

COSTELLO MEDICAL CAREER STORIES:

My Focus on Inclusion and Diversity at Costello Medical

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MY BACKGROUND

I am Talent Acquisition and Early Careers Manager in the People team at Costello Medical. When I was hired, I was the first employee specifically focused on recruitment and growing the company. As a result, the company almost doubled in size in my first year and the People team's own growth has mirrored this.

THE EQUALITY & INCLUSIVITY TASKFORCE

I sit on the Equality & Inclusivity (E&I) taskforce at Costello Medical, which was set up in 2020 in response to the Black Lives Matter movement. It's important to say that, when we established the taskforce, we wanted to do something really meaningful and impactful, rather than just putting an empty statement on our website or on LinkedIn.

The E&I taskforce is made up of three workstreams; the internal workstream, the London outreach workstream and the Cambridge outreach workstream. I am part of the internal workstream, given my focus on recruitment. As well as ensuring all candidates face a fair and equitable recruitment process, we have also worked to develop a company-wide newsletter which discusses different diversity topics and issues. There is often a personal perspective included in that too, where our colleagues explore their personal experiences.

We are also running a big project to collect diversity data from both our current

employees and our candidate pools. Before we implement or change anything at Costello Medical to increase diversity, we need to better understand what the company's diversity profile looks like, who our candidates are and how they move through the recruitment process. When we have started to gather this data, we will analyse it and make recommendations with regards to changing our policies, procedures and ways of working.

OUTREACH PROGRAMMES

We have also been working with a student from Warwick Business School who, as part of their university project, has been assessing our current efforts to promote diversity at Costello Medical and will be using this to make recommendations on how our efforts can be more impactful. The student has been able to use their outside perspective to get a granular sense of what's going on in the company and then linking this to a wealth of external research, which has been invaluable.

Our external workstreams, based in both Cambridge and London, focus on our outreach work with local schools, Sixth Forms and social mobility charities. This has included providing work experience and mentoring opportunities to young people who are considering a career in the life sciences. External outreach needs to be a priority because the majority of our recruitment is at the graduate level. Unfortunately, by the time young people get to most Russell Group universities, there is already a lack of diversity. Therefore, we want to work with young people and provide them with opportunities to explore future career paths before university. We hope this will encourage them to consider STEM subjects at universities. It has been inspiring to see our London team getting involved with mentoring programmes

with the Social Mobility Foundation to nurture students' interest in the STEM sector.

WORK EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES

In 2021, for the first time, our Cambridge office hosted seven work experience students from a local secondary school to help them learn about our industry and show them what a career in this sector entails. Many colleagues supported with the work experience programme by hosting skills workshops and training sessions. The students had the opportunity to get involved with elements of practical work and deliver a presentation of their work at the end of the week. The aim is for this to be the first work experience programme of many – we plan to roll this out annually and across multiple offices. These initiatives not only help to build a future pipeline of diverse candidates for us to recruit from, but also helps us to support local young people.

The three workstreams that form the overall E&I taskforce work independently on projects and then meet once a quarter to share our progress and future plans. We give frequent updates to the whole company too, to provide an overview of our efforts and to encourage other colleagues to get involved and support with these initiatives.

SUMMARY

It is incredibly important for me to be working at a company that is willing to listen to its employees and local communities, and be prepared to make changes as well as going out of its way to provide otherwise unavailable opportunities to young people. Having the opportunity to be part of the E&I taskforce has been hugely rewarding for me as it so closely links with my day-to-day work, as well as our core values as a business.

