

Sustainability Impacts Report



# Our Impacts



March 2024

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# Our word from our CEO

At DLRC, our ethos is deeply rooted in excelling at what we do as well as contributing positively, both within our business and the broader community.

We are very proud of what we do as a business. We celebrate the positive outcomes for our clients and the personal achievements of individuals in the team we have built. We also understand the positive impact we can make as a collective, addressing the topics of Sustainability.

In this impact report, we highlight our progress in key areas: Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI), Wellbeing, and Team development.

We're dedicated to fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace culture, offering support for mental health and prioritising sustainability in our practices. Through these efforts, we aim to create a positive and thriving environment for our team members and stakeholders.

In the upcoming year, DLRC plans to focus on its carbon footprint and broader environmental impacts. We will continue to support our colleagues and the community by continuing to give our time and resources, and by setting ambitious and measurable targets to drive our actions. We will make sustainability a core value driver unpinning everything we do.

However, we aspire to achieve more. We recognise the responsibility we have to make positive change, and we are committed to pushing ourselves and driving progress even further. Our first impact report serves as both a celebration of our current position and a recognition of future potential with a promise to drive ourselves towards achieving even more in years to come.



Dianne Lee  
CEO



# About US

## *Our Business*

DLRC, established in 2005, boasts over 15 years of expertise in providing award-winning regulatory support to pharmaceutical, biotech, Advanced therapy, and Med Tech companies. Our firm is renowned for its leadership, combining extensive regulatory and scientific knowledge with a commitment to sustainability and social responsibility.

## *Our Clients*

At DLRC, we collaborate with a diverse clients, from Top 5 Pharma companies to SMEs and start-ups. We develop and execute innovative phase-appropriate regulatory strategies to provide comprehensive support from very early in the lifecycle of a product right through to post-licensing activities, for both medicinal products and medical devices.

>15

years of expertise

>90

consulting professionals

## *Our Team*

Our team of over 90 consulting professionals from pharmaceutical and regulatory agency backgrounds is dedicated to delivering innovative solutions tailored to meet our client's strategic and operational objectives. Focusing on diversity and inclusivity, we foster a collaborative work environment where every voice is valued.

## *Our Approach*

DLRC's flexible working approach ensures seamless interaction with clients and regulators worldwide, enabling us to support projects of varying scopes and durations. Through our efforts, we aim to make a positive impact not only on our clients but also on the broader communities we serve, contributing to a more sustainable future for all.



# Our values

To further develop a culture based on integrity, that enables our employees to provide exceptional service to clients whilst benefitting from unrivalled professional development and flexible working.

## *Quality*

We aim to provide high quality regulatory services that adds value for our clients and gives confidence to the regulators that review our work.

## *Innovation*

We train our staff to enable them to provide innovative and creative approaches in the regulatory support they provide.

## *Flexibility*

We offer employees a flexible working environment in their quest for a work/life balance and to support their diverse personal situations. Our flexibility is reflected in how we strive to accommodate clients' needs.

## *Collaboration*

We encourage a high level of collaboration with our colleagues, clients and stakeholders to obtain the best outcome for client projects, employee career paths and our business relationships.

## *Integrity*

We act with integrity in all matters and it is at the heart of everything we do.

## *Respect*

We respect our colleagues, clients, regulators and other stakeholders by taking account of collective and individual needs.

# What is sustainability for DLRC?

**DLRC believes in partnering with other institutions and individuals to promote sustainability and build a better future for people and the planet.**

At DLRC, we focus on people. Initially, this was an internal focus, but as we have expanded our ESG initiatives, we have made this internal and external focus by working with our local community, the UK, and Global Charities. Many instinctively think that sustainability is just about the environment, but at DLRC, we appreciate more than ever that the people and planet ecosystems are complex and interdependent.

As we grow our business globally, we are determined to take care of our environment and the impacts we have on it. We also recognise how we can support our customers and teams to improve their impacts. The social impacts of DLRC range from the services we offer to supporting regulatory requirements, providing rewarding work for employees, and contributing positively to our communities. The Governance reflects how to remain a solvent business within our society while making ethical decisions that support our environmental and social goals.

# Driving sustainable outcomes for DLRC

## Approach

Our sustainability strategy arises from considering where we have positive and negative impacts on people, society, and the planet. At DLRC, we want to eliminate, reduce or mitigate any adverse effects we create and sustain, build and amplify positive impacts we make and influence

In 2023 we have benchmarked our carbon footprint and created a plan to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050. We have worked with external consultants to examine our sustainability impacts beyond carbon and develop a strategy and plan that addresses the most significant ones. We will continue to review and adjust these priorities as part of our ongoing review of our progress.

## Framework Alignment

Our plan, mapped against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), provides a comprehensive framework for determining our impacts and aligns us with the UK Government's pledge to achieve the goals by 2030.

## Stakeholders and Collaboration

We recognise that sustainability is a team effort. This first report reflects the efforts of key DLRC employees and our initial partnerships with external people and organisations. In the future, we want to broaden and deepen the input to include clients, all employees, and more like-minded organisations.

## United Nations Sustainable Development Goals



# Sustainability strategy

## Focus and Commitments

Our sustainability strategy is grounded in three focal points, each supported by our governance pillar, selected through an initial materiality assessment aligned with the UN SDGs. Detailed exploration of each pillar follows, outlining progress, objectives, and targets. Key SDGs have been pinpointed for each focus area, reflecting our belief in where our impact can be most substantial. Moving forward, we remain dedicated to monitoring and transparently reporting our advancements in line with our commitments.

