# Ascential

# Diversity and Inclusion

HOW WE'RE DOING AND
**HOW WE CAN IMPROVE.**

DECEMBER, 2020

# Contents

# Introduction

### Duncan Painter
Chief Executive Officer,
Ascential

### Tracey Gray
Executive Vice President,
People, Ascential

At Ascential, our goal is to help the world's top consumer companies understand what's important and how to act on it. This year we have applied this expertise to doubling down on our approach to Diversity and Inclusion, highlighted in our Corporate Responsibility Strategy as one of our strategic goals.

For Ascential, the business case for diversity is clear. Research has shown time and again that diverse teams are more productive, more innovative and ultimately better support customers. For this reason, I am thankful for the data gleaned from our company-wide Diversity Data Survey conducted in August 2020, which enables us to understand and prioritise next steps.

While we are starting from a good position, it is clear to me that two key areas where we have work to do are at a senior leadership level globally, and in our North American teams.

I look forward to tracking progress and championing this issue in our business. The Exec team and I all understand we need to do more, to commit to real action today to make diversity and true inclusion a reality in our business, not just an aspiration.

We have taken the time to ensure that we're responding, not reacting, to recent events, including the acceleration of the Black Lives Matter movement. The actions we take following the survey need to effectively respond to the needs of our people and our business. We have shared more detailed data with each of our business units, brands and regions, so they can really focus on where they can have the largest impact — their clients and sectors.

We commit to regularly reviewing this data, checking in on progress and altering our actions to keep us on track for success.

In tandem with this Diversity and Inclusion work, we are reimagining the way we're working at Ascential in response to COVID-19. This work will support the actions in this report, and contribute to building a truly inclusive culture.

Our overarching commitment is that we will learn from the rich information our people have shared this year, so that we can adapt our plans and ensure in all areas of our business that we are driving diversity, embracing inclusion and ensuring equitable structures for all.

# New for 2020
# Our Diversity and Inclusion approach

## Vision

For Ascential, diversity is core to us. Our value as an employer and to our customers is greater when we draw on the full range of our collective perspectives and experiences. We continue to be committed to attract, retain, develop and engage a diverse workforce, and we will work constantly to ensure that everyone at Ascential feels comfortable to be themselves. This is the right thing to do to ensure a sustainable future for our organisation and to make a positive impact for our people, customers, and society.

## Commitments

**To employees:**
We will co-create an inclusive culture with equitable systems throughout our workforce, so that people are comfortable in bringing their authentic selves to Ascential, to thrive, and progress their career.

**To customers:**
We will deliver the ideas, perspectives and cultural richness that our customers – and their customers – need to future-proof their products and services.

**To society:**
We will play our part in imagining and developing a brighter, more equal society, starting with our own company and the industries we work in. We will report openly and regularly on our progress to enable others to learn from us and hold us to account.

## Objectives

**Employees:**
- We aim to create a workforce that fully reflects, at all levels, the ethnic diversity of our major markets before 2030.
- We aim to ensure our senior leadership represents an equal gender split before 2030.
- We commit to measuring and assessing any possible gender and ethnicity pay gap.

**Customers:**
- Each of our major brands will develop specific, measurable and public ways of championing diversity in their respective industries and track progress systematically.

**Society:**
- We will report honestly on our workforce diversity data and initiatives on an annual basis to create accountability, show progress and share our lessons.
- We will continue to manage and seek appropriate charity partners in line with our ambitions to support young people to succeed in the digital world.

## Enablers

- We will continue to enable and promote Employee Resource Groups.
- We will invest in management and leadership training, as well as mentorship, sponsorship, and other career development programmes for all employees.
- Every member of Ascential's leadership team will take an active role in our Diversity and Inclusion initiatives.
- We will review our recruitment policies, extend our outreach and offer opportunities to a more diverse representation of colleges, universities and professional backgrounds.

# Our objectives:

This report contains detailed objectives to mitigate any lack of representation across different minority groups. In order for these to be effective, we will need to prioritise the things that matter the most. To do this, we will work in an agile way to set and publish targets on a yearly basis which will see us achieve our 10-year goal. Working in this way will allow us to make sustainable change. We are not afraid to try things and pivot or stop them if they're not making a difference.

## Our lead objectives

### Representation

- Before 2030 we aim to ensure that our population, at all levels, represents a balanced gender split, and represents the race and ethnicity profile of the core regions where we operate.

- To deliver the sustainable and systemic change this will require, we'll set and report against annual targets to demonstrate progress.

### Equitable pay

- We aim to put in place a global system to assess any possible equity disparity. Where gaps may exist, appropriate action will be taken.

*What do we mean when we talk about a pay gap?*
*A "pay gap" or "wage gap" is the average difference between the remuneration for different groups, e.g. men and women, who are working. It isn't about people being paid a different amount for the same job.*

# How will we do this?

## In 2021 we will:

- Introduce a company-wide succession planning approach that will allow us to proactively identify opportunities to enable a more diverse pipeline and promote talent within our business. **(Q4 2020 - Q1 2021)**

- Review our talent attraction processes, suppliers and recruitment requirements so we can better support our hiring managers to effectively recruit diverse talent and remove unnecessary barriers to entry. **(Q1 - Q2 2021)**

- Launch an Inclusive Leadership training programme for our senior leadership team. **(Q1 2021 then ongoing)**

- Develop a range of outreach opportunities which align with our signature activity to support young people from under-represented groups to thrive in the digital world, including reviewing our work experience, internship and apprenticeship opportunities. **(Ongoing, 2021)**

- Establish firm governance and reporting for all D&I-related activity, with Tracey Gray our Exec lead and Paul Harrison as our Board lead. **(Q4 2020 - Q1 2021)**

- Review our policies, to identify any potential bias or preference for particular groups, to inform activity required to ensure equitable support for all. **(Ongoing, 2021)**

- Build out specific plans for each region to address local challenges. **(Q1-Q2 2021)**

- Launch a Global Diversity and Inclusion calendar to raise awareness of major holidays, festivals, awareness days and months. **(Q1 2021)**

- Further analyse the data and investigate the root causes of issues through employee focus groups. We want to ensure we are working from a place of fact, not assumption, to address the priorities highlighted in these surveys. **(Ongoing, 2021)**

# Diversity and Inclusion Governance

At Ascential, we believe that it's everyone's job, every day, to progress our Diversity and Inclusion objectives.

However, to ensure that we stay on track, that our activities are aligned and that we're focussing on the right thing at the right time, we have established a governance framework for our work in this area.

These governance structures also ensure that our planned activities remain compliant and work within regional legal structures.

We commit to ensuring that these governance structures remain representative of our business and fit for purpose.
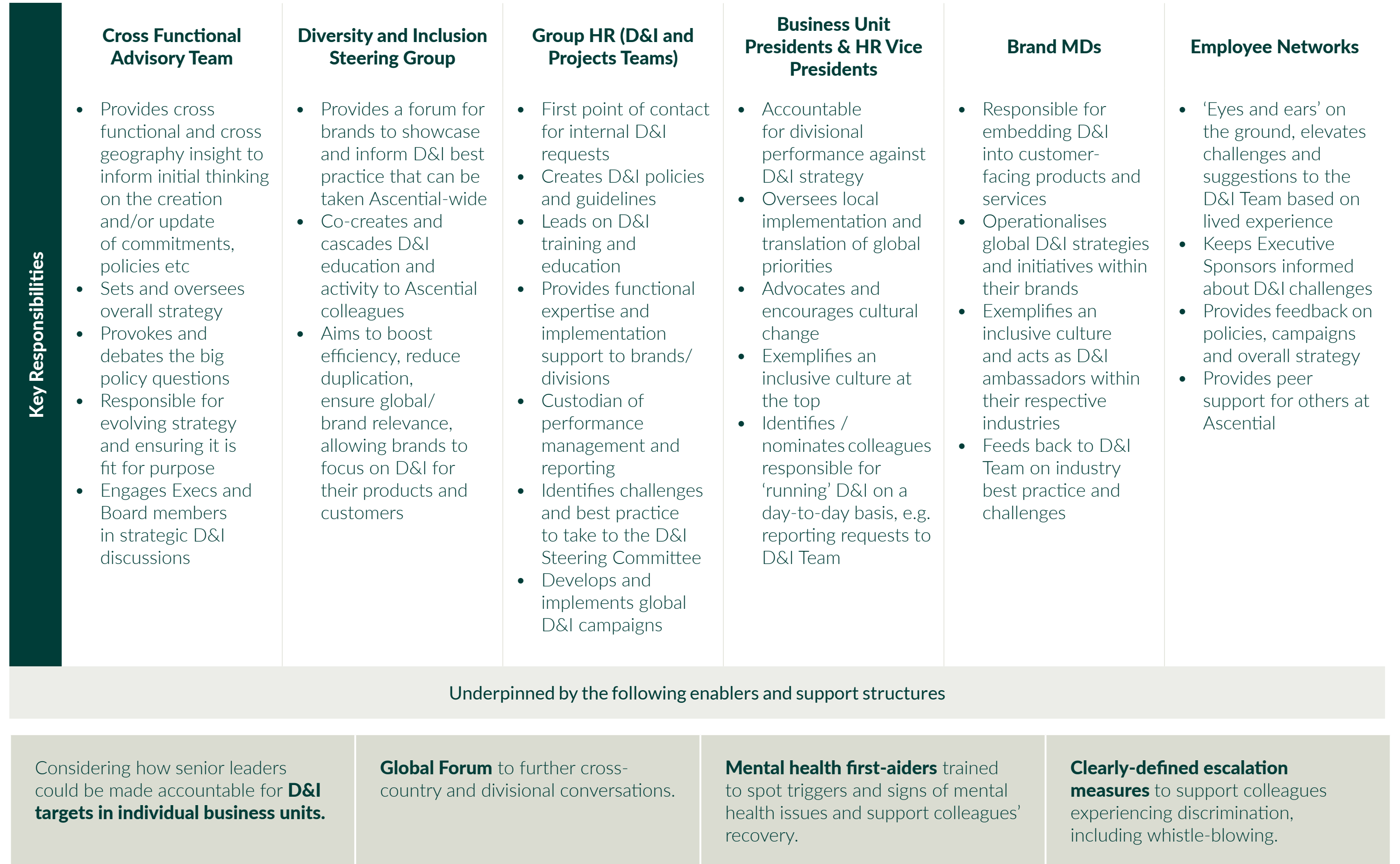
We have also appointed both a Board and Executive Sponsor for our Diversity and Inclusion work:

**Paul Harrison**
Chief Operating Officer,
Board Sponsor

**Tracey Gray**
Executive Vice President, People
Executive Sponsor

| Key Responsibilities | Cross Functional Advisory Team | Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group | Group HR (D&I and Projects Teams) | Business Unit Presidents & HR Vice Presidents | Brand MDs | Employee Networks |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | • Provides cross functional and cross geography insight to inform initial thinking on the creation and/or update of commitments, policies etc<br>• Sets and oversees overall strategy<br>• Provokes and debates the big policy questions<br>• Responsible for evolving strategy and ensuring it is fit for purpose<br>• Engages Execs and Board members in strategic D&I discussions | • Provides a forum for brands to showcase and inform D&I best practice that can be taken Ascential-wide<br>• Co-creates and cascades D&I education and activity to Ascential colleagues<br>• Aims to boost efficiency, reduce duplication, ensure global/brand relevance, allowing brands to focus on D&I for their products and customers | • First point of contact for internal D&I requests<br>• Creates D&I policies and guidelines<br>• Leads on D&I training and education<br>• Provides functional expertise and implementation support to brands/divisions<br>• Custodian of performance management and reporting<br>• Identifies challenges and best practice to take to the D&I Steering Committee<br>• Develops and implements global D&I campaigns | • Accountable for divisional performance against D&I strategy<br>• Oversees local implementation and translation of global priorities<br>• Advocates and encourages cultural change<br>• Exemplifies an inclusive culture at the top<br>• Identifies / nominates colleagues responsible for 'running' D&I on a day-to-day basis, e.g. reporting requests to D&I Team | • Responsible for embedding D&I into customer-facing products and services<br>• Operationalises global D&I strategies and initiatives within their brands<br>• Exemplifies an inclusive culture and acts as D&I ambassadors within their respective industries<br>• Feeds back to D&I Team on industry best practice and challenges | • 'Eyes and ears' on the ground, elevates challenges and suggestions to the D&I Team based on lived experience<br>• Keeps Executive Sponsors informed about D&I challenges<br>• Provides feedback on policies, campaigns and overall strategy<br>• Provides peer support for others at Ascential |

Underpinned by the following enablers and support structures

| Considering how senior leaders could be made accountable for **D&I targets in individual business units.** | **Global Forum** to further cross-country and divisional conversations. | **Mental health first-aiders** trained to spot triggers and signs of mental health issues and support colleagues' recovery. | **Clearly-defined escalation measures** to support colleagues experiencing discrimination, including whistle-blowing. |
|---|---|---|---|

*D&I = Diversity and Inclusion

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# Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group

Our Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group was established in 2020 to provide a forum through which brands and Employee Resource Groups can showcase their Diversity and Inclusion best practice and see it shared Ascential-wide.

