

Gender Pay Gap Report 2024

**Progress,
challenges
and our
commitment
to change**

adam&eveDDB

REPORT

A word from Miranda Hipwell, CEO



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At DDB UK, we believe transparency and accountability are vital to driving meaningful change. Our latest gender pay gap report acknowledges the areas where improvement is needed while also highlighting our ongoing investment in the future.

Our current results are not where we want them to be. We are taking a proactive approach to addressing the gap and laying the groundwork for long-term and sustainable progress.

	2022	2023	2023*	2024
Mean gender pay gap	29.9%	20.4%	22.4%	24.8%
Median gender pay gap	20.0%	14.8%	14.3%	26.4%
Mean bonus gap	59.0%	1.9%	9.2%	-10.1%
Median bonus gap	46.2%	-4.3%	79.8%	65.0%
Proportion of men receiving a bonus	14.2%	18.6%	18.2%	8.1%
Proportion of women receiving a bonus	10.8%	9.8%	9.3%	6.6%
Lower quartile (percentage women)	63.4%	60.2%	61.7%	69.3%
Lower-mid quartile (percentage women)	54.9%	50.4%	52.1%	58.0%
Upper-mid quartile (percentage women)	47.8%	56.4%	59.6%	55.7%
Upper quartile (percentage women)	33.6%	36.4%	39.4%	36.0%

Note: The 2023 gender pay gap figures have been adjusted to reflect the departure of Tribal Worldwide from the business, following their realignment into Omnicom Precision Marketing Group. These adjusted figures more accurately reflect the current workforce structure of DDB UK.

Context and Workforce Change

Over the past 18 months, several operational changes have influenced our workforce structure. A number of key senior leaders departed the agency, including a period of significant leadership movement across the agency. These changes created a transitional moment as we took time to recruit and promote the right people into key roles.

Building the Next Generation of Female Leaders

Our data shows that women are well represented at entry and mid-career

levels, comprising 69.3% of the lowest pay quartile and 58% of the lower-mid quartile. While this contributes to the current gender pay gap, we see it as an opportunity. We are committed to developing this talent into the next generation of leaders.

Thirty percent of the hires made in the reporting period were into the lower quartile, with women making up 72% and men 28% of those roles. The upper quartile tells a more balanced story, with an even 50/50 gender split in hiring.

To accelerate progression, our current actions include:

- **Targeted development programmes**
– such as Omniwomen mentoring and sponsorship for mid-career women
- **Structured hiring and promotions**
– ensuring gender-balanced shortlists and clear, consistent criteria
- **Pay and progression transparency**
– strengthening guidance on salary bands and promotion pathways

Women are progressing into senior roles at the same rate as men, with the average pay increase upon promotion being close to identical. This consistency underscores our fair approach to pay progression.

Pitching has also become a valuable tool for mid-career women to increase visibility and confidence outside their day-to-day roles. Some of our most successful pitches this year have been led by women across strategy, creative, and client services. As Annabel Barry, Head of New Business, recently wrote, pitching gives women a platform to be seen by senior leadership and grow their careers beyond the boundaries of existing accounts.

Creative & Leadership Roles: Our Key Focus for Change

One of the key areas influencing our gender pay gap is the underrepresentation of women in senior creative roles. While men continue to hold the majority of higher-paid creative leadership positions, we are actively driving change to create a more balanced and sustainable future. Over the past year, we have deliberately focused on increasing the number of junior female hires. As a result, 44.4% of junior creative hires have been women. This is a clear step towards developing and retaining more women into senior creative leadership roles over time.

We recognise that meaningful change takes time, and we are encouraged by the progress being made:

- **Women currently make up 36% of the highest-paid quartile, an improvement from previous years.**
- **Senior creative roles remain predominantly male at 54%, but the gap is narrowing as we continue to invest in female creative talent.**

We have recently significantly bolstered our senior female creative team with outstanding hires, including:

- **Katherine O'Brien, Executive Creative Director – a seasoned creative leader known for driving innovative campaigns across high-profile brands**
- **Amber Casey, Creative Director – previously at MullenLowe UK, leading work for Knorr, British Heart Foundation and MicroLoan Foundation, and recognised with Gold Effie, Cannes Lions and D&AD accolades**

- **Nicola Wood, Creative Director – a multi-award-winning creative recognised in the WARC and DRUM global rankings for work like 'Have a Word' for the Mayor of London**
- **Pauline Ashford, Creative Director - previously at AMV BBDO, has been behind highly awarded and culturally influential work, including IKEA's famous festive campaign 'Silence the Critics', one of the most awarded campaigns of 2019.**

Being part of the DDB network means we have access to world-class talent and leadership development opportunities that support our ambition to build the next generation of female creative leaders.

With the hiring of Chaka Sobhani, President and Global Chief Creative Officer at DDB Worldwide, female creative leaders across the network have a strong and visible role model who can inspire and mentor them throughout their careers.

