Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Advancing diversity, equity and inclusion in the UK workplace and society

Aleron

Foreword

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CEO & Founder

At Aleron, our commitment to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) runs deep. This commitment is evident not only in our external engagements but also within the very fabric of our firm. We believe DEI is paramount in building an organisation that attracts, nurtures, and retains outstanding talent.

From our very beginning, we've been privileged to spearhead DEI initiatives across a diverse array of sectors - from higher education to motorsport, from medical research to insurance, and many more. Our involvement doesn't stop there. We've played key roles in fostering a more inclusive internet and ensuring the development of trustworthy AI products and services. Evaluating DEI programmes, formulating strategies, gathering vast amounts of data, and honing our analytics capabilities - all these tasks are undertaken to empower our clients with actionable insights and allow them to monitor and communicate their DEI progress.

We've witnessed, first hand, the myriad benefits of cultivating an equitable workplace and society: heightened innovation, informed decision-making, superior customer service, and a boost in employee morale and productivity.

This document offers a snapshot of our approaches and the wisdom we've garnered. Our dedicated DEI consultants are always eager to share their learnings and offer guidance. We encourage you to reach out.

Empowering Tomorrow

Beyond moral imperatives a diverse and inclusive workforce is required for sustainable performance
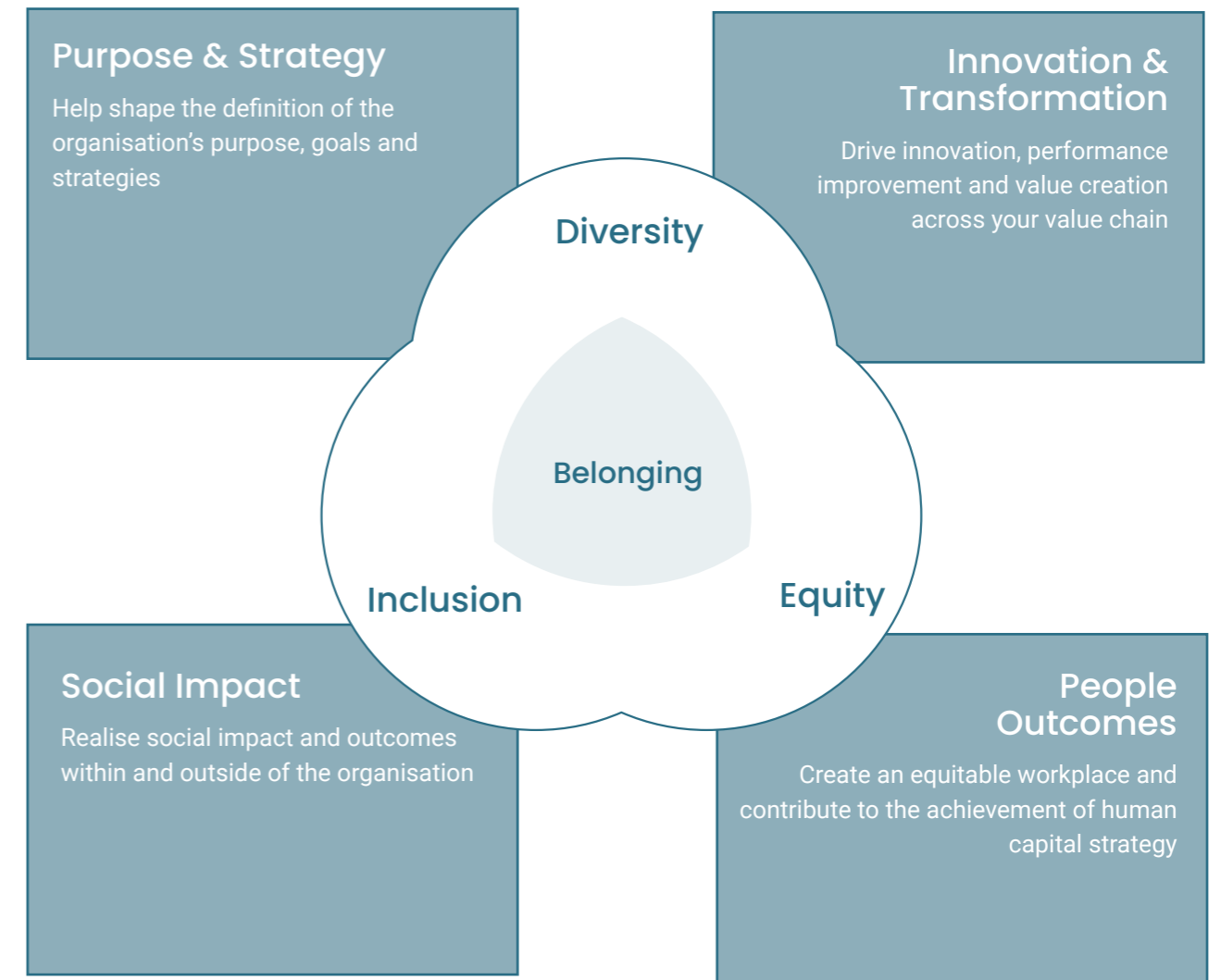
In 2023, a rapidly evolving global landscape places a premium on adaptability, creativity, and diverse perspectives.

