



**LED BY:**  
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**FOUNDED BY:**  
 **Teneo**  
The Global CEO Advisory Firm



## **TENEO, THE FORD FOUNDATION AND THE EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL LAUNCH THE BOARD DIVERSITY ACTION ALLIANCE**

***Taking action to increase the representation of racially and ethnically diverse  
directors on corporate boards of directors***

***Led by Ursula Burns and Gabrielle Sulzberger***

September 8, 2020 – New York City – Ursula Burns, Gabrielle Sulzberger, the global CEO advisory firm Teneo, the Ford Foundation, the Executive Leadership Council, and a group of founding signatories today announced the launch of Board Diversity Action Alliance, a business-led initiative taking action to increase the representation of racially and ethnically diverse directors on corporate boards of directors, beginning with Black directors.

Corporate diversity and board diversity go hand in hand – leadership starts at the top. To best serve the broader stakeholder community, companies need to understand their employees' communities, have a clear point of view and set a purposeful course of action. By joining the alliance, signatories voluntarily commit to accelerate change by supporting a concerted enterprise transformation approach to diversity by integrating talent, accountability and engagement.

Specific signatory commitments include:

- Increasing the number of Black directors on the board of directors to one or more;
- Disclosing of the self-identified race and ethnicity of directors on corporate boards;
- Reporting on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion measures on an annual basis.

Founding signatories include Dow, Macy's, Mastercard, PNC, UPS, WW

The Board Diversity Action Alliance will lead the focused and aligned effort to quantify, convene and amplify the work being done by building partnerships with the corporate and non-profit community to increase awareness and expand influence. Visit [www.boarddiversityactionalliance.com](http://www.boarddiversityactionalliance.com) to learn more.

**Ursula M. Burns**, former Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of the Xerox Corporation, current board director of Uber, Nestlé, ExxonMobil and Datto, and Teneo Senior Advisor, said “We know that leadership starts at the top and presence makes an impact. If the outcome we seek is one where companies value the positive differences of the customers they serve and the communities where they operate, then we need to accelerate the drive for more inclusive representation on boards. This is the reason we formed the Board Diversity Action Alliance . . . to engage people and companies in positions of influence to be the change we want to see and push for more progress.”

**Gabrielle Sulzberger**, former Chair of the Board of Whole Foods, current board director of Mastercard and Brixmor Property Group and co-founder and general partner of Fontis Partners, said “Ultimately we believe diversity of background, perspective and experience make for more robust decision making and resilient organizations overall and is therefore in the best interest of all of our employees, customers, and importantly, our stockholders. This must have its foundations at the very top of the organization and is why Board Diversity Action Alliance is so focused on the diversity of corporate boards.”

**Darren Walker**, President of the Ford Foundation, said “The mission of the Ford Foundation is addressing poverty, inequality and injustice. We know that to drive more inclusive capitalism for the benefit of *all* stakeholders, we must address the unbalanced structural incentives that are distorting our economy. This work starts with the board of directors. Foundations, like Ford, must continue to do more and the Board Diversity Action Alliance brings together the right voices to advance this pressing work.”

**Crystal Ashby**, Interim President and CEO of The Executive Leadership Council, said “It is not an option, but a business imperative, to have Black men and women directors on today’s corporate boards. Increased board diversity as a priority enhances corporate reputation, helps improve company performance and positively impacts board performance. It also sends a strong message to the employee population of a company’s authentic commitment to diversity as demonstrated by the intentional action of leadership.”

**Tonie Leatherberry**, Board Chair of The Executive Leadership Council, said “The ELC’s north star is to increase the number of Black executives on corporate boards. As corporate leaders, we have witnessed how board diversity broadens the ability of companies to more effectively meet the market due to an expanded understanding of differing demographics. Without a diverse board, companies risk missing out on diverse ideas that come with a diverse leadership”

**Declan Kelly**, Chairman and CEO of Teneo, said “Board diversity and especially increasing the number of Black executives on boards is a critical issue for CEOs and corporate directors. Teneo is proud to be involved in driving this important diversity initiative and we will continue to dedicate the resources of our firm to help ensure its success.”

## **Teneo**

Teneo is the global CEO advisory firm. Working exclusively with the CEOs and senior executives of the world's leading companies, Teneo provides strategic counsel across their full range of key objectives and issues. Our clients include a significant number of the Fortune 100 and FTSE 100, as well as other global corporations. Integrating the disciplines of strategic communications, investor relations, digital advisory, diversity & inclusion, management consulting, physical & cyber risk advisory, financial advisory, corporate governance advisory, political risk advisory, and talent advisory. The Firm has more than 800 employees located in 20 offices around the world. For more information about Teneo, please visit [www.teneo.com](http://www.teneo.com). ([www.teneo.com](http://www.teneo.com))

## **Ford Foundation**

The Ford Foundation is an independent, nonprofit grant-making organization. For more than 80 years it has worked with courageous people on the frontlines of social change worldwide, guided by its mission to strengthen democratic values, reduce poverty and injustice, promote international cooperation, and advance human achievement. With headquarters in New York, the foundation has offices in Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. ([www.fordfoundation.org](http://www.fordfoundation.org))

## **Executive Leadership Council**

The Executive Leadership Council is the preeminent membership organization committed to increasing the number of global Black executives in C-Suites, on corporate boards and in global enterprises. Our purpose is to open channels of opportunity for the development of black executives to positively impact business and our communities. ([www.elcinfo.com](http://www.elcinfo.com))

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