

Diversity and Inclusion

2020 Highlights



“There is real momentum for change right now, which is long overdue. As a society, we have to use that momentum to make lasting change for the benefit of all.”

- Abbi Cohen, Deputy Chair of Diversity and Inclusion

Celebrating the Advancement of Exceptional Leaders



Vincent Cohen, Jr. is a partner in Dechert’s litigation practice and focuses on government and internal investigations, government enforcement matters, and complex civil and criminal litigation. In July 2020 he was appointed to Dechert’s 14-member Policy Committee, which oversees the management of the firm worldwide. He also leads Dechert’s Black Lawyers Alliance.



In recognition of the significance of diversity and inclusion to Dechert’s culture, in 2020 we elevated the role of **Satra Sampson-Arokium** to Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer. Satra leads the team that is responsible for the oversight and implementation of the firm’s diversity and inclusion strategy.

By the Numbers

43% of the Policy Committee [senior leadership team] are women or diverse partners.

77% of the lateral partner hires made in 2020 are women or diverse.

62% of the lawyers most recently promoted to partner (effective January 1, 2021) are women or diverse.

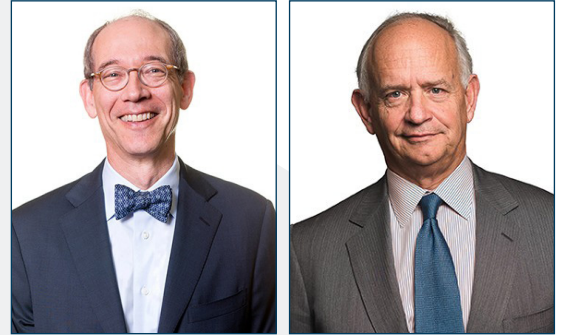
42% of our global offices are managed by women or diverse partners.

77% of our next incoming class of new associates in the U.S. are women or diverse.

Racial Justice Initiatives



Dechert has publicly condemned the tragic and unconscionable deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and countless others. In response to Black Lives Matter, Dechert quickly planned and implemented a comprehensive employee program to deepen our understanding of racism, anti-racist practices and ally-ship. This multi-faceted program included the Stand Against Racism Town Hall and Speaker Series, virtual forums for Black employees, new resources to deepen our understanding of racism, and Juneteenth, a day to reflect and recharge.



“The search for justice has always been fueled and enabled by the law. We cannot turn away now simply because the task has become more complicated or will take longer than we anticipated.”

- Andy Levander, Chair, and
Henry Nassau, CEO

Stand Against Racism Town Hall and Speaker Series

Dechert’s Town Hall and Speaker Series addresses recent events related to racism and social justice in the United States and around the world, as well as the impact on our mental health and how to deal with the trauma.

Our objectives are to provide a safe space for the Dechert community to learn, share ideas and support each other. Speakers have included:

- Sociologist Courtney Cogburn
- Clinical psychotherapist Jacquesline Walker
- Legal Innovators CEO Bryan Parker
- British writer and broadcaster Afua Hirsch
- Writer and comedian Baratunde Thurston
- Pediatrician Jacqueline Dougé
- Black studies professor Kehinde Andrews
- Former UK football player and ESPN commentator Shaka Hislop

Dechert also hosted a conversation for clients and our community on human dignity and criminal justice reform in America with Kevin Richardson, a member of the Exonerated Five, in recognition of Dechert’s commitment to fighting systemic racism.

The investigation of the wrongful conviction of Richardson and the other members of the Central Park Five as teenagers raised questions regarding police coercion and false confessions, as well as the vulnerability of black and brown youths in the criminal justice system.



Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit

Dechert launched a comprehensive Diversity and Inclusion Toolkit that is intended to deepen our understanding of racism, anti-racist practices and allyship. It is available on the firm's intranet, and includes media articles, podcasts, book recommendations, and access to training.



Juneteenth – A Day to Reflect and Recharge

Dechert was a market leader in giving time off to commemorate Juneteenth on June 19, 2020. Dechert encouraged our community to invest this time in learning about the tragic killing of George Floyd and others, the events of the last few months, and the history that preceded them.



Protecting the Right to Vote

Dechert continued the fight for equality and justice through our renowned pro bono program. Working with community partners including the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, the Brennan Center for Justice, Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights, LatinoJustice PRLDEF, Demos, and the American Civil Liberties Union – Voting Rights Project, Dechert has handled numerous cases to [protect the right to vote](#).