With representatives from each business unit, the group informs and co-creates Ascential strategy. The group has been instrumental in creating the vision and commitments launched in this document.
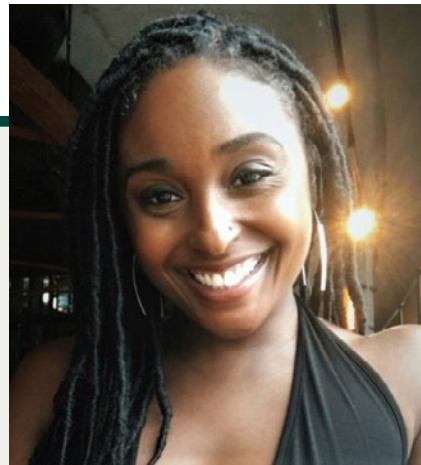
Arielle Kalu

Clare Conway

David Phillips

Graham Wilson-Perkin

Hannah Tovey

Jordan Sullivan

Justin Lui
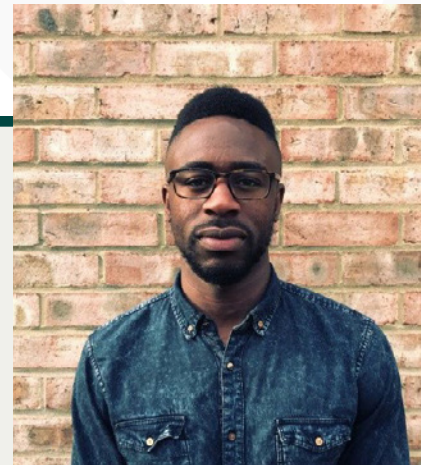
Kennedy Ogbanufe

Lisa Cox

Martha Jennings
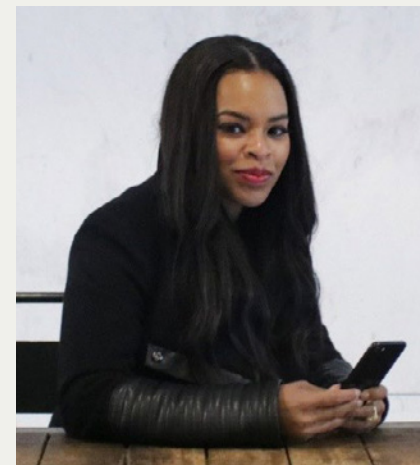
Melanie Washington

Nina Preston-Smith

Parris Francis

Shravya Dega

Susan Hothersall

Philip Thomas

Tracey Gray

# What are we doing next?

The data and insight in this report has given us the next chapter in our Diversity and Inclusion story, but the story is far from finished. We commit to continue to be curious, to check our assumptions, to unpack our bias and understand what we need to further measure and monitor to achieve our goal of true representation across the company.

This is the first Diversity and Inclusion report of this kind for Ascential, and we commit to regularly reviewing the data and publishing our progress. To be able to measure progress most effectively, we are working towards including this data in our HR System to allow for real-time analysis and measurement against targets.

We know this won't be a linear road to success, so we commit to being honest about what's going well and what needs further work or a change of direction.

Outlined in this report are some areas where we want to develop further insight (e.g. disability) to build a clearer picture of where the barriers to progress may be for some under-represented groups. For these areas we commit to further research and future action planning with clear objectives.

We will work with our business units, brands and regions to provide a deep dive into their data, so they can then develop their own Diversity and Inclusion action plans which will focus on where they can impact their wider communities, sectors and customers.

At an Ascential level we commit to carrying through on all the commitments and actions set out in this report and in our strategy summary.

Our initial focus will be in two key areas:

- Talent management, including how we forecast talent and ensure a bias-free internal succession process
- Talent attraction, including how we recruit diverse talent

# Developing our Diversity and Inclusion strategy

The purpose of conducting the Diversity Data Survey, and producing the strategy set out in this report, is three-fold:

1. To know where we have representation and where we are lacking.

2. To understand what we need to do to address any lack of representation and assess where the priorities are.

3. To inform a step-by-step roadmap based on fact and the identified priorities.

The process of writing our strategy, and developing the actions and insights, has involved four clear stages:

1. A peer benchmarking exercise, showing how Ascential's approach to Diversity and Inclusion stacks up against its 10 direct peers and leaders from adjacent sectors in seven distinct areas of Diversity and Inclusion.

2. A global employee Engagement Survey, with questions about how colleagues feel about Ascential's approach to and management of Diversity and Inclusion.

3. A global Diversity Data Survey, showing us the demographic makeup of Ascential across regions and management layers.

4. Rich conversations with colleagues, and also a series of workshops and listening sessions across our brands and regions to gather qualitative data about the current status of Diversity and Inclusion at Ascential.

In the process of developing the strategy and doing this work, we aim to adhere to five guiding principles:

1. **We value evidence.** We used the best available evidence to inform our approach, gathering qualitative and quantitative organisation-specific data.

2. **We take a bespoke approach to every project.** Whilst there are some common experiences related to Diversity and Inclusion, every organisation faces slightly different challenges, requiring different interventions.

3. **We believe in honest, open dialogue.** Good Diversity and Inclusion strategies can't be just warm words from the boardroom. Everyone should get the opportunity to contribute and share their voice.

4. **We believe this is about doing the right thing.** It's about ensuring fairness and equality across our business. But we also understand that, to be sustainable, we need to ensure this work has a clear Ascential-specific business case.

5. **We don't react, we respond.** We believe in taking a long-term view, looking at issues in context, with an eye on what will really support our business and make a positive impact in the long term.

**Notes on the Diversity Data Survey:**

The data in this report comes from the Diversity Data Survey we ran in August 2020. 83% of all colleagues completed the survey, with representative responses from all our regions and brands which give us confidence that the data reflects the reality of our population.

For the purposes of clarity and creating comparable datasets, we have aggregated data in some cases.

All percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest percentage point. As a result, in some cases, the percentages for total gender and/or total race/ethnicity may not total 100%.
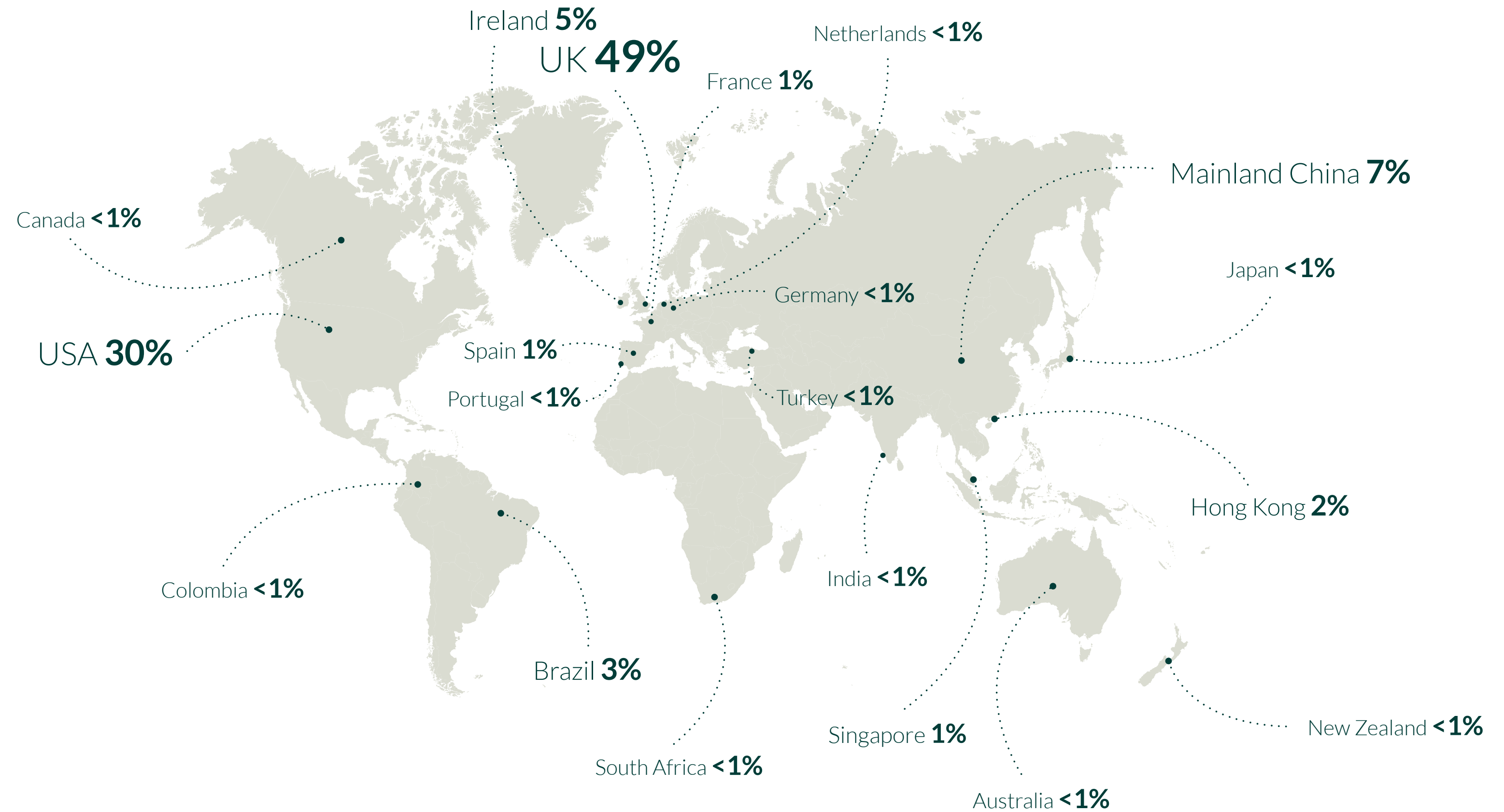
For Ascential people: If you don't see yourself reflected in these data sets, rest assured that this doesn't mean we don't see you or that we're not taking your view into account when developing our actions.

# Diversity Data Audit 2020
# Map of respondents

Ascential is a global business. This map shows the location of our Diversity Data Survey respondents, and the percentage of total respondents that each region represents.

Notes: The survey was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic, which means some colleagues were not in their normal location. For a full list of Ascential's offices please visit the website.

