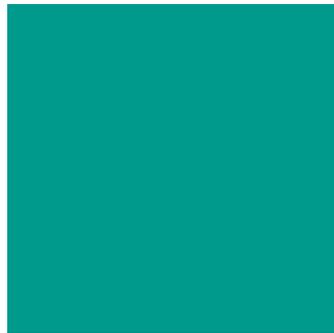
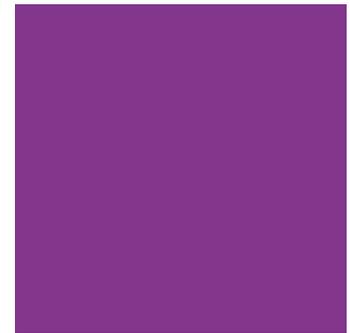




# Building Disability Confidence

*From the inside out*



“Having access to proven methods and experienced Network Leaders enabled SEED to build a network strategy that delivers value back to our people, customers and business.”

**Sarah Simcoe, Fujitsu**

“PurpleSpace gives us the opportunity to engage with other leaders from across different industries, share best practice and move the agenda forward – something we’re really passionate about at Barclays.”

**David Caldwell, Barclays**



### We are a social business with a big mission:

To make it easier for employees to navigate the experience of ill health, disability or the experience of an accident or injury, at the same time as flourishing at work.

#### We do this in three ways:

- By having created the world's only professional development and best practice exchange for employee network / resource group leaders, allies & champions
- By supporting employers to build vibrant disability networks that help employees to bring their authentic selves to work
- By helping employers to improve business performance by learning directly from disabled employees

#### Building disability confidence from the inside out.

An organisation's performance on disability can have a profound effect on colleague engagement. Get it wrong and it increases your risk of breaking the law and impacting on your reputation. Get it right and you will be better equipped to source and retain disabled talent, as well as how you provide goods and services.

We help organisations across all industries and sectors to create vibrant and effective networks & resource groups – which then build the exceptional engagement strategies that stimulate better conversations about all aspects of disability and business with their internal champions, allies and executive sponsors: building disability confidence from the inside out.

We believe that the only real way for employees and employers to build disability confidence is from the inside out.

That means supporting colleagues to navigate difficult life experiences, helping them to manage the soft bigotry of low expectation and helping them to source and access the workplace adjustments they might need.

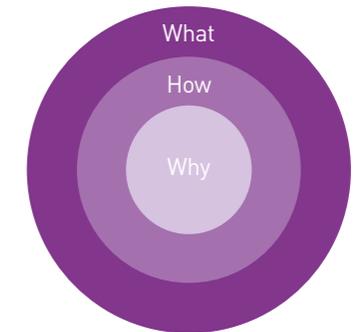
It means helping employers to learn about building inclusive cultures directly from their own disabled colleagues.

And it means highlighting and profiling the plentiful purple talent that contributes to the UK and global economies.

We are uniquely placed to do this because of our 10 years of experience in how employers can build conversations between and across internal employee networks – and because we build the leadership capacity of the internal 'change agents'.

*"We lead with the question 'Why?'. Successful organisations communicate, act and think by leading with why they exist, followed by how and by what means they deliver. PurpleSpace leads change by focusing on why networks and resource groups exist and then support members to deliver high performance to drive confidence from the inside out."*

**Kate Nash OBE, Creator & CEO, PurpleSpace**



#### What

Every network on the planet knows WHAT they do. These are the activities that they deliver.

#### How

Some networks know HOW they do it. These are the things that make them special or set them apart from their competitors.

#### Why

Few networks know WHY they do what they do. WHY is not about 'improving engagement' or 'helping to signpost' employees. That's a result. WHY is a cause or belief in the need to unleash talent and comes from a detailed understanding about the blocks to progress.

## Networkology - It's what we have invented

We are all about 'Networkology' – the art and science of building great conversations through networks & resource groups to support inner confidence and drive cultural change.