Alongside this, Susie Walker, Global Chief Creative Operations Officer, and Claire Salvetti, Executive Leadership Coach, lead two key initiatives that provide dedicated support to female creatives as they progress into leadership roles:

- ***Phyllis Robinson: Creative Pioneers, Leadership* – an intensive and highly personal development programme for female creative leaders at the ECD level and above, designed to enhance leadership capabilities.**
- ***Phyllis Robinson: Creative Pioneers, Emerging Leaders* – helps emerging female creative leaders develop the confidence and skills needed to step into their CD-level roles and take on leadership responsibilities.**

These initiatives are part of DDB Worldwide's broader commitment to developing female leaders, their impact extends across the network, including here at DDB UK. To date, we have actively supported these initiatives by ensuring our emerging female leaders have had the opportunity and the space to attend and benefit from them as part of their development journey. These programmes remain an important marker of our investment in creative leadership development.

We are also excited to support the upcoming Phyllis Project, a DDB Worldwide-funded ten-week leadership programme designed to help female creative talent achieve their leadership goals and foster a global community of female creative leaders.

Mid-Career Retention & Progression

While women and men are promoted at equal rates from mid-level to senior roles, women are leaving mid-career roles at a slightly higher rate (-4 net movement vs. -2 for men).

While promotion rates remain strong, this presents an opportunity to strengthen retention efforts for mid-career women, particularly through targeted development programmes and career support.

Encouragingly, our internal data shows equitable outcomes in promotion pay. We are proud that several senior female leavers have taken up prominent roles within the wider DDB and Omnicom networks. Their journeys reflect the strength of our internal pipeline and our commitment to developing future leaders.

When upward mobility isn't immediately available within our agency, our network allows us to continue developing and promoting talent across borders.

Ensuring Fair & Equitable Pay for the Future

We have taken steps to build a stronger foundation for equitable pay. A key milestone was increasing the entry-level salary to £30,000 across all roles. This move ensures a consistent and fair starting point for new joiners, helping to reduce long-term disparity.

Progress on Bonus Gap

While our median bonus gap remains an area of focus, we are encouraged by the progress made over the past year. The gap in the proportion of men and women receiving a bonus has narrowed, and the distribution of performance-related pay

is becoming more balanced. We know there is still work to do to ensure consistency, and we will continue to review how bonuses are awarded across the business.

This is an important shift. Bonuses are discretionary and vary depending on role, performance, and tenure, but we are reviewing how bonuses are awarded to ensure they reflect contribution fairly across the business. Over the coming year, we will continue to look at how recognition is delivered to all employees, with an emphasis on clarity and transparency.

Moving forward, we will focus on:

- **Reviewing salary progression and promotion criteria**
- **Analysing leadership-level hiring and retention**
- **Continuing to review how bonuses are awarded to ensure fairness in recognition**

These efforts are not about taking opportunities away from men; they are about ensuring equal access to progression, reward, and recognition for everyone.

A Measured & Accountable Approach

We are committed to sustained, data-driven progress. Our actions for the coming year include:

- **Increasing the number of women in leadership and high-earning roles**
- **Continuing to diversify our Creative department**
- **Evolving our approach to pay and recognition, with a focus on clarity and fairness**

We are also introducing a new expectation for all recruitment partners to provide balanced candidate shortlists, with 50% women and 50% men. This step is designed to ensure inclusive representation from the outset.

We will continue to provide allyship development opportunities for our creative community – including mentoring, sponsorship, and pitching opportunities.

Our Next Steps for Meaningful Change

In 2024, we introduced several initiatives to support women beyond pay and promotion, ensuring our policies, culture and leadership practices actively enable women to thrive at every stage of their careers. We launched a dedicated Menopause Action Plan, including quarterly Menopause Café sessions and targeted training for managers and employees in partnership with ZAOWOMAN. These sessions and training will provide practical support, encourage open conversations, and help break down the stigma surrounding menopause.

This is a key factor in retaining experienced female talent and ensuring they feel supported to stay and progress.

We also strengthened our parental leave policies, increasing maternity leave to 24 weeks at full pay, with flexible, fully paid return options. Alongside this, we continue to support working parents through our active Parent Network and quarterly advocacy groups, which shape our policies and provide ongoing training, resources, and support for all employees.

Looking ahead, we know that real, lasting change requires sustained focus. That's why we are prioritising four clear actions over the next 12 months to drive meaningful progress:

- **Launching a Sponsorship Programme for mid-career women to accelerate progression into leadership roles.**
- **Conducting an annual Equal Pay Audit to identify and correct role-for-role pay disparities.**
- **Introducing a transparent Creative Pay & Progression Framework to remove barriers and ensure fair, consistent career development opportunities.**
- **Working with ZAOWOMAN to deliver our Menopause Management and Leadership training for all line managers and leaders, ensuring they are equipped to support employees going through menopause.**

We recognise that there are no quick fixes to closing the gender pay gap. Progress will not always be linear, and we anticipate that our figures

may continue to fluctuate year on year as structural changes and natural workforce movement take effect. However, we are focused on driving meaningful, sustainable change over the long term. By investing in our future talent pipeline, creating clear progression pathways and holding ourselves accountable, we are committed to building an agency where gender equity is not only possible but inevitable.

DDB UK

This report reflects data from employees who work within DDB UK Limited – the legal entity that includes adam&eveDDB, and adam&eveStudios. I can confirm that the figures included within this report are accurate and in accordance with the regulations.



Mark Watkins
Chief Financial Officer, DDB UK