Ireland **5%**

UK **49%**

Netherlands **<1%**

France **1%**

Mainland China **7%**

Canada **<1%**

Japan **<1%**

Germany **<1%**

USA **30%**

Spain **1%**

Portugal **<1%**

Turkey **<1%**

Hong Kong **2%**

Colombia **<1%**

India **<1%**

Brazil **3%**

New Zealand **<1%**

Singapore **1%**

South Africa **<1%**

Australia **<1%**

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# Race & Ethnicity:

## Our objectives:

- We aim to ensure that our population, at all levels, represents the race and ethnicity makeup of the core regions where we operate before 2030.
- To deliver the sustainable and systemic change this will require, we'll set and report against annual targets to demonstrate progress at pace.

- Reviewing our talent attraction processes, suppliers and recruitment requirements to support our hiring managers to effectively recruit diverse talent and ensure we don't have unnecessary barriers to entry.
- Introducing a company-wide succession planning approach which will allow us to proactively identify opportunities to enable a more diverse pipeline and promote talent within our business.
- In 2021, we will start to regularly collect and analyse both ethnicity and gender data on our HR system. This will provide the real-time intersectional insights needed to inform any specific areas where additional activity may be required, and if so, inform the appropriate actions to address those areas over subsequent years consistent with our overarching timelines.

BiB
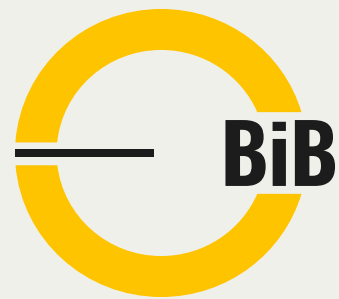
## Black in Business Case Study:

Black in Business (BiB) was formed in October 2019 by Arielle Kalu and Parris Francis. It originated as a group chat, and has evolved into a space for Black colleagues to network, advance their professional and personal development, share experiences and celebrate diversity. We are committed to building an inclusive environment that supports and encourages Black colleagues to advance their professional and leadership potential through connection, mentorship and collaboration, with Tracey Gray (EVP People) as our Executive Sponsor. BiB aims to build an inclusive environment that supports and encourages Black colleagues to thrive, acting as a sounding board for meaningful change within Ascential. To join Black in Business and get involved in the network please contact blackinbusiness@ascential.com to receive updates and to make sure your voice is heard.

## Insights:

- In the UK, our population largely represents the wider UK population. However, with around 40% of our total global population working in London, we need to ensure our population is representative of this core region. We are currently under-represented in the Asian, Black and mixed race populations, with UK census data showing that in London 40% of residents identified with either the Asian, Black, Mixed or Other ethnic group.*

- In the US, our representation falls short of US census data, in particular with our Black population who represent just over half of the national average (our population 7% Black/US population 13.4% Black) *

- In Ireland, our population is more diverse than the Irish population as a whole.

- In China, our population is in line with the national census data.

- We can see clearly that we need to work on improving representation of different races and ethnicities at senior leadership level e.g. Senior Vice President and above.

## Evolving our understanding:

- Our listening conversations with the APAC populations highlighted that representation from a race and ethnicity perspective was less of a priority than ensuring that the APAC team are heard across our organisation and involved in company-wide decisions. As our company grows in this market, we will keep this front of mind in order to ensure company-wide engagement.

- To understand whether we have an ethnicity pay gap, we need our people to share their "diversity data" in our HR System, our people management system. This will allow us to understand how pay relates to race and ethnicity. We didn't use our existing HR system to collect the data for this initial survey so we could commit to anonymity and to comply with legal requirements in some of our regions. We want to capture data in this way in order to build a richer and real-time picture of Ascential.

- We are also keen to review our data through an intersectional lens, looking further at the experiences and representation of certain groups e.g. Black women in our organisation. We will conduct this analysis and share our findings in 2021.

*Census data for both US and UK collected in 2010 and reported in 2011. We commit to revisiting our data against new data sets and adjusting plans accordingly.*
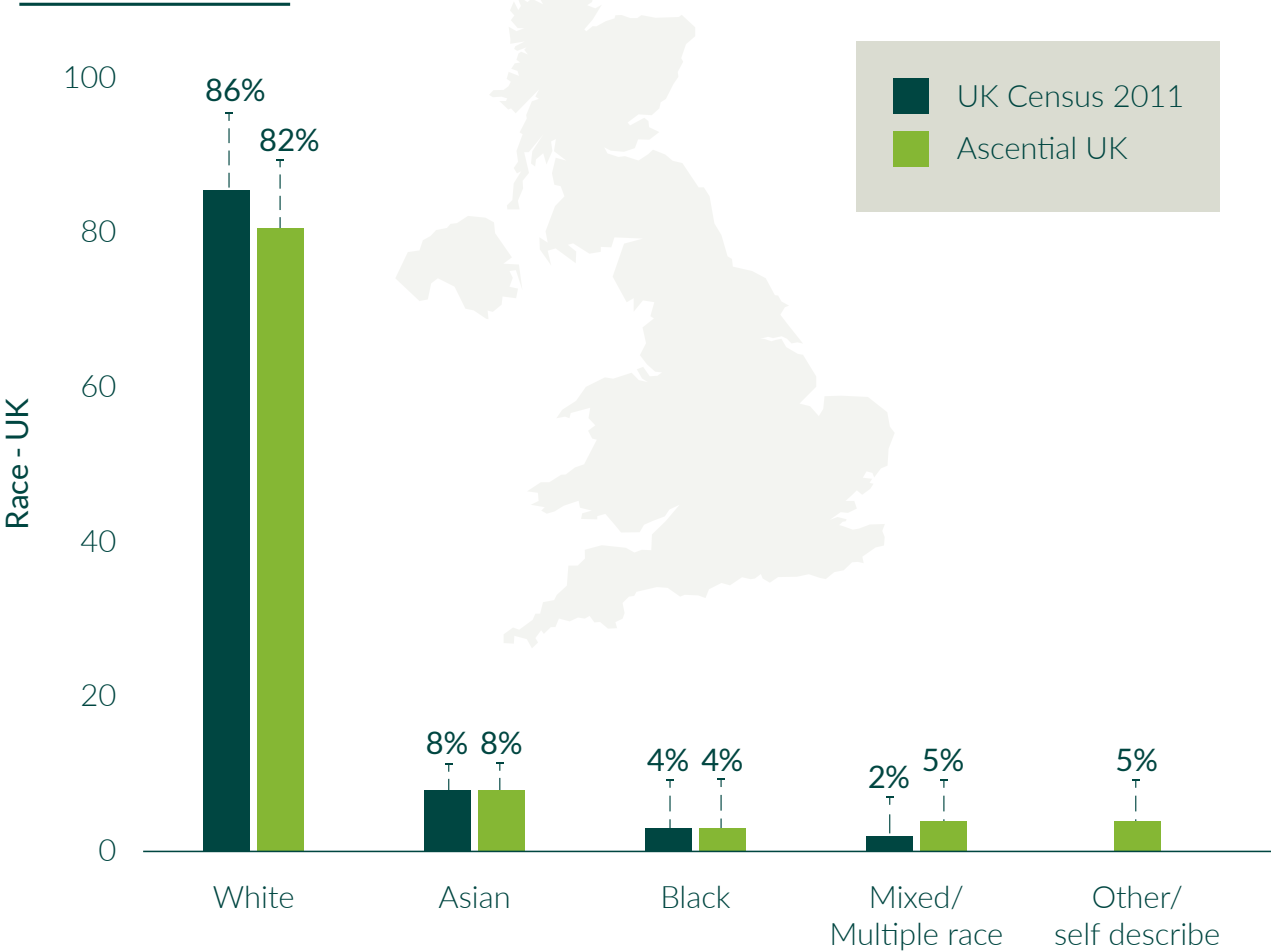
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# Race & Ethnicity:

For this survey, to ensure anonymity, we have only reported on data where the office size of the respondent is over 100 people. We therefore only asked this question in four regions: the UK, USA, China and Ireland.
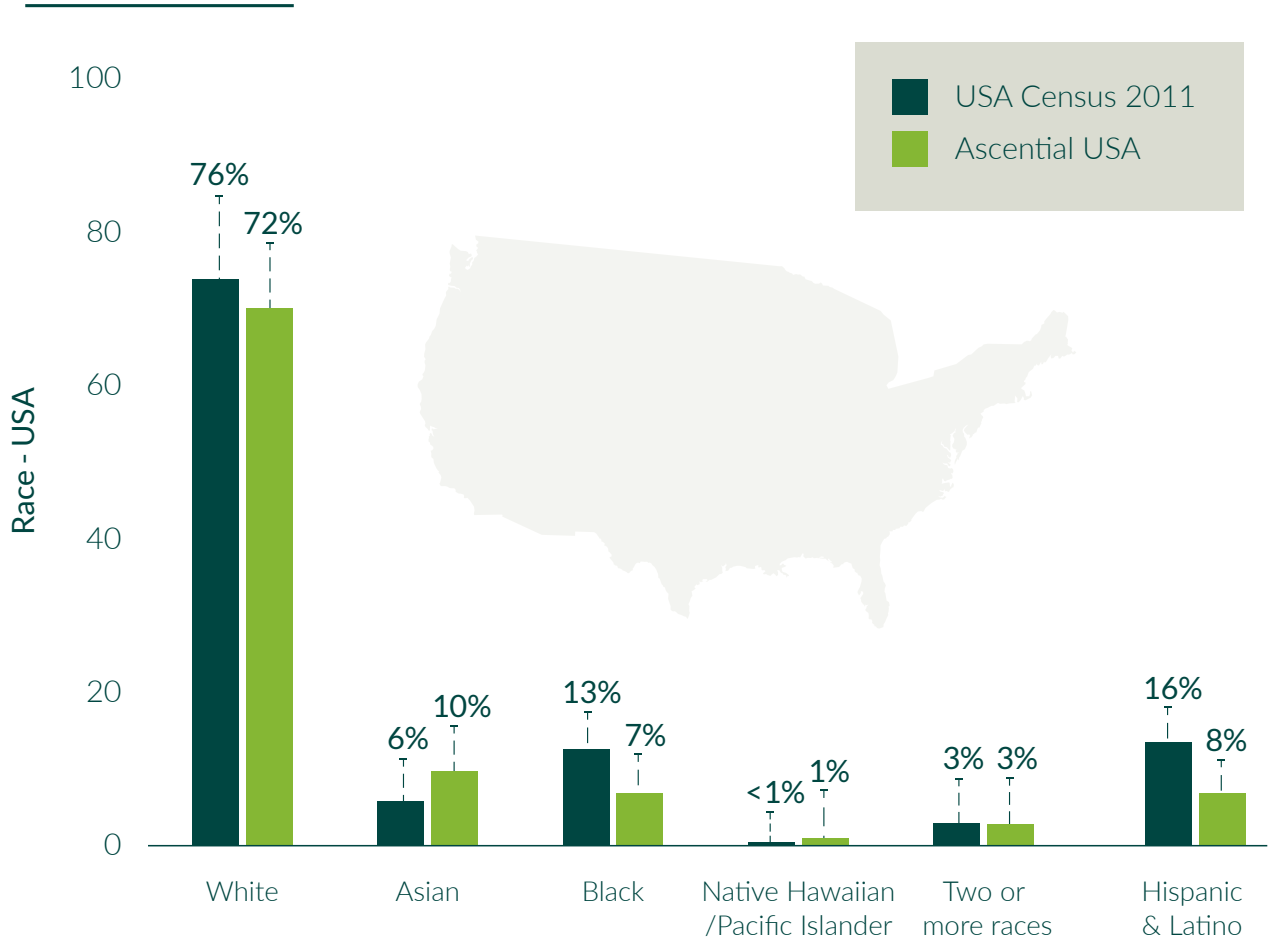
To help us understand this data, we have compared our data to the national census data for the regions where we asked this question. We have noted that this data is currently 10 years old in both the US and the UK, and will therefore review again when new census data is available.