Our clients told us that for too long they had over-invested in employee assist programmes, external training, occupational health providers, external consultants, membership trade organisations, segregated recruitment campaigns, sponsorship of award and recognition schemes, benchmarking tools only to see no impact on the visibility of their own purple talent and disabled colleague engagement scores.

So they come to us in order to re-align their spend, better invest in their internal 'cultural change agents' and make a step-change in the quality of internal conversations about building inclusive workplaces.

We help employers to connect with their own disabled employees, together with their champions, allies and executive sponsors. And then we connect them to other employer networks through the world's only professional development hub in our on-line Member Zone.

Simple really.



## Low cost, high value

Our costs are low because we stay 'infra-structure light. We don't employ lots of permanent staff and we don't hang out in a big costly glass building in London.

**Our unique digital Member Zone has lots of high-quality practical resource materials. And we underpin the materials by delivering face-to-face and virtual networking opportunities. Our fast-growing community makes it easy for members to connect, share good practice and innovate together.**

Our members and clients are together investing in a unique 'movement' – one comprised of disabled colleagues and their champions, allies & executive sponsors who all have skin in the game.

Our focus is simple – to support employers to build high-performing networks and resource groups – and help lift organisation performance in developing inner disability confidence.

## Building healthier working lives

Many governments, across the globe, want to build nations that work for everyone. This means ensuring that workplaces anticipate, accommodate and celebrate human difference, in all its forms.

There are many employers who are public with their belief that having a disability or health condition should not impact on the path a person is able to take in life – or in the workplace; what should count is a person's talents, contribution and their desire to succeed.

However, for many people who experience a period of ill health, or have a health condition that gets worse, their experience can cause huge challenges. It can lead to a loss of personal confidence and a lack of self-esteem. It can potentially mean they lose their job and then experience barriers to get back into work. In turn this could result in someone who was once a valuable colleague struggling to support themselves and their loved ones. And without the positive psychological and social support that comes from being productive and engaged, their well-being can decline.

The impact is not just felt by individuals – it can also impact employers who lose valuable employees.

PurpleSpace helps employers to create better conversations with all their employees as part of the

package of solutions that help an employer to retain talent.

Network leaders and diversity & inclusion specialists know how networks help talented individuals to talk about their experiences, build inner confidence, ask for the adjustments they need and crucially, stay in work.

And retaining the talent you have already invested in simply makes good business sense. It is also the right thing to do.

**Did you know...? The average cost of a workplace adjustment is between £400-£700 and that most disabled employees won't incur any extra costs at all**

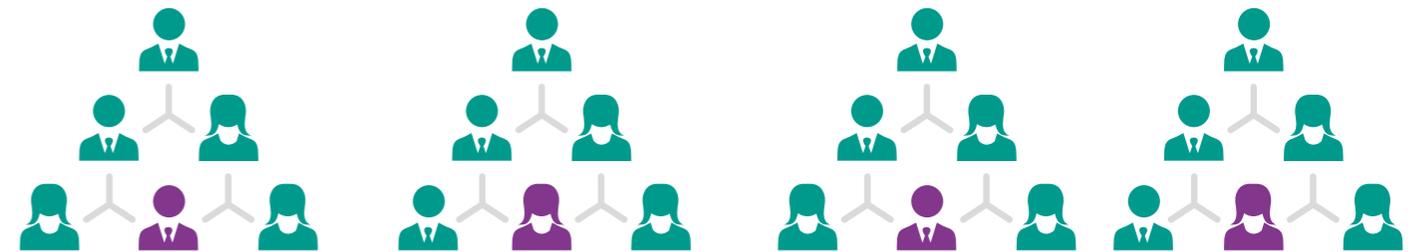
**Did you know...? Most people defined by disability according to the UK Equality Act don't enjoy the language of 'disability' and find it hard to identify with the term. This makes it hard for employers to collect the right data, which makes them think they have no disabled people working for them. Think again.**

## Our market

**Most employers whether global or local, will have a workforce where 10% of their people will have a disability, or a health condition or who have sustained an accident or an injury.**

So, whether you have a workforce of 100 people, or 10,000 people, that's a sizeable chunk of your total workforce.

