



THE7STARS

GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2026



Our Commitment

At the7stars, we are committed to creating a fair and inclusive workplace where people are rewarded equitably for their contribution. Gender pay gap reporting is an important part of that commitment and helps us to remain transparent about where progress is being made and where further action is required.

This report sets out our gender pay gap data based on the snapshot date of 5 April 2025, in line with the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations.



Understanding the gender pay gap

The gender pay gap is the difference between the average hourly earnings of men and women across the organisation. It is not the same as equal pay, which relates to men and women being paid the same for the same or equivalent work.

Our gender pay gap is influenced by the distribution of men and women across roles and levels, particularly at senior and higher paid roles.

To meet government requirements we are required to report the following:

- Median gender pay gap at the snapshot date.
- Mean gender pay gap at the snapshot date.
- Breakdown of males and females into four groups (quartiles) ordered from lowest to highest pay at the snapshot date.
- Median bonus pay gap at the snapshot date.
- Mean bonus pay gap at the snapshot date.
- Proportion of males and females eligible to receive a bonus payment

The median gender pay gap shows the difference in the middle points of the ranges of hourly rates of pay for both men and women at the7stars by ordering the rates of pay by gender from lowest to highest, and then comparing the middle value. The mean gender pay gap, however, is calculated by taking the hourly pay of men and women at the7stars and dividing this by the total number of each gender, then comparing the mean male pay against the mean female pay.

Our 2025 Results

The gender pay gap is based on the snapshot date of 5 April 2025, and for the bonus pay gap we have analysed bonuses paid the 12 months prior i.e. April 2024- April 2025.

Hourly Pay Gap

- The median gender pay gap has reduced from 16% to 9%.
- The mean gender pay gap remains at 18%.
- These gaps reflect a high proportion of women in our early careers stage, compared with a 50/50 distribution of men and women at more senior levels.



Bonus Pay Gap

There are three bonus schemes in operation at the7stars.

The Christmas bonus is paid to All Staff in December. This is a small “thank you” bonus and is payable equally to everyone. In December 2024 this bonus was £250. The proportion of women who received a bonus was 94.7%, and the proportion of men receiving a bonus was 96.8%. This is below 100% because anyone in their notice would not receive the bonus. However, as the same value is shared with all employees (outside of the shareholder group) the median bonus pay gap was 0%.

The second scheme; the Summer bonus, is a profit-share. If the7stars hits its profit target during the fiscal year, a minimum of 5% of the profit is distributed equally amongst all staff. Unfortunately in FY 23/24 the7stars missed its profit target and so this bonus was not paid in July 2024.

Finally, the shareholders at the7stars usually receive a discretionary bonus. This bonus is paid in lieu of receiving a dividend - the7stars does not pay its shareholders a dividend, because it retains the majority of its profit for long term investments. In July 2024 a bonus was paid to the shareholders, although the amount was significantly lower than in previous years due to the missed target.

There are seven shareholders - four male and three female. The most senior female shareholder did not receive a bonus, which has caused a significant mean gender pay gap. This drives the bonus mean pay gap of 67%.

