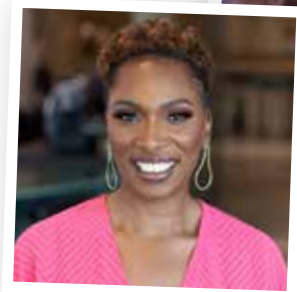




## PUTTING RACIAL EQUITY ON THE MENU



**Lorraine Copes** is the founder of **Be Inclusive Hospitality**, a social enterprise that works to inspire, empower, collaborate and educate those working in hospitality to build a more inclusive industry. Launched four years ago, she shares its progress so far

### WHAT IS BE INCLUSIVE HOSPITALITY?

Be Inclusive Hospitality CIC is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to building a thriving community and accelerating racial equity in hospitality, food and drink.

As a social enterprise, we drive action through research, empower our community with funded programmes, and partner with organisations that commit to building a fairer and more inclusive industry. We are a community of over 1,000 members including ambassadors and mentors.

### WHERE DID THE IDEA FOR BE INCLUSIVE HOSPITALITY COME FROM?

I've worked within the hospitality industry for the past two decades in procurement for brands such as Gordon Ramsay Restaurants, The Wolseley Hospitality Group and Shake Shack. Throughout my career, there has never been anyone who looked like me in any decision-making rooms, events, conferences, or the supply chain – other than those waiting tables.

This has been the case despite hospitality technically being extremely diverse. Our own research produced in 2020 in partnership with The Resolution Foundation found that 17.83% of the industry are ethnic minorities, occupying junior roles. This

is symptomatic of a problem I was keen to raise awareness of and address.

Our aim is to ensure that the future of hospitality has more ethnically diverse senior leaders and founders, who are visible, succeeding and celebrated.

### WHAT IS YOUR IMPACT?

To date, we have produced four industry reports, in partnership with think tanks and universities, collecting over 4,000 views and experiences. We have supported over 2,000 ethnically diverse employees and founders, investing more than £300,000 in mentorship, qualifications, grant funding, recognition programmes and work experience.

We collaborate with global and national organisations on a consultancy basis, and have delivered workshops for over 1,000 hospitality leaders to date.

### AND HOW DO YOU HAVE THAT IMPACT?

We take a multi-pronged approach, producing research, delivering professional development programmes and working actively as a Equity, Diversity and Inclusion consultancy supporting businesses to Be Inclusive.

### WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE CHANGE/IMPROVE IN YOUR AREA?

Our aim is to see more representation of ethnically diverse talent in senior leadership





*Find out more*  
 Join the community, become  
 a partner, ambassador or mentor,  
 or fundraise and donate at  
[bihospitality.co.uk](http://bihospitality.co.uk)  
**BE INCLUSIVE HOSPITALITY**

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roles and positions of influence, and this extends to business owners too. The Inside Hospitality Report, a report we commissioned, found that 43% of ethnically diverse respondents believe that ethnicity has hindered career progression, one in three have witnessed or experienced racism, and only two in five respondents have accessed any

earnings or business revenue. We support a range of ethnically diverse people within a variety of sectors of hospitality.

**WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE?**

We face the same challenges as any other relatively young business. We are four years old in June and we are naturally keen to grow. However, bringing on the right resource at the right time is an important step for a small business and we are steadily doing so in order to drive more social change.

**WHAT IS A SOCIAL ENTERPRISE TO YOU?**

To me, it's an organisation that has clear social aims and drives change through community impact.

**WHAT'S NEXT FOR BE INCLUSIVE HOSPITALITY?**

Growth and greater impact. We are clear on our 'how', and it is proving effective, yet the work we are doing is a drop in the ocean of what is possible. To do more, we need more funding, sponsorship, and partners to create a greater impact. Our work is heavily concentrated in London, and so over the coming year we are going to ensure we support members and collaborate right across the UK. ❤️

education relating to diversity, inclusion or race. Our hope is that year on year our survey posts an improved picture.

**CAN YOU GIVE AN EXAMPLE OF HOW YOU'VE HELPED A COMMUNITY?**

We deliver multiple programmes each year, and we know that 98% of participants would recommend our programmes to a peer or colleague. We have a 99.5% programme completion rate and 70% go on to achieve their career or business goals, which are often related to upward social mobility, so increased