What we do is help you to better connect with that 10% so that you can help people build inner confidence and ask for the adjustments they might need.



And then we connect all the networks together to build leadership capacity and to create systemic change.



## Why purple?

In 2014 Kate Nash OBE, the creator of PurpleSpace wrote a book called 'Secrets & Big News' – 55 employers took part and together they reached over 2,500 of their disabled colleagues who took part in the research. The evidence showed that employees are very cautious about their association with the word 'disability'. Nearly two-thirds of the participants said that some people would always resist the label or think the association with the word 'disability' is a big personal step.

This has a big implications on how you stimulate cultural change and engagement in an organisation.

Around the same time, the UK government launched it's Disability Confident campaign. They started to talk about the power of the purple pound; a bit like the use of the term 'grey pound' to denote the spending power of older consumers or the term 'pink pound' to denote the spending power of people from the LGBT community.

So when we launched PurpleSpace in October 2015 we simply brought together the hundreds of employers that Kate Nash Associates had been working with for over a decade and created a brand to further stimulate and build the symbolism increasingly associated with disability.

By us leading the purple colleague 'movement' we are providing an opportunity for disabled employees together with their champions and allies to connect as mutual change agents. Together they are learning ways to engage and connect so they can invest in their purple talent and their careers and progression.

The fact is it take's time to learn how to manage your disability or impairment at work, and if you need anything at all, how to ask for and secure the workplace adjustment you might need. Sometimes you just need a bit of space to figure out what all this 'disability' stuff is all about...

We help employers to help their people to navigate through that process.

### PurpleSpace.





## Why focus on disability networks and conversations?

Very few life experiences invoke the mixture of pity, fear, awkwardness or feelings of inconvenience by others that disability brings. And these things make it difficult for employees to navigate.

These human reactions require an employer to develop a sophisticated approach to cultural change – and a detailed understanding about how employees build inner confidence.

For most individuals all of this has little to do with benefits, doctors or social care and everything to do wanting to deliver well for their employer.

We believe that there is a right 'network' to create the right 'conversation hub' for most employers. Though we will be honest with you if we think that setting up a network would be too cumbersome or costly or inappropriate taking into account the numbers of employees you have.

However if you are a SME we won't leave you in the lurch, there are different ways that you can join as a member and to tap into our Networkology know-how to develop an inclusive work culture.

**Did you know...? 86% of all disabled people in UK acquire their disability during the course of their working lives.**





## PurpleSpace - What we do

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### A unique on-line Member Zone

We are the world's only professional development hub for network leaders, allies and champions. Our Member Zone includes all the tools needed for delivering high-performing networks and great conversations.

#### This includes:

- A suite of briefing papers and 'know-how' material in how to set up or refresh a network and engage with disabled colleagues
- An opportunity to connect and hang-out with other change agents from other organisations
- The option to collaborate with others

### Learning, development and networking events and webinars

- We deliver high-quality, high-impact learning, development and networking events. Our members don't pay extra to attend our core events & training – there are no hidden charges.
- We focus on the topics that others can't – because we have connected the largest pool of disabled employee network leaders across many sectors and we know what is on their mind.
- We are hosted by some of the most creative employers in the UK and globally – because they too believe in the power of purple networks to support cultural change and build inner confidence.

### Fresh thought-leadership

We produce insight publications and briefings that bring something new to the table. Our unique, and extensive contact with network leaders means we are close to their challenges and so can create practical resources that create real culture change.



## Project - Building 'Our Disability Confidence'

PurpleSpace network leaders told us that too much emphasis on 'disability confidence' at an organisational (or macro) level meant employers were in danger of losing sight of the personal struggle that many employees have when they acquire a disability for the first time.

So we set up the [#ourdisabilityconfidence](#) national working group and are creating a maturity model for inner confidence. We are also creating sub-groups such as our visual impairment working group with high-calibre individuals from KPMG, PwC, Bouygues, E.ON Energy and many more. Together they are creating a national toolkit to help visually impaired colleagues learn the skills required to build inner confidence and resilience.