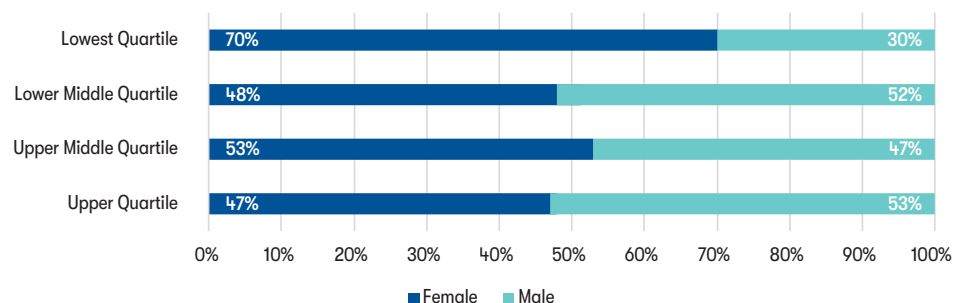




Pay Quartiles

Our quartile analysis continues to show a more even gender distribution at lower middle, upper middle and the upper pay quartiles, with a 7% greater proportion of men represented in the upper quartile. There are significantly more women in the lowest quartile. This reinforces that the key driver of our gender pay gap remains representation at junior levels rather than unequal pay for comparable roles. It is worth noting that the lowest quartile of roles is predominantly (70%) held by women. This is driven by women occupying administrative roles, as well as the successful recruitment of 83% female candidates across our entry-level schemes (graduates, school leavers, apprenticeships, and placement students).

Women continue to perform strongly in our early careers programmes, which use anonymous assessments and structured panel interviews with consistent questioning. Female candidates consistently excel at assessment centres, leading to high representation in our Graduate scheme – 83% in 2023 to 2024, and 74% in the year before that. For our apprenticeship hires, 33% of apprentice hires were female in 2023 moving to 100% of apprentice hires in 2024 being female. These results demonstrate both strong performance and growing female representation across our early careers pathways.



What has driven improvement this year

This year, we have monitored our gender pay gap on a monthly basis to the CEO and Finance Director to understand the impact of leavers and joiners on our overall figures. This does not drive positive discrimination. We maintain a rigorous and consistent recruitment approach and to how pay rises and promotions are awarded. However, keeping this data front of mind allows us to better understand trends, anticipate risk, and ensure pay equity remains an active and ongoing consideration in workforce decisions.

The improvement in our median pay gap reflects:

- Increased female representation across mid-level roles
- Progression and pay growth for women already within the organisation, with some significant promotions happening within this review period (which were awarded to women)
- A continued focus on consistent pay frameworks and external benchmarking

While we are encouraged by the reduction in the median gap, we recognise that sustained progress requires continued focus on structural change. In particular, this includes:

- Increasing female representation in senior and higher paid roles
- Ensuring equitable access to progression, stretch opportunities and leadership development

We recognise that the mean bonus pay gap continues to present a challenge. This is primarily driven by the structure of our shareholder arrangements, which form a distinct element of reward within the business. This approach is longstanding and reflects the importance of shareholders receiving an appropriate return for their investment and contribution to the agency.

The shareholder group at the7stars is stable and not subject to frequent change. The business has seven shareholders, all of whom have been with the organisation for 10-15 years or since its inception. Of these, three shareholders are women, including the CEO, and four are men.

We take a considered and deliberate approach to bonus outcomes across the wider business, ensuring they remain fair, transparent, and aligned to individual contribution. It is also important to note that the CEO did not receive a bonus during the reporting period, which has contributed to the mean average figures reported above.



How We Are Closing the Gap

At the7stars, inclusivity and diversity are at the heart of everything we do. We are proud of the culture we are building and the progress we continue to make to ensure everyone feels valued, respected, and able to thrive.

We have an internal employee group, Team Inclusivity, which plays an active role in driving awareness, education, and celebration throughout the year. Alongside this, we regularly track how our employees feel about our approach to diversity and inclusion, using feedback to shape our priorities and actions.

In our most recent employee engagement survey, 91% of employees said they understand the organisation's priorities in encouraging diversity and inclusivity, and 91% agreed with the statement, "The organisation is committed to fair and equitable practices." These results give us confidence that our commitment is clearly understood and felt across the business.

This commitment is supported by a number of established frameworks and policies, which are clearly communicated to employees and consistently applied when making business decisions.

Fair Deal Charter

Our Fair Deal Charter is underpinned by a robust approach to internal benchmarking. We regularly review pay across the business to ensure that employees at the same level, with comparable skills and experience, are remunerated fairly and consistently, in line with the principle of equal pay for equal work.

We are committed to ensuring that newly hired talent is not paid more than existing employees performing equivalent roles. This approach helps us avoid a culture where individuals feel they need to leave the7stars in order to achieve fair pay progression. Upholding the Fair Deal Charter is a core part of how we retain and recognise our people.

