



MCA
A POSITIVE FORCE FOR THE
ECONOMY AND SOCIETY



MCA Consulting Excellence Declaration

2024

Our annual declaration

AAR is a management consultancy specialising in Marketing Operating Model Design . With just under 50 years of experience, and an unrivalled depth of market knowledge, we work closely with about 70 brands a year to deliver genuine and sustained change in their marketing operating model. As such, we are fully committed to the MCA's Consulting Excellence scheme and each of the 13 Consulting Excellence principles.

Working collaboratively with our clients to transform their marketing ecosystem, drive growth and deliver lasting impact for their most business-critical challenges is the bedrock of our business. This document aims to demonstrate our commitment to delivering consulting excellence for our people, partners & clients.

“AAR is excited to join the MCA as we continue to build our reputation as the UK's leading marketing-focused management consultancy. Membership of the MCA is an important milestone for AAR as we scale and continue to offer best-in-class consulting to CMOs as they undertake marketing transformation projects.”

Victoria Fox – Chief Executive Officer, AAR



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EXCELLENCE



Who we are

We are management consultants focussed on optimising marketing operating models. We believe that without a high performing operating model, a brand's marketing strategy will be difficult to implement, mired in inefficiencies, costly and ultimately less successful. We believe the right operating model is an **enabler** to successful marketing strategy implementation.

We are experts in helping brands drive efficiencies and effectiveness in the **HOW** of marketing



We are practitioners, not theorists. We work with our clients and don't consult "at them"



We deliver practical change and results and have been doing so for almost 50 years



Our consultants are experts who believe in the power of marketing to drive business growth



Our services

Design the right operating model of internal & external capabilities

- Operating Model Design
- Marketing Capability Strategy
- Agency Model Design
- In House Agency Strategy
- Ways of Working audits

Sharpen your marketing capabilities to drive high performance

- E-Learning
- Better Briefing
- Better Agency Management



Populate the ecosystem with the right partners to deliver better outcomes

- Market Exploration
- Partner Selection
- Commercial Audits
- Agency Health Checks

Ethical Behaviour & Sustainability

Across our clients, partners, agencies, and employees, we are always striving for a collaborative, pragmatic and long-lasting relationship. We adhere to the MCA Consulting Excellence principles and conduct all our consultancy with ethical and sustainable practices. We are transparent in our proposals and in our pricing model about any 3rd party costs. Our reputation has been hard-earned for our independent, fair and mutual approach to search and selection processes between brands and agencies. We work closely to align with our clients' and agencies' interests by keeping information confidential and managing press relations on their behalf.

We are engaged in a range of CSR initiatives including a net-zero office provider, a flexible working model, a cycle to work scheme, partner in Octopus' electric vehicle scheme and, after a thorough audit via Green Element in 2022, we have been certified Carbon Net Zero. We take conscious steps to contribute towards public and industry initiatives. As part of our No Bullsh*t Leadership programme, we donate one place for every two that we sell to under-represented candidates in the marketing industry via our partner, MAMA Youth Project. Our partnership aims to boost opportunities for those who would not afford access to this training and that way we can build the diversity of leaders in the industry coming through at all levels. We also run a bi-annual charity event for NABS and participate in the Marketing Society's Sprintathon.

AAR is an Employee-Owned Trust which fundamentally puts our team at the heart of our business and culture. We are a small but mighty team of 21 consultants and business managers, powered by a bench of top-tier consulting talent. Our culture is supportive, kind, and authentic, and we encourage our team across all levels to share ideas and feedback in an open and supportive environment. We have clear policies and procedures regarding appraisals and parental leave, as well as a month extra leave to celebrate 10-year tenure.



Client Service & Value

Our mission is to enable the 'how' of marketing operations to leverage marketing as a strategic growth engine. To do this, our clients need partners who are expert in their experience as well as being collaborative. Collaboration is therefore fundamental to our approach at AAR, and we work with our clients as an extension of their team, rather than consult 'at' them.

