**BTS NDRC – LVA OBLIGATOIRE 2024**

**Is a lack of diversity holding back the fashion industry?**

Catwalks[[1]](#footnote-1) may be more diverse than a few years ago, but what about the boardrooms? A new report says fashion brands would do better business if they were more inclusive.

The top jobs in the British fashion industry are still overwhelmingly held by white men, according to a new report. While that might [feel like old news](https://www.theguardian.com/fashion/2023/dec/03/male-pale-and-out-of-step-why-fashion-houses-have-such-a-problem-with-diversity), the business case for making workforces better reflect society is perhaps less regularly made.

[The inaugural Fashion Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI) report, released today, finds that only 9% of executive and 11% of so-called power roles, which include chief executive, chief financial officer, chair and creative director positions, are held by people of colour. 39% of executive teams and 24% of power posts are occupied by women.](https://www.theguardian.com/fashion/2023/dec/03/male-pale-and-out-of-step-why-fashion-houses-have-such-a-problem-with-diversity)

Across industries, a diverse workforce, it points out, “improves decision-making up to 87% of the time – the result of expanded perspectives”, which, in turn, “feeds through to the bottom line”. It finds that diverse businesses are 39% more likely to outperform financially, while improving DEI is important for companies looking to attract talent, with “39% of global job seekers [having] turned down or decided not to pursue jobs because of a perceived lack of inclusion.”

Alongside this, consumers are increasingly choosing to leverage their spending power with companies that they perceive as reflecting their values, with about 50% of millennials saying “it is important or very important to choose brands that have a gender equity stance”.

“The whole point now is to reposition DEI as a business imperative and a lever for profitability and financial success,” says Jamie Gill, founder of the [Outsiders Perspective](https://www.theoutsidersperspective.org/), a not-for-profit incubation platform for people of colour in fashion that co-authored the report. In the current turbulent economic climate, he argues, DEI should not be sidelined[[2]](#footnote-2). “Having the right people around the table, having those fresh perspectives from all different walks of life is really what we need to look at,” he says. [...]

The need for greater diversity and inclusion runs deeper than good commercial sense, but, says Gill, “we haven’t moved the needle in the last three and half years, since the conversation was brought to the world stage … We’ve been saying there’s a need for humanity and that hasn’t landed.”

[Ellie Violet Bramley](https://www.theguardian.com/profile/ellie-violet-bramley), Tue 23 Jan 2024 10.30 CET*,* theguardian.com

1. Catwalks : défilés [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Sidelined : rejected [↑](#footnote-ref-2)