



## GLOBAL BUSINESSES COMMIT TO DISABILITY INCLUSION ON THIS YEAR'S 75<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF UNGA

- *Global businesses ANZ, Daimler, DuPont, Financial Times, Kurt Geiger and Verizon sign up to putting disability inclusion on their board agenda*
- *Global disability inclusion movement The Valuable 500 is calling on businesses to ensure disability-inclusive SDGs are at the heart of post-Covid recovery*
- *The announcement is made during the UN's 75<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, running 15<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> September*

**28.09.20:** Today, The Valuable 500 – the global movement which is working to get 500 of the world's largest businesses to commit to placing disability inclusion on their business leadership agendas – announces 326 global businesses have committed to putting disability inclusion on their board agenda.

The latest global companies to join the movement today come from across industries and all four corners of the world, including Australia, Japan, South America, Middle East, Europe, India and the USA.

Those signing up today include Addleshaw Goddard, AGL, Al Baraka Banking Group, ANZ, B&Q, Brenntag, British Land, Capgemini Group, Compass Group, Daimler, DNP Group, DuPont, Ecopetrol SA, Endesa, FT, Gin Group, Ipsos MORI, Kurt Geiger, LSEG, Macquarie Group, Nissan Motor GB, OM Metals, Pets at home, RELX, SEGA SAMMY HOLDINGS, INC., SHOWA DENKO K.K., Sumitomo Life, Travis Perkins plc, Urban Research Co., Ltd, Verizon, Vestas Wind Systems A/S and Yomiuri Shimbun.

The Valuable 500 remains the only global CEO community dedicated to radically transforming the business system across the whole supply chain for the benefit of all those with a disability. Launched on the main stage at the World Economic Forum's Annual Meeting in January 2019, the movement today announces that 326 companies have so far committed to putting disability on the business leadership agenda.

This total brings the combined revenue of The Valuable 500's current members to over \$4.5 trillion, encompassing 55 sectors, with over 11.9 million employees and reaching across 31 countries.

This announcement is made on the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of UNGA as marked by Member States, and the 10 year count down to the completion of the UN's 2030 sustainable development goals.

As we come within a decade of the deadline for completing the goals, there are still huge strides to be made. The pandemic has only further widened inequalities with fear of increased poverty, further impact to the environment and a moving away from achieving the goals.

Disability is included in five of the Sustainable Development Goals, including goal 8, promoting inclusive economic growth, full and productive employment allowing persons with disabilities to fully access the job market, and 10, emphasizing the social, economic and political inclusion of persons with disabilities. Furthermore, 'persons with disabilities' or 'disability' are specifically mentioned 11 times throughout the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.



The Valuable 500's goal is critical to meeting the goals of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as currently, 15% of people worldwide live with some form of disability. When you include the families of those living with a disability, this number rises significantly to 53%. Businesses cannot afford to exclude such a huge market comprising of talented employees who can contribute significantly to the business sustainability agenda, and valuable customers with a significant spending power of \$8 trillion per annum.

Sanda Ojiambo, Executive Director of the United Nations Global Compact, comments:

“One of the key pillars of the United Nations Global Compact is Social Sustainability, and within this a cornerstone is focused on people with disabilities. With 1.3 billion people globally we cannot afford to ignore them and Business is at the heart of ensuring inclusion for all. The Valuable 500's bold ambition has paved a way for us all to realise business can and needs to be inclusive and this needs to happen now. With this global collective, now celebrating 326 businesses committing to disability inclusion from over 30 countries, I am optimistic that we will reach a point where global business integrates the SDGs into their core business strategies and operations to achieve a world where everyone is included.”

Eddie Ndopu, UN Secretary General's Advocate for the Sustainable Development Goals, comments:

“The Valuable 500 initiative is a catalyst for the tipping point that we have been waiting for. People with disabilities constitute 1.3 billion people and it is time for the world to recognise and validate the lived experience of this tenacious and resourceful segment of society. We know that business is a transformative force for change and so it brings me tremendous joy as a disability activist and as one of the Secretary General's Advocates for the Sustainable Development Goals to bear witness to this transformation. It is my hope that more businesses will recognise what we already know to be true, that people with disabilities are brilliant, magnificent and valuable.”

