

Companies seeking out women for top roles to benefit from experience, finds key Quoted Companies Alliance survey

Publicly quoted companies are actively looking to appoint women to top positions to achieve a better boardroom balance and address concerns about diversity in business, as indicated by research for the Quoted Companies Alliance, the independent membership organisation that champions the interests of small to mid-size quoted companies.

Among quoted companies that recruited for board positions in 2017, 40% explicitly sought out female candidates for their long list, compared to 36% in 2015. 67% also included female candidates on their short lists which was up from 59% in 2015.

The study of 103 companies is part of the latest QCA/YouGov Sentiment Index, which has tracked the mood of businesses since 2011. Of the 52 companies hiring, 40% appointed a female candidate against 36% in 2015.

The QCA said that this study supports anecdotal evidence that businesses are undergoing a change in behaviour as they look for a more diverse team in their boardrooms. This was also confirmed outside the boardroom, where 33% of hiring companies (of an albeit smaller sample of 27 companies) appointed a female candidate to a senior management position.

Tim Ward, Chief Executive of the Quoted Companies Alliance, highlighted the importance of women on boards because a range of attitudes and experiences is vital in setting and fulfilling strategy, particularly in growth businesses.

“Our survey suggests we are seeing an improvement in the way companies address board evaluation together with a more professional approach to recruitment,” said Mr Ward.

“While it’s encouraging that companies in which individuals and institutions can invest are actively seeking out women for board positions, numbers of women on boards and in senior management positions remain low. There are positive signs that this is changing but there is still some way to go.”

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For more information and a detailed presentation of the results, please contact:

The Quoted Companies Alliance:

Tim Ward, Chief Executive +44 (0)20 7600 3745

tim.ward@theqca.com

Media enquiries:

Peter Curtain, Allerton Communications +44 (0) 20 3633 1730

peter.curtain@allertoncomms.co.uk

Notes to editors:

The Quoted Companies Alliance is the independent membership organisation that champions the interests of small to mid-size quoted companies. We campaign, we inform and we interact to help our members keep their businesses ahead. Through our activities, we ensure that our influence always creates impact for our members. For more information please visit www.theqca.com .

Methodology:

The QCA/YouGov Small and Mid-Cap Sentiment Index by the Quoted Companies Alliance and YouGov is a biannual survey across the small and mid-cap quoted company sector. This is the 19th issue of the survey and is based upon 173 online interviews (109 small and mid-cap UK quoted companies and 64 advisory companies) conducted between 05/12/17 and 19/12/17. The sample definition is "small and mid-cap UK quoted companies and advisory companies". The responding sample is weighted by industry to be representative of small and mid-cap UK quoted companies, as derived from London Stock Exchange data, but the advisory companies are not weighted in any way.