

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 00:01 AM 22<sup>nd</sup> JULY**

## **GLOBAL FINANCIAL SERVICES SECTOR ANNOUNCES BIGGEST MOVE TO DATE TO TACKLE EXCLUSION OF DISABLED PEOPLE**

- *Seven of the world's largest financial institutions, including the Bank of England, Lloyds Banking Group, RBS and HSBC UK, have signed up to disability inclusion campaign The Valuable 500*
- *Campaign is seeking 500 global businesses to commit to putting disability on their board agendas in 2019*
- *Marks the most significant move the banking sector has made to date to address disability inclusion in business*

**LONDON, 22<sup>nd</sup> JULY:** The Bank of England, Lloyds Banking Group, HSBC UK, RBS, Monex, Standard Chartered and Bank Hapoalim of Israel, today announce that they have become members of The Valuable 500 – a worldwide call to action launched earlier this year which strives to place disability inclusion at the top of business agendas.

These organisations will join others already signed up to the initiative, including Barclays, Danske Bank and Citibanamex of Mexico, placing the banking sector at the front of the fight for inclusion.

The campaign, launched at the World Economic Forum's Annual Summit in Davos in January, will hold global business leaders accountable for disability inclusion in their businesses by ensuring it is discussed at leadership level and placed on their board agendas.

The banking sector has been increasingly recognised for its efforts to improve inclusion of disabled people in the workplace in recent years: in 2017, for example, The Business Disability Forum awarded RBS its 'Workplace Adjustments Innovation of the Year' Award' and in 2018 Gold in the Business Disability Forum's Disability Standard, and Bank Hapoalim of Israel recently announced a social impact programme whereby at least one person with a disability must be included in all of its media campaigns.

Similarly, Lloyds Banking Group has been awarded Gold in the Business Disability Forum's Disability Standard and is recognised for its work to raise awareness of mental health. Since their partnership with Mental Health UK began in January 2017, over £9 million of vital funds has been raised so far through fundraising initiatives such as Walk-the-Talk. However, this is the first time in history that the world's financial services sector has taken such a significant step towards ending the exclusion of disabled people.

Caroline Casey, founder of The Valuable 500 commented:

*"We are thrilled to be welcoming such an acclaimed group of world-leading banks to The Valuable 500 today.*

*“It is particularly encouraging to see that the industry society relies on for financial purposes, has recognised the huge market size and spending power of a currently untapped pool of people, and has taken a definitive stand on embracing inclusion and diversity in their boardrooms as a result.*”

*“We commend the banking sector for tackling this issue head on, and encourage other leading UK high street and global banking brands to follow the lead of their peers. We would also love to see other industry sectors focus on this massive opportunity and join The Valuable 500 to end disability exclusion in business once and for all.”*

Mark Carney, Governor of the Bank of England said:

*“I am delighted that the Bank of England is now a signatory to The Valuable 500 campaign putting disability on the business leadership agenda. Over the last five years we have made significant progress increasing diversity across all levels of the Bank. This is an important step to demonstrate the Bank’s ongoing commitment to those with disabilities and long term conditions. We all benefit from ensuring reasonable adjustments can be made in a simple and effective way so that those with disabilities and long term conditions are able to contribute to their full potential and we will discuss their inclusion on our Court agendas to ensure we maintain progress.”*

António Horta-Osório, CEO of Lloyds Banking Group, commented:

*“As part of our purpose to help Britain prosper, at Lloyds Banking Group we are taking action right across our organisation on disability. From working with our charity partner Mental Health UK to create the UK’s first mental health and money advice service; to making our products and services more accessible for customers with disabilities. It starts by talking to our customers and colleagues and leads to us having a real impact on people’s lives.*”

*Changing the culture around disability and mental health requires continued drive and enthusiasm. This is something we are truly committed to. We still have a great deal to do, but we continue to support, sustain and promote an inclusive and diverse organisation for all our customers and colleagues.”*

David Wheldon, RBS, Chief Marketing Officer & Executive Sponsor for Disability said:

*RBS is delighted to become a member of The Valuable 500. We are deeply committed to ensuring diversity and inclusion are top of our agenda for our customers and colleagues. In recent years we have made good progress to make sure people with disabilities can access the opportunities, products and services that the bank has to offer, but we realise we still have much more to do. If we all make this a priority and play our part we can affect real and lasting change.’*

Ian Stuart, CEO of HSBC UK, added:

*“Breaking down the barriers for disability inclusion is vital for HSBC UK. We are proud to be joining the Valuable 500 as part of our wider commitment diversity, inclusion and human rights across our business. We believe diversity brings huge benefits for our customers, our people, our suppliers, our communities and our investors. A diverse and connected workforce contributes different ideas and perspectives which in turn helps us to innovate and improve the service we deliver to our customers. We want HSBC UK to reflect the community we seek to serve and to embed a culture within our company in which all individuals are valued, respected and supported to fulfil their potential.”*

Bill Winters, Group Chief Executive, Standard Chartered, said:

*“We are committed to be a disability-confident organisation with a focus on removing barriers and increasing accessibility. We have also developed our own internal disability benchmark and have asked our Country CEOs to complete this assessment and take action to improve their progress as part of their local D&I plans, meeting the needs of the local operating environment.”*

Hector Lagos, CEO of Monex, said:

*“In Monex we are proud to be part of The Valuable 500 as we acknowledge that disability inclusion is something fundamental. We all have to play our part in achieving a more inclusive world.*

*We have various initiatives and are convinced that disability inclusion enriches all Monex stakeholders. As companies adopt more inclusive activities, I believe we can influence positively to get rid of the barriers that people with disability face nowadays”*

The news comes after research from Inclusive Boards this week revealed that 90% of business leaders interviewed were apprehensive about employing a disabled person in a leadership position, with the cost of making the necessary adjustments for disabled people emerging as the primary reason for this apprehension. 41 percent of respondents felt that disabled people might take a lot of sick leave and 45 percent said their offices wouldn't be accessible to those with disabilities

Founded by social entrepreneur and campaigner Caroline Casey, the launch of The Valuable 500 at Davos marked the first time disability inclusion was discussed on the main stage with the support of global business leaders – who included former Unilever CEO Paul Polman, Bloomberg Chairman Peter Grauer, and North American CEO at Accenture Julie Sweet. Since its launch, businesses such as Sainsburys, Microsoft, EY, Accenture, Fujitsu, Unilever, and Bloomberg have all joined the movement.

