The unseen impact of Anti-DEI policies is undermining UK futures

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- Imagine losing your chance at a dream career.
- That's the **impact of Anti-DEI (diversity, equality and inclusion) Policies on UK Youth** right now.
- Policies originating in the US are now quietly undermining opportunities for young people in the UK.
- CEO & Founder of award-winning social mobility charity, Leila Thomas, argues that these anti-DEI policies risk dismantling progress on social mobility, gender and ethnic diversity, creating fewer opportunities for underrepresented students.

The chilling Trump effect: What Urban Synergy is witnessing

At Urban Synergy we are hearing back from our young people of withdrawn job and educational offers, and we know some firms are pausing to reassess their diversity strategy because of external pressures.

> This is not about corporate box-ticking or so-called ‘woke’ culture. Every time a company steps back from or pauses DEI, a young person loses access to mentorship, to opportunities, to a future they deserve. Abstract US presidential policies, detached from real world problems, are harming futures in the UK and far beyond. Leila Thomas, Urban Synergy CEO

How Anti-DEI policies are unraveling progress

We believe that progress on social mobility, ethnic and gender diversity is compromised in three key areas and is harming young people in the UK:

Fewer opportunities: The impact of Anti-DEI on UK youth careers

Companies pulling back on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) initiatives are not just changing boardroom numbers—they risk jeopardising internships, mentoring schemes, and access to careers for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Potential impact on inclusion, wellbeing and potentially mental health

Without DEI policies, work environments become less welcoming. Young people from minority backgrounds face increased mental health challenges and fewer safe spaces to thrive.

Why Anti-DEI policies weaken the UK's future workforce

When DEI commitments are cancelled, the UK risks building a workforce unprepared for a globally diverse economy, limiting competitiveness and innovation. And, this might also lead to more lawsuits.

Why the EY Parker Review goals are at risk

Anti-DEI policies undermine the EY Parker Review’s goal to improve ethnic minority representation in UK leadership roles. The message sent is clear—diversity is optional, and inclusion is no longer a priority.

A call to action

Urban Synergy urges business leaders and educators to protect the future of young talent. We must not let political agendas derail decades of progress. It’s time to stand up for equal opportunity and inclusive growth.

Note to Editors

Journalists can contact us at media@urbansynergy.com or call 07711331127.

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Latest stats

Office for National Statistics data shows that the number of young people aged 16 to 24 years not in education, employment or training (NEET) is currently estimated to be 987,000, up from 877,000 in October to December 2023.

According to new research by UCL, graduates from low socio-economic backgrounds are 32% less likely to receive a job offer than those from more wealthy backgrounds. Black applicants and Asian applicants are 45% and 29% respectively less likely to receive an offer than white applicants.

About Urban Synergy

Founded by a City of London worker, Urban Synergy is an award-winning social mobility charity, transforming the lives of young people in urban areas from primary school aged 9 to 24 years through dynamic mentoring, career insight events, and real-world work experiences.

Since 2007, they've built confidence and skills to support over 35,000 young people, bridging the gap between ambition and opportunity.

From classrooms to boardrooms, they connect future talent with top professionals who mentor them, widening organisations' talent pipelines and creating safer, happier and more productive communities. Urban Synergy ensures you never hear: "I don't belong in a place like this."

Urban Synergy works predominantly with children and students from schools with high rates of free school meals and exclusion.

If you would like to contact Urban Synergy, please use the Contact Us page to send a message.

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