



Muslim Friendly  
Employers

# The Crescent Index

[www.muslimfriendlyemployers.com](http://www.muslimfriendlyemployers.com)

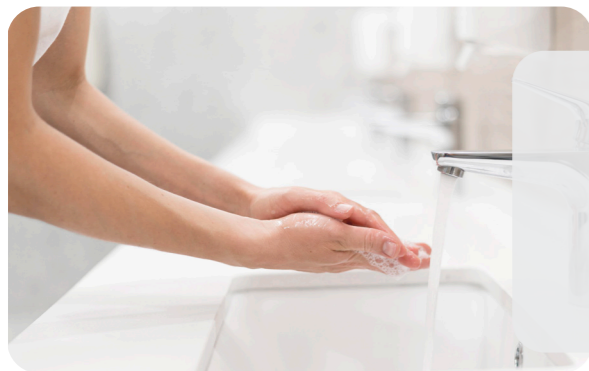


# Why MFE?

The MFE initiative was launched in response to the growing numbers and needs of Muslim employees in major corporations. It coincides with, and forms a key part of the ongoing well-received 'Diversity and Equality' (D&I) drives in many large professional corporations. The timing of MFE and the benefits of Employers partaking in the programme, are highly pertinent for various reasons:



**Prayer** - Muslim employees, including many senior ones, find themselves travelling to local Mosques during a lunch break due to **inadequate prayer and ablution facilities** in their workplace.



**Ablution** (ritual washing) - Although a vacant meet room can be used for prayer; the ablution process (prior to prayer) really is very **difficult to perform in a regular sink** and requires a specific ablution unit or going out to the local Mosque.



**Halaal Food** - If Halaal food is not provided in the staff restaurant, then Muslim employees may be **forced to leave the office premises** and find the closest Halaal food outlet.



**Discrimination** - BBC studies show that an application with a **Muslim name is 3 times less likely to receive an interview** than the same application with a non-Muslim sounding name. This bias, conscious or unconscious, needs tackling and MFE will assist employers to address this. Other studies show that **2/3rds of Muslim Women felt they were treated 'differently' in the workplace due to wearing Hijab**. Muslim Women often face a **'triple ethnic-penalty'**; the fact that they are female, Muslim and from an ethnic minority.



**Fasting and productivity** - During Ramadan, Muslims fast from dawn to dusk and energy levels may not be as high as a typical day. **Flexible working hours** during times like these can hugely ease the burden of fasting and increase productivity to the employer.



**Diversity and Inclusion** - Employees are increasingly looking to employers to embody values which matter to them e.g. **tackling racism, inequality, disability, climate change, gender inequality and more**. Employers who are part of Social Mobility Indices, Equality Indices, tackling racism at work initiatives are likely to have the edge in attracting the best employee talent. For many employees, the wearing of Religious dress, such as wearing the Hijab or a Beard, falls squarely in to the diversity obligation of an Employer.

*When employees feel comfortable in their own identity in the workplace, they are likely to be more productive at work and more loyal to the employer over many years of service.*



# The Case for Muslim Talent



# 18%

According to the 2011 census, **18% of Muslims** (almost 1 in 5) over the age of 16 are in **full time education**, this figure is only 8% (1 in 12) for the general population. This disparity is only likely to have increased since the last census.



# £20.5Bn

British Muslims are more financially independent than ever before, with an estimated spending power worth **20.5 billion pounds**.

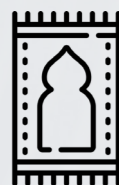
Source: Muslim Council Of Britain (2013) The Muslim Pound. <https://www.mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/The-Muslim-Pound-FINAL.pdf>

## An untapped pool of Muslim talent

In a 2016 survey MEND sampled over **1000 British Muslims** and found



**59%** of the unemployed group were **graduates or postgraduates** indicating a highly educated potential Muslim workforce.



**58%** stated that knowing that they could **practice their religion** at work would encourage them to seek work.



A **third (34%)** regarded being able to **practice religion** at work as one of the **top three things** that are most important when considering a career or job (top response was 'good pay' - 62% and 'work- life balance' - 58%).