Our work is grounded by the ambition to deliver impactful change for our clients. We therefore always seek feedback, both throughout the process to course correct, and after any project. We are proud to have clients where we have developed deep long-standing relationships over the last 40+ years.

In addition to our core team, we operate an expert network of independent consultant who are ex-CMOs, and subject matter experts with deep expertise. . Each project is supported by a brilliant team of business managers who are on-hand to maintain excellence consistently across the delivery of the project and integral to the success of our engagements. This team also spot areas to improve our capabilities and share projects learnings back to the wider team. To best meet our clients' needs and offer them a well-rounded marketing transformation, we work with our consultant network and partner organisations in joint bids to bring a breadth of expertise and skillset to deliver lasting change.

Keeping our finger on the pulse is central to successful consultancy and our business model allows us to keep close to the latest innovations in marketing, martech and operating models from both brands and agencies. Additionally, all of our consultants have time dedicated for research, conferences, events and outside-in perspective, fuelling our bank of insight.



Professional Development

It is essential to our business that our team are continually developing – not just for the role they're in, but for their long-term careers, too. Our people have access to bespoke training and development opportunities based on their specific ambitions. We are proud that many of our employees have worked across all areas of the business and had the autonomy to follow their interests in our business. We provide access to a wealth of research resources, trade body memberships and are active in industry conferences for our team to follow their interests and network with peers.

Our professional development cycle runs every six months with monthly check-ins to enable honest, 360 feedback and accelerated career progression. As part of the care of our team, we have wellbeing initiatives to ensure happiness and motivation is high, such as free access to gyms, cycle to work scheme, flexible working around exercise classes and appointments, and team coaching sessions.

We also provide career development and project opportunities to our network of independent consultants that expand their career portfolio with top brands, whilst ensuring they have access to the skills and resources to be successful on a project. We are committed to providing professional development opportunities to our employees, but also the wider industry. AAR has a community of non-executive directors and rising stars in the industry, and runs quarterly mentorship events, bolstered with the latest industry research and trends.

To support our flexible working employees and independent consultants, working collaboratively is a key focus for us. We have regular all company days to share feedback in an open and judgement-free space and share best practice and learnings from our projects, developing our consulting experience and upskilling our teams across a breadth of projects and industries.



