

## Sodexo is named on Times Top 50 Employers for Gender Equality 2024

10 months ago



Sodexo UK & Ireland has been listed as one of The Times Top 50 Employers for Gender Equality 2024 for its [commitment](#) to making gender equality a priority in the workplace.

The Times Top 50 Employers for Gender Equality is the UK's most highly profiled and well-established list of employers taking clear action in this area as part of their business strategy at all levels. While progress has been made to reduce inequalities in the workplace, they are still prevalent in UK workplaces today, especially in times of economic disruption, such as the aftermath of the pandemic and the rise in the cost of living.

Business in the Community (BITC) has been running The Times Top 50 for 14 years, as part of its Gender Equality work, which focuses on equality for all genders and those who do not identify as a gender. The organisations featured in the list have taken a proactive approach to stamp out inequalities in their workplaces by creating action plans to address disparities ranging from pay to progression.

Applicants were assessed on the work they do to remove gender inequalities in the workplace, including flexible working, family friendly policies, pay, reward, and progression at work.

Sean Haley, CEO, Sodexo UK & Ireland said: "Sodexo has always been a purposeful business, built on the principles of improving quality of life.

"To live up to our purpose, we must foster a diverse and gender-balanced workforce so that every one of our 30,000 colleagues in the UK and Ireland feels they belong to a team in which they can act with purpose and thrive in their own way.

“At Sodexo, we believe, when women reach their full potential, businesses and society are stronger and more successful, which is why we are committed to increasing the number of women in leadership roles and promoting equal access to career opportunities.

“But creating an inclusive environment, requires meaningful change, and I am proud of the work we have done and the investment we have made. We know there is always more progress to be made but inclusion in The Times and Business in the Community’s Top 50 for Gender Equality 2024, is testament to the fact we are moving in the right direction.”

Sodexo is firmly **committed** to promoting the advancement of women and empowering women around the world, both at work and in the communities in which it operates.

In April 2023 Sodexo announced a suite of new enhanced benefits for eligible employees including enhanced and equalised maternity, adoption, and paternity paid leave benefits. These new enhanced benefits reinforce Sodexo’s ambition to offer a flexible first culture to help its employees, not just those with caring responsibilities, to balance work and personal commitments in a way that suits them. The new benefits are part of the Sodexo Group’s Vita programme which brings together a common foundation for employee benefits for Sodexo’s eligible employees across the world.

Other initiatives include:

- A programme of support and awareness of menopause and endometriosis through the creation of working groups, appointment of champions and internal events such as virtual menopause cafes. The company is working towards becoming an accredited menopause friendly employer and has joined the endometriosis friendly employer scheme.
- SoTogether UK & Ireland employee network provides valuable support by raising awareness of topical issues, providing feedback and insight, and helping Sodexo deliver on its gender strategy
- SoTogether FM employee network specifically focuses on improving gender balance and addressing inequity within Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and FM careers.
- Women in security network: through the network’s activities Sodexo currently has 17% representation of women in security positions against an industry standard of 10%.
- Initiatives to tackle sexual harassment and gender based violence. In addition to guidelines and e-learning training modules Sodexo and the International Union Federation (IUF) have signed a joint intent declaring their support to prevent domestic abuse worldwide. Sodexo is the first company in its sector to sign this type of joint declaration with the IUF announcing a three-stage framework to drive change globally for gender equity, inclusion and wellbeing.

The scale of Sodexo’s operational footprint makes it an intrinsic part of many communities and it takes its responsibility to influence gender equally outside of its business seriously. Sodexo’s Stop Hunger Foundation has a strategic focus on women’s empowerment to tackle food insecurity through grant giving and volunteering. Last year, in the UK and Ireland the Foundation supported an estimated 800,000 women through its work with charities operating in areas such as food redistribution and providing refuge for victims of domestic abuse.

Charlotte Woodworth, Gender Equality Director at Business in the Community, said: “Being named as a

Times Top 50 employer for gender equality demonstrates Sodexo's commitment to driving a more equitable, inclusive world.

"But while the employers who made the list are doing great work prioritising gender equality, there is still more work to do. From addressing pay disparities to better supporting those with caring responsibilities, many employees, women among them, still face barriers to finding employment and progressing in their careers.

"It is every employer's responsibility to play their part in reducing and removing gender inequalities from the workplace, and research shows this isn't just the right thing to do, it also makes business sense."