

MP backing award-winning disability employment programme

Joanna Cherry QC MP is backing Leonard Cheshire's award-winning Change 100 disability employment programme and is urging employers to sign up for the innovative scheme.

The charity's Change 100 programme brings together top employers and talented students and graduates with disabilities to offer three months of paid work experience.

Since its launch in 2014, the innovative programme has worked with over a hundred employers across the UK to host interns, including Standard Life, Taylor Wimpey and Lloyds Banking Group.

These highly-coveted internships help remove barriers experienced by people with disabilities in the workplace to allow them to achieve their full potential. Successful applicants receive mentoring and guidance throughout their paid placement, enabling them to develop and thrive within the workplace.

Change 100 supports businesses to become recognised disability-inclusive employers through advice and guidance on how to support employees with disabilities and long-term health conditions.

The programme also provides businesses with tailored

Disability Equality Training, allowing companies to better understand the complexity of disabilities and to better support existing staff with disabilities or long-term health conditions.

Tom Fraser, Service Programmes Development Manager at BMW UK, said : “We’ve been delighted to welcome five talented, enthusiastic and dynamic interns into our organisation. Each intern has brought with them a wide variety of skills and helped us to change perceptions within the business. With the help of Change 100 and our interns, we’ve already discovered that our processes and systems can be improved to ensure we’re adapting to our employees’ needs.”

Change 100 was a finalist for the 2018 National Undergraduate Employability Awards, and was the proud winner of the prestigious Recruitment Industry Disability Initiative (RIDDI) Awards in 2015 and 2016.

Joanna Cherry QC, MP for Edinburgh South West, said: “Despite having the right skills and experience and wanting to work, many people with disabilities still face significant barriers to entering employment. That is why the Scottish Government is committed to taking action to halve the disability employment gap.

“Leonard Cheshire’s award-winning Change 100 programme works with employers to help them better understand the complexity of disabilities and to better support their employees through specialist advice, training and support. Through Change 100, businesses can become leading disability-inclusive employers. I’d urge employers to sign up for the programme and play their part in enabling all of Scotland’s people to achieve their full potential in the world of work.”

Stuart Robertson, Leonard Cheshire in Scotland’s Director, said: “Less than half of people with disabilities in Scotland are in employment. We are determined to break down the

barriers they face in entering and succeeding in the workplace through our innovative Change 100 programme. By hosting high-calibre interns through Change 100, businesses can become leading disability-inclusive employers whilst giving talented students and graduates with disabilities the opportunity to kick-start their careers.”

[More information here.](#)