British Muslims are **crucial to the UK economy** and have been significantly contributing year on year. The number of British Muslims who hold positions of higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations has **increased over 100,000**, which is excluding the **£3.6 billion!**



Source: Muslim Council Of Britain (2013) The Muslim Pound. <https://www.mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/The-Muslim-Pound-FINAL.pdf>

**The survey showed that there exists a highly educated potential Muslim workforce that would be attracted to employers that were seen as 'muslim-friendly'.**

Source: Muslim Engagement & Development (2016). Tackling racism and employment discrimination in the UK. [www.mend.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/A3-Folded-SNP-Conference.pdf](http://www.mend.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/A3-Folded-SNP-Conference.pdf)

## The Social Mobility Factor

The future certainly looks bright for British Muslim talent, but the present still poses challenges. Around 50% of British Muslims living in the 10 most deprived locations in the UK<sup>4</sup> presents a huge Social Mobility challenge.

The Social Mobility report on The Social Mobility Challenges Faced by Young Muslims<sup>2</sup> concluded that young muslims were disadvantaged by a lack of appropriate advice, guidance and informal networks to progress in the labour market, compounded by potential discrimination at the recruitment stage.

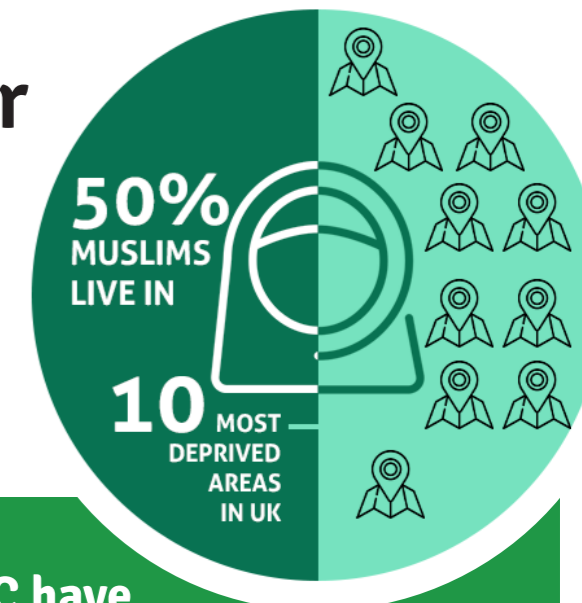
The Social Mobility Commission's report<sup>3</sup> on social mobility and the pandemic found that those from privileged backgrounds were 60% more likely to get a professional job than those from working class backgrounds.

The borough of Tower Hamlets sits on the border of the City, and has a 35% Muslim population, one of the highest in the country<sup>4</sup>. It is a hugely disadvantaged area and represents a great opportunity for corporations to address the social mobility dilemma and to further facilitate diversity and inclusion.

### The Social Mobility Commission's Advice

The Social Mobility Commission recommends the following

1. Get to know the socio-economic dynamic of your employees by asking questions such as 'What was the main occupation of your main household earner when you were aged about 14?'
2. Reach out to 'social mobility cold spots' and recruit from schools and colleges in such places.
3. Assist those from lower-socioeconomic backgrounds to progress at work by ensuring that managers at all levels are involved in providing constant training and engaging in 'career conversations.'



## PwC have ranked number one for social mobility in the Social Mobility Employer Index 2020

The Social Mobility Commission highlighted that PwC\* had implemented the following measures to improve social mobility;

1. Work with schools and colleges in cold spot areas to help young people develop workplace skills.
2. Provide paid work experience for young people from low socio-economic backgrounds through their New World New Skills programme.
3. Provide young people access to technology degrees and data science graduate apprenticeships with no tuition fees. Since 2018, more than 340 students have taken part in these programmes.
4. Being a cornerstone employer in Bradford, which has been identified by the Government as an Opportunity Area in social mobility coldspots. PwC's Bradford office employs more than 160 people.
5. PwC's Social Entrepreneurs Club mentors, trains and supports 250 social enterprises in the UK and in the financial year of 2021 contributed more than £1.4 million to the social enterprise sector.

1. Muslim Council of Britain (2015). British Muslims in Numbers. [https://www.mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/MCBCensusReport\\_2015.pdf](https://www.mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/MCBCensusReport_2015.pdf)  
 2. Social Mobility Commission (2017). The Social Mobility Challenges Faced by Young Muslims. [http://shura.shu.ac.uk/22029/1/Young\\_Muslims\\_SMC.pdf](http://shura.shu.ac.uk/22029/1/Young_Muslims_SMC.pdf)  
 3. Social Mobility Commission (2021). State of the nation 2021: social mobility and the pandemic. HMSO. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/state-of-the-nation-2021-social-mobility-and-the-pandemic>  
 4. Muslim Council of Britain (2015). British Muslims in Numbers. [https://www.mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/MCBCensusReport\\_2015.pdf](https://www.mcb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/MCBCensusReport_2015.pdf)

\*PricewaterhouseCoopers. "Social Mobility - PwC UK." PwC, 2020. <https://www.pwc.co.uk/who-we-are/our-purpose/empowered-people-communities/social-mobility.html>



## D&I in practice – Tackling Racism at work

There are several initiatives already operating in the workplace, including Stonewall's Diversity Champions and Women's equality initiatives too. One such example tackling racism is below.