Each region's data set may add up to more than 100%. This question was multiple choice, allowing people to identify with as many options as applied to them. Standard reporting for this requires you count each option as one, which means some people are counted more than once.
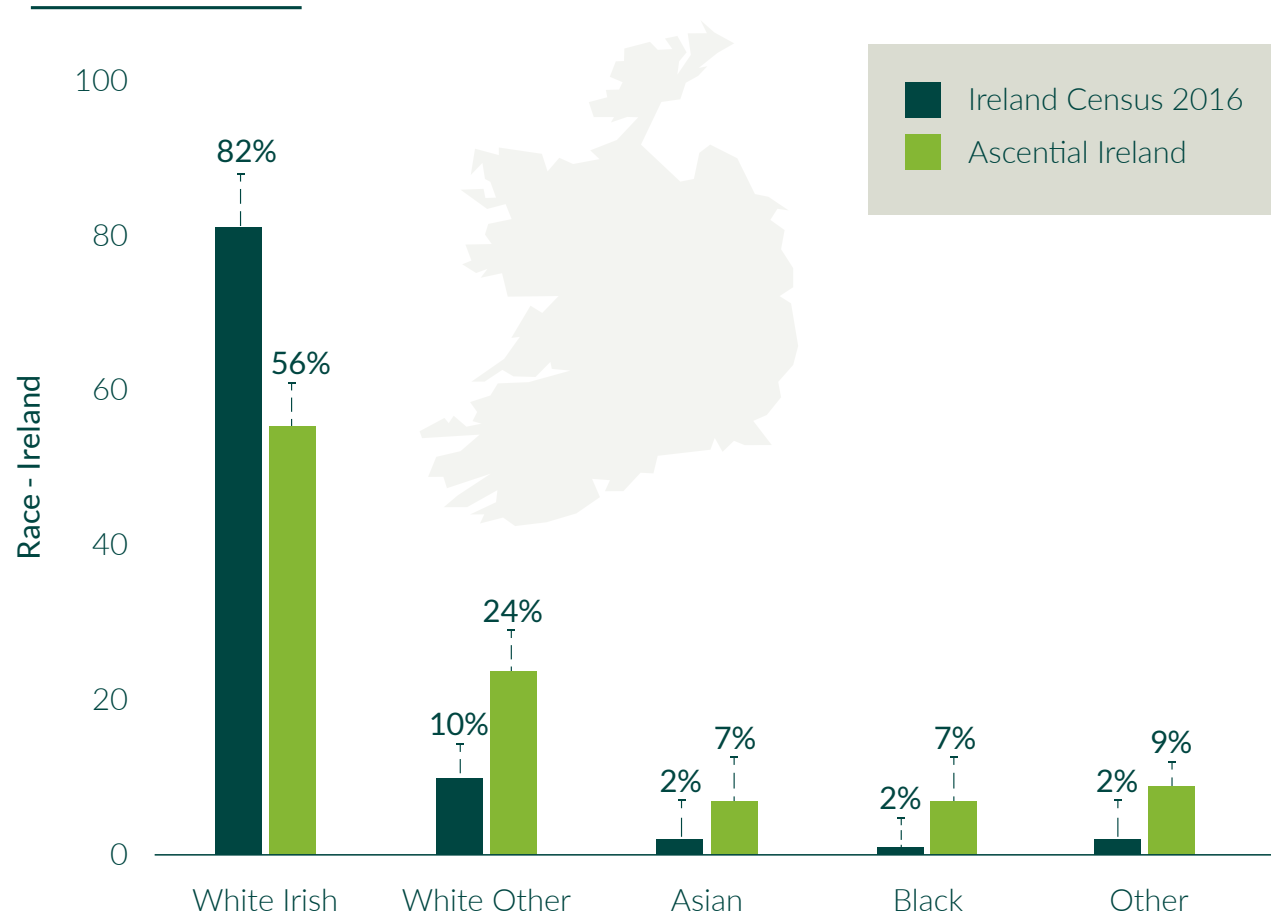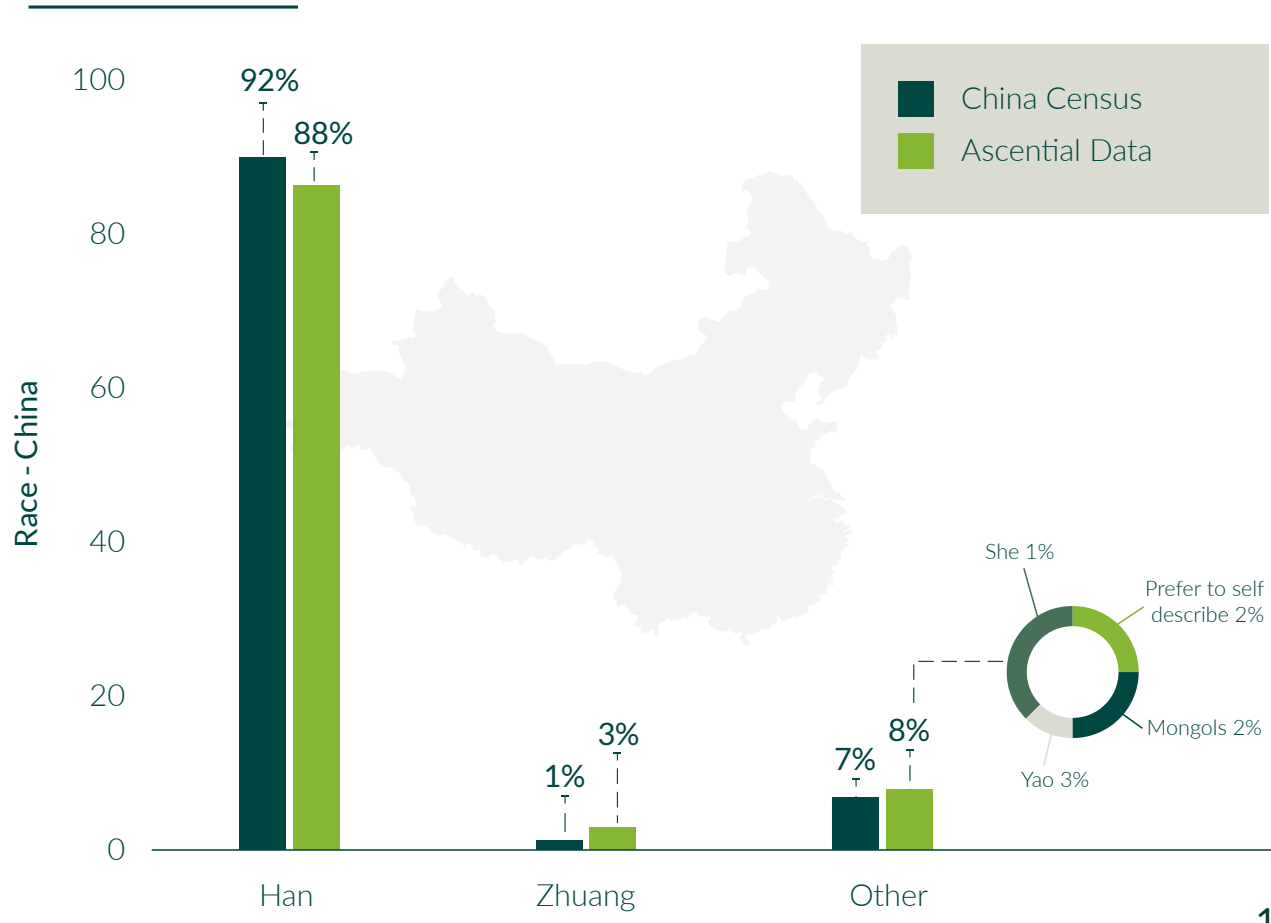
## United Kingdom



Legend: UK Census 2011, Ascential UK

White: 86%, 82%
Asian: 8%, 8%
Black: 4%, 4%
Mixed/Multiple race: 2%, 5%
Other/self describe: 5%

## United States of America



Legend: USA Census 2011, Ascential USA

White: 76%, 72%
Asian: 6%, 10%
Black: 13%, 7%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: <1%, 1%
Two or more races: 3%, 3%
Hispanic & Latino: 16%, 8%

## Ireland



Legend: Ireland Census 2016, Ascential Ireland

White Irish: 82%, 56%
White Other: 10%, 24%
Asian: 2%, 7%
Black: 2%, 7%
Other: 2%, 9%

## China



Legend: China Census, Ascential Data

Han: 92%, 88%
Zhuang: 1%, 3%
Other: 7%, 8%

She 1%
Prefer to self describe 2%
Mongols 2%
Yao 3%

# Race & Ethnicity:

## White vs BAME* by level

Legend: White | BAME | Prefer not to say

| | Senior leadership | Leadership | Manager | Specialist | Operational | Hourly |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Prefer not to say | | 4% | 1% | 2% | 2% | 3% |
| BAME | 5% | 17% | 23% | 32% | 38% | 29% |
| White | 95% | 79% | 76% | 67% | 61% | 68% |

Senior leadership
e.g. C-Suite, EVP, SVP, President

Leadership
e.g. VP, Director

Manager
e.g. Head of, Manager

Specialist
e.g. Lead Partner, Specialist, Consultant

Operational
e.g. Executive, Coordinator, Associate

Hourly

Notes:

This data represents 90% of the total Ascential population as the race and ethnicity question was only asked in China, Ireland, UK and the US. It does not include individuals who skipped this question.

We have deliberately avoided using the term BAME apart from in this chart as we understand it's an imperfect term. We have used it here, as when comparing race data across regions it's the most commonly used aggregate term.

*BAME - Black, Asian, and ethnic minorities.

# Gender:

## Our objectives:

- We aim to ensure that our population, at all levels, represents the gender split of the societies in which we operate before 2030.
- We aim to put in place a global system to assess any possible equity disparity. Where gaps may exist, appropriate action will be taken.
- We commit to taking both gender and race into account when setting representation targets to ensure true gender equity.

## Insights:

Whilst we have proportional gender representation at levels up to Director and Vice President, we see that this isn't the case at senior leadership level. Looking at the data by region also tells a sector story. Ireland and China, where we see less strong female representation, are areas mostly made up of people in our digital commerce brands, Edge by Ascential and Yimian.

Brazil, where we have higher female representation, is a region primarily made up of our WGSN, Start by WGSN and Use Fashion brands (in 2020).