For UK organisations specifically, the post-Brexit environment, coupled with international shifts towards more inclusive governance and commerce, underscores the necessity of a robust diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) strategy.

Beyond moral imperatives a diverse and inclusive workforce is linked to enhanced innovation, better decision-making, and improved financial performance. It is also a unique opportunity to drive positive social outcomes for customers, suppliers, other stakeholders and more broadly, our society.

We typically consider the following four areas when developing DEI strategies:

- **Purpose & Strategy:** Effective DEI strategies have to be developed in the context of the environment in which the organisation operates. They have the power to help share the organisation's purpose, goals and strategy.

- **Innovation & Transformation:** Embedding DEI across the value chain drives innovation, performance improvement and value creation. This includes designing and developing new products and services and improving operating models and ways of working.

- **People Outcomes:** By creating an equitable workplace, DEI initiatives and policies enable greater opportunities for employees and contribute to the achievement of the human capital strategy.

- **Social Impact:** DEI initiatives can drive social impact and outcomes within and outside of the organisation. One example is by reducing the barriers to education and employment pathways.

Purpose & Strategy

Help shape the definition of the organisation's purpose, goals and strategies

Innovation & Transformation

Drive innovation, performance improvement and value creation across your value chain

Social Impact

Realise social impact and outcomes within and outside of the organisation

People Outcomes

Create an equitable workplace and contribute to the achievement of human capital strategy

Diversity

Belonging

Inclusion

Equity

Understanding DEI

Diversity in itself is not enough to achieve equity or inclusion; everyone should have the same opportunities to succeed

Diversity is the foundation of equity and inclusion. Diversity recognises the breadth of human experiences, backgrounds and identities. It's about valuing every individual for who they are, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality or any other characteristic.

The UK, with its multicultural cities and a long history of immigration, has a living tapestry of cultures, languages and traditions. Harnessing this diversity means drawing strength from different viewpoints, ideas and skills. We typically consider the six dimensions to account for people's diversity (see table).

Equity is about ensuring fair treatment, access and opportunity for all, addressing the imbalances that might exist due to societal structures. In the context of the UK, it means recognising the challenges faced by specific communities, from racial and ethnic minorities to LGBTQIA+ individuals and ensuring that barriers to success, whether they be in education, employment, or elsewhere, are identified and dismantled.

Inclusion is about creating environments where everyone not only has a seat at the table but feels truly valued, heard and involved. For UK organisations this means fostering a culture where differences are celebrated, where every voice matters and where everyone has an equal opportunity to thrive.

Belonging is considered the emotional culmination of any DEI initiative. Employees should feel comfortable and feel like they are accepted as they are in the workplace. Though intangible and hard to quantify, belonging is a crucial part in really cultivating a truly inclusive space for all employees.