Race is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act (2010) which makes it illegal for anyone to discriminate on this basis.

### Race at Work Campaign by Business in the Community

The Race at Work campaign aims to tackle the inequalities in the workplace that centre on race. Its charter addresses the reality that employees from an ethnic minority background still greatly suffer disparities in finding employment in professional jobs as well as progression<sup>1</sup>.

### Seven Key Actions :

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>1</b> Appoint an Executive Sponsor for race.   | <b>5</b> Capture ethnicity data and publicise progress.   |
| <b>2</b> Commit at board level to zero tolerance of harassment and bullying.  | <b>6</b> Make equality, diversity and inclusion the responsibility of all leaders and managers. |
| <b>3</b> Take action that supports Black, Asian, Mixed Race and other ethnically diverse employee career progression. | <b>7</b> Support race inclusion allies in the workplace.  |
| <b>4</b> Include Black, Asian, Mixed Race and other ethnically diverse-led enterprise owners in supply chains         |   |

1. "Race." Business in the Community, November 29, 2021. <https://www.bitc.org.uk/race/>





# Muslim Friendly Workplaces

## So, what does a Muslim Friendly Workplace look like?

### Recruitment and Retention

- Removing conscious bias and unconscious bias in recruitment, eg . introducing 'Name-blind applications'.
- Active monitoring of numbers of Muslim Graduates at intake.
- Strategies to actively recruit Muslim employees, eg targeted marketing, MFE kitemark on marketing materials etc.
- Annual reviews with Muslim Employees to discuss 'Muslim-Friendly' experience of employees at the workplace.
- Actively assist talented Muslim employees into senior management roles and monitor this.



### Facilities

- Prayer rooms across all offices.
- Ablution facilities across all offices.
- Promotion of Religious Dress eg Hijab.
- Halaal Meat in Staff Restaurants.



### Employer Training

- Easy Read Guides (ERGs) circulated in workplace.
- Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) training course.
- Top 100 - Muslim-Friendly Employer Index participation.
- Collaboration with Internal Muslim Network
- Adopting the APPG definition on Islamophobia



### Working Flexibility

- Flexible working hours in Ramadan.
- Non-Muslim employee fasting initiatives.
- Holding social events that accommodate Muslims as well.
- Flexible hours on Fridays to accommodate Friday prayers.



### Islamophobia Awareness Month (IAM)

- Support on Social Media.
- Seminar/Webinar.
- Exhibition.
- 'Day in the life' series.





# Resources

## Islamophobia Exhibition

**MUSLIM CONTRIBUTION TO BRITAIN**

**BRITISH MUSLIMS & PATRIOTISM**

83% of BRITONS generally felt a 'strong sense of belonging' in the UK.<sup>1</sup>

86% of BRITISH MUSLIMS felt a 'strong sense of belonging' in the UK.<sup>1</sup>

98% of British Muslims feel a loyalty to the UK<sup>2</sup>

**MUSLIMS IN BRITAIN**

**HISTORY OF MUSLIMS IN BRITAIN**

**19th Century**

Lancaster sailors increasingly visited Britain in the 18th Century, with some settling to establish the first Muslim communities in Manchester, Cardiff, Liverpool and the East End of London. Most came from colonies of the British Empire, such as British India.

**18th Century**

One of the earliest Muslims to settle in Britain was Sidi Qasim Muhammad who came to the UK in 1794. He opened a Coffee House in London, and later an Indian Vegetarian Bath and Sheringham 'Bathhouse' in Brighton, at a time when the concept of bathing by sea was relatively unknown. He eventually became 'Sheringham's Emperor' to the Vegetarian George V.

**20th Century**

The first purpose-built mosque in Britain was the Shahjahan mosque in Woking in 1926, built by Sir Ghalib Lakhani a Hungarian Jew of Jewish descent. It is still in use today.

At the beginning of the 20th Century there were approximately 10,000 Muslims in Britain.