## Priority SDGs

G  
O  
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E

### The environment



### Our clients and community



### Our team



# 1. The environment

Reduce DLRC’s carbon footprint through sustainable operations and resourceful management.

We are committed to reducing our carbon footprint through sustainable operations and resource management. We know that environmental responsibility is essential to our stakeholders. We implement eco-friendly practices across our offices, including installing LED lighting and constantly seeking innovative ways to minimise our environmental impact. By embracing sustainable measures, we aim to contribute positively to the global effort in mitigating climate change and preserving our planet for future generations.

This year we have	Next year we want to
Measured Scope 1, 2, and 3 carbon emissions	Work on our carbon reduction plan
Introduced a bike to work scheme	Consider sustainable travel policy implementation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look at our Scope 3 emissions via our suppliers for reduction opportunities.</li> <li>• Implement an optional Salary Sacrifice Electric Car Scheme Consider offering a ½ day paid leave for employees to move to a renewable energy tariff or organise a heat pump or similar.</li> <li>• Improve the accuracy of our carbon footprint data (Work with the landlord and consider WFH calculators)</li> <li>• Ask our landlord about solar panels and renewable energy tariffs</li> <li>• Record office waste and consider ways of reducing this.</li> <li>• Write and roll out an Environmental Policy.</li> <li>• Provide training on the Environmental Policy for all employees</li> <li>• Sustainable Travel Policy.</li> <li>• Discuss EV charging point provisions with our landlords.</li> <li>• sustainability questionnaire for medium and high-risk suppliers</li> <li>• Add an ESG review in the SOP for vendor selection</li> </ul>



## Measure and report carbon footprints

We are committed to environmental responsibility. We diligently measure and report our Scope 1, 2 and some aspects of Scope 3 carbon footprint as part of our sustainability initiatives. By quantifying our carbon emissions, we gain valuable insights into our environmental impact, allowing us to take informed steps towards reducing our carbon footprint and contributing to a greener future.

For DLRC, as with any other company, it's impossible to create business growth without generating environmental emissions; therefore, we will consider this when assessing our environmental progress.

We started measuring our emissions more accurately this year with our partner, Sustainable X. Their dashboard allows us to see where our emissions are coming from more accurately and better focus our future optimisation efforts.

We have measured four of the most impactful and relevant aspects of our carbon this year, which include:

- Employee Homeworking
- Employee Commuting
- Business Travel
- Waste



Our target is to reach net zero as soon as practical. We appreciate that this is a journey and have been committed to reducing our carbon footprint since our inception. Due to the nature of our carbon emissions and our limited opportunity to control or influence them directly, we have conservatively set a net zero ambition of 2050.

## Carbon reduction plan

Next year, we will focus on our carbon reduction plan. Some actions we plan on taking in 2024 include:

- Look into an optional salary sacrifice scheme for electric vehicles.
- Providing information on renewable energy and solar panels to employees to make it less time-consuming to switch.
- Ask Landlords to consider a renewable energy provider.
- Ask landlords to consider solar panels for the building.

We will continue to work closely with our suppliers, customers, and employees to bring them on this journey with us.

# Environmental policy

In 2024, we intend to implement an Environmental Policy. This policy will set DLRC's position, commitment to environmental issues, and actions to improve our environmental impact. The policy will be backed up with training for all employees so that it can be better embedded into daily activities.

## Some other important initiatives include:

### Cloud-based IT solutions throughout

DLRC embraces cloud-based IT solutions across our operations. We prioritise efficiency and security, ensuring access to cloud platforms is controlled through a secure login process. This rigorous approach guarantees data integrity and privacy. We are dedicated to harnessing cutting-edge technology while maintaining the highest data security standards.

### Promote cycling to work and encourage the use of public transport

DLRC actively encourages sustainable commuting practices among our employees. We promote cycling to work and public transport wherever safe and convenient, especially for travelling to conferences. Our commitment to reducing our carbon footprint extends beyond the workplace, fostering a culture of environmental awareness and responsibility. DLRC encourages sustainable commuting by providing bike racks at our office facilities. We have negotiated access to showers with our landlords at their premises over the road.

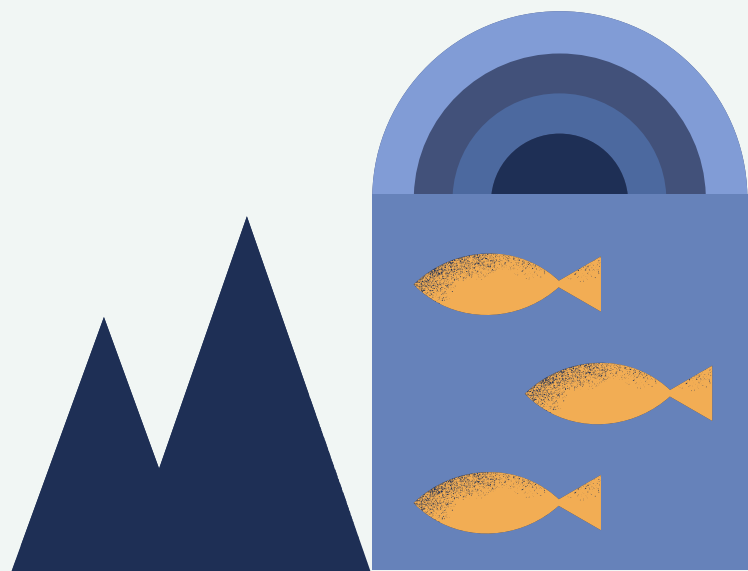
## In the future:

### Look into Electric Vehicle charging points:

DLRC is exploring the installation of Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points at our facilities. We recognise the importance of supporting EV adoption as a sustainable transportation option. By investigating EV charging infrastructure, we aim to facilitate eco-friendly commuting options for our employees and contribute to the growth of EV usage.