## Evolving our understanding:

We know that understanding the intersections between gender and race and ethnicity are key to ensuring true gender equity. We will be conducting further research into the experience and representation of minorities in our business (and how that intersects with gender) to inform the development of all diversity and inclusion programmes.
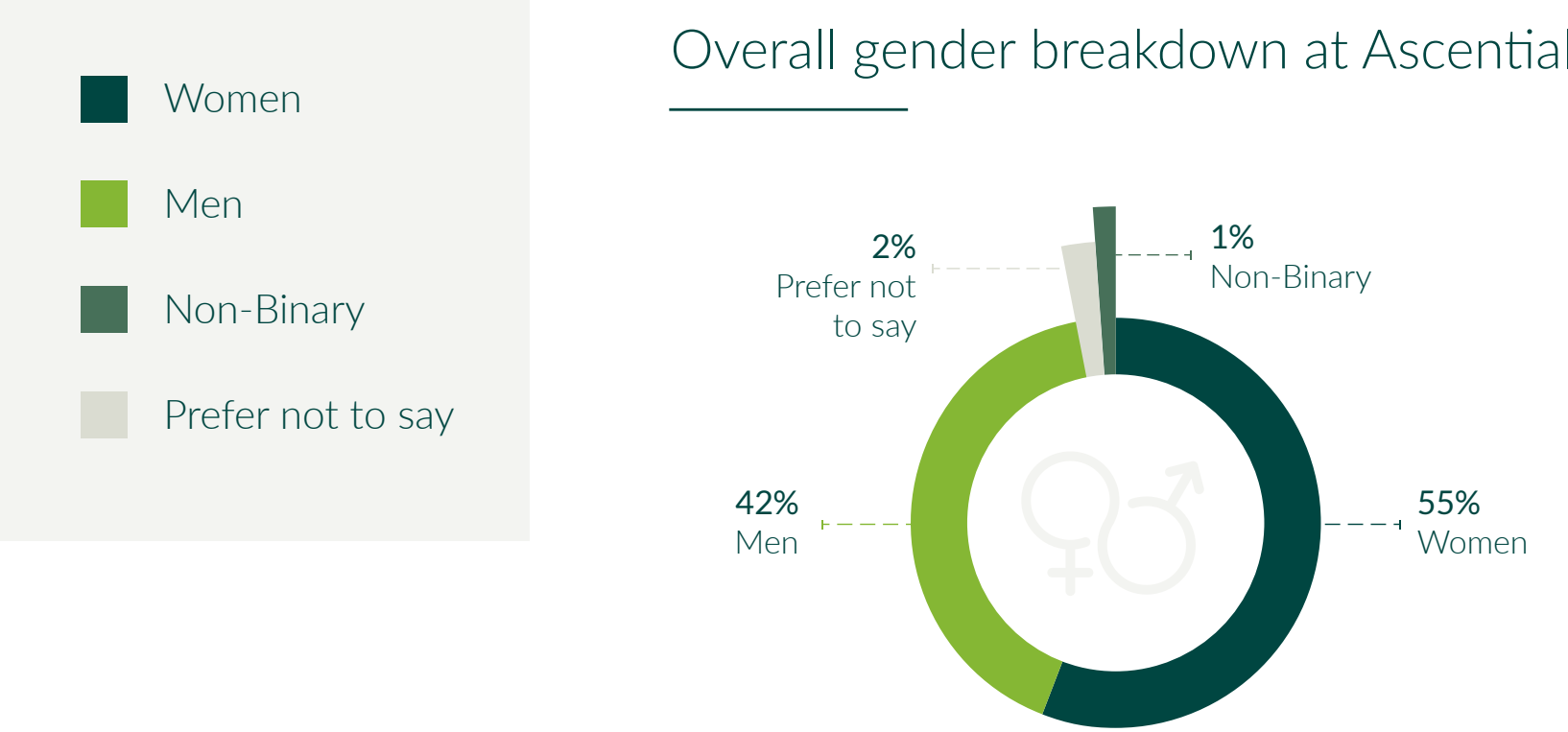
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ANTISTORIES

# Gender

ASCENTIAL

Ascential has a history of working towards gender equality. Targets and objectives put in place over 15 years ago have seen the organisation reach the top three of the Hampton-Alexander rankings for gender diversity on boards for the FTSE 250 since its inception, and a population which is overall 55% women.

As our business has grown through acquisition, and our core offer has changed from publishing and events to data and insights, we are more conscious of renewed efforts needed to maintain and support a good gender balance.

## Gender breakdown by organisational level

Legend: Women, Men

| | Senior Leadership e.g. C-Suite, EVP, SVP, President | Leadership e.g. VP, Director | Manager e.g. Head of, Manager | Specialist e.g. Lead Partner, Specialist, Consultant | Operational e.g. Executive, Coordinator, Associate | Hourly |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Men | 63% | 49% | 40% | 46% | 33% | 44% |
| Women | 37% | 47% | 60% | 53% | 66% | 56% |
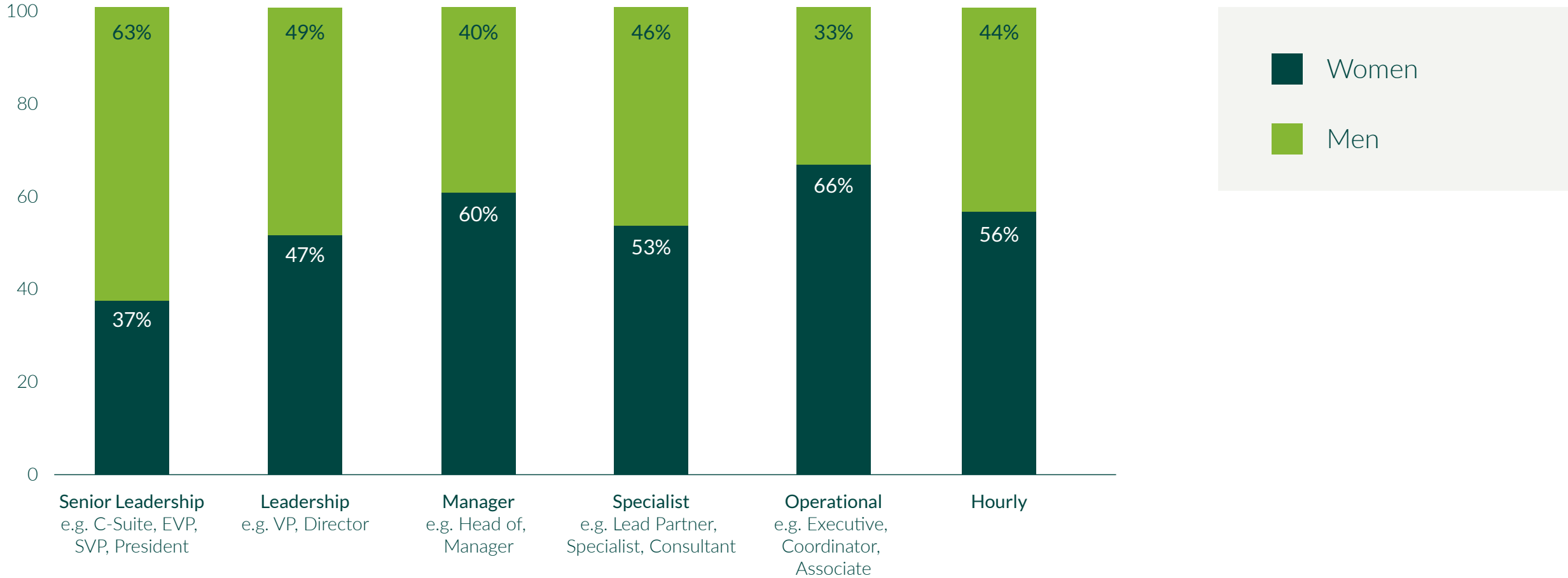
## Overall gender breakdown at Ascential

Legend: Women, Men, Non-Binary, Prefer not to say

- 55% Women
- 42% Men
- 2% Prefer not to say
- 1% Non-Binary

*The number of people who identified as Transgender was not high enough to be represented in the above chart. However, we continue to work with Ascential Pride to support our Transgender colleagues to make sure their voices are heard and represented at Ascential.*

## Gender split in our largest regions

Legend: Women, Men, Non-Binary, Prefer not to say

| | UK (n=851) | USA (n=524) | Ireland (n=85) | China (n=118) | Brazil (n=53) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Prefer not to say | 2% | 1% | 2% | 6% | |
| Non-Binary | 1% | 2% | | | |
| Men | 40% | 45% | 66% | 49% | 17% |
| Women | 57% | 54% | 32% | 45% | 83% |

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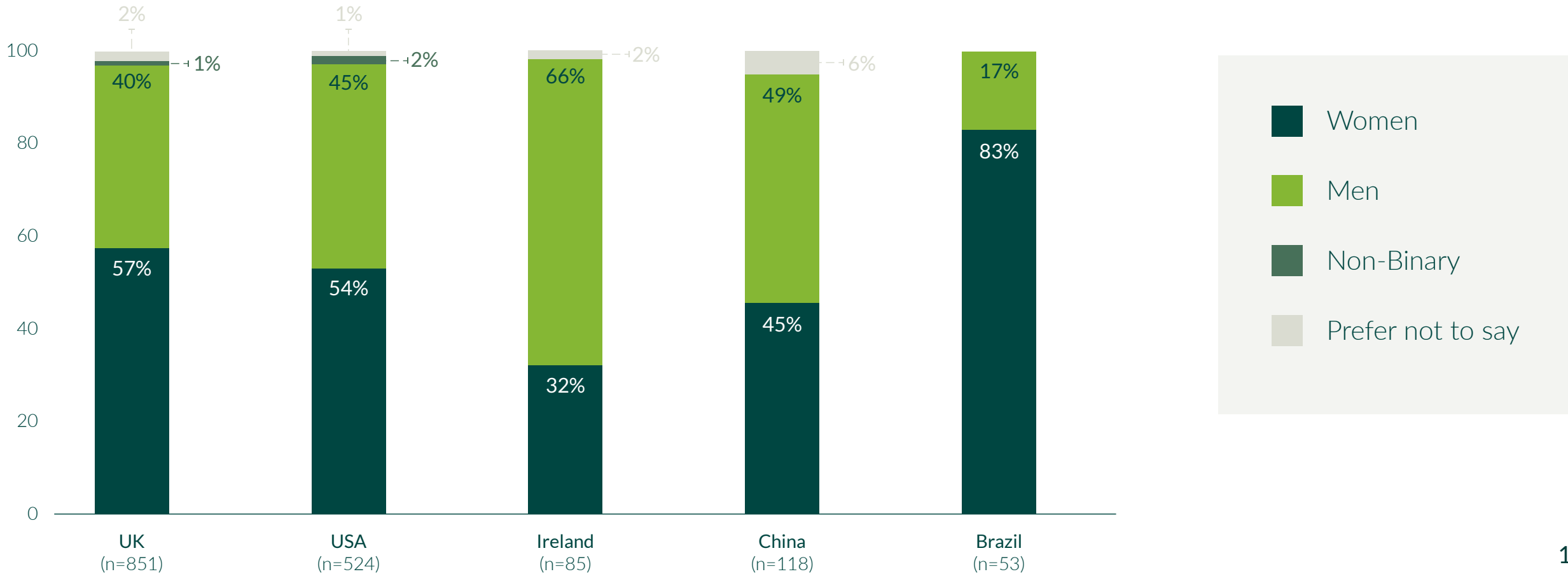
# Supporting our LGBTQ+ community:

## Our objectives:

We commit to supporting and giving a platform to our LGBTQ+ colleagues through our Pride Network. We commit to reviewing our data again in 2021 with new census data to check that we are representative of the societies we work in, and if not commit to action to change that.

## Insights:

- 9% of our population identified themselves as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual with a further 1% self-describing their sexual orientation. This population is represented throughout our organisational levels and across our regions.

- We know that disclosing your sexual orientation at work can be a complicated decision for some, and in certain countries we operate in, is still attached to considerable stigma.

- The data to understand whether we're representative in this area is currently unavailable. The UK census data is from 2011 and shows the UK population as approximately 2% LGB, meanwhile the US 2020 census is currently being conducted and is asking questions on LGBTQ+. New data available in 2021 will allow us to accurately benchmark.

## Evolving our understanding:

- We count every individual according to the gender identity that they identify with, and this is reflected in the data in the previous chapter. We recognise and support our transgender colleagues as part of the LGBTQ+ community.

- Led by Ascential Pride we will work with our Transgender community in 2021, to identify commitments we can make to continue our support of this community and ensure an inclusive space for them.

## Ascential Pride Case Study:

Ascential Pride is an employee network created to unite and inspire our Ascential LGBTQ+ colleagues, provide a voice for our community within the organisation, and educate allies on LGBTQ+ issues to further build an inclusive culture.