The Muslim community of London initially comprised of Lancans or seamen from South Asia and the Arab world. The first mosque in London was established in 1926, and was the forerunner to the biggest mosque in the UK today - the East London Mosque.

The majority of Muslims in Britain today originate from economic migration in the 1950's and 1960's from the Indian subcontinent, and from Uganda and Kenya in the 1970's.

Abdullah Quilliam was born in 1856 and brought up as a Wesleyan Methodist. He converted to Islam after a trip to North Africa. He established the first mosque in 1889 in Liverpool. A mosque which he subsequently set up a Muslim college.

Sidi Qasim Muhammad who came to the UK in 1794.

**ISLAMOPHOBIA IN BRITAIN**

**ISLAMOPHOBIA IN THE WORKPLACE**

The Muslim Penalty - UK Muslims are more likely to be unemployed than their white British counterparts.

According to evidence found in research published in the Ethnic and Racial Studies Journal, there is a penalty for being both Muslim and also Black when British labour markets.

Evidence from population surveys and modelling reveals discrimination towards Muslims and in those perceived to be Muslim to be an overwhelming barrier to being employed.<sup>1</sup>

Economic inactivity was highest among Muslim women, over half of whom were economically inactive.<sup>2</sup>

A Savanta Compass survey reveals 7 out of 10 UK Muslims experienced Islamophobia in the workplace with 56 percent of Black Muslims having experienced discrimination at the recruitment stage.<sup>3</sup>

British Muslims are hindered from reaching their full potential in the workplace due to Islamophobia. The Social Mobility Commission found predominantly young Bangladeshi and Pakistani Muslims have higher educational attainment, but this does not translate into success in the workplace.

Only 6% of Muslims are in higher managerial or administrative positions, compared to 19% of the overall UK population.

Only 20% of the Muslim population are in full-time employment, compared to more than 35% of the overall population in England and Wales.<sup>4</sup>

Between 2012-2016, Muslims had the lowest employment rate of all religious groups.<sup>5</sup>

## Diversity & Inclusion Resources

### Diversity & Inclusion Course

**Diversity and Inclusion**

A training course from Muslim Engagement and Development (MEND)

**MUSLIM FRIENDLY EMPLOYERS**

**Diversity and Inclusion in a Corporate Environment**

[www.muslimfriendlyemployers.com](http://www.muslimfriendlyemployers.com)

Now also available as a virtual experience

## Easy Read Guides

**Easy Read Guide Religious Dress**

**Easy Read Guide: Creating a Muslim Friendly Workplace: Annual Leave (Eid, Hajj/Umrah)**

**RAMADAN TOP TIPS FOR EMPLOYERS**

**A.K. HALAL MEAT RETAIL**

**Easy Read Guide Halal Meat**

**What will be covered?**

- Module I**: Understanding the legal rights, requirements, and responsibilities
- Module II**: Equality in practice: Islamophobia as a case study
- Module III**: How to create an inclusive work force.
- Module IV**: Self-reflection and creating an action plan

**Module II: Equality in practice Islamophobia as a case study**

**Module III: How to create an inclusive work force**

**Module IV: Self-reflection and creating an action plan**



# The Employer Journey



*Within 2-3 years, MFE hopes to publish its first Top 100 Muslim Friendly Employer Index. By working with MFE you will ensure you play a vital role in shaping this historic initiative.*