By engaging the most influential business leaders and brands, The Valuable 500 is working to create a tipping point that unlocks the business, social and economic value of the 1.3 billion people living with disabilities around the world.

Caroline Casey, Founder of The Valuable 500, commented:

“Disability inclusion is not simply a ‘nice to have’, it is critical to achieving a significant proportion of the Sustainable Development Goals. In light of this, it is more imperative than ever that businesses globally look to regroup and reevaluate for post-Covid recovery, achieving the SDGs as a collective is firmly embedded within their leadership agendas.

“As part of this, disability inclusion cannot be siloed simply as a diversity and inclusion initiative. It is integral to the business sustainability agenda and instrumental in meeting several of the SDGs, beyond those explicitly focused on disability inclusion. It means unlocking the talent and potential of a vast community who can significantly contribute to the work being done to meet SDGs across industries globally. We must also not overlook the key issue of intersectionality between gender, race, class,



disability. We cannot prioritise one above the other when they intersect and impact on a daily basis – we must tackle all together.

“We are delighted to see the momentum of the sign up to The Valuable 500 continuing throughout the global pandemic, demonstrating that businesses are listening and taking action to create a more inclusive society globally. We wholeheartedly welcome the latest members joining, at this critical tipping point as business is presented with a unique opportunity to remould and remake itself.”

Brett Redman, CEO and Managing Director of AGL Energy, comments:

“We’re proud to be the first Australian energy company to join The Valuable 500’s global CEO collective focussing on improving disability inclusion. At AGL, we’re committed to building a safe and inclusive work environment for all our people – including those who identify as having a disability.

“We recently launched our new Disability Action Plan and Disability Working Group, which are helping us drive important programs and initiatives across the business. We look forward to standing alongside The Valuable 500 to take a stand on this important initiative within the energy industry, and society more broadly.”

Graham Bell, CEO of B&Q, comments:

“We’re committed to making B&Q a more inclusive place to work and shop for both our colleagues and customers, and pledge to make it easier for everyone to access their home improvement needs.

B&Q is a Level Two, Disability Confident Employer; joining The Valuable 500 is the next step on our disability inclusion journey and we are proud to be launching the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Lanyard scheme across all our stores. We know there’s more work to be done and we’re committed to keeping diversity and inclusion firmly on our board agenda and taking action to create an accessible and inclusive work and retail environment for everyone.”

Dr. Christian Kohlpaintner, CEO of Brenntag, comments:

“As a leading company, Brenntag is committed to diversity and inclusion. For Christian Kohlpaintner, CEO of Brenntag AG, it is therefore a particular commitment to sign the global movement @The Valuable 500: "Inclusion issues belong on the sustainability agenda of every company. It is above all about promoting the strengths and potential of employees with disabilities".

Simon Carter, Chief Financial Officer and CEO designate of British Land, comments:

“Diversity and inclusion is central to driving innovation, understanding our customers and ultimately the success of our business. We work very hard to ensure that British Land is an organisation where people feel free to bring their whole selves to work and I am delighted that we are joining The Valuable 500’s campaign focusing on disability inclusion.”

Aiman Ezzat, CEO of Capgemini Group, comments:



“At Capgemini, we believe that a diverse workforce and an inclusive culture for all are the very foundations of a sustainable business. The digital revolution ushers in increased flexibility and accessibility for the benefit of everyone. Through our support of the Valuable 500, it is with great pride that we acknowledge this important commitment to our colleagues with disability.”

Dominic Blakemore, Group CEO of Compass Group, comments:

“Our strength comes from our inclusive and welcoming environment. Being part of the Valuable 500 supports our commitment to ensuring that our workforce reflects our diverse customers and communities around the world. Diversity of thought, experience and backgrounds are critical ingredients in our view and embracing people’s differences is essential for a culture where everyone feels valued. We feel we are well placed to give people with a disability an opportunity to have fulfilling careers.”