Physical	Cognitive	Societal
Who we are and what others think they see	How we think and process information	How we connect and relate to society
o Age o Appearance o Gender o Health o Physical abilities o Race o Sex	o Communication style o Emotional Intelligence o Interpersonal style o Introvert/Extrovert o IQ o Learning style o Mental abilities o Neurodivergence (ADHD, ASD, Autism etc.)	o Education (individual and parents level) o Ethnicity o Geographic location o Language o Origin o Political o Social class o Socio economic status
Relational	**Occupational**	**Values**
How we relate and rejuvenate	How we work and what we do	What we believe and feel
o Family Status o Generation o Habits o Sexual/Romantic orientation o Parental Status o Birth Order o Activities/Interests	o Industry o Division/department unit o Seniority o Work style o Skills/talent o Tenure o Work location o Union/group affiliation o Management status o Previous experience of DEI	o Attitudes o Beliefs o Convictions o Culture o Morals o Practices o Religion o Spirituality

Above are the six dimensions that define the diversity of an individual.

Making DEI work

We have identified five characteristic to successful DEI strategies and initiatives

Despite widespread communication of intent and discussions about DEI, progress remains slow on the ground in some industries. Common challenges include lack of leadership support, unclear goals and case for change, internal resistance, limited data and metrics or lack of resources. Below are the five key imperatives to consider on you DEI journey.

Understanding and prioritising DEI themes

Your starting point should be to understand the DEI challenges and opportunities that are specific to the environment in which you operate (e.g. sector, geography) and your organisation. This should be informed by a factual analysis of your ecosystem and an identification of the key issues and their root causes. The analysis and prioritisation of the problem areas should ideally involve the target populations that you have identified.

Setting clear goals and explaining how the targeted outcomes will be achieved

After prioritising an opportunity area, you need to define goals and outcomes in the short, medium and long-term. Some organisations will use a logic model or theory of change to explain how the outcomes will be delivered. This makes the articulation of the case for change easier and helps to connect the strategies to the organisation's purpose and business outcomes. It also clarifies which actions have to be taken by whom, from within or, sometimes, outside the organisation.

Designing fit-for purpose solutions and mobilising employees for sustainable change

The design of the solutions and activities should be informed by the understanding of the root causes and the outcomes model. The change should be integrated in the relevant processes and ways of working to enable scalable and sustainable impact. Employees should be informed, equipped and encourage to embrace the new ways of working.

Ensuring leadership support and accountability

DEI strategies and initiatives should get the buy-in of the senior leadership and be included in the organisational strategies and objectives. It is critical to ensure that the initiatives are adequately resourced and funded and receive appropriate visibility and sponsorship. Moreover, senior leaders have to be accountable for the DEI outcomes and be change-makers themselves.

Monitoring process and adjusting solutions

Issues and opportunities related to diversity, equity and inclusion are not static. You need to define clear and measurable performance indicators, track progress regularly and make necessary adjustments to strategies and initiatives.

Measuring DEI

Our framework enables benchmarking and ongoing measurement of progress

The lack of data about DEI is often cited as one of the main challenges for organisations. It prevents the understanding of the core DEI issues, the design of effective solutions and the measurement of progress and success.

We have developed a DEI measurement framework to help you quantify, measure and track diversity, equity and inclusion in your organisation. The framework can be easily tailored to your organisation to consider your operating environment and your DEI aspirations. The selection of data will compliant with local regulations and data privacy requirements.

The framework includes four distinct areas:

- **DEI Strategy & Execution:** The objective is to measure the extent to which the DEI strategy has been developed, communicated and implemented across the organisation. This looks both at what has been achieved and how it is perceived by employees.

- **Diversity:** We want to measure the diversity of the workforce and the extent to which diversity is embedded within the organisation.

- **Equity:** In this section, we analyse equity metrics such as pay, promotion, retention, attrition and work-life balance and collect employees feedback on the equability of the current processes and ways of working.

- **Inclusion & Belonging:** This last area aims to test the extent to which employees feel welcome, respected and valued by combining an analysis of incidents, complaints and communications with employees feedback.