Its mission is to unlock the value of people living with disabilities across the world. Along with their friends, families and communities, the one billion disabled people worldwide also hold a disposable annual income of \$8 trillion a year, equating to an opportunity that business cannot afford to ignore.

The campaign is also aimed at ending ‘diversish’ attitudes towards disability in business (90% of companies say they’re inclusive but only 4% include disability in this definition). Research by EY and #valuable has found that 56% of global senior executives openly admitted to rarely or never discussing disability on their leadership agendas – proving disability to be woefully absent from the current business agenda.

The seven new members announced today will all join the effort to tackle the poor global employment rate for disabled people, which is currently stands at half of non-disabled people, a gap which has been on the rise since 2010.

To apply to be a Valuable 500 business, please visit [thevaluable500.com](http://thevaluable500.com).

#valuable – it’s everyone’s business.

- Ends -

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#### **Applying for Membership of The Valuable 500**

To apply to be a Valuable 500 business, please visit [thevaluable500.com](http://thevaluable500.com).

Membership of The Valuable 500 includes:

- Unlimited access to our executive disability performance resource hub
- Membership to a community of like-minded business peer leaders, committed to raising their game on disability
- The platform and opportunity to raise your profile as an early adopter helping to shape this vital emerging economic and societal agenda.

By becoming a member of The Valuable 500, you agree to:

- COMMIT: Table disability on your board agenda from 2019
- ACT: Make ONE firm commitment to action in 2019
- AMPLIFY: Share your commitment to The Valuable 500 internally and externally

#### **About #valuable**



Launched by Binc, #valuable is a campaign working to ensure businesses globally recognise the value of the one billion people around the world living with a disability. We believe that building a global society that recognises the value of the 1 billion people living with a disability starts with business. We're on a mission to make sure businesses across the world recognise the value of the one billion people living with a disability.

Binc was founded by social entrepreneur and activist Caroline Casey in 2015, with a mission to ignite a historic global movement for a new age of business inclusion. Binc is capitalising on Caroline Casey's 18-year track record of success engaging over 450 organisations and working with 500,000 business leaders. Binc fundamentally believes that inclusive business creates inclusive societies and is initiating a new approach to business that genuinely includes the 1 billion people living in the world with a disability. Binc is the founding team behind valuable, an ambitious global campaign to put inclusivity on top of the business agenda around the world in 2019. Binc is using a tried and tested formula that has worked in the past for gender, race and LGBT to leverage the exponential rise of The Diversity and Inclusion Agenda.

#### **About HSBC UK:**

HSBC UK serves around 14.5 million customers across the UK, supported by 32,000 colleagues. HSBC UK offers a complete range of retail banking and wealth management to personal and private banking customers, as well as commercial banking for small to medium businesses and large corporates.

#### **About RBS:**

RBS is a UK-based banking and financial services company. It provides a wide range of products and services to personal, commercial and large corporate and institutional customers through a number of well-known banking brands, including NatWest, Royal Bank of Scotland and Ulster Bank.

#### **About Standard Chartered:**

We are a leading international banking group, with a presence in 60 of the world's most dynamic markets and serving clients in a further 85. Our purpose is to drive commerce and prosperity through our unique diversity, and our heritage and values are expressed in our brand promise, Here for good.

Standard Chartered PLC is listed on the London and Hong Kong Stock Exchanges as well as the Bombay and National Stock Exchanges in India.

For more stories and expert opinions please visit Insights at [sc.com](https://sc.com). Follow Standard Chartered on Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook.

#### **About Monex:**

Monex is a specialised financial services provider in the Mexican market with more than 34 years of experience providing banking and wealth management services. Monex is listed in the Mexican Stock Exchange. It also operates corporate FX and international payment solutions in the US, and in Europe through its subsidiary Monex Europe based in London.

### **Definition of disability:**

#valuable uses the definition provided by the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with disabilities, which defines a person living with a disability as ‘those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.’

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.who.int/disabilities/world\\_report/2011/chapter8.pdf](http://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/chapter8.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> WHO

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.who.int/disabilities/world\\_report/2011/chapter8.pdf](http://www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/chapter8.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Return on Disability, 2016

<sup>5</sup> Scope and Landman, Enabling Work

– [https://www.scope.org.uk/Scope/media/Images/Publication%20Directory/Landman\\_Report.PDF?ext=.pdf](https://www.scope.org.uk/Scope/media/Images/Publication%20Directory/Landman_Report.PDF?ext=.pdf)

### **Disability and the Sustainable Development Goals**

The need to advance disability inclusion around the globe is essential to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Disability or ‘persons with disabilities’ are specifically referenced 11 times in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with a further six references to ‘persons in vulnerable situations’. Principally with reference to: promoting inclusive economic growth that allows disabled people to fully access the job market and guaranteeing equal and accessible education through the creation of inclusive environments.