In addition, the firm hosted a virtual discussion with Dale Ho, director of the ACLU's Voting Rights Project. Ho discussed the documentary *The Fight*, which features him, as well as highlights from his work supervising the ACLU's voting rights litigation nationwide.

Key Initiatives



Aspiring Solicitors

Dechert is an Affiliate Partner of Aspiring Solicitors, a UK organization which aims to increase diversity in the legal profession by working with its 35,000+ members from under-represented groups to achieve their goal of obtaining a training contract. 2020/2021 marks the fifth successful year of Dechert's sponsorship of the organization's national Commercial Awareness Competition, with the winners offered a vacation scheme and opportunity to interview for a training contract at Dechert.



Diversity and Inclusion Week

As part of the firm's inaugural [Diversity and Inclusion Week](#) (July 20-24, 2020), Dechert hosted journalist and filmmaker Afua Hirsch for a provocative conversation about race, identity and belonging, as well as how what we learn (or don't learn) about our history has an impact on racism and inequality today. The firm also held fast-paced virtual quizzes focused on diversity, inclusion and world culture, with charitable donations made to the winning teams' chosen charities focused on social justice.



Inclusive Leadership

Commitment to diversity and inclusion stems from the top. Our partners continued to participate in interactive sessions on inclusive leadership, with the most recent session focused on inclusive leadership in times of crisis in response to both the pandemic and the BLM movement. Interactive sessions included dramatizations that prompt conversations long after the program ends. Training was expanded to the entire Dechert community.



Mansfield Rule Certification

Dechert achieved [Mansfield Rule 3.0 Plus Certification](#) for the second consecutive year, as a result of the firm's strong commitment to moving the needle on diversity and inclusion. This certification recognizes law firms that have increased the representation of historically underrepresented lawyers in law firm leadership by broadening the pool of women, lawyers of color and LGBTQ+ lawyers who are considered for significant governance roles, senior lateral openings and promotions.



Sponsorship and Sustained Support (SASS) Program

Studies warn that the pandemic is diluting decades of advancement on gender equality. Through our [Global Women's Initiative](#), we continued to identify and implement initiatives that promote opportunities for women to advance and lead throughout the firm. For example, in 2020 we organized our SASS women into several cohorts led by partner faculty. SASS cohorts are designed to provide support and actionable skills as women continue learning and networking together to navigate the path to partnership.

Diversity Champions

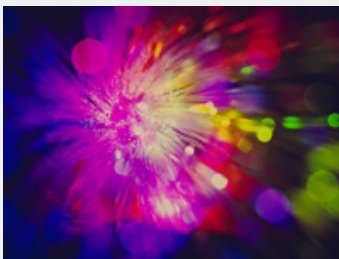
Walking the Walk

Dechert's diverse, multinational identity is a core component of who we are. Recognizing the individuals who serve as role models for the inclusive, open culture we value, Dechert offers the Diversity Champions Award. In 2020 members of the Dechert community submitted 100 nominations, ranging from partners to business service professionals. Four Diversity Champions were recognized by firm leadership at our annual all-hands event, with honorees each awarded a US\$10,000 bonus.



Pictured from L-R are Diversity Champions Louis de Chezelles, Associate (Paris); Spencer Joffrion, Associate (New York); Amisha Patel, Associate (Washington, D.C.); and David Young, Regional Office Manager (Charlotte)

Affinity Groups and Signature Events



Celebrating Our Cultures and Traditions

Dechert's affinity groups support the development and retention of diverse lawyers and educate others about the history and traditions of their cultures.

Affinity groups include the Asian Affinity Group, Black Lawyers Alliance, Family Network, Global Women's Initiative, Greater Middle Eastern Alliance, Latino Affinity Group, LGBTQ Affinity Group, London IDC, Paris IDC, and Veteran Affinity Group (Dechert Heroes).

Our affinity groups host lively and thought-provoking events throughout the year. To receive invitations and stay informed about future affinity group and diversity initiatives, please [subscribe today](#).



Introducing the Greater Middle Eastern Alliance

In 2020 Dechert formed our newest affinity group, the Greater Middle Eastern Alliance (GMEA). Chaired by partner Arif Ali, the group welcomes and brings together everyone in the Dechert community who wishes to identify with, is affiliated to, or has an interest in the region. Together group members speak 23 languages (and counting), from Arabic to Farsi to Urdu.