"One of the most challenging aspects of working with a visual impairment is to build the type of resilience that enables you to manage others who simply don't know what to do around you. By us pooling our know-how we will help fast-track others to learn those skills more quickly than we did."

Anonymous



## Project - Building story-telling campaigns

Members of PurpleSpace had started to use their own people to tell their story of disability to drive and sustain culture change. But they told us how hard it is to be the first disabled employee to do that – or to decide to do it at all. They asked us for a toolkit to encourage the creation of a vast and vibrant community of story-tellers to drive change.

So we wrote Purple Stories to help people tell their story of difference for business and personal gain.

"Having a practical resource like Purple Stories enables us to continue to talent spot our own internal story-tellers and to help up-skill them as they support the organisation to develop its confidence. These things are an iterative process. There is no point in building confidence at an organisational level unless you support individuals too."

Anonymous



## Project - Developing practical advice in how to use social media

We noticed that only a small number of disability networks were using social media to drive cultural change in comparison to, for example, women networks, BAME networks, LGBT networks. Some organisations and networks were nervous about using social media when it came to disability and / or could not persuade colleagues that there was a business case to do so.

So we wrote **#VirtuallyPurple** to help organisations to understand the benefits of using social media to drive better conversations with employees as well as customers.

“Social media is an important vehicle for us to spread the word about the many thousands of disabled people in work in the UK today. If our company genuinely wants to attract more disabled people to work for us we cannot do any better than by conveying news and information about our vibrant disability network and that we learn directly from our own people. The publication **#VirtuallyPurple** was yet another innovative tool from PurpleSpace to push us forward and join the **#purpletalk on the airwaves.**”

Anonymous



## Project - Building the capacity and community of network leaders

PurpleSpace is all about helping networks to share what they have learnt along the way when it comes to building outcome-focused networks and resource groups.

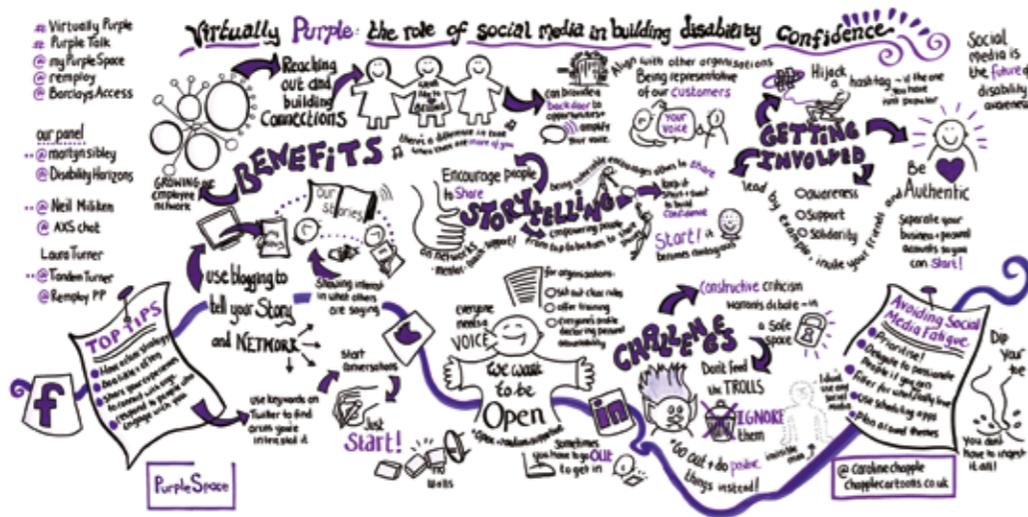
Because we work across all sectors we are uniquely placed to notice exceptional networks. Our consultancy arm helps new and emerging networks. To support them we asked some of the most gifted leaders to offer their hints and tips about how to set up and deliver high-performing networks and published *In The Chair* as a result.