### Sustainable Travel Policy:

As we grow and our client base changes, we seek to provide clear guidance to our employees to support them in making the best travel decisions while at work.



# 2. Our clients and community

Align community, partnerships, and service delivery with DLRC's values to exceed customer expectations sustainably.

We aim to consistently deliver and develop services that meet and exceed client expectations. Client satisfaction is at the heart of our operations. We pride ourselves on our track record of providing efficient, accurate, and reliable outcomes. With a client-centric approach, we are committed to building enduring partnerships and ensuring that every interaction with DLRC is a testament to our dedication to our client's success.

In addition, DLRC actively participates in community partnerships that align with our core values and competencies. We believe in giving back to the communities in which we operate. Our engagement extends beyond our professional work as we seek to impact society positively. We collaborate with organisations and initiatives that share our commitment to making a difference.

This year we have	Next year we want to
Supported 8 charities through events run by our charities committee	Work closely with our clients on their sustainability ambitions
Made charity donations of £7,628	Increase our charitable donations
Supported 4 school careers events	Support more school careers events through our involvement with Mission 44 and engagement with STEM subject teachers
Welcomed 3 work experience students and one summer intern	Expand our work experience offering
Donated 25 laptops to schools	Continue to donate laptops and mobile phones to schools and charities
Exhibited at TOPRA Careers Fair	Continue to support careers fairs
Offered up to 1 day per year volunteering time to employees	Increase the number of employees taking advantage of their paid day to volunteer

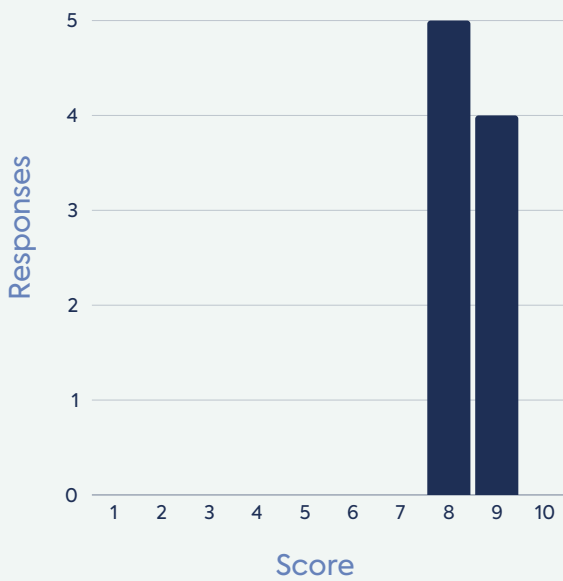
# Client satisfaction

At DLRC, we conduct an annual client survey to gauge client satisfaction. The process for this is outlined in our customer satisfaction SOP. In 2023, DLRC averaged a score of 8.4 out of 10 (where 10 is "excellent"), showing high client satisfaction.

## Our client satisfaction scores:

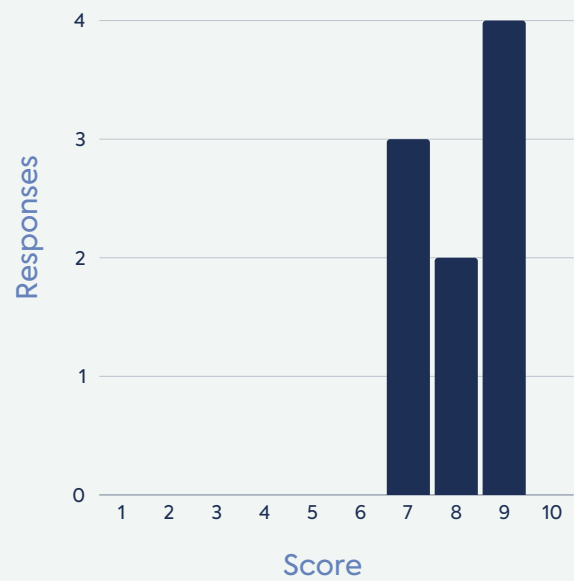
Was the consultancy service provided by DLRC to your expectations?

**Average score: 8.44**



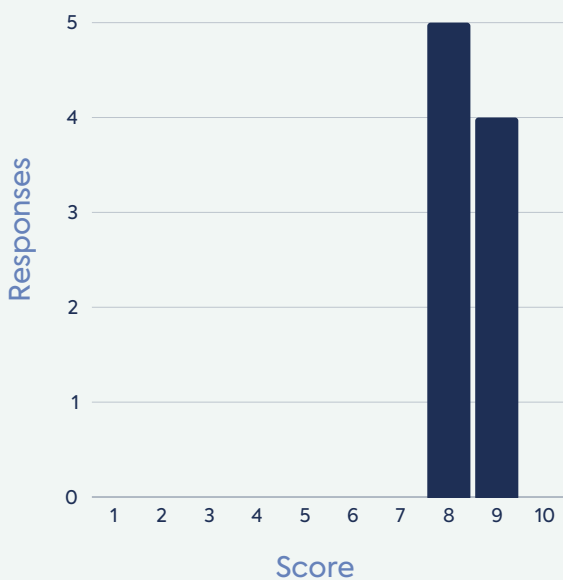
Was the quality of work you received from DLRC up to your expectations?