Asian Affinity Group

In celebration of Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month and Diwali, we hosted a conversation with Maulik Pancholy, an award-winning actor, author, and activist whose career has spanned hit television shows, animated series, the Broadway stage and films.



Black Lawyers Alliance

The BLA has been active in supporting the firm's Stand Against Racism Town Hall and Speaker Series. We celebrated Black History Month by hosting a conversation on human dignity and criminal justice reform in America with Kevin Richardson, a member of the Exonerated Five, also known as the Central Park Five.



Family Network

We welcomed pediatrician Jacqueline Dougé (*pictured left*) to learn about helping our children process violence, trauma and race in a world of non-stop news. We welcomed parenting coach Susan Nason to learn about coping with the convergence of work, school and home, and tips for dealing with quarantine. Lastly, we launched the Young and the Restless (AKA Dechert Story Time) to support our working parents. Readers from across the globe, including Dechert CEO Henry Nassau, gathered weekly to read to our children.



Global Women's Initiative

We were honored to welcome journalists Katty Kay and Claire Shipman, authors of *The Confidence Code: The Science and Art of Self-Assurance — What Women Should Know*. In the book, Kay and Shipman interview women leaders from the worlds of politics, sports, the military and the arts to learn how they have tapped into confidence.



Latino Affinity Group

We celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month by hosting a presentation with David Lamb, the award-winning producer and playwright of the ground-breaking, long-running off-Broadway hit *Platanos Y Collard Greens*, based on Lamb's book *Do Platanos Go Wit' Collard Greens?* The play and the book explore the relationship between African Americans and Latinos.



LGBTQ Affinity Group

The LGBTQ Affinity Group celebrated Pride Month with a virtual discussion with Mayor Annise Parker, president and CEO of the LGBTQ Victory Fund and Victory Institute, and the first openly LGBTQ mayor of a major U.S. city, Houston, Texas.



London Inclusion and Diversity Committee

In celebration of UK Black History Month, we hosted a lecture on the topic of race, law and the role of institutions with professor and author Kehinde Andrews of Birmingham City University.



Veteran Affinity Group (Dechert Heroes)

Dechert celebrated Veterans Day by hosting Sergeant Jake Wood, USMC, co-founder and CEO of Team Rubicon, a nonprofit organization that recruits, trains and deploys military veterans to disaster zones around the world. He is also the author of *Take Command* and *Once A Warrior*.

Awards and Accolades



Great Place to Work®

Certified as a Great Place to Work® for Third Consecutive Year



Leading Inclusion Index Company

The only law firm recognized as a Leading Inclusion Index Company



Best Places to Work for LGBTQ Equality

Perfect score in the Corporate Equality Index 8 years in a row



“We were really pleased with the diversity of our Dechert international trade team. They are setting the standard.”

- Vice President/Chief Counsel – Regulatory Matters, Eaton

- Best International Firm for Minority Women Lawyers – *Euromoney, European Women in Business Law Awards*
- Diversity Leader Award, Team Award, and Innovations in Diversity Award – *Profiles in Diversity Journal*
- 100 Best Companies, Best Law Firms for Women, and Best Companies for Dads – *Working Mother*
- Top Companies for Executive Women – *National Association for Female Executives*
- Great Place to Work®, Best Workplaces™ for Parents, Fortune Best Workplaces™ in New York, and Best Workplaces™ in Consulting & Professional Services
- Investigation Team of the Year – *C5, Women in Compliance Awards*

Diversity and Inclusion Contacts



Abbi Cohen
Deputy Chair of Diversity and Inclusion
T: +1 215 994 2352
abbi.cohen@dechert.com



Satra Sampson-Arokium
Chief Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Officer
T: +1 212 698 3692
satra.sampson-arokium@dechert.com



Andrew S. Wong
Chair of the Diversity Committee
T: +1 213 808 5710
andrew.wong@dechert.com



Sabina Comis
Co-Chair, Global Women's Initiative
T: +33 1 57 57 81 66
sabina.comis@dechert.com



Alison Bernard
Chief Talent and Human Resources Officer
T: +1 212 641 5662
alison.bernard@dechert.com



F. Amanda DeBusk
Co-Chair, Global Women's Initiative
T: +1 202 261 3452
amanda.debusk@dechert.com

Photo Credits

D-Keine | iStock.com
Gwengoat | iStock.com
Christopher Lin | Shutterstock.com
Marilyn Nieves | iStock.com