## Project - Building a virtual community

PurpleSpace members at KPMG, Fujitsu and Shaw Trust wanted to create a common hashtag to build the community of network leaders and allies. So they worked with us to create **#purpletalk**.

By mobilising our collective social media presence, we reached 600,00 people on one day – continuing our work to promote the authentic stories of disabled people who work day in, day out in the UK and across the globe.



“What matters to us is the opportunity to collaborate with others. Disability networks are coming out of the shadows and PurpleSpace enables us to work with other members, to really push ourselves to deliver first-class networks by learning from others. Next generation change will come from existing disabled employees working with each other as well as their D&I colleagues, champions & allies.”

Anonymous

## Project - developing the pool of Purple Champions / Allies / Executive Sponsors

PurpleSpace members came to us to help create a common understanding about what makes a “great” champion. As a result we have created resources and know-how for champions, allies and executive sponsors.

“Across all aspects of diversity at Barclays, I’m always looking for partners that bring unique and innovative opportunities. The way PurpleSpace helps colleagues to focus is something that’s really special.”

Mark McLane, Global Head of Diversity and Inclusion, Barclays Bank



## Project - Developing networks in the civil service

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Disability champions and D&I professionals in government departments told us they were looking for partnership opportunities for their people to learn from private sector networks and champions. So we launched the Equal Approach / PurpleSpace Bursary Scheme to offer high-quality learning via membership to nine network leaders across government departments.

“When allies collaborate, great things can happen, just like the Purple Space/Equal Approach ‘Civil Service Bursary Scheme’. Nine of our most talented and aspiring network leaders are participating in this ground-breaking 3-year talent programme. Every bursary holder has entered into a mentoring relationship with a someone from the private sector, stimulating great conversations involving allies and champions alike. A growing voice of like-minded spirits are now bringing a range of insights, energy and ideas to the table, helping us to look outside the Civil Service and extend our reach.”

Philip Rutnam, Permanent Secretary, Home Office & Civil Service Disability Champion



If your focus is on stimulating better conversations between you and your employees - and building disability confidence from the inside out – we will have something for you.

### **Some of the bespoke things we do are:**

#### **Group learning in Networkology, tailored to your own organisation**

Our tried and tested workshops and focus groups can help you stimulate the creation of a new network. Or review one that is a little tired. Or audit a successful one so that you can be clear on the reasons for your success, and repeat!

Get in touch and we will design something specific for you.

#### **Personal development courses for disabled employees**

We offer three tried and tested workshops to support the personal and career development of disabled colleagues:

- [Chain Reaction – about how to build confidence after the onset of disability](#)
- [Telling Stories – about how to tell your story for personal and business gain](#)
- [Shades of Disability – about how to brand yourself as a disabled woman](#)

Get in touch and we will design a workshop for your own people.

#### **Coaching network leaders for awards and recognition schemes**

We don't deliver award or recognition schemes for network leaders. We think the world has enough and stick to what we do best instead. Though we do offer bespoke coaching and mentoring programmes for network leaders who want to win existing award and recognition schemes. Get in touch and we will design a package that suits you.

PurpleSpace is a private limited company and a social business.

It is being funded by membership fees, partnership investment and Kate Nash Associates.

We were born from the conversations we had with disabled employee network leaders, champions, allies, executive sponsors and D&I professionals. They told us it was necessary to create a modern business-like approach to convey the value of purple talent. And they told us not to set up as a charity or become another employer led network. Our task is to create something new, something fresh and to build the largest ever community of disabled employees – to build confidence and resilience and to share that with others.

We keep it real by appointing Ambassadors – these are individuals who are drawn from the networks with whom we work – they help us develop our strategy and reach.

#### **The Founding Ambassadors are:**

Sarah Simcoe, Fujitsu

Andy Garrett, GSK

David Caldwell, Barclays



Partnerships matter to us – so whether your organisation has a network, or not, come and talk to us about how we can build a better world.

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 [@mypurplespace](https://twitter.com/mypurplespace)

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