**Average score: 8.11**



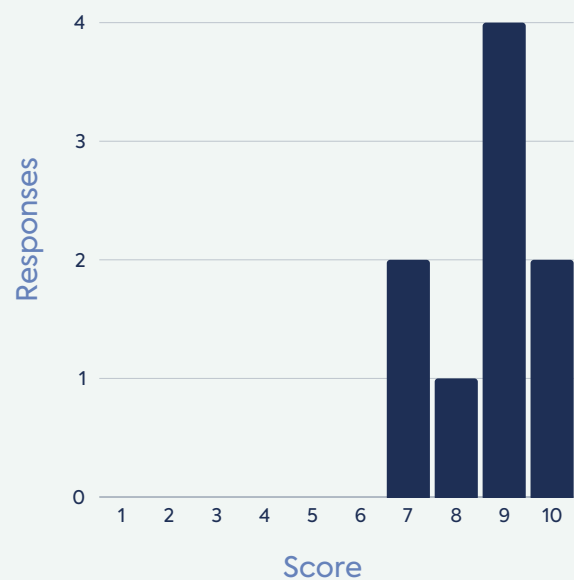
Were your interactions with DLRC to your expectations?

**Average score: 8.44**



How likely are you to recommend DLRC to other companies?

**Average score: 8.67**



As part of my engagement lead role for a key client, I provided a presentation on training topic. The client was very complimentary on how the presentation was delivered. They found it very easy to follow, informative, and welcomed the collaborative working environment within DLRC, where sharing of regulatory knowledge and information as well as self-development are encouraged. The train the trainer model was well accepted, since it enhances DLRC training capacity by leveraging on internal resources. The client congratulated the wider team for providing evidence of being 100% compliant on training.

The quality of DLRC's work was very high. I felt they exhibited good attention to detail and were very responsive to our requests/needs.

All interaction with DLRC consultants are very professional and informative and they make sure to understand the requirements.

We wanted to extend our thanks for all of your hard work, expertise and thoughtful partnership throughout 2022. You have been instrumental in operationalizing .... capabilities we have been building together across people, process, tech, and content. We know that it hasn't been easy at times because we are building something totally new and consider you a great partner to navigate this with. We are really looking forward to our continued work in 2023. Thank you!

DLRC are a valued supplier, and we will continue to bring projects to DLRC as needed

I take this opportunity to thank you for your initiative and agility in leading regulatory response and strategy in unexpected circumstances ... Your support is indispensable and highly appreciated.

Very pleasant collaboration. Knowledgeable and quick, not afraid to highlight issues and provide solutions for improvement. Overall, very good collaboration.

Thank you so much for your support and for guiding us through the entire process! Especially the last couple of weeks were so intense and have shown how important a well aligned team is! Great job everyone ... You were our compass all the time... you were always spot on when needed; and all the time, you gave us the confidence to get where we wanted to be at the end.

I'd like to thank you for your expert and enthusiastic support, at times requested on very short notice. I hope we can continue the pleasant and fruitful collaboration.

We wanted to extend our thanks for all of your hard work, expertise and thoughtful partnership throughout 2022. You have been instrumental in operationalizing .... capabilities we have been building together across people, process, tech, and content. We know that it hasn't been easy at times because we are building something totally new and consider you a great partner to navigate this with. We are really looking forward to our continued work in 2023. Thank you!

## Community engagement & support

Community engagement is at the heart of our values. We take pride in our involvement with the community, resulting in five distinct ways that reflect our commitment to making a positive impact and fostering meaningful connections beyond our business walls.

We are proud to engage with the community in 5 different ways:



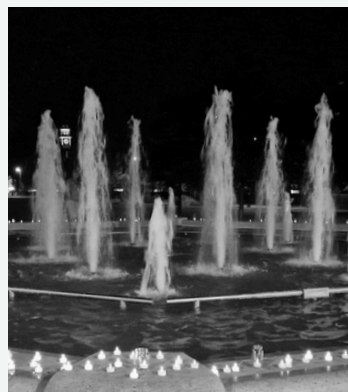
## 01 *Our charity committee*

DLRC is actively involved in charity support, and our efforts as a team are coordinated via our Charity Committee, which ensures that we align our charitable efforts with our core values. DLRC’s Charity Committee is crucial in our community engagement efforts, as it nominates charities and organises fundraising events. We aim to align our interests and purpose with charitable causes, ensuring a positive impact on the community.

### In 2023 we have:

Throughout the year, DLRC has actively engaged in fundraising activities to support various charitable causes. In February, we began our efforts by hosting a raffle for the British Heart Foundation, raising £332 towards ground-breaking research for heart conditions. March saw DLRC continuing their annual support for the Garden House Hospice’s “Charlie Chicks Campaign”, donating over 14,000 Cadbury’s Crème Eggs, contributing to a campaign total of £19,000. Additionally, we raised over £950 for Garden House Hospice in August through participation in the ‘Starlight Walk’. In March, thanks to the Letchworth Heritage Foundation, DLRC donated £250 to the Zaanha Fund, which supports education for impoverished children in Afghanistan. May brought a successful coffee morning and bake sale in aid of Macmillan, raising £514 for people living with cancer. In June, DLRC organised an online quiz and raised £330 for Alcohol Change, aiding those affected by alcohol misuse. August witnessed DLRC’s support for Jeans4Genes, raising £145 to help individuals with genetic conditions. In November, DLRC participated in the Herts Young Homeless Big Quiz, donating £150 to support young homeless individuals. November saw DLRC raising £726 for the Movember Foundation through moustache-growing and a bake sale to support work to reduce male deaths from prostate cancer. Finally, in December, DLRC joined in a Christmas jumper day to raise money and awareness for Crisis, supporting people experiencing homelessness during winter. We also organised collections of clothing and items for resale in the Crisis charity shops. Through our diverse efforts, we have demonstrated a solid commitment to social responsibility and community support throughout the year.