	Quantitative measures	Employees' Feedback
DEI Strategy & Execution A DEI strategy that clarifies the why, what and how, and is embedded in the organisation	o DEI strategy o DEI goals & reporting o DEI resources o DEI policies and initiatives o DEI Training o DEI Communication	o Awareness/assessment of the quantitative measures o Suggestions or initiatives

Diversity
 	
A diverse workforce includes people from different backgrounds, races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations and abilities
	o Individual diversity dimensions
	  • Physical
	  • Cognitive
	  • Relational
	  • Occupational
	  • Societal
	  • Values
		o Diverse workforce
		o Celebration of diversity
		o Comfort discussing own diversity
		o Role models
		o Decision-making
		o Diversity across the employee life cycle
		o Barriers or challenges
		o Incidents
		o Suggestions or initiatives

Equity An equitable workplace provides everyone with the same opportunities for advancement, taking into consideration their background and circumstances	o Pay equity o Promotion opportunities o Employee retention or attrition o Work-Life balance	o Fairness and equality across the employee life cycle o Transparency and communications o Decision-making o Work-life balance o Barriers or challenges o Incidents o Suggestions or initiatives
Inclusion & Belonging An inclusive workplace is one where everyone feels welcome, respected, and valued	o Incidents of discrimination or harassment o Complaints about inclusion o Inclusive language and communication	o Welcome o Valued o Understood o Supported o Trust o Belonging o Psychological safety o Barriers or challenges o Incidents o Suggestions or initiatives

Measuring DEI

Our framework is tailored to help you benchmark diversity, equity and inclusion throughout the employee life cycle, ensuring consistent measurement of progress against your objectives. Complementing this, our suite of DEI dashboards enhances visibility into your DEI performance. These dashboards not only support informed decision-making but also bolster transparency and accountability throughout the organisation.
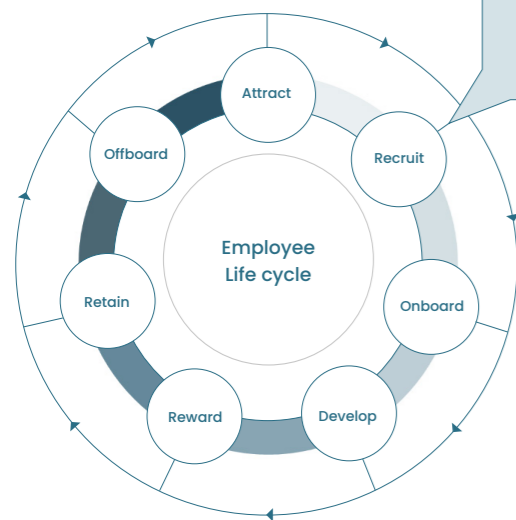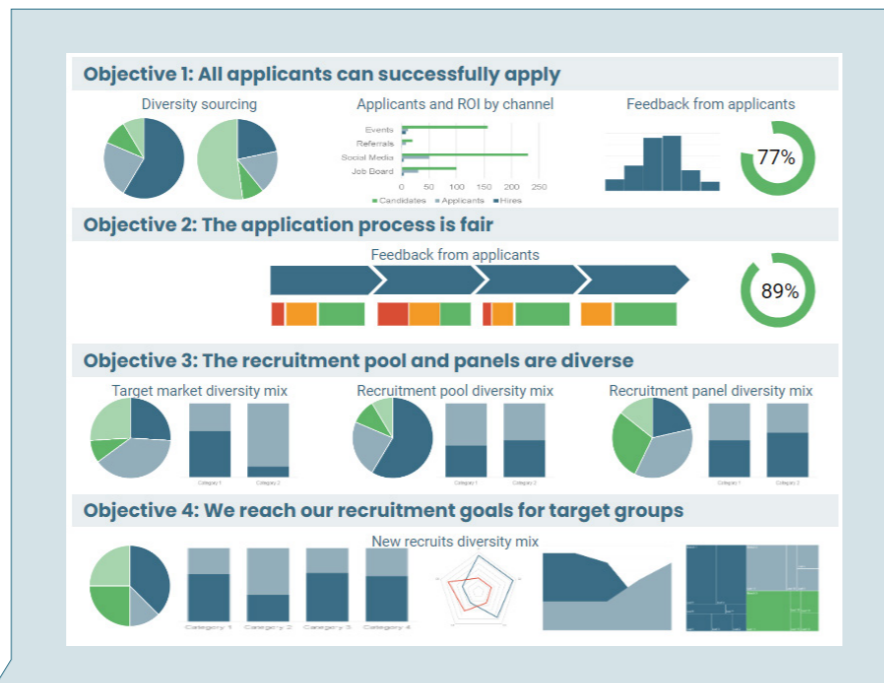
Above is an illustrative example of DEI dashboard at the recruitment phase of the employee life cycle.