Our Pride group was the first Ascential-wide employee network, created organically by a group of LGBTQ+ colleagues back in 2018. We work to create opportunities for members of our group to feel represented at Ascential, and to ensure that all LGBTQ+ Ascential employees can be welcomed, accepted, and celebrated.
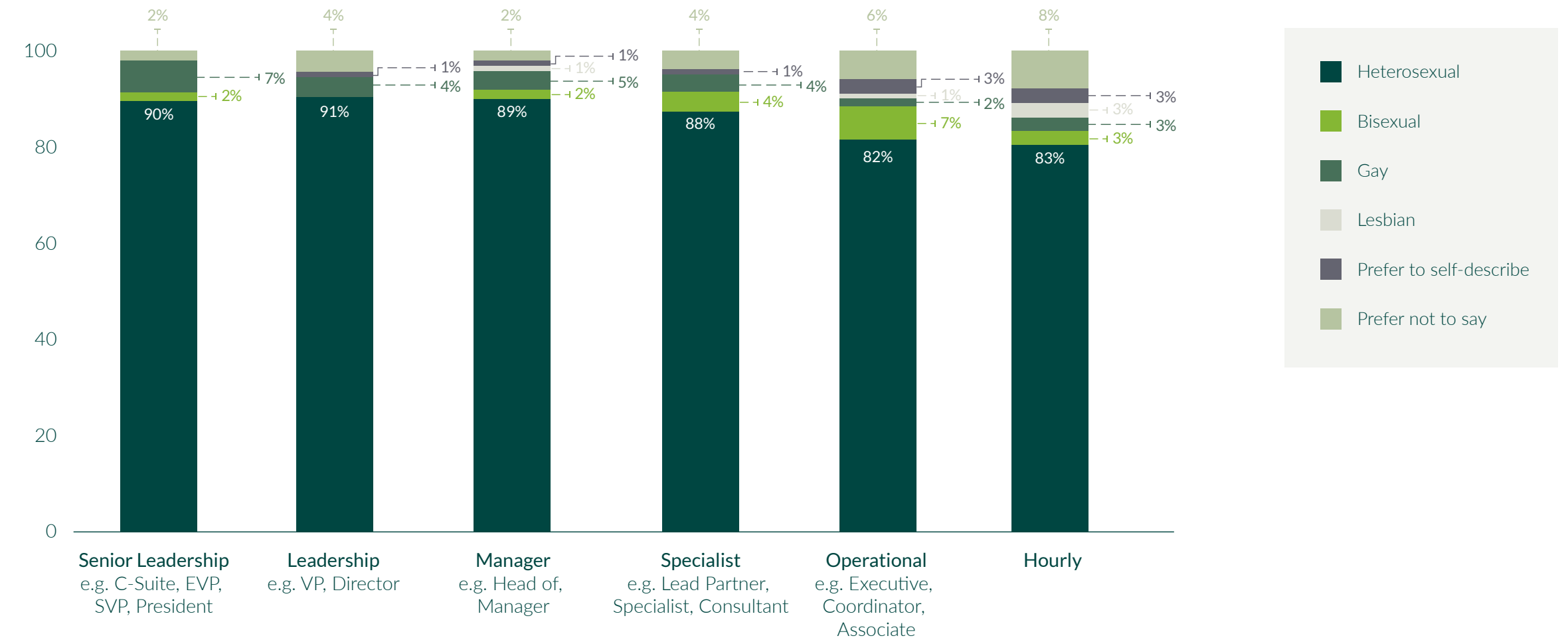
We are always looking to grow our community within Ascential. Please contact pride@ascential.com to receive our newsletter, join our events, and help our voice be heard.

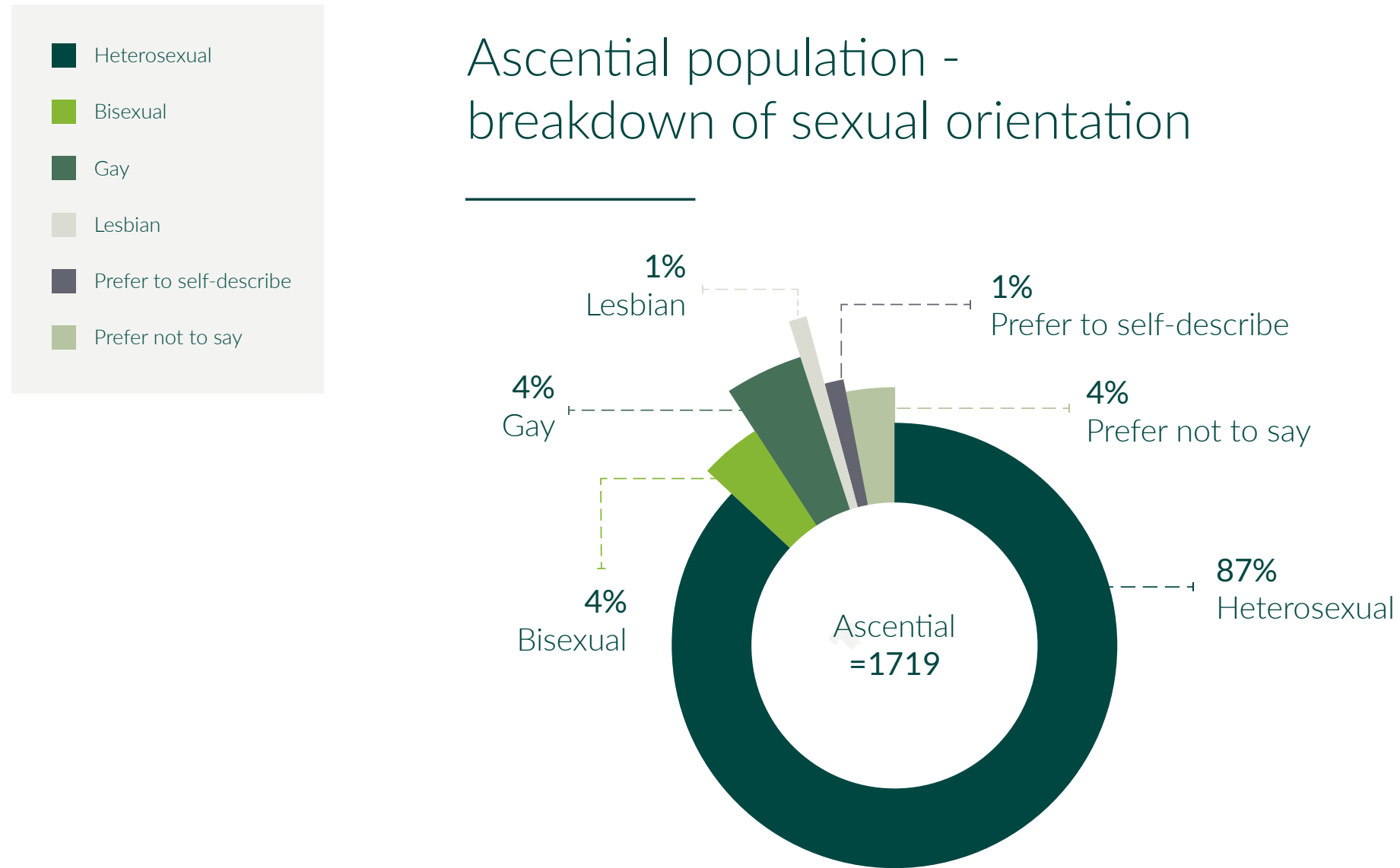*Ascential Pride were consulted in the creation of this report.*

# Sexual Orientation:

The data here focuses on sexual orientation i.e. LGB+ representation. We captured data on our transgender colleagues as part of our question on gender.
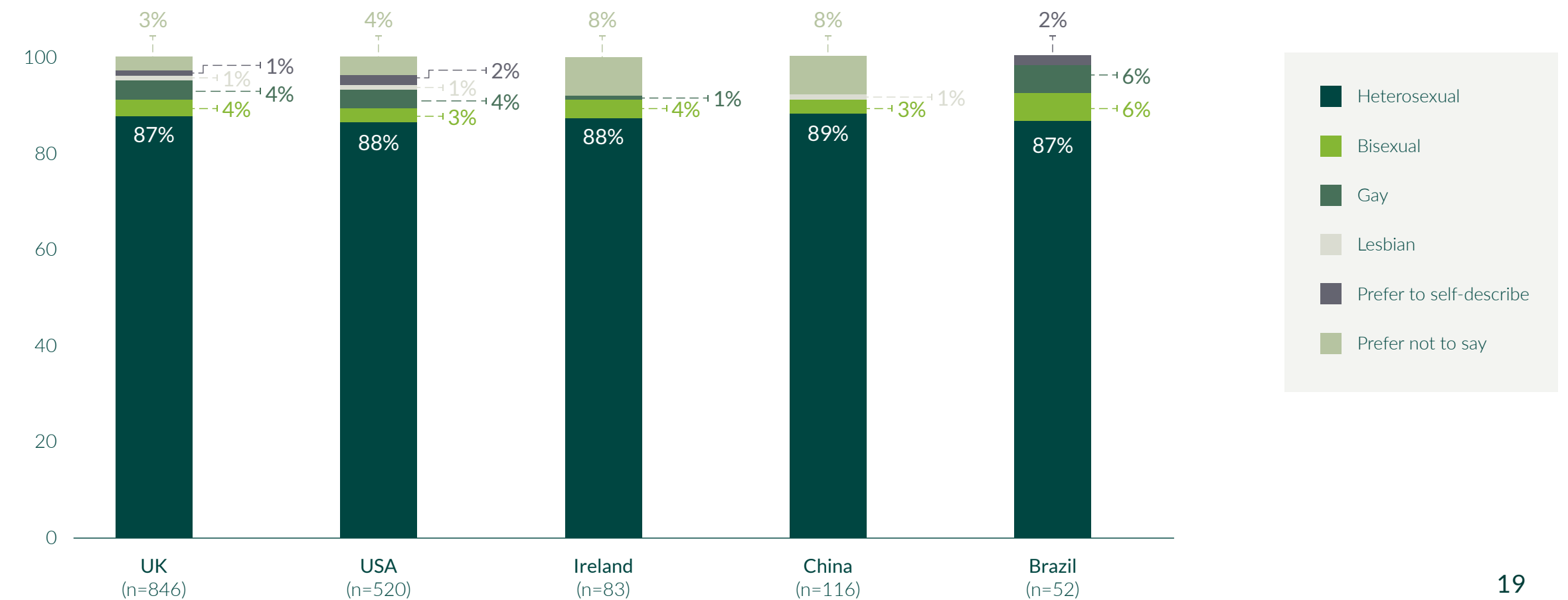
Legend:
- Heterosexual
- Bisexual
- Gay
- Lesbian
- Prefer to self-describe
- Prefer not to say

## Ascential population - breakdown of sexual orientation

Ascential =1719

- 87% Heterosexual
- 4% Bisexual
- 4% Gay
- 1% Lesbian
- 1% Prefer to self-describe
- 4% Prefer not to say

## Sexual orientation breakdown by organisational level

Senior Leadership e.g. C-Suite, EVP, SVP, President — 90%, 2%, 7%, 2%
Leadership e.g. VP, Director — 91%, 4%, 1%, 4%
Manager e.g. Head of, Manager — 89%, 2%, 1%, 5%, 2%
Specialist e.g. Lead Partner, Specialist, Consultant — 88%, 4%, 1%, 4%, 4%
Operational e.g. Executive, Coordinator, Associate — 82%, 6%, 1%, 2%, 7%
Hourly — 83%, 8%, 3%, 3%, 3%, 3%

## Breakdown of sexual orientation in our largest regions

UK (n=846) — 87%, 3%, 1%, 1%, 4%, 4%
USA (n=520) — 88%, 4%, 1%, 4%, 3%
Ireland (n=83) — 88%, 8%, 2%, 1%, 4%
China (n=116) — 89%, 8%, 3%, 1%
Brazil (n=52) — 87%, 2%, 6%, 6%