## 02 Professional memberships

DLRC recognises the importance of professional memberships in enhancing industry knowledge and networking opportunities for our team members.

### BIA (UK BioIndustry Association)

DLRC maintains an active presence in the regulatory affairs field by regularly attending BIA meetings. This involvement allows us to stay at the forefront of industry developments and contribute our expertise to regulatory excellence. We also get involved with the PULSE initiative and provide free-of-charge tailored early advice to start-ups on regulatory requirements and an idea of when to get strategic advice. Next year, we will work on a standard package for start-up companies.

### TOPRA (The Organisation for Professionals in Regulatory Affairs)

At DLRC, we invest in our team's professional development by providing corporate TOPRA memberships for all regulatory affairs staff. This demonstrates our commitment to regulatory expertise and excellence among our colleagues. The DLRC team were awarded the Support Award in the TOPRA Awards for Regulatory Excellence 2021, celebrating the critical role that DLRC plays in supporting our clients across the range of activities involved in the development process and entire lifecycle of a drug.

### PING (Pharmaceutical Industry Networking Group)

DLRC recognises the value of professional networking in the pharmaceutical and regulatory industry. Our PING membership facilitates connections with industry peers, ensuring we stay informed about industry trends and best practices and enhancing our regulatory solutions.

We also have corporate membership for RAPS (Regulatory Affairs Professionals Society), the OBN (Oxford Bioscience Network), One Nucleus and Medi Link Midlands for medical devices network so employees can participate in learning and networking events.

Additionally, we support those on the board to be members of the Institute of Directors and our administrative and operational staff to be members of relevant professional bodies such as the CIPD. We have a CIMA Fellow, two TOPRA Fellows, and a Royal Pharmaceutical Society Fellow. We support regulatory professionals becoming chartered and registered scientists (CSci and RSci).



## 03 Educational engagement

Our employees contribute to education by volunteering their time for school and university talks and sharing their expertise and insights. They run employability workshops, share career paths, and help with mock interviews, inspiring young minds and strengthening our local educational connections.



## Careers Fairs

In 2023, our team members attended The Knights Templar School, The John Henry Newman's School, and Hitchin Girls School career fairs. These fairs were aimed at students in years 10-13. The aim was to introduce students to potential career paths they would only have encountered after the day, something that DLRC is always eager to promote.

DLRC actively collaborates with some local Letchworth schools. This partnership includes material and financial donations, educational opportunities within our company, and providing education and career advice within local schools, enriching educational opportunities in our community. We have given more than 40 hours to schools this year.

In 2024, we will be expanding our careers talks and workshops to include partnering with the Shaw Trust. The Shaw Trust is a charitable organisation in the United Kingdom which supports people with complex needs in good work.



## University Talks

In 2023, DLRC's CEO Dianne Lee spoke at the University of Hertfordshire's Powering Impact Experience Event, which launched a new economic impact report. The event highlighted the university's role in addressing regional and global challenges through education and collaboration. Dianne participated in panel discussions, sharing her expertise. The event aimed to empower individuals, foster progress, and drive innovation.



## 04 Empower Individuals

DLRC supports team cohesion and community involvement by granting employees one additional paid day off per year for volunteering with charitable organisations. The Volunteering Policy ensures we allow our team members to pursue charitable and community interests dear to them. We also support our employees in making a difference by offering a charity matching scheme, with DLRC matching donations up to £250 per collection. This initiative underscores our commitment to supporting our colleagues' charitable endeavours.

## 05 Guest Speakers on Health Awareness Sessions

DLRC holds regular health and wellbeing awareness talks to inform the team on various topics. As part of our wellbeing commitments, these talks vary from mental and physical health to environmental issues and information on supporting others experiencing health difficulties. These talks are usually delivered by charities to whom DLRC donates £250 and encourages employees to donate of their own accord. These talks are recorded where possible and shared on our learning management system for employees to access as they wish. One-pagers are also created and circulated.

In 2023, we had eight health and wellbeing talks, which the following charities delivered:

- Prostate Cancer UK
- The Sleep Charity
- Bipolar UK
- Letchworth Garden House Hospice
- ADHD Foundation UK
- Guts UK
- Blood Pressure UK
- Endometriosis UK

# 3. Our team

Cultivate a high performance that prioritises colleague development, wellbeing and job satisfaction.

Our commitment to cultivating a high-performance culture prioritises employee development, wellbeing, and job satisfaction. We recognise that our colleagues are our most valuable assets. We invest in their growth and provide a conducive work environment that encourages personal and professional development. Colleague wellbeing and job satisfaction are integral to our philosophy, ensuring a motivated and dedicated team.

