

PRESS RELEASE: IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EHRC COMMISSIONS KATALYTIK FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY RESEARCH

Katalytik has been awarded a high-profile research contract by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) to help the UK construction industry reap the benefits of improving diversity practice in the sector.

Katalytik is partnering with the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) and the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE). These professional bodies will host industry round-tables to engage their members and explore perceptions and attitudes to the workplace of 2010 and expectations about how differently it will look in ten years time.

Dr Jan Peters, founder and MD of Katalytik, said: "We are keen to hear from construction professionals across all disciplines about the challenges they face managing the workforce and its diversity. We welcome the active participation of these professional bodies."

The research team are canvassing views from male and female middle managers across the industry. The aim is to learn about their understanding of diversity and to widen the discussion to include gender, ethnicity, age and disability. Middle managers will be invited to round-table discussions as well as to contribute to an online survey that will be launched towards the end of the year. Register at www.iceroundtable.eventbrite.com

"Not all firms yet recognise the value of diversity as a tool for strengthening business", said Dr Peters, who is also President of the UK Women's Engineering Society. This work will review existing work and identify good practice and share the cost - benefit of diversity with all."

For the UK construction industry as a whole, a stronger diversity focus is seen as critical to ensuring future sustainability and long-term success. Additionally, it will help ensure that construction and property firms are at the top of their game in employing and retaining a rich pool of talent to meet future business needs

Michael Brown, CIOB Deputy Chief Executive said:

"Human endeavour and ingenuity makes the impossible possible and so we need to support and encourage it, wherever it may be found. Ideas and talent are the currency of our future. Involving people with different views and different ways of doing things is essential to a healthy industry. That is why diversity is so important for the future built environment – because tomorrow's industry won't be the same as today's and we face different tests than we have before."

ICE London's Miranda Housden added, "The ICE is committed to valuing the diversity that individuals with differing backgrounds and abilities bring. In our industry there is still much to do to deliver a diverse workforce and we are delighted to be supporting Katalytik's research."

Peters is upbeat about the challenge ahead : “While some firms recognise the benefit to their organisation, their clients and suppliers, their employees and their future sustainability, others still lag behind. If the UK construction sector is to meet the demands and challenges of the future, becoming a diverse employer is vital.

In a tight market it will be the trailblazer firms who really motor, who respond to the diversity imperative and put themselves ahead of the competition so as to secure a sustainable future for their business. Doing nothing is no longer an option.”

Notes for Editors

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About Katalytik. Katalytik specialises in equality and diversity and is about making projects and partnerships work across boundaries. A small business specialising in inclusion and engagement in science and engineering, recent work includes research report Different Women, Different Places, about inspirations and strategies for success of black and minority ethnic women leaders.

www.katalytik.co.uk

Managing Director Dr Jan Peters has championed women’s participation in science and technology since a postgraduate at the University of Southampton. She is :

- President of the UK Women’s Engineering Society, where she is leading a business transformation programme
- UK Ambassador to the American Association for Computer Machines (ACM-W)
- member of the Royal Society of Chemistry Diversity Committee
- founding member of the European Commission’s Helsinki Group, as the UK National Expert on women in science
- former Equality and Diversity Manager at the Royal Society.
- Founder of W-Tech an inspirational event for women in IT.

About the CIOB. With over 42,000 members the Chartered Institute Of Building (CIOB) is “the international voice of the building professional, representing an unequalled body of knowledge concerning the management of the total building process.” CIOB members are skilled managers and professionals with a common commitment to achieving and maintaining the highest possible standards. With its increasing international membership and growing profile in the UK, the CIOB is making a hugely influential contribution to one of the world's most important industries.

www.ciob.org.uk

About the ICE. The Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) was founded in 1818 to ensure professionalism in civil engineering. It represents 80,000 qualified and student civil engineers in the UK and across the globe. The ICE has long worked with the government of the day to help it to achieve its objectives, and has worked with industry to ensure that construction and civil engineering remain major contributors to the UK economy and UK exports. Visit www.ice.org.uk to find out more.