# Ability:

**17%**
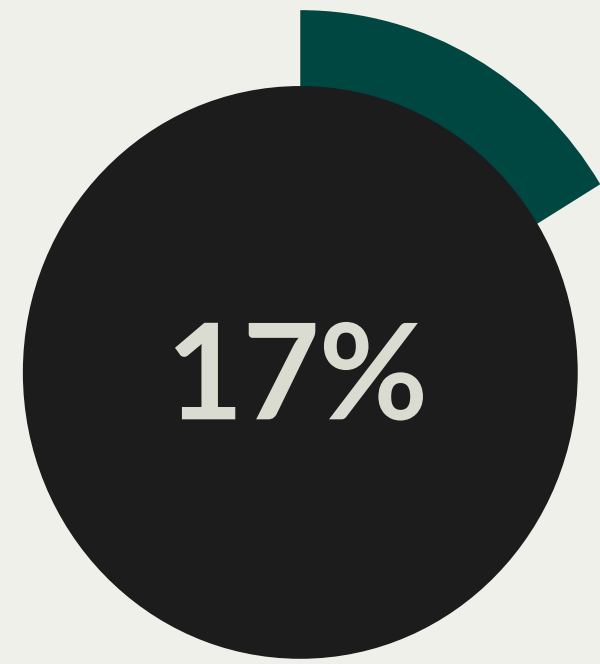
**17%** of our survey respondents identify **mental health** as something which may *"hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others"*

**14%** of survey respondents declared they had a disability other than mental health.

## Our objectives:

- We commit to continuing to empower our business leaders to support their teams' mental health in timely and relevant ways.
- We will continue to provide resources and education to ensure mental health and wellbeing training stays an active and regular part of our learning and development offer. We'll iterate this resource and support as required to keep it relevant and current to the new ways of working.
- As we develop our policies on dispersed working, we commit to ensuring these new ways of working support good mental health and wellbeing as a priority. We will look at where the barriers to entry, into our organisation, might be for individuals with disability and aim to remove them. As home working becomes the norm, we know this will remove some of the barriers to working for us for certain groups with disabilities and we hope we can maximise that opportunity to actively encourage this community to thrive at Ascential.
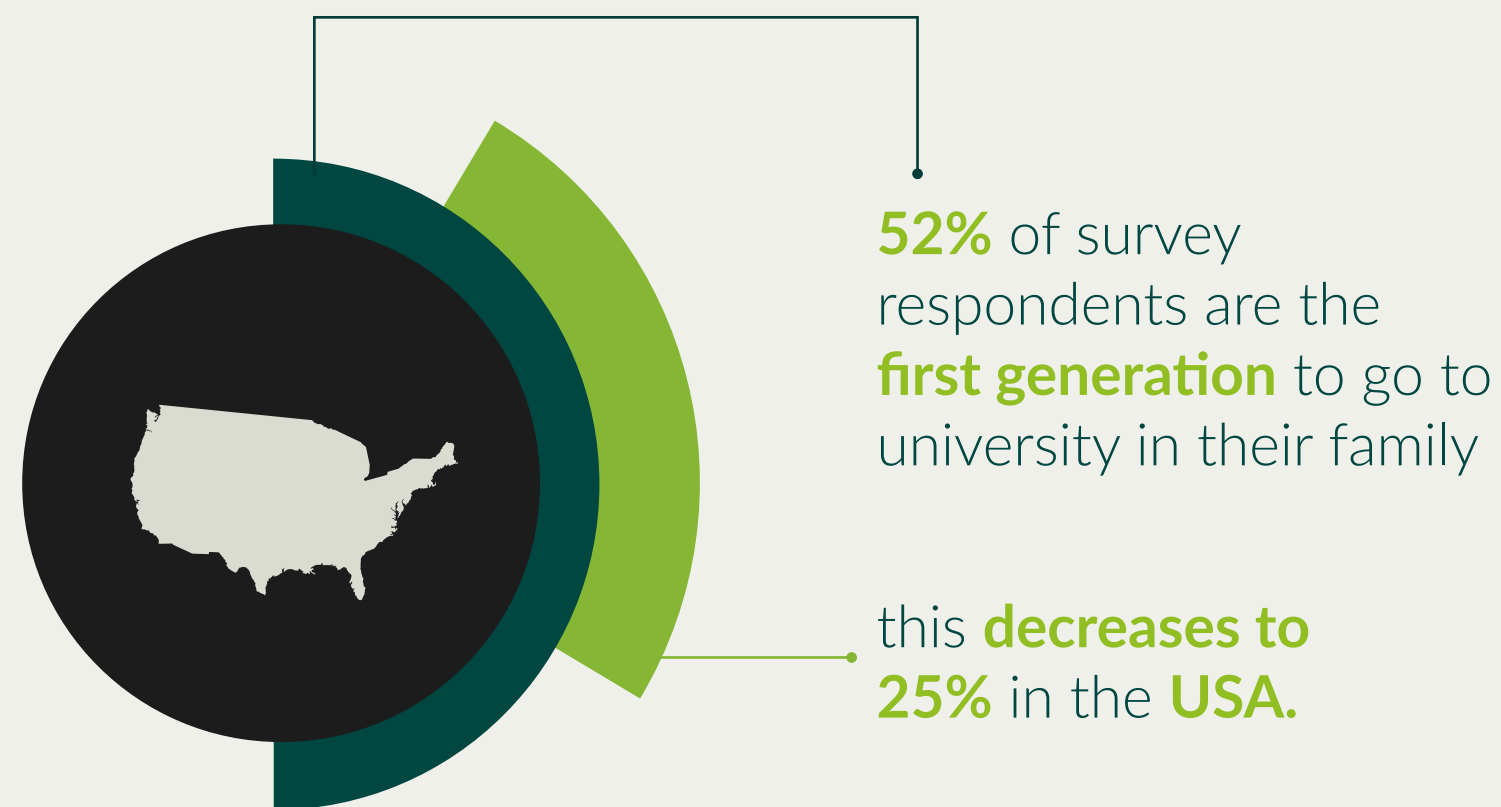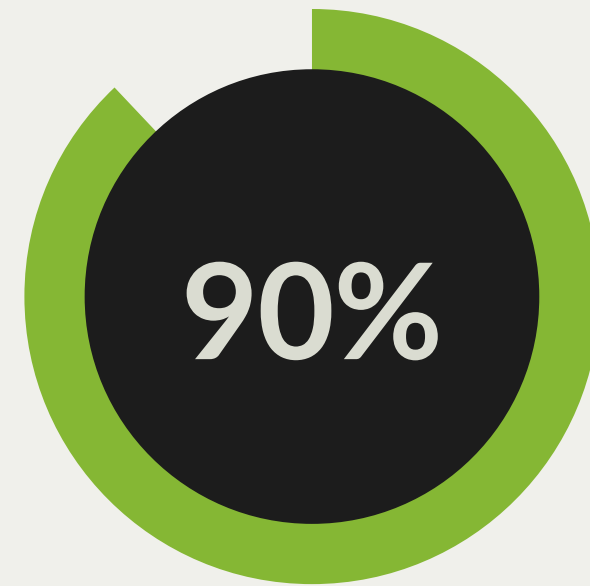
## Evolving our understanding:

- These results have helped us understand that we need to look at the reasons for our under-representation in areas of physical disability and cognitive diversity.
- We know there are some excellent examples of partnerships between charities and businesses working in this space, supporting specific groups of people into specific sectors. E.g. autism and technology. We look to explore this area of work further and understand where a similar model could work in our business.

## Support already available:

- We know there are significant numbers of people across the world suffering with their mental health. UK mental health charity Mind report that 1 in 4 people will experience a mental health problem of some kind each year in England. In the US, the National Institute of Mental Health reports that nearly 1 in 5 US adults live with a mental illness. The global pandemic has, for many, exacerbated poor mental health and added additional pressures to their daily lives. On World Mental Health Day, our senior leaders reached out to their teams to offer support and practical, personal tips around feelings of fatigue and mental overload.
- We have introduced a range of ways to support our colleagues, including training more than 40 Global Mental Health First Aiders, promoting our Employee Assistance Programme and developing our podcast series on working remotely and virtually, covering a range of topics including 'happiness at work', 'confidence and calm' and 'working flexibility'. Details of these tools and the podcast are accessible to all at Ascential via our company intranet.

# Social Mobility:

**90%** of survey respondents have **one or more** degrees

**90%**

**52%** of survey respondents are the **first generation** to go to university in their family

this **decreases to 25%** in the **USA.**

## Our objectives:

- In developing inclusive recruitment guidelines, we will ensure that university education is only a requirement where absolutely necessary and never used as a screening tool in isolation of other experiences or learning.

- We will develop a range of outreach opportunities which align with our corporate responsibility focus to support young people from under-represented groups to thrive in the digital world. We will be reviewing our work experience, internship and apprenticeship opportunities across our regions, to see where we can start or scale these programmes.

- We will work to maintain our existing charity partnerships (e.g. The Prince's Trust in the UK) and understand where we can build on those partnerships. Our aim will be to give opportunities to our colleagues to get involved and share their skills, and also to create opportunities for young people to enter our workforce.

## Insights:

Providing an inclusive workplace isn't only about recognising the importance of representation of protected characteristics including gender, sexual orientation and race. An individual's access to opportunities and privilege whilst growing up is also heavily linked to their educational and professional performance later in life. This area of diversity, known as "social mobility" or "socio-economic diversity", is perhaps the hardest to measure, since socio-economic indicators vary enormously from country to country, which means there isn't yet a global data set for comparison.

The objectives and actions we've set out in this report to address under-representation against a range of protected characteristics will also support us in ensuring we have socio-economic diversity in our organisation.

## Evolving our understanding:

Understanding and measuring socio-economic diversity is a new area for many regions and companies. We look forward to developing our understanding, and in time refining our data collection in this area to create regional action plans on social mobility.
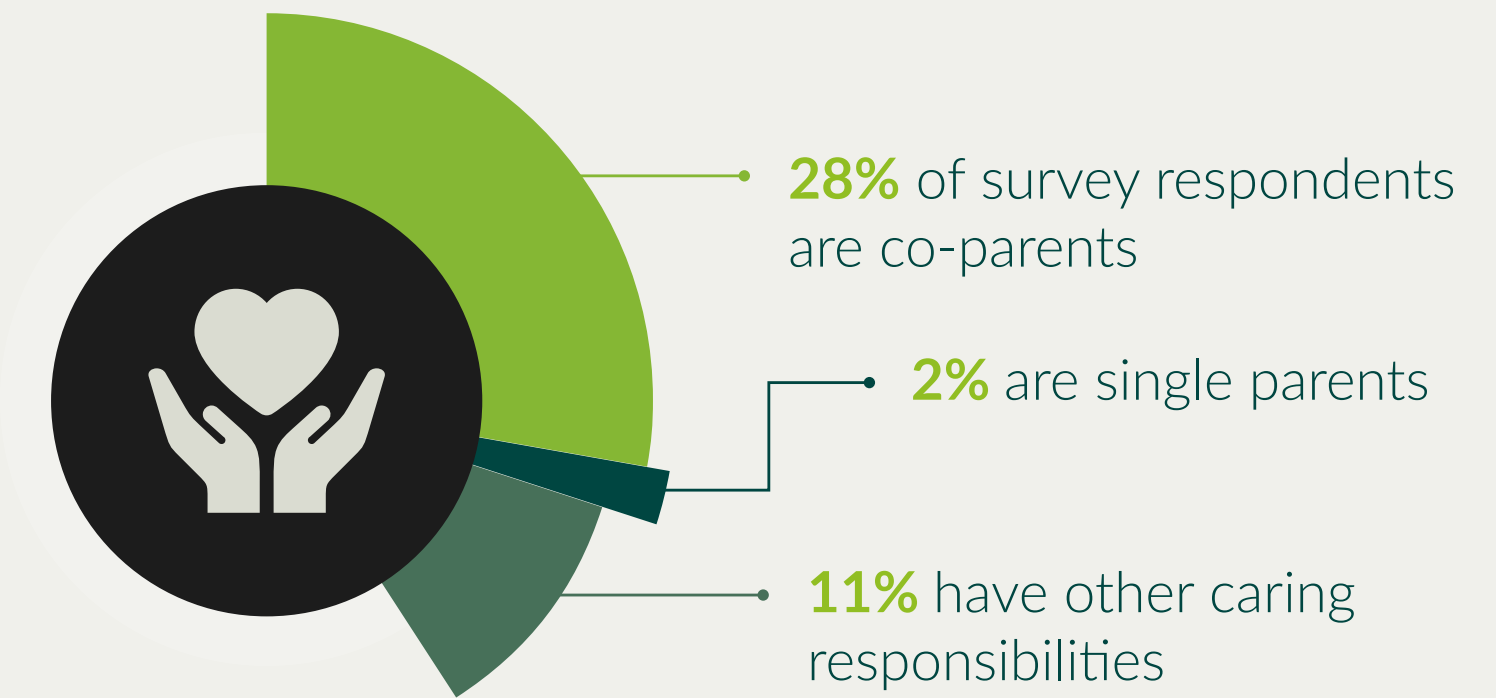
# Further insights on our people

## Insights:

Almost half of our workforce are juggling caring responsibilities with their role at Ascential, something we know has been particularly hard this year with many parents managing work and home-schooling.