Our DEI Consulting Services

We combine DEI expertise with advanced analytics to help our clients create a more equitable future

We support you in understanding DEI challenges and opportunities, and driving change within and outside your organisation. We help you embed DEI in everything you do across business functions and organisational priorities.

Our starting point is to learn about you. We want to understand your ways of working, your culture, where you are as an organisation in your DEI journey and your ambitions for the future.

Research and Diagnostic

- **System Mapping:** Analysing the state of DEI in a sector, mapping pathways and identifying opportunities and challenges.

- **DEI Diagnostic:** Running an organisational DEI diagnostic to assess the current state (including benchmarking) and inform strategies and plans.

- **Materiality Analysis:** Supporting an organisational ESG materiality assessment that includes DEI.

- **Due Diligence:** Performing DEI and Human Rights due diligences.

Vision and Strategy

- **DEI Strategy:** Developing data-driven strategies that embed diversity, equity and inclusion across the organisation as an accelerator of purpose, business value and sustainability.

- **System Change:** Engaging with stakeholders to build sector-wide DEI strategies to drive change at scale.

- **Organisational Models:** Shaping an organisation strategy and operating model that embraces DEI.

Enablement and Integration

- **Leadership & Culture:** Creating an inclusive, accessible environment and culture where everyone belongs, is valued and is empowered.

- **Inclusive Employer:** Providing fair and supportive career pathways to give everyone equal access to opportunities across the employee life cycle (e.g. new talent pools, skills development, advancement and diverse workforce retention).

- **Inclusive Practices and Value Chain:** Designing business practices and policies that provide employees and partners with access and opportunities to succeed and promote innovative, responsive and cost-competitive solutions.

- **Inclusive Growth:** Identifying growth opportunities by integrating DEI into business/market expansion and product development.

- **Inclusive Design:** Innovating through inclusive and accessible design, enabling more to engage and access products and services equitably.

- **Learning & Development**: Improving the knowledge and skills of leaders and teams in DEI.

- **Collective Impact:** Building stakeholder partnerships on societal impact.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- **Performance Management:** Measuring and communicating DEI achievements through the development of DEI dashboards. scorecards and reports.

- **Evaluation:** Assessing the impact of DEI initiatives and interventions (e.g. mentoring programme).

Why Aleron

We are committed to helping your organisation not only to value diversity but to thrive on it

Data-Driven

We put data at the centre of our work, from the initial analysis of the current state to the definition of measurable goals and monitoring progress over time. We use advanced analytics to understand how mindsets, behaviours and actions are shifting over time and contribute to a more inclusive environment and culture.

Co-Production

We believe that the design of DEI interventions should be informed by the needs and the voices of those who are most marginalised; our teams bring expertise in user-centred design, co-production and multi-stakeholder engagement.

System Change

Sustainable change happens in an ecosystem of aligned leaders and strong governance. We help you to identify the root causes and interrelationships of systemic problems to drive outcomes and impact within your organisation and/or our society.

Collaboration

We work closely with you, understanding your unique needs and perspectives, to collaboratively frame your DEI aspirations. Together, we strategise to secure leadership commitment, ensure staff buy-in and diligently embed the necessary processes, capabilities and tools to efficiently and effectively realise your overarching organisational goals.

On the ground experience

We know what it takes to deliver sustainable change at scale. Our work is informed by our own track record advancing DEI matters and the experience of our practitioners, partners and technical advisors. Over the years, we have established partnerships across the private, public and non-profit sectors to bring the relevant operational, technical and analytical expertise in DEI areas that matter to you.

Our work in DEI

Improving diversity in motorsport

We worked with a Formula 1 company and a nonprofit organisation to analyse the education and employment pathways to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) careers' in motorsport and identify the root causes of the lack of diversity in the sport. This has led to the identification of specific interventions to address the identified issues and the development of the organisation's grant-making strategy.