Commitment to Diversity And Inclusion

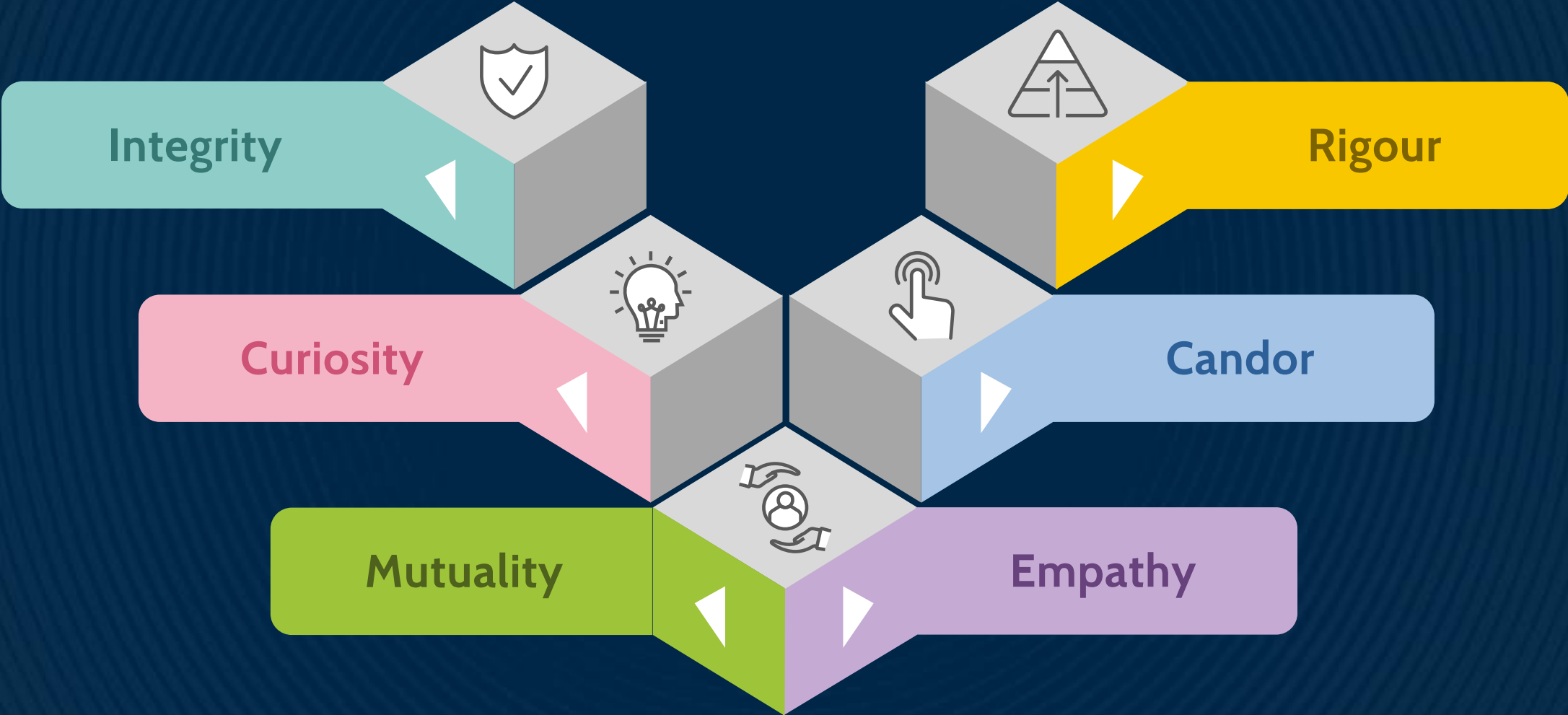
We truly believe that to deliver impactful change for our clients, it is essential to foster an inclusive and equitable culture for our people. Embracing diversity is core to what we do as diversity of our team and partners brings with it diversity of thought, creating a superior consulting service and better outcomes for clients.

At AAR, we always believe in leading from the front and have a proud history of exclusively female CEOs. Alongside our current CEO Victoria Fox, 62.5% of our executive leadership team and our board are women. In order to get the best talent, we work closely with DEI-focused recruitment partners, Flexible Working People and Inventum Group. 30% of our team work on flexible hours, giving them ownership of their own schedule, easing childcare commitments and promoting a healthy work-life balance. We also operate a 'work from anywhere' policy across August, allowing our team to work flexibly and easing childcare challenges over the summer holidays. Alongside our core team, we have a diverse network of consultants that have experiences from a wide range of different sectors, industries, specialisms, and backgrounds.

AAR sits in a central position in the industry across both brands and agencies, and we have a committed involvement in making the industry a better, more diverse place to work. As part of our work with agencies, we collate DE&I data and sustainability data that forms part of the selection criteria for our clients. We work closely with our partners on this to encourage more transparency and accountability within the industry. Our CEO is on the Executive Committee for WACL (Women in Advertising and Communications London), and we have close ties to Bloom Network and NABS. We are also proud to have a BAME Future Top 10 Leader in our team.



Our Values



Some feedback from our clients



"I cannot recommend AAR highly enough. Their knowledge, expertise and experience ensured that we had the right blend of capabilities and cultural fit for our business."

- DFS



"Having worked with AAR in the past across RFPs, agency ecosystems and marketing excellence training, I always know exactly who I'd be reaching out to! I highly recommend AAR as a strategic partner"

- HiBob



"What I like about working with AAR is that their superpower was to understand our needs, then quickly focus our attention."

- Emmi Group



"This was a complex project involving potentially sensitive issues and relationships. AAR's reputation within the industry for integrity and discretion made them the perfect partner."

- ITV

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Thank you

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