All salary reviews are agreed with both our CEO and Finance Director to ensure consistency, fairness, and alignment across the business.

External Salary Benchmarking

We conduct an annual salary review for all employees and benchmark roles against relevant industry data. This ensures that pay at the7stars remains competitive, equitable, and aligned with the external market, while maintaining internal fairness.

Flexible Working and Family Friendly Practices

We continue to offer flexible working arrangements to support the diverse needs of our workforce and help employees balance work and personal responsibilities. This includes a strong focus on supporting mothers returning from maternity leave, with a standard period of phased return to work at full pay.

We are also committed to reviewing and enhancing our family leave offering for both birthing and non-birthing parents. Our wider support for working parents includes return-to-work coaching, buddy programme, internal community groups, curated resources,

financial advice, nursery partnership benefits, and bonus schemes.

We actively encourage shared parental responsibilities to reduce the disproportionate impact that time away from work can have on women's careers with a matched enhanced Shared Parental Leave policy offered to secondary/non-birthing parents.

Mentorship and Coaching Programmes

We provide access to internal mentorship programmes to support career development across the agency, with a particular focus on encouraging women to engage with these opportunities.

All employees at the7stars also have access to external coaching, enabling individuals to unlock their potential, support progression, and develop confidence at every stage of their career.

Recruitment Practices

We promote the recruitment of women into leadership roles through fair, equitable, and structured recruitment processes.

We also place a strong emphasis on internal progression, creating opportunities for women to develop and advance into leadership positions. Over the past 12 months, we have seen clear evidence of this approach delivering positive outcomes.

To minimise bias, all recruitment processes are designed to be fair and consistent. This includes structured interviews, interview training for hiring managers, and the use of psychometric tools to assess role suitability and alignment with company values.

Employee Engagement and Feedback

We actively seek feedback from employees on workplace policies and practices through our Your Voice engagement survey, supported by followup focus

groups with specific employee cohorts to gain deeper insight and inform meaningful action.

We maintain an "always on" approach to listening by using open feedback tools that allow employees to share thoughts and concerns throughout the year. We continue to strengthen our communication channels to ensure issues are understood and addressed promptly.

We will also create additional opportunities to gather and act on feedback from women across the agency, ensuring that actions taken reflect what matters most to them.

Review and Refresh of Career Progression

We provide training on equal opportunities and unconscious bias to eliminate stereotypes and preconceptions and family friendly training for managers to ensure they champion inclusive experiences for their teams.

We have frameworks for managers to fairly and objectively assess employees performance and access to development and progression within the agency.

We're exploring ways to provide clearer, more structured support for mothers and birthing partners as they transition back to work after extended family leave.

Continuous Monitoring and Adjustment

We regularly monitor and analyse pay gap data throughout the year to identify trends and address any emerging issues early.

Our approach remains responsive, and we will continue to adjust our strategies to reflect the evolving needs of our workforce.

Our Ongoing Actions

To continue closing our gender pay gap, we are committed to:

- Strengthening internal progression and promotion pathways
- Embedding consistent recruitment and internal mobility practices
- Expanding mentoring, coaching and sponsorship opportunities
- Continuing regular pay and bonus reviews to identify and address emerging gaps
- Strengthen internal pathways into senior roles through targeted development and progression opportunities.
- Review shortlists and appointment outcomes for senior roles to ensure fair and consistent application of selection criteria.
- Retain and make accessible prior years' reports to support transparency and trend analysis.

Our focus remains on addressing the structural drivers of our gender pay gap through strong governance, equitable progression, and sustained action on representation at senior levels. While we recognise that some elements of our pay and reward structure will continue to influence outcomes, we remain committed to fairness, transparency and long term progress.

Final Statement:

Our commitment to fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace remains unwavering, and we will continue to implement initiatives that support the career growth of women at all levels of the organisation. This report reflects our dedication to transparency and accountability in achieving gender equality at the7stars. We will actively monitor and reassess our strategies to ensure continued progress in the years to come.