Ola Källenius, Chairman of Daimler AG and Mercedes-Benz AG, comments:

“By joining The Valuable 500, we stand up for Daimler’s core values: We demand and foster equal opportunity and a working environment of appreciation and mutual respect. The Valuable 500 is a strong worldwide initiative that emphasizes disability inclusion and diversity - topics we continuously work on and enrich our corporate culture.”

Mr. Yoshinari Kitajima, DNP company president, comments:

“DNP strives to create new value that overcomes social challenges and answers consumer expectations. Society and consumers are truly diverse, and in order to provide real value DNP is faced with the need to respect the diversity of all individuals, including those with physical and mental challenges, and to respond by combining the multiple strengths we possess as a company. DNP products and services will then become an absolutely essential value accepted as a constant, must-have part of the daily lives of each and every consumer.”

Felipe Bayon, CEO of Ecopetrol SA, comments:

“We feel inspired by the power of Diversity and aim to create an inclusive environment where we all feel we belong. We are committed to integrate the diversity lens to foster the inclusion of people with disabilities and caregivers' perspectives across our organization and processes. These actions help us to build a better company that as we in Ecopetrol say is "De Todos, para Todos”.

José Bogas, consejero delegado de Endesa, comments:

“La diversidad es una de las áreas prioritarias del planteamiento de Endesa en su promoción de una cultura de inclusión total en la empresa, junto con el género o la edad. Por eso queremos participar en la ambiciosa iniciativa internacional "Valuable 500" que tiene como objetivo liberar el enorme potencial que puede obtenerse mediante la inclusión de los 1.300 millones de personas con discapacidad de todo el mundo, en sintonía con la visión estratégica de Enel de que sostenibilidad es sinónimo de valor. Valuable 500 nos demuestra que, al abrir las puertas a las personas con discapacidad, las empresas obtienen una serie de ventajas entre las que se incluyen un nivel superior de innovación, el aumento de



la base de clientes y una mejora de la productividad. Con este fin, estamos reforzando nuestras medidas para superar los obstáculos a los que se enfrenta este colectivo e integrar sus perspectivas en nuestro planteamiento empresarial”.

John Ridding, CEO of the Financial Times, comments:

“At the FT we are committed to building a fully inclusive culture and giving our people the support they need to grow and thrive at work. Disability inclusion is firmly on our leadership agenda and we are proud to take part in The Valuable 500.”

Raúl Beyruti Sánchez, CEO of Gin Group, comments:

“In Ginclúyete we work to expand the labor opportunities and inclusion for people with disabilities, procuring their welfare and happiness up to the point that the results and delivery capacity of them makes no difference for any employer all around the world.”

Ben Page, Chief Executive of Ipsos MORI, comments:

“Ipsos MORI is committed to diversity and inclusion, fairness and equality. We are stronger because of the diversity of our people, and this lets us better understand the people, businesses and societies we seek to research. We have pledged to use our skills productively to highlight prejudice in societies and work to ensure we more fully represent the communities we serve.”

Neil Clifford, CEO of Kurt Geiger, comments:

“The fashion sector has been a notorious culprit of exclusivity too often and for too long, but times are changing. At Kurt Geiger, diversity and equality have always been and remain essential core values of our organisation and we are striving to reflect these principles across every corner of our culture. We are proud to join The Valuable 500 and we pledge our commitment to building an inclusive industry, not only by supporting those with disabilities, but by championing them wholeheartedly.”

Andrew Humberstone, managing director of Nissan Motor GB, comments:

“We are delighted to be joining the Valuable 500 community as part of Nissan GB’s ongoing ambition to achieve zero emissions, zero fatalities and zero inequality in society.

“Anyone living with disability will tell you that it comes with a unique set of challenges, which are all too often ignored or invisible to others. We need to do much more to remove such barriers and ensure a fairer, more equal society for all.”

Peter Pritchard, Group CEO, Pets at Home Plc, comments:

“We can learn a lot from our pets – they don’t discriminate, and as a business, neither do we. That’s why I’m so proud to join Valuable 500 and push for the barriers around disability to be eradicated from the workplace for everyone. By creating as inclusive a workplace as possible, we firmly believe that we will be a better business for it. Personally, and as a business we are passionate about raising awareness of



the benefits that pets bring to people with disabilities across society. This is an area we plan to champion through the Valuable 500.”