This year we have	Next year we want to
Provided 8 Wellbeing talks	Provide 12 Health and Wellbeing talks
Over 500 hours of training with external providers across all staff  Training for managers with an external provider given up to 4 days per person	Hold a team building session focused on EDI/cultural awareness training for all.
Supported 2 apprentices in starting new courses	Support at least one additional apprentice to start a new course and continue to support at least 3 apprentices through to completion of their courses
Supported employees undertaking apprenticeships, degrees, and diplomas	Join the Eve Appeal's Every Woman Project
Attended 22 different conferences and networking events	Create policies for wellbeing, menstrual health and menopause

## This year we have

## Next year we want to

Take a further assessment with IIP to help us reach the Gold level.

Use the Good Life Goals to educate employees on the UN SDGs and how they can embed them into their lives

Further policies including: Wellbeing, Menstrual Health, and Domestic Abuse

Measure diversity

Mind Training for Wellbeing Champions Monitoring of hiring/diversity

Ensure that our website and employment advertisements are disability-friendly by working with Shaw Trust and signing up for the government's disability confidence scheme

Move to a more comprehensive EAP/Wellbeing Platform

Gain RAPS Membership

## Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI)

### Diversity

DLRC is proud to have a diverse workforce, with over 30% of our employees identifying as being from a racial or ethnic minority. We value the contributions and perspectives of individuals from diverse backgrounds and are committed to maintaining an inclusive environment. This is also represented in our management levels, with 25% being from an underrepresented group.

Gender diversity is a cornerstone of our workplace culture. At DLRC, 74% of our non-managerial workers identify as women. This gender-balanced representation reflects our dedication to equal opportunities for all employees. Gender parity is not limited to our workforce; it also extends to our management team. A significant percentage, 60% of our senior leaders and 75% of our Team Leaders, identify as women, reflecting our commitment to proportionate representation in leadership roles.

We recognise the importance of age diversity and have a workforce that reflects this commitment. Approximately 20-29% of our workforce comprises individuals under the age of twenty-four or over fifty, ensuring a broad spectrum of experiences and perspectives.

### Our Ownership and Leadership

DLRC proudly embraces diversity in leadership. Two women, Dianne Lee and Cheryl Dhillon, lead our leadership team and chair our Board of Directors. Their position in leadership demonstrates our commitment to diversity in senior roles and encourages underrepresented groups to excel in leadership positions.

### Inclusive Work Environments

Our commitment to inclusivity extends beyond hiring. DLRC ensures its facilities meet accessibility standards for those with physical disabilities. We also accommodate learning or emotional disabilities in our workplace policies, ensuring accessibility for all.

## Equity at DLRC

Proactively managing equity is important at DLRC. We have conducted a comprehensive pay equity analysis, addressing gender, race/ethnicity, and other demographic factors, and have implemented equal compensation improvement plans where needed, ensuring fair and equitable compensation practices. Our most recent comprehensive survey was in May 2023. We are a Living Wage Employer.



## Measurement of Diversity

DLRC continuously tracks the diversity attributes of our workforce, including race or ethnicity, gender, and age, through anonymous surveys. This data is collected at all stages of the employment cycle, starting at recruitment and asking for feedback on DEI during exit interviews. This data collection informs our diversity and inclusion efforts. Moving forward, we intend to begin measuring diversity through our recruitment process to ensure that no aspect of the process is disadvantaging a protected group.

## Wellbeing

At DLRC, a thriving team is the cornerstone of success. That's why we've implemented initiatives such as our Health and Wellbeing talks, designed to promote knowledge about health and wellbeing issues and empower our colleagues who may have conditions or may be working with someone who does. We also have several resources in our shared area which promote a healthy work-life balance and provide advice on fostering a positive working environment.

We provide our staff with a confidential Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), which includes a range of confidential resources, including a helpline. Each staff member is entitled to up to four free counselling sessions. Our staff discount platform also provides a range of online wellbeing content, including advice on physical health, mental health, and financial wellbeing.

In addition, our Private Medical Insurance (PMI) provider, which all employees can apply to, offers a range of self-care options, such as a free subscription to Headspace and online talking therapies. Our PMI also offers a range of discounts for gym memberships, therefore supporting physical wellbeing.

By prioritising the wellbeing of our employees, we enhance morale and productivity and cultivate a culture of support and collaboration.

Recognising the importance of mental health in the workplace, we have trained Mental Health First Aiders who provide essential support and guidance to our employees in urgent situations. We also have a group of Wellbeing Champions, managed by our Wellbeing Lead, who are there to promote wellbeing initiatives and signpost colleagues to resources if they need additional help. The mental health charity MIND has previously trained our Wellbeing Champions, and in 2024, we will be re-training with MIND. Additionally, the Wellbeing Champions meet regularly to plan new wellbeing initiatives and discuss areas of improvement. Our comprehensive management system includes robust people recognition, appraisal, and development mechanisms, ensuring that every team member feels valued and empowered to reach their full potential.

Over 2024, DLRC is committing to creating policies on wellbeing, menstrual health, menopause, and domestic abuse. This is to ensure that every member of our company understands what support is available to them, how they can support colleagues, and how they can empower colleagues to seek any assistance they may require.

## Team Development

Our HR and training system provides comprehensive training tools, ensuring our team members have access to the resources and support needed to develop their skills and advance their careers. Combined with our robust management system, which includes mechanisms for recognition, appraisal, and development, we create an environment where every team member feels valued, supported, and empowered to succeed.