### Objectives:

- We commit to reviewing our policies to ensure they are effectively supporting a flexible working approach.
- We aim to create maternity and paternity policies that are equitable across our regions.
- We will work to remove any unintended barriers to the ex-military veteran community entering our workforce.
- Our 2019 Employee Engagement Survey showed that 88% of people felt they had permission to work flexibly and that 91% were comfortable to talk to their manager about their health and wellbeing and get support where needed. We need to both sustain and enhance the support we have for both these areas of focus, particularly as we're reviewing how we work at Ascential.
- The data from these questions will be used whenever reviewing our benefits and working practices to ensure that not only do they support the population we have, but that they aren't putting up barriers to different generations.

### Evolving our understanding:

- During the global lockdown, with the need to work from home, we have learnt many things about how we can work differently. We want to listen to our people and leaders about what has been beneficial, learn from the experience and adapt our ways of working going forward.
- We are currently kicking off a review of policies and practices to look to enable a more diverse and dispersed way of working. Doing this in a conscious way means we need to be mindful of many things — how will we recruit and develop our people differently; how do we need to lead and manage performance and goal setting in a new way; what is the impact on our culture; what are the implications of recruiting in and relocating to different countries; how do we best use our office spaces and so on....
- We are now undertaking a programme of work to answer and review all of these questions so that we can proactively manage new ways of working for our people post-COVID-19. Each work stream within the programme has an Ascential Exec sponsor, and kick-off meetings have commenced.

**28%** of survey respondents are co-parents

**2%** are single parents

**11%** have other caring responsibilities

**1%** of survey respondents are ex-military veterans.

# More than just numbers:

In the survey we also asked three qualitative questions to gain further insight into what the data is telling us. Those questions were:

1. How do you rate Ascential in terms of its level of Diversity and Inclusion? We provided a free text box for people to add further thoughts on this.

2. How comfortable are you in discussing or raising any issues/concerns with respect to Diversity and Inclusion with your Manager or HR?

3. What should Ascential start doing to be more inclusive and enable diverse people to join and build a career here?

## Insights:

- Overall 41% rated Diversity and Inclusion at Ascential as Excellent or Very Good, 32% as Good, 20% rated it Fair and 6% said it was Poor.

- These ratings varied depending on a range of factors: 17% of our Black and African American US colleagues rated Ascential Poor for Diversity and Inclusion (this went down to 4% for our US white colleagues). We want all colleagues to rate Ascential Good or above for Diversity and Inclusion, so this data shows us which areas we need to focus on.

- Co-parents were more likely to rate Ascential as Excellent for Diversity and Inclusion; we hope this means that our existing support for this cohort is proving effective.

- 54% are extremely or very comfortable discussing Diversity and Inclusion with their manager/HR, 29% are somewhat comfortable, 13% are not comfortable and 4% would rather not say.

- Over 50% of respondents provided ideas and suggestions on what more we could be doing to support diverse people to build inclusive careers at Ascential.

- The themes which have come from the question on what we should start doing have informed the commitments and actions throughout this report, and the detailed responses from these questions will be used to inform a wide range of Diversity and Inclusion and people projects across Ascential.

## Actions:

The top five actions which were suggested by the majority of respondents are shown below.

1. Review all recruitment processes and policies to remove barriers to entry from under-represented groups

2. Create an outreach programme to develop an early talent pipeline

3. Create a more diverse senior leadership team

4. Provide more Diversity and Inclusion training opportunities

5. Create an internal mentoring programme to support internal progression

All of these actions are now underway, e.g. company-wide mentoring programme, development of an early talent pipeline, leadership succession planning and company-wide Diversity and Inclusion training. The overarching objectives outlined at the top of this report will only be met if we deliver these actions. We commit to sharing the specific details of each of these actions with the Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group for them to input and share the details with their teams.

# Thanks and find out more

We're grateful for the ongoing contributions, feedback and review from our Diversity and Inclusion Leadership Group and our Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group.

Thanks to all of our colleagues at Ascential for providing us with the rich insight to develop this report and your ongoing work to see its actions and recommendations realised.

If you would like to know more about Diversity and Inclusion, or Corporate Social Responsibility at Ascential, please contact **CSR@ascential.com**

# Appendix

# UK Gender Pay Gap Reporting

- In the UK, from 2017, any organisation that has 250 or more employees must publish and report specific figures about their potential gender pay gap.

- The UK Government sets out the methodology for working out the potential pay gap and the way in which this information must be displayed.

- For the past three years, we have published our UK pay. In 2020, we are publishing the data set taken at April 2019 in accordance with the UK legislation. The data for 2018 (collected April 2018) and 2019 (data collected April 2019) is set out on the next page.

- In this Diversity and Inclusion report, we commit to putting in place robust measurement and assessment globally in order to understand any possible equity disparity in our under-represented groups.

- The reporting we conduct under UK legislation is a starting point for the above objective. In 2021 we will start to regularly collect and analyse both ethnicity and gender data on our HR system. This will provide the real-time intersectional insights needed to inform any specific areas where additional activity may be required, and if so, inform the appropriate actions to address those areas over subsequent years consistent with our overarching timelines.

- Please read the Gender chapter (from page 16) in this report to further assess how we're preparing to understand any potential pay gaps across Ascential and our aims to close the identified gap in the UK.

## UK methodology for reporting on Gender Pay Gap:

The UK Gender Pay Gap reporting constitutes six measurement metrics which are defined below.

**Mean Gender Pay Gap**

The difference between the mean hourly rate of male full-pay employees and that of female full-pay employees

**Median Gender Pay Gap**

The difference between the median hourly rate of male full-pay employees and that of female full-pay employees

**Mean Bonus Pay Gap**

The difference between the mean bonus pay paid to male employees and that paid to female employees

**Median Bonus Gap**

The difference between the mean bonus pay paid to male employees and that paid to female employees

**Bonus Proportions**

The proportions of male and female relevant employees who were paid bonus pay during the year

**Quartile pay bands**

The proportions of male and female employees in the lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper quartile pay bands

# 2019 UK data
## - as recorded in April 2019 (reported in 2020)

For the past three years, we have published our UK pay data to understand where we have any pay gap between genders in our business. Please read the Gender chapter (from page 16) in this report to find out more about how we're approaching gender pay gaps at Ascential.

- Similar to last year, there are more female employees than male in the lower, lower middle and upper middle pay quartiles and more male than female employees in the highest-paid quartile (Q4).
- The largest pay gap occurs in the most highly-paid quartile, which contributed significantly to the increase in the overall mean figures for gender bonus gap and gender pay gap.
- The compensation amounts tended to be larger in the Q4 group, emphasising the gap.
- There were more male than female employees paid annual bonuses and payments from a long-term incentive plan.
- At the time of reporting, Ascential was 55.4% female and 44.6% male. 83% of male employees received a bonus (either annual bonus or sales performance bonus) compared with 80% of female employees. Almost double the number of female employees were paid sales performance bonuses than male employees in the reporting period.

## Notes on the data

- The company underwent extensive change in the reporting period. The Exhibitions business was sold and the company acquired Flywheel, Clavis, WARC and Brandview. So Ascential is a very different entity from when the 2017/2018 gender pay gap figures were produced.
- It has not been possible to bring in all pay and bonus data from the acquired brands because data was missing.

### 2018

| Ascential UK | Mean | Median |
|---|---|---|
| Gender pay gap | 18.5% ▲ | 20.3% ▼ |
| Gender bonus gap | 38.2% ▼ | 32.4% ▲ |

**Proportion of female and male receiving a bonus**

81%          82%
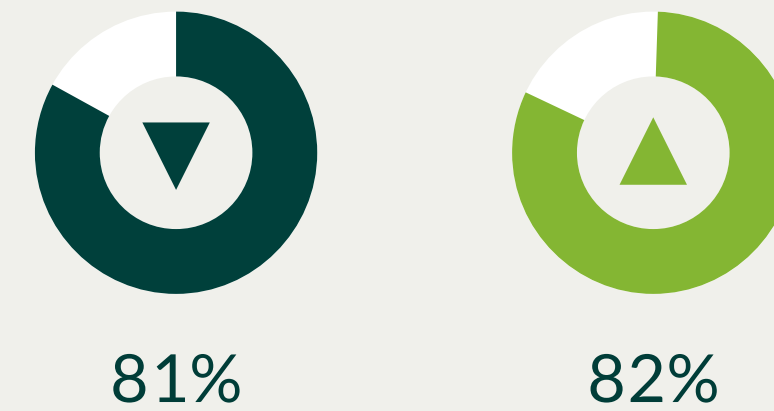
| % female/male in each quartile band | Female | Male |
|---|---|---|
| Lower quartile | 66% ▼ | 34% ▲ |
| Lower middle quartile | 61% ▲ | 39% ▼ |
| Upper middle quartile | 52% ▬ | 48% ▬ |
| Upper quartile | 48% ▼ | 51% ▲ |

### 2019

| Ascential UK | Mean | Median |
|---|---|---|
| Gender pay gap | 25.0% ▲ | 13.0% ▼ |
| Gender bonus gap | 22.2% ▼ | 24.5% ▼ |

**Proportion of female and male receiving a bonus**

80%          83%
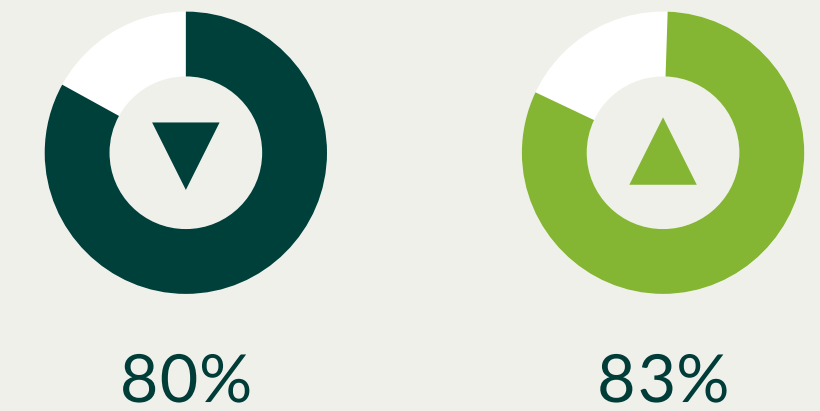
| % female/male in each quartile band | Female | Male |
|---|---|---|
| Lower quartile | 61.9% ▼ | 38.1% ▲ |
| Lower middle quartile | 63.6% ▲ | 36.4% ▼ |
| Upper middle quartile | 52.4% ▲ | 47.6% ▼ |
| Upper quartile | 44.4% ▼ | 55.6% ▲ |

■ Female  ■ Male  ▼▲ The arrows indicate either upward or downward movement from the previous year.