Kohei Morikawa, Representative Director, President and CEO of SHOWA DENKO K.K., comments:

“We at Showa Denko Group will continue to promote diversity and inclusion to ensure that all our employees, regardless of disabilities, can play active roles in the company.

“We strive to touch people's hearts, lead social changes, and bring more surprises and excitement to the world.”

Masahiro Hashimoto, President & Chief Executive Officer of Sumitomo Life, comments:

“As a member of The Valuable 500, Sumitomo Life will create new models of employment for persons with disabilities by leveraging technology, so that we can empower them and foster greater inclusion in the workplace. Under Sumitomo Life’s brand message of “Empowering Your Future”, we will continue our sustainable growth by providing a place where all our employees can excel.”

Nick Roberts, CEO of Travis Perkins plc, comments:

“In an industry that typically lacks diversity the future success of the Travis Perkins Group will be dependent on creating a more inclusive environment which naturally fosters and celebrates diversity in all its forms. Around 80% of disabilities are hidden, and we want our colleagues to feel able to bring their whole selves to work and be confident and open about their disabilities without being defined by them. Supporting the Valuable 500 is a natural step on this journey for us, and we look forward to sharing and learning within this network to improve the lives of our colleagues.”

Kozo Takemura, President and CEO of Urban Research Co., Ltd., comments:

“We are delighted to join The Valuable 500 in order to enhance inclusion and diversity in our business process for the interests of both people with or without disabilities. In our subsidiary company “UR Terrace Co., Ltd.” located inside the headquarters, our staff can access suited work environments and necessary support throughout their career development. A role of us among the Japanese fashion industry, I believe, is to make full use of creativity and imagination and to contribute this movement.”

Hans Vestberg, Chairman and CEO of Verizon, comments:

“At Verizon, we create the networks that move the world forward, but we cannot fulfill our purpose if any member of society is left behind. Technology has the power to connect and enhance the lives of all people, including the one billion individuals living with disabilities. That’s why we are proud to join the Valuable 500 to drive sustainable innovation and equitable growth with the expertise of the disability community at the forefront. Together, we can build a future where everyone is included.”

For more information please visit: [www.thevaluable500.com](http://www.thevaluable500.com)



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**Notes to Editors**

**About The Valuable 500**

Launched by social entrepreneur and activist Caroline Casey at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in January 2019, The Valuable 500 aims to put disability on the global business leadership agenda.

The Valuable 500 was created by Binc, the organisation founded by Caroline Casey in 2015, with a mission to ignite a historic global movement for a new age of business inclusion - capitalising on Caroline Casey's 18-year track record of success engaging over 450 organisations. The campaign has won three awards: a Cannes Lion, D&AD, and a BIMA.

Our goal is to persuade 500 multinational companies that have at least 1,000 employees to make a public commitment to advance disability inclusion in their organisation. By engaging the most influential business leaders and brands, we want to create a tipping point within business that unlocks the business, social and economic value of the 1.3 billion people living with disabilities around the world, and the millions of us who will become disabled over time

We believe that if business takes a lead, society and government will follow, truly inclusive businesses can build truly inclusive societies.

**About The Valuable 500: Phase 2**

We have approached over 2,800 leaders across the globe to commit to specific actions including putting disability performance on their leadership agenda.

The deadline to join the Valuable 500 has been extended to January 2021, and we will continue to build momentum and work with business leaders to complete the sign-up formalities to reach our goal of 500.



We also will inaugurate Phase II development in 2020: a three-year effort to turn The Valuable 500 into a community of like-minded business peers committed to raising their game on disability by sharing models, lessons learned, and energy. This will include:

- Helping our 500 CEOs boost inclusivity best practice at the leadership level through our Executive Inclusivity Programme
- Developing a peer-to-peer network of CEOs committed to inclusion
- Providing research and insight around inclusivity and business disability performance
- Empowering our CEOs to integrate disability across the entire value chain and
- Continuing to change the global narrative around disability.