## Some of the online training our colleagues have access to include:

- Clinical Trial Regulation Workshops
- A series of recorded 'Lunch and Learns'
- Personal Development courses, including communications skills, effective meetings, giving feedback and time management
- Professional Development
- Managing Teams, Project Management, and Project Lead series Business Central
- Training on our Internal systems and IT Tools
- Health & Wellbeing Talks are held by external providers and recorded for our LMS

All employees have weekly check-ins with their manager. These regular informal meetings foster communication, trust, and personalised support. They also offer dedicated time for individuals to discuss progress, challenges, and goals with their manager, leading to personal career development plans. For those interested in moving to the next level, this will support promotion aspirations.

As part of our more formal annual performance review process, individuals, alongside their team leader, create a bespoke development plan for the year. This plan helps employees set goals, improve and develop their skills, advance their careers, and help motivate them.

Where knowledge gaps that cannot be addressed in-house are identified, external training can be provided. Any learnings from external training are then distilled to the broader team during Lunch and Learn, our weekly company all-hands meeting.

Our well-established purpose and valued behaviours are integral to our ethos, which serve as guiding principles in all aspects of our operations. Our company values are embedded within our development framework, referenced within probation meetings, and integrated into annual performance reviews. This involves assessing the outcomes achieved and the methods used, ensuring that employees uphold the company's values while striving for success. We maintain a culture of recognition, celebrating role models and best practices within our ranks. We have a series of Talent Development Programmes that are tailored to bring out the potential of every individual, ensuring they receive the necessary support and resources to thrive.

Central to our team development efforts is our emphasis on leadership. Through our Leadership Development Programme, we identify and nurture high-potential individuals, equipping them with the skills and tools necessary to lead effectively within our organisation. By fostering a culture of mentorship and growth, we empower our team members to realise their full potential and drive success collectively.

## Apprentices

DLRC currently supports 13 UK apprentices, equating to more than 10% of our UK workforce. As a Regulatory Affairs Consultancy, some apprentices are on the TOPRA course in Regulatory Affairs, but DLRC also supports apprenticeships in Management, Accountancy, IT and Business Transformation. Some apprentices who have completed their courses have chosen to study further, while others now apply what they have learnt to their daily work.



## Case Study A

### TOPRA Apprenticeship

Towards the end of 2020 I was asked by DLRC if I would be interested in undertaking the Regulatory Affairs Specialist Apprenticeship run by TOPRA. It was also highlighted that completion of this apprenticeship programme could allow me to obtain the Regulatory Affairs MSc accredited by the University of Hertfordshire.

As someone who already had future ambitions to complete the Regulatory Affairs MSc, this was an opportunity that I found incredibly exciting.

The apprenticeship programme was designed by industry experts to help colleagues develop a range of core competencies that are deemed to be essential for success in regulatory affairs. The bulk of the course centred around 8 'masterclass' modules, with each module running for 3-4 days and spanning a huge breadth and depth of regulatory topics. Completion of each module also required submission of two coursework projects, which reinforced learnings from the classes. In addition to this, the masterclasses were supplemented by other bespoke courses/workshops which either focused on a specific area of regulatory affairs or a specific behaviour that was highlighted as a 'core competency'.

In the initial stages, DLRC supported me by facilitating an internal interview process which allowed me to speak to prospective mentors and identify which mentor would be the best fit for me. Throughout the apprenticeship programme, my DLRC mentor was able to support me by acting as a sounding board for coursework ideas, helping to keep me on track with demonstrating the core competencies required, and being available to support if I ever faced any uncertainties/challenges.

In addition to the amazing support that my mentor provided throughout the programme, there were several other initiatives set up by DLRC which helped me to complete the apprenticeship to the best of my ability. For example, the learning manager appointed by DLRC was able to liaise with the resourcing team and project leads so that I could get hands on project experience (both billable/non-billable) that supplemented my learnings on the TOPRA courses.

DLRC also ran Quarterly catch-up meetings where all apprentices/mentors could meet and share learnings to ensure that we were all getting the most out of the programme.

Finally, since coming towards the end of the apprenticeship, DLRC has set up sessions where I could provide support/feedback to newer cohorts of apprentices within DLRC. This has meant that, in addition to the personal benefits that the apprenticeship has brought me from a knowledge/competency perspective, I have also been able to make a wider positive contribution by developing company best practice and supporting other colleagues as they work through the programme.



## **Case Study B**

### **TOPRA Apprenticeship**

After joining DLRC as a new chemistry graduate in 2019, I was lucky to be given the opportunity to become one of DLRC's first apprentices, joining the TOPRA Regulatory Affairs Specialist Apprenticeship in 2020.

This was a 30-month MSc level course to develop my knowledge, skills, and behaviours (KSBs) relevant to the regulatory field of medicines. As a work-based programme, my time was split 20% 'off the job' training and 80% working.

In particular, one of the most valuable elements of the course were the masterclasses (MSc modules) - these provided me with a more detailed understanding of specific regulatory topics, with an opportunity to test this during case studies and coursework. These modules also helped to extend my network with other apprentices and more seasoned regulatory professionals.

Managing the apprenticeship deadlines and requirements whilst working was challenging at times. However, DLRC were very supportive in ensuring that I had the resources and time I needed (whilst balancing the somewhat unpredictable workload of consultancy) and as such it massively improved my time and project management capabilities. This support included a DLRC mentor, who was able to support me throughout my apprenticeship and provide insights into their regulatory experience, along with developing an in-house apprenticeship team to help navigate the ways of an apprenticeship and to not feel isolated when navigating something new. As a result of all this I managed to submit all apprenticeship work on time and to a high standard.