# How can I get involved?

## Subscription packages

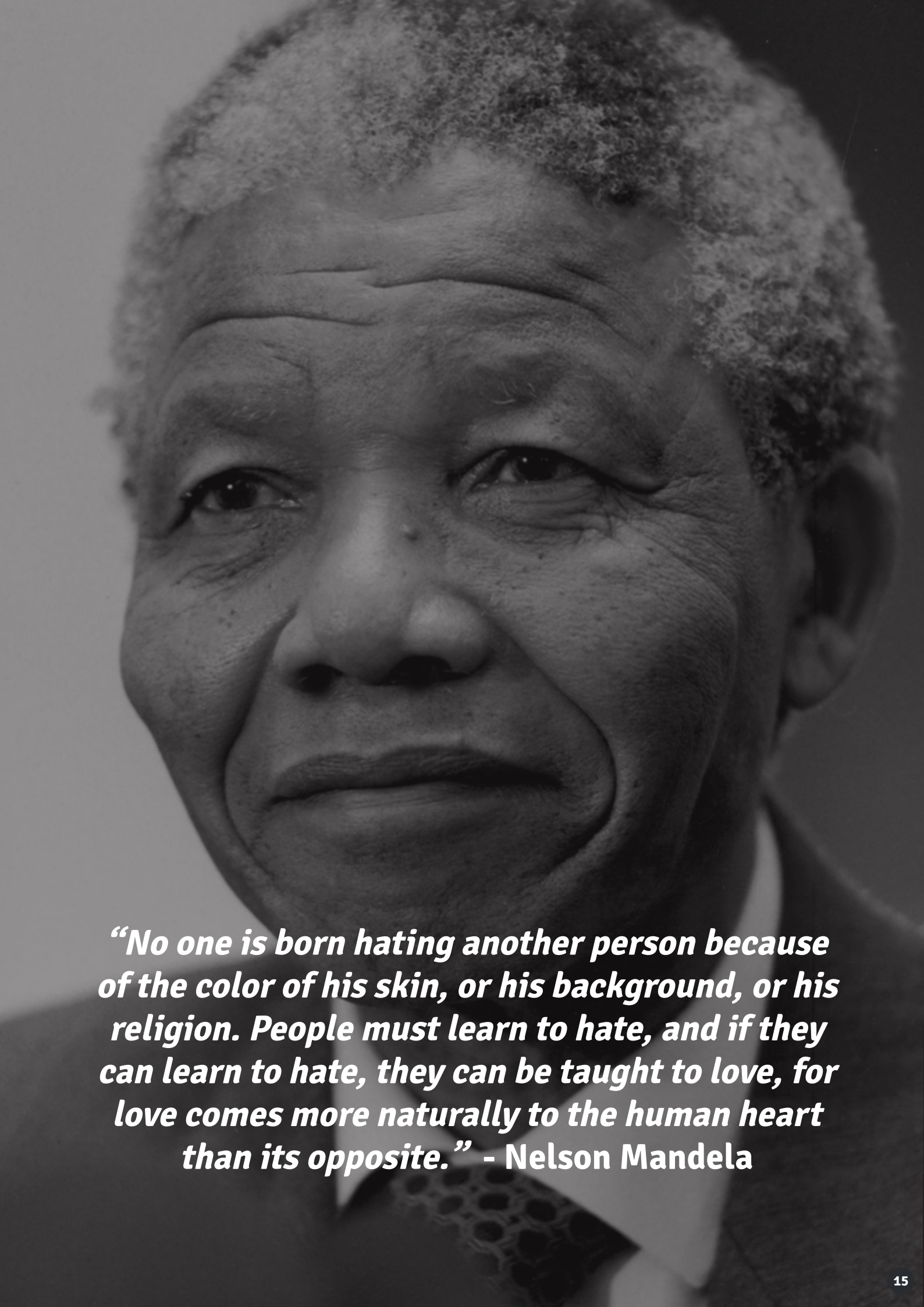
### Silver (£9,000+VAT pa)

- Training on conscious and unconscious bias during recruitment.
- Assistance with prayer room creation, materials in prayer rooms etc.
- Easy Read Guides on Halaal Food, prayers spaces, Ramadan etc.
- Adopting the APPG definition on Islamophobia
- D&I training courses for up to 5 HR/general staff members.
- Right to use MFE logo/Kitemark.
- Assistance with provision of Halaal food across all canteens.
- Materials provided for Islamophobia Awareness Month (IAM).

### Gold (£15,000+VAT pa)

- Training on conscious and unconscious bias during recruitment.
- Assistance with prayer room creation, materials in prayer rooms etc.
- Easy Read Guides on Halaal food, prayers spaces, Ramadan etc.
- Adopting the APPG definition on Islamophobia
- D&I training courses for up to 10 HR/general staff members.
- Right to use MFE logo/Kitemark.
- Assistance with provision of Halaal food across all canteens.
- Materials provided for Islamophobia Awareness Month (IAM).
- Assistance with MFE 100 application.
- Annual Independent report on Muslim Employee feedback of Employer's progress on MFE journey.
- Meetings to tailor your IAM strategy, social media support etc.
- Pre-Ramadan briefing to key partners/HR staff on Muslim employees, work patterns etc.
- Guaranteed Physical Exhibition during IAM at your offices.
- Guaranteed MFE speaker during IAM at your main event.
- Your name and logo on MFE website as Gold Member.

\*MFE is currently working on a platinum package which includes active monitoring and fast-tracking of Muslim graduate employees by senior staff.



***“No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite.” - Nelson Mandela***



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