of color. Other upcoming titles will examine inequality and social activism.

Looking just at the US book publishing program, we set goals for half of new book signings to feature an author/coauthor who is a person of color, half of all revision signings to recruit and bring on an author or coauthor who is a person of color, and for 30 percent of all new book signings to feature a main theme or approach that is DEI-focused and fundamental to the work. We met all those goals in 2021.

SAGE has issued a **historical content statement** to help our community know what to do when they come across problematic content, and we've circulated a **name-change policy** to assist our journal editors and authors. We give *guidance* on ensuring we use inclusive and bias-free language, support authors whose first language isn't English or who have disabilities.

In 2022 SAGE created the **SAGE Social Justice Book Award** for SAGE authors from our UK Publishing Program; the inaugural prize went to Bennie Kara, author of *A Little Guide for Teachers: Diversity in Schools*.

Partnerships

Some of our 'wider impact' work comes from active participation in industry initiatives, such as the Committee on Publication Ethics, signing onto the Coalition for Diversity and Inclusion in Scholarly Communications (C4DISC) and active participation in the **RSC Joint Commitment** for action on inclusion and diversity in publishing. Other initiatives arose solely within SAGE, such as **sponsoring nine titles from Universal Write Publications LLC**, a Black-owned social science publishing company, or endowing an **Africology and African American Studies graduate research scholarship** at Temple University's College of Liberal Arts.

SAGE supports – through contributions or sponsoring events – groups that work to ensure people of color enter and remain in all levels of academe and the corporate world. These partners include **Leading Routes** in the UK and the **Academic Pipeline Project** and the **PhD Project** in the US.

Looking to the future

We want SAGE to increase our representation of talent from diverse backgrounds at all levels of our business, giving us a publishing program in which people from all backgrounds contribute to and benefit from teaching and research resources. We will track progress through annual reporting and frequent updates from different aspects of our business.

While we have many initiatives in the works, these in part reflect that we aim to cover a lot of ground quickly. We appreciate that the seriousness of our commitment was recognized when the Independent Publishing Awards presented us with the Alison Morrison Diversity Award. Its judges commented that our journals and books "have long championed under-represented groups and challenged inequalities, ... SAGE is also a leader on accessibility, striving to open up content to more people."
The judges concluded: "SAGE has been working hard on this for a long time, and it runs right through the structure and philosophy of the business."

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- Alison Morrison Diversity Award judges