



THE FUTURE OF FURNITURE

BRIEFING DOCUMENT

Sustainability and education – the cornerstones of The Future of Furniture

The Future of Furniture is an exciting new campaign from the BFM, showcasing the work of members who are taking strides in implementing policies that protect the planet, or driving change to attract and retain talent within the industry.

Last year, research conducted by Businesswise Solutions and BFM showed that environmental challenges and labour were among the key priorities for our members.

The Sentiment of the Sector & The Road to Net Zero Report found that:

100% felt the sector lacked a clear strategy to achieve net zero

94% of the sector was aware change needs to happen

75% claimed that meeting environmental challenges is a priority for their business

50% admitted to not knowing what was required to achieve net zero as a sector. A further 44% were 'not sure.'

38% had challenges hiring labour in the previous 12 months

25% of labour came from Eastern Europe – down from 33% in 2018

Many BFM members are making changes to their business in a bid to reflect the importance placed on environmental footprint, social impact and governance by stakeholders including both investors and consumers.

Factors outside the sector have also driven change within it, with both Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic having impacts on the availability of skilled labour, as well as prompting businesses to find new ways of working.

The Future of Furniture campaign aims to provide a platform for BFM members to demonstrate and share best practice in these areas as part of a strategic shift across the sector as we strive towards net zero targets and seek to attract the talent and skills we need back into the industry.

LAUNCH

The Future of Furniture campaign will be officially launched at the January Furniture Show 2023.

And to underpin the aims of promoting members' work in sustainability and education, two awards will be presented in 2023 in recognition of those who are leading the way in these areas.

The campaign will highlight the work of our membership in case studies, print, video and on social media over the next 12 months and beyond.

By showcasing the work of members, and their dedication to sustainability principles, we can continue to build on the compelling attributes associated with British-made goods.

The British standards of quality, safety, comfort and professionalism are key, but increasingly both investors and consumers are also looking to establish a business's credentials in reducing environmental footprint, creating a positive social impact and implementing good governance.

Likewise, by promoting the activities of members who have been innovative in their approach to education, training, recruitment and retention, we demonstrate the clear commitment to the workforce within the sector, while setting out the benefits of joining the industry, either as a trainee or skilled worker.



THE FUTURE OF FURNITURE AWARDS



Two accolades will be presented to BFM members at the January Furniture Show, in recognition of excellence in sustainability and education - the BFM Future of Excellence in Sustainability Award and the BFM Excellence in Education Award.

Entry is free and members are invited to send an outline of the work completed and plans for the future, in one or both categories.

The BFM Future of Excellence in Sustainability Award will reward exemplary work from a BFM member in working towards a more sustainable future.

Judges will consider entries against the following criteria:

- Evidence of a commitment to continuous improvement across your business in sustainability
- Action plan for the next three and five years to become more sustainable
- How you've empowered those in your organisation to focus on, and create, a more sustainable future
- How a more sustainable approach is being communicated to staff and customers

The BFM Future of Excellence in Education Award will reward exemplary work from a BFM member in engaging and igniting a passion for talented trainees to work and thrive in the furniture manufacturing sector.

Judges will consider entries against the following criteria:

Evidence of a commitment to providing a rewarding working and learning environment for new recruits, regardless of age.

Partnerships and initiatives with other organisations/schools/colleges/universities to attract talented individuals to the sector.

The closing date for both awards is **Wednesday 11 January 2023**. Application forms are available at (add link). Completed forms should be returned to Jo Audley: jo.audley@bfm.org.uk

When the winners are announced at JFS, we'll capture the moment on video and with photography to amplify the result across different channels.

This initiative will replace the previous arrangement at JFS, where British Furniture Manufacturers were offered a champagne prize for the best display of our logo at the show.

GET INVOLVED

Throughout 2023 there will be opportunities for all our members to get involved in The Future of Furniture campaign, and we'll keep you informed of the activities planned.

Now, more than ever, it is vital to highlight the steps we are taking towards a more sustainable future and to demonstrate the value of a career in the manufacture of British furniture.

We urge all our members to support The Future of Furniture campaign and encourage you to share with us your stories and achievements.

