

**WHAT'S IN A DAY?**  
*FIDELIO OVERTURE*



**MARKING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY**

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**# INSPIRE INCLUSION**

Fidelio wishes our friends and clients a thoughtful and enjoyable celebration of [International Women's Day](#) with its focus on inspiring inclusion.

Expectations are of course myriad. A senior woman commented rather wistfully this week what about the other 364 days of the year? Others think about a world where gender parity is so much the norm that a dedicated women's day becomes redundant.

But this is far away. Yes, there has been progress towards greater gender balance, but it is often patchy and frequently positions of power and influence, as well as key sectors of the economy, remain strongly male dominated.

IWD is an opportunity to celebrate what works and to innovate for the future. We are pleased to see: illustrious ballet companies considering how ballerinas return to work as mothers; leading law firms approach the gender pay gap head on; and major corporates look critically at why diversity at Executive Committee level still falls short of expectations.

For Fidelio diversity, and in particular gender diversity, is core to Board effectiveness and good decision-making. It's therefore a priority all year round, as we support Chairs through Search, Board Performance Reviews and Development. We also recognise the importance of primary research and challenging preconceived norms.

In this Overture dedicated to IWD, we are pleased to share Fidelio research and thought leadership focused on promoting gender balance in the Boardroom and throughout the organisation. We hope you enjoy the selection!

## FIDELIO - COMMITMENT & THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

### 1. The Pathway to Gender Balance – FTSE Women Leaders

Fidelio underscores the importance and value contribution of gender diversity in the Boardroom and Executive Committee, noting progress in the UK towards greater gender balance at leadership level in major listed and private companies. Accredited for our contribution, Fidelio emphasises the ongoing commitment required to maintain momentum in order to build diverse Boards and leadership teams with great judgement and strong decision-making capabilities. [Please click here to read on.](#)

### 2. Board, Investors & Diversity Champions – Regulating AI

In this Overture, Fidelio argues that three groups have a major interest in the implications of AI. This includes Diversity Champions, who need to be alert to inclusive representation in AI development, acknowledging its potential to either promote diversity or perpetuate biases. The Overture stresses the need for diverse voices at the decision-making table to ensure equitable outcomes for minority groups as AI's influence grows. [Please click here to read on.](#)

### 3. The Elusive Female CEO

Despite significant focus on gender diversity, the number of female CEOs remains shockingly low. At the time of writing, only 9% of FTSE 100 CEOs were women; it has now risen to 11%. In this Overture Fidelio explores the practical contribution that Search firms can make to redressing this imbalance, including: clearer role definition; development and support for those stepping into role; building the pipeline predicated on high quality data; reaching across sectors to break the glass ceiling. [Please click here to read on.](#)

### 4. Women, Health and Leadership - An Update

Fidelio has been an early advocate of Boards building a better understanding of women's health and reflecting this within the organisation. As early as 2019 Fidelio explored women's health within the workplace with the illustrious Dame Lesley Regan, then President of the Royal College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, and revisited the subject with its implications for Board Members and business leaders as recently as Christmas 2023. [Please click here to read on.](#)

### 5. Next Steps to Gender, Power & Influence in the Boardroom

Fidelio was delighted to explore diversity and inclusion in the Boardroom and leadership teams, in collaboration with the [Global Institute for Women's Leadership](#). This resulted in a virtual Roundtable which included Hon. Julia Gillard, Denise Wilson

OBE and Fiona Cannon OBE and focused on practical strategies to advance gender balance, with key findings emphasising the importance of data, leadership, and targets in driving change. [Please click here to read on.](#)

## 6. Gender Diversity – The EU Legislates

This Overture examines various approaches and legal and regulatory frameworks to achieving gender diversity across different jurisdictions, in particular the UK, Germany and the EU with its Directive to promote gender balance on corporate Boards. Whatever the regulatory framework, strong governance and a rigorous search process delivers results. [Please click here to read on.](#)

## 7. Towards Gender Balance – A Fidelio Update

Fidelio explores regulatory expectations for greater diversity and what an important driver this has been. Shareholders have also played a key role and negative votes for Boards failing to make headway has certainly contributed to diversity being firmly on the Board agenda. [Please click here to read on.](#)

### FIDELIO - GET IN TOUCH

[Fidelio Partners](#) advises Chairs and has a clear focus on Board effectiveness and building judgement capability. We have an international track record in **building better Boards** through Search, Board Performance Review and Development. We are focused on diversity and inclusion on IWD and throughout the year. To learn more about how we advise and support Chairs, including with regard to the diversity and inclusion, please contact [gkarrancumberlege@fideliopartners.com](mailto:gkarrancumberlege@fideliopartners.com).

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