



D&I in Action

Trilegal on Gender Diversity & Inclusion

Motivation

As one of India’s top-tier law firms, we recognize our responsibility to promote equality, diversity and inclusion within our workforce and in the legal profession as a whole. Trilegal has a long-term commitment to diversity. It is not only a “business imperative”, we believe our diversity makes us more competent, credible, skilled, talented, creative and empathetic lawyers when servicing our diverse set of clients.

Trilegal strongly believes that diversity and inclusion is an ongoing process, not a one-time project. Therefore, the Firm keeps the inclusion exercises living and dynamic.

Attracting Talent and Retention

Our campus and lateral hiring practices over the years have been focused on attracting talent from a vast pool of candidates representing different backgrounds, cultures, and equality in gender. Our workforce includes people from every corner of the country.

We engage with more than 25 different law schools and universities across the country as part of our campus outreach and recruitment programs. Our recruitment committees have a diverse selection of our partners (male and female) which helps check against implicit bias in hiring. We evaluate the candidate forms we receive without applying a gender filter. Throughout the year, we have diverse internship programs that provide the opportunity for law students to experience the Firm’s work environment.

These hiring practices have borne good results for us with a relatively healthy gender balance at the entry level. Over the last 4 years (2018-2021), the female to male hiring ratio among entry level lawyers was 52:48. Overall, women are well represented across levels and departments at the Firm. Out of our active workforce today, women represent 58% of our associate lawyers, 41% of our senior associates/counsels, and 37% of our support staff.

While we are succeeding in drawing women into the Firm, we recognize that the bigger challenge is retaining talent and supporting their gradual promotion to the upper bands of the profession. Trilegal aims to cultivate a culture of meritocracy, while at the same time, retain and support our talented women lawyers, and enable them to find their path to partnership and positions of leadership within the Firm.

Today the Firm’s leadership consists of 20% women equity partners; 75% of our office heads and 40% of our board members are women partners. These are women achievers who cultivated their careers and rose to partnership at the Firm, broke glass ceilings and became leaders and role models to other aspiring women within the Firm and in the legal community.

“Performance funnels the vision of every individual in a professional organization, leaving behind the mindsets of caste, class or gender distinction. As an organization, we try to ensure that our female lawyers and employees are provided a conducive environment to thrive in their respective roles, while recognizing the practical challenges that women often face when pursuing their career paths.”

- Kavita Mathur, Head - Human Resources, Trilegal



While we constantly review our diversity and inclusion initiatives for improvement, some notable steps we have implemented are discussed below.

Coaching and Mentorship

- The Firm has curated programmes to mentor lawyers at each stage of their career, starting from induction training for interns and fresh hires, to professional development and leadership coaching for partners.
- We follow a Buddy Programme for our new joiner associates by assigning them to a senior workplace buddy, to ease their onboarding and integration into the Firm.
- Our Senior Associate to Counsel mentoring programme is very effective in evaluating the lawyer's career path in the Firm by identifying key strengths and areas of development to motivate them towards partnership. We also conduct regular coaching and mentorship workshops for our Counsels facilitated by senior partners in the Firm and reputed external counsellors.
- Secondment opportunities have proven to be extremely rewarding for both the Firm and the individual candidate. It helps those seconded in developing their skills, understanding practical nuances of business, and receiving much needed international exposure for cross-border work.
- Trilegal also leverages WinPE ProClub Mentorship Program, a pioneering initiative that aims to accelerate career growth for high performing women from the investing ecosystem by facilitating 1:1 mentoring by industry leaders for a 12-month period.
- Our diversity initiatives extend beyond our lawyers to our mission critical executive and administrative staff members. We implement periodic upskilling programs for the executive staff and office managers to train them on soft skills, use of technology, Management Information System and Customer Relationship Management.

Work Environment and Infrastructure Support

- The Firm provides support to new mothers returning from maternity leave to help them rejoin the workforce. The Firm understands that it is a marathon, not a sprint. Women returning from maternity leave are supported through flexible work schedules, 3 months' extension of leave, shorter working hours and work from home options. We provide working parents with a flexible work environment that enables them to balance their personal commitments with their professional deliverables.
- We have dedicated nursing rooms in our offices to ensure that new moms can tend to their kids during office hours. We also have creche facilities within our offices wherever possible, and tie-ups with daycare facilities situated very close to our offices.
- To ensure the safety of the professionals, all our offices provide cabs (pre-verified, GPS enabled and exclusively servicing the Firm) so that our lawyers feel safe when attending client meetings when needed.

We are an Equal Opportunity Employer in Letter and Spirit

- Trilegal strongly advocates for equal employment opportunities for all, and also makes provisions for the retention and career progression of those under-represented in the workforce.
- No one who works or applies to work at Trilegal is denied equal treatment because of age, sex, national origin, race, religion, marital status, sexual preference, pregnancy, disability or political conviction.
- Our efforts extend to promoting an inclusive and supportive workplace for individuals with disabilities. We have not only retrofitted old office spaces and designed new offices for physical accessibility but worked on the digital infrastructure to adhere to the accessibility standards.