Connecting disadvantaged young people to employment

We led the design phase of a digital solution to connect young people aged 16-30 to available jobs in the technology sector. We set up a youth board to co-develop the digital solution and engaged with employers through surveys, interviews and focus groups. The application is currently in development and will be launched later in the year.

Evaluating diversity mentoring programmes

We helped with a market leader in DEI mentoring programmes to evaluate the outcomes and impact delivered by their different mentoring programmes. This analysis looked at the programmes as a whole and the benefits to each of the participating organisations. We have also supported the development of their most recent impact report.

Measuring DEI in research and improving the research culture

We worked with a British research institute to assess the diversity of their staff and their organisational culture. The work was done through a range of data collection methods which included a mix of HR data, employee surveys, employee focus groups and selected interviews. Our work informed the development of new roles and policies to improve DEI and transform the research culture. It also served as a baseline for the monitoring of the progress made.

Improving diversity in food businesses

We supported a provider of shared kitchen workspace in assessing the diversity of their members and identifying policies to address the barriers faced by specific target groups in setting up a food business. As part of our work, we have conducted research on diversity in the food industry and developed a theory of change.
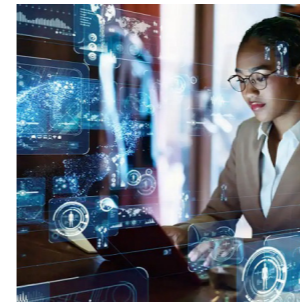
Building a more inclusive digital and AI services

An American technology company and their foundation engaged us to develop a strategy and action plan to build a better and more inclusive internet, and launch a movement on trustworthy artificial intelligence (AI). Our work involved an analysis of the DEI issues related to the design of AI products and services.

Creating DEI insight to inform strategies

We worked with a UK insurer to develop greater insight about the diversity, equity and inclusion of their workforce to inform future strategies. Our work involved defining the DEI metrics that they should track and benchmarking the results so that they could identify the right interventions and suitable ways of working to support an inclusive workplace. As part of this process, we helped them build the case for change for their leadership and the communication to their employees.

Aleron

Aleron was established to bring a new approach to creating positive and sustainable change

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About Us

In 2010, Aleron was established to bring a new approach to creating positive and sustainable change around the world. After over a decade of working in social impact and sustainability, we have seen the incredible benefits carefully targeted action can have on society and the environment and how to make sustainable change happen at scale.

We actively partner with our clients to co-create strategies and capabilities that deliver positive and sustainable economic, environmental, and social impact. No matter the industry, Aleron helps organisations define and achieve their purpose.

Through our work we have enabled critical advances in medical research, build resilience in local vulnerable communities, accelerate investments towards alternative ways to generate electricity or guide organisations to achieve net zero emissions.

Collaboration is key to tackling complex social and environmental challenges. At Aleron, we believe public, private and non-profit actors must work together to be effective forces for good. We work across sectors, bringing public bodies, corporates, non-profits, social enterprises, foundations and investors together to address and achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Our Services

We support you at each point of your sustainability journey

Purpose

Stating your intended contribution to our society and planet

The purpose of an organisation is the very reason why the organisation exists —beyond simply making a profit. Purpose gives direction and informs your decisions and culture.

Leveraging over 12 years of experience in social impact and sustainability, our approach helps you clearly define your purpose and embed it in your organisation and decisions.
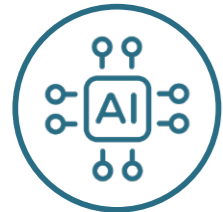
Research

Generating the insight required to develop impactful strategies

Our team brings unique expertise in primary and secondary research, data analysis, and real-world experience to identify solutions to complex social and environmental issues. We use a combination of surveys, interviews, focus groups, data collection and site visits to conduct our primary research. Our analytics team leverages the latest techniques and tools in machine learning and generative AI to generate actionable insights.

Strategy

Developing impact and ESG strategies to create social value and achieve your purpose

We provide insight to stimulate thinking, generate new ideas and guide our clients towards making the right ESG strategic choices. Beyond our research capabilities, we offer a wide range of proprietary tools and services that support every element of strategy development. Our reputation for collaborating with clients to achieve exceptional results is unmatched in the social impact and ESG industry.

