

Engendering change from the inside out – acknowledge, engage and build



To support the delivery of an inclusive and safe space for all its colleagues, National Grid believes it is vital to address diversity in all its forms, be it gender, race, ethnicity or other underrepresented groups. This inclusivity is integral to building trust. Engaging in conversation on difficult topics, making information available and empowering colleagues to have a voice, helps to build understanding and break down barriers.



Striking up a conversation and breaking down barriers

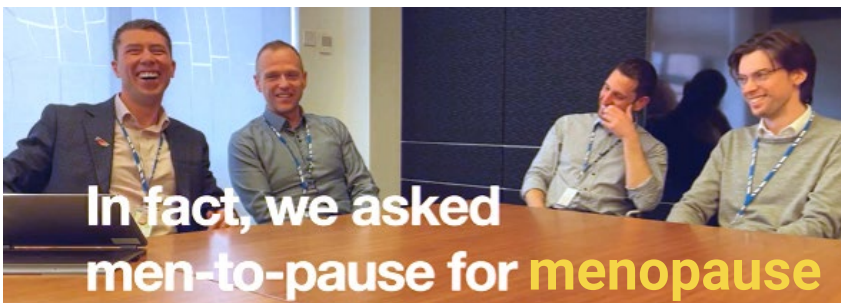
Pause for menopause

Breaking down the stigma of taboo subjects like the menopause is something National Grid is continuing to champion. This year, the business renewed its commitment to build menopause awareness amongst all colleagues including what it is and what it's like for those experiencing it, and understanding how to support them. The programme includes inviting 'men-to-pause' across the business, encouraging them to learn more, listen to colleagues' experiences and share resources more widely. Several groups were held across the business in addition to broader initiatives for World Menopause Month.

National Grid has also signed up to the Menopause Workplace Pledge, committing to taking positive action to make sure everyone going through the menopause is supported.

"Menopause is a health issue impacting all of us. We all need to understand it, to support those who experience it more effectively."

David Wright, Group Chief Engineer and Risk Officer



'Men-to-pause' invites men to learn more about the menopause, listen to colleagues' experiences and share resources.

Period Dignity

Recent research from WaterAid highlights that a staggering 85 per cent of women experience stress or anxiety managing periods at work. Breaking down the stigma, National Grid has this year resolved to create a 'period positive workplace'. Following a trial and request for feedback, a range of free and environmentally friendly tampons and pads, supporting the varying needs of individuals, are now freely available at all our main offices. Plans are also underway to roll this out further across operational sites.



Gender Neutral Toilets

National Grid says its aim is to be one of the most inclusive, diverse and equitable organisations of the 21st century and that means everyone should feel comfortable accessing and using facilities. This includes transgender, non-binary and all gender non-conforming people as well as those with disabilities who have personal attendants that are a different gender.

National Grid has adapted the head office toilets to be gender-neutral facilities. Where concerns were received, the D&I team and property team were able to explain the rationale and resolve quickly. The property team has now created a blueprint to be used for all future office upgrades, which will include the availability of fully enclosed toilet rooms, with a wash basin for individual use.



“There are so many benefits in providing gender neutral facilities and striking the right balance between access, privacy and equity is key. My aim is for everyone to feel included – no one should feel stress or anxiety in choosing where to go to the loo!”

Lisa Waterhouse
Interim Global
Chief Diversity
Officer

All these initiatives form part of National Grid’s D&I agenda and are strengthened through Employee Resource Groups (ERG). These groups have the autonomy to provide people with the tools to advocate change.

WiNG development programme

One such example is the Women in National Grid (WiNG) group which has revived two new programmes to support the development of those who identify as female. Run by external consultancies, the programmes are designed to empower and develop people, regardless of background or chosen field. The first is ‘Springboard’ for those starting their careers and want to grow in confidence, whereas ‘Spring Forward’ is for those aspiring to step up into leadership and management roles. So far, the courses have proved incredibly popular, with more lined up for next year.

“I went back to my desk for my phone and back to the ladies just so I could feed back! What a great idea, I felt seen and included. Hygiene poverty isn’t something we talk about often, but this will surely help those that could need it. Thank you.”

Anonymous feedback

Providing colleagues with a voice and the tools they need to thrive and drive change will bring down barriers. For National Grid, empowering colleagues to thrive is a key part of that.