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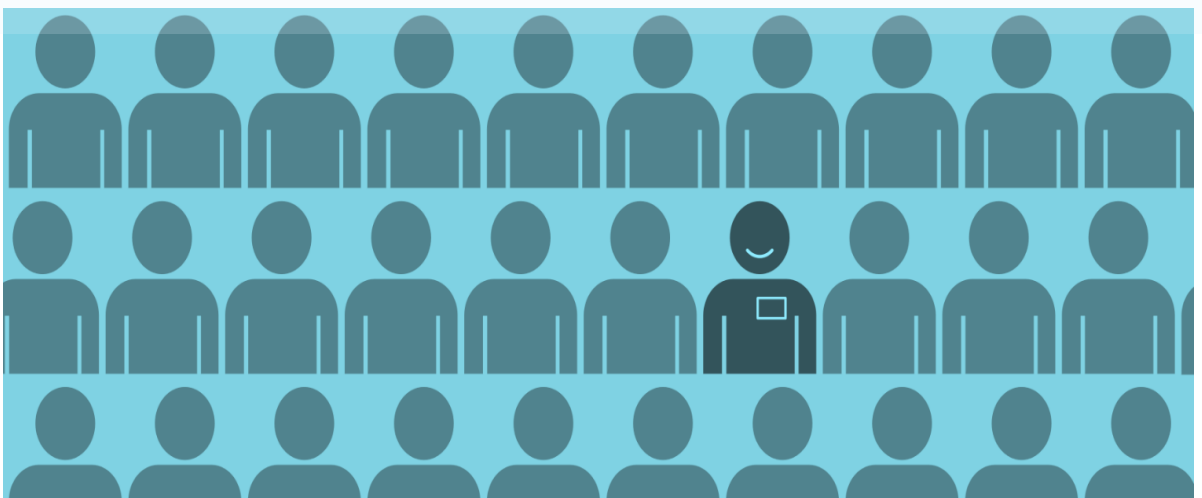
- Trilegal is one of the few professional service firms in the country to allow a paternity leave policy. Our endeavour is to break the stereotype of women being caregivers and men being bread-earners, and to encourage the sharing of parental and caregiving responsibilities. In this spirit, in 2020, we celebrated Father’s Day with a social media campaign “Daddy Cool” to acknowledge the role, responsibilities, and contributions of men as parents.
- In 2020, we also celebrated the Pride week on our social media, to emphasize the importance of diversity and inclusion, and accepting individuality free from stereotypes.

Standard-Setting Initiatives

- **Elected Management:** Trilegal is one of the first law firms in India to have an elected management. In February 2020, the founding partners stepped down from the managing committee, to make way for an elected management which truly reflects democratized leadership and diverse voices.
- **Leadership Capability Development Programme:** The firm undertook a rigorous and reflective process facilitated by Aon Hewitt in 2018, to create a feedback-based Partner capability development programme. The main aim of the programme was to help identify strengths and development areas and ensure that the Firm is investing and building Partner competencies for the next generation of leaders in a transparent and inclusive manner.
- **Trilegal Engage:** In the wake of COVID-19 last year, Trilegal rose to the challenge and created an innovative digital learning programme “Trilegal Engage” for different batches of interns. This consisted of a series of digital training sessions and practice-oriented modules conducted by Trilegal partners and counsels to replicate the internship experience at our Firm.
- **D&I Policy:** Towards our commitment to being a diverse and inclusive organization, this year we will formally launch our D&I policy to take on some specific goals in the area. We will also be launching a focused programme on building awareness on “Unconscious Bias” through classroom training across all levels.

Recognition and Contribution to Community

- Trilegal has been nominated as a finalist in seven of eight national categories in the Women in Business Law Awards 2020, supported by IFLR. This award recognizes law firms that have developed strong and innovative practices and programmes that highlight women and diversity. The Firm was a finalist in the categories of Mentoring, Minority Women Lawyers, Talent Management, Work-Life Balance, Pro Bono Work and Jurisdiction Awards



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- Trilegal was a finalist at the inaugural Chambers Diversity & Inclusion Awards: Asia - Pacific 2020 for its POSH toolkit in the Programme of the Year – Regional category.
- Trilegal has been recognised as ‘one of the top fifteen most innovative law firms in Asia-Pacific’ at the Financial Times Innovative Lawyers Awards, 2019, 2018 and 2017 and as ‘one of the top five law firms in the country’ by RSG Consulting in its 2019 India Report.
- Trilegal is also recognised as one of the ‘Best Overall Law Firms in India’ as part of the India Business Law Journal Annual Indian Legal Awards 2018-19 and as one of the ‘Best Law Firms to Work’ in Vahura Research Report 2018.
- Trilegal has incredibly talented women who have demonstrated exemplary success in their professional careers to become market leaders. Many of our women partners have been recognized by clients and peers and received multiple individual category awards year after year for their professional achievements.
- We understand the need to proactively champion diversity initiatives and inspire the legal community at large. Our partner Charandeep Kaur is the Global Chair of the International Bar Association’s Women’s Interest Group and has been playing an important role in shaping the conversation around the world on diversity in legal services. She was the only Indian lawyer to be recognised as Gender Diversity Lawyer of the Year at Chambers Diversity Inclusion Awards 2020. Our partner Kosturi Ghosh has written about recognizing transgender rights in India in the Chambers Diversity Forum and was recognised as ProBono Lawyer of the Year at Chambers Diversity Inclusion Awards 2020 for her work with Blank Noise, a non-profit organization that works towards empowerment of women and prevention of abuse through the medium of art.
- Our work on diversity and inclusion does not stop at the edges of the legal community and is not limited to legal profession pipeline efforts. Effective December 2020, we launched our CSR initiative. We partnered with Catalyst for Social Action (CSA), one of the few NGOs who are focused on children in institutional care. We are sponsoring two CSA homes in Ahmednagar.

Trilegal’s mission is to foster an environment that attracts, develops and inspires women to achieve their full personal and professional potential as well as contribute to the future development of the firm as leaders.

“Trilegal is committed to ensuring a safe and inclusive workplace where people from diverse backgrounds can thrive. There is no question that diversity in opinions and perspectives strengthens the firm and allows us to serve our clients better. From increased innovation and creativity to reduced attrition, the benefits of a diverse and inclusive workplace are drivers of success.”

- Sridhar Gorthi, Senior Partner and member of Managing Committee, Trilegal