Transformation

Building the capabilities to drive action, and accelerate impact

We help organisations identify their potential for ESG transformation through a proprietary suite of diagnostics and tools. With this informed evidenced-based view, we work with our clients to design and implement the operating models, capabilities and ways of working they need to deliver their strategy and purpose. Our transformation approach follows an agile model to ensure rapid and realistic change.

Impact

Evaluating and communicating the impact of ESG initiatives

Our team brings extensive experience in social impact and ESG reporting, including social return of investment (SROI), health economics including QALY, impact evaluations and sustainability reporting standards (SECR, ESOS, SASB, SFDR, etc.) We help you gain the insight to make ongoing informed decisions about your purpose, strategy and operations.

Funding

Raising and investing funds to implement ESG and impact strategies

Because of our corporate finance and investment banking heritage, we are passionate about supporting the growth of the sustainable investment market, from helping entrepreneurs to raise capital from impact investors, and embedding ESG practices in private equity to designing social impact bonds.

Training

Building the knowledge and skills to drive an ESG agenda

Leveraging our on-the-ground experience and conscious of the need for greater workforce development across the sector, we offer bespoke training support across the ESG spectrum from culture and DEI assessment, social impact measurement to decarbonisation and carbon emission life cycle analysis.

Areas of Expertise

Since our inception, we have worked on some of the most pressing sustainability issues

No Poverty

Fair4All Finance was founded to help the financial wellbeing of people in vulnerable circumstances. We co-designed a strategy with the team and sector professionals to improve access to affordable credit, and more recently developed a theory of change on financial inclusion in the UK.

Good Health & Wellbeing

We have worked with many healthcare and medical research organisations helping them deliver the best outcomes for the communities they target. Notably, we worked with Cancer Research to develop the operating model and capabilities required to realise their ambitious research strategy.

Quality Education

We supported the University of London in transforming their online education provision through the redesign of its operating model including the embedding of new capabilities in business development, course design and student services.

Gender Equality

We worked with the Ignite partnership - a charitable initiative to support greater diversity and inclusion in motorsport launched by Mercedes-AMG Petronas F1 Team and Sir Lewis Hamilton in UK motorsport including gender equity.
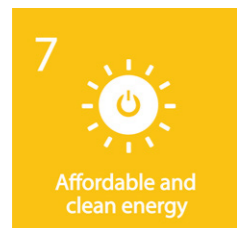
Affordable and Clean Energy

We have assisted a start-up that invented a solution to convert air into electricity to developing their strategy and raise the investment required to build a large-scale prototype.
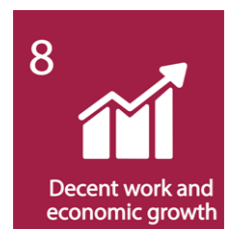
Decent Work & Economic Growth

We co-produced a digital product to support disadvantaged young people in employment with the Prince's Trust. Our work was informed by a youth board we established to develop ideas through the discovery phase.

Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure

We have supported the Global Innovation initiatives launched by Bloomberg Philanthropies, by developing a performance framework, we help them communicate and improve the overall impact of the programmes, including What Works Cities, i-Teams and Mayors Challenge.

Reduced Inequalities

Following the British Red Cross' development of their 2030 strategy, we worked with the NGO to design a new operating model to support its work to provide practical, local and emotional support to people in need throughout the UK.

Sustainable Cities & Communities

Our Parklife is a social enterprise that was set up to support the regeneration of Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in London. We have worked with the team and Engie - a French multinational utility company - to develop a growth strategy to become financially sustainable.

Responsible Consumption & Production

Our multi-staged methodology allowed us to map out the sector-wide issues and navigate through this complex space, focusing the strategy on the areas where Esmée had the greatest opportunity for impact.

Climate Action

We have helped Jisc – a leading technology provider to the education sector - to implement their CSR strategy, assess climate risks and embark on their journey to net zero. More broadly, we have been active climate advocates through our research activities and participation in climate initiatives.

Life on Land

Aleron has been involved with numerous national and global animal welfare organisations, including Brooke, Woodgreen and World Animal Protection. We assisted them in a range of areas, from strategy development and impact measurement to process improvement.

Get in Touch

To find out more about what we do visit our website
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