The apprenticeship has given me the knowledge, skills and confidence when working on a variety of different regulatory projects including initial marketing authorisation activities, lifecycle management, regulatory safety, and global divestments. I have also been able to share some of this regulatory knowledge through in-house presentations (Lunch & Learn session) at DLRC, and as more of the DLRC team have become apprentices, it has been a great opportunity to share my experiences and learnings with them too.

Following the intense final assessment process, where I compiled extensive evidence to demonstrate I had met the KSBs of the apprenticeship, supported with a case study report, presentation, and viva voce, I was awarded a Distinction in February 2024! With the ongoing support of DLRC, I am now continuing with the TOPRA MSc programme, developing my dissertation for submission in December 2024.

### What our interns say:

My time at DLRC provided me with valuable insights into the field of regulatory affairs. I was fortunate to work alongside colleagues who exemplified enthusiasm, emphasising the importance of collaboration and a friendly atmosphere within the DLRC culture.

During my internship, I had the privilege of collaborating with various teams, including HR, Business Transformation, and the Regulatory department. This collaboration not only allowed me to expand my network and get to know more colleagues but also provided an excellent opportunity for learning.

## Internal Promotions

We value the development of our people and reward the team with internal promotions. In 2023, we promoted 14 of our team members across all parts of the business, including promotions to team leader and senior team leader levels.

**INVESTORS IN PEOPLE®**  
We invest in people Silver

DLRC had the honour of being awarded an Investors in People Silver Award in 2021. This Award is recognition of our exemplary investment in our employees and the resultant employee satisfaction. Our employees feel well supported, part of a team, and listened to.

# 4. Governance

**Uphold high standards of ethical conduct and business governance to ensure long-term sustainability and stakeholder trust.**

In line with our work, DLRC upholds high ethical conduct and business governance standards internally to ensure long-term sustainability and stakeholder trust. By adopting these principles, we ensure that DLRC remains a trusted and sustainable partner in the regulatory affairs industry.

Regular board meetings, centred on critical financial and performance KPIs, provide a platform for informed decision-making and strategic planning. We have high standards for Continued Professional Development training, continuous professional development, and competence among our team members.

Risks, Opportunities, and Competitive threats are reviewed to facilitate adaptive responses to evolving market dynamics. Clear grievance policies and compliance with legislation align with our commitment to fostering a fair and inclusive workplace environment.

The appointment of independent directors to our board ensures diverse perspectives and decision-making.

In addition to seeking ISO9001 accreditation in 2024, we will consider B Corp certification as a framework that aligns with our business identity and operating style.

To manage and maintain our high governance standards, we have a comprehensive suite of policies with which all employees must comply. These are also included in our employee handbook.

**These include but are not limited to:**

- Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment
- Whistleblowing
- Data Privacy
- QMS Policies and procedures & Employee Handbook Policies

**This year we have**

Achieved Cyber Essentials Accreditation

**Next year we want to**

- Improve end to end project management
- Leverage AI and Machine Learning
- Achieve ISO 9001 certification
- Achieve B-Corporation certification
- Implement DEI Policy
- Implement environmental Policy
- Look into sustainable investment options



# Cyber Essentials



DLRC is pleased to announce the receipt of the Cyber Essentials accreditation. This government-backed accreditation allows DLRC to guard against the most common cyber threats and demonstrate its commitment to cyber security.

## What is Cyber Essentials Accreditation?

Cyber Essentials is a government-backed accreditation scheme that sets out a baseline of cybersecurity standards businesses must meet to achieve certification. The scheme was launched in 2014 as part of the UK government's National Cyber Security Programme and is designed to help companies of all sizes protect themselves against cyber threats.

## The Cyber Essentials certification is a self-assessment process that assesses a business's cybersecurity against five key controls:

- Boundary firewalls and internet gateways
- Secure configuration
- Access control
- Malware protection
- Patch management.

To achieve Cyber Essentials certification, DLRC completed a self-assessment and provided evidence demonstrating that DLRC has implemented the required controls. The questionnaire covers various topics, including password policies, email security, and secure remote access.

## Receiving Cyber Essentials Accreditation

DLRC's in-house IT team is committed to safeguarding the entire business from cyber threats. The team constantly works to secure our IT systems against cyberattacks, develop our work processes, and add extra levels of security wherever possible. DLRC values security highly and fully appreciates the value and sensitivity of the information we handle.

During DLRC's internal announcement, Head of IT & Systems Drew Williams thanked Technical Services Manager Russell MacFarlane for managing the project and ensuring its smooth completion. He also thanked IT Helpdesk and Support Engineer Jack Hipkins for auditing every laptop in the company and rectifying any security problems before we applied for accreditation.

The successful management of the project and application is the perfect demonstration of DLRC's IT Team's skillset and expertise. DLRC has a committed team of IT professionals who ensure the highest level of security and support when working internally and with external clients. The accreditation is a well-deserved recognition of this and another layer of security provided to DLRC and all we work with.

# Risk Management

DLRC regularly identifies and assesses potential risks across all aspects of the organisation, including financial, operational, strategic, compliance, and reputational risks. DLRC maintains a formal risk register that evaluates the likelihood and potential impact of each identified risk and prioritises risks based on their potential severity and probability of occurrence. Within every risk, the internal and external factors that may influence each risk are considered, including relevant laws, regulations, and industry standards.

Where a risk is identified, