



## Cultural Diversity Network announce new cross broadcaster initiative to promote Diversity

Press Release

Current chair of the Cultural Diversity Network (CDN), Channel 4 Chief Executive Andy Duncan, today announces a new CDN cross broadcaster Diversity Pledge. The Pledge aims to help both independent production, post production and other supplier companies and in-house producers take measureable steps to improve diversity in the Industry.

Created in partnership with Pact, and supported by the BCIDN (Broadcasting and Creative Industries Disability Network), this is the first time the CDN, including BBC, ITV, Sky, C4, Five, Turner, MTV Networks and Virgin Media Television, has signed up to an initiative of this kind. The CDN will monitor the diversity practices of the independent production companies they work with, as well as in house producers, in real and quantifiable ways.

The Pledge is split into four sections covering various aspects of diversity; production, post production, technical, craft and other supplier companies will be asked to sign up to a minimum of two:

1. Recruit fairly and from as wide a base as possible and encourage industry entrants and production staff from diverse backgrounds.
2. Encourage diversity in output.
3. Encourage diversity at senior decision-making levels.
4. Take part in, or run, events that promote diversity.

Companies will be asked annually to demonstrate how they are meeting these commitments, and whether their actions have led to improved diversity within their company. This information will be reviewed by the current CDN chair (Channel 4) and in return companies will be able to use the CDN Diversity Pledge Logo. For the first time both in-house producers and independent production companies will have to demonstrate the measures they are taking, introducing an element of accountability into the production sector for the first time.

The CDN will choose a selection of companies each year who will be invited to a meeting to discuss in more detail their actions and any outcomes. The aim of the initiative is to share best practice, to help companies to meet their targets, as well as sharing knowledge of schemes other companies have run, which have worked well.

Channel 4, will expect all their suppliers to sign up to this Pledge as the initiative is an important tool to help the media industry better reflect modern Britain, and better nurture British talent. A section will be inserted into the Editorial Specification forms for Channel 4, BBC, ITV and Sky which will ask if a company has signed up to the Diversity Pledge.

Andy Duncan, Chief Executive of Channel 4 and CDN Chair said:” I am very excited that for the first time ever we have got an industry wide diversity initiative covering broadcasters, in-house production departments and the independent sector. Despite the tough economic conditions we are all facing it’s in all our interests to have a representative workforce and to give

opportunities to the widest variety of voices so we can portray the richness of contemporary, multicultural Britain on screen.”

Oona King, Head of Diversity at Channel 4 said: “Diversity is an important catalyst for originality and creativity, so it shouldn’t be a burden for business; it should be an enabler. The Diversity Pledge is entirely flexible, and allows companies to set their own agenda. None of it is punitive. It’s essentially about turning good intentions into good practise, and creating better programming as a result.”

John McVay, Chief Executive of Pact said: “Pact members have shown their commitment to diversity over the last three years by signing up to Pact’s Diversity Pledge, and we welcome the opportunity to strengthen and broaden this commitment through the new CDN Pledge. The CDN Diversity Pledge is an opportunity for producers and commissioners to work together to build diversity across the industry, and we support it wholeheartedly.”

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**Notes to Editors**

The Pledge will be launched on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, with a CDN morning event at Channel 4 for CDN members and senior executives from the Independent Sector. It will be hosted by Andy Duncan and Oona King, and will be accompanied by a takeaway booklet.

Aaqil Ahmed, Commissioning Editor at Channel 4 and Chair of CDN North, will also launch the Pledge at an evening event, starting at 5pm, at the BBC in Manchester.

**About the CDN**

The Cultural Diversity Network (CDN) began in 2000, when all Britain’s major television broadcasters joined forces to achieve fairer representation of ethnic minorities both on and off screen. The challenge was, quite simply, to change the face of television. Instigated by Clive Jones, then at Carlton Television, CDN members agreed to develop cross-industry initiatives and share expertise, resources and good practise, to ensure that television responded to Britain’s increasingly multiracial society.

The CDN remain committed to improving the representation and portrayal of ethnic minorities and other under-represented groups throughout the broadcasting industry. “Diversity” in its broadest sense goes far beyond a tick-box analysis of different groups. Diversity is an inclusive *approach* that should run throughout an organisation to encourage talent and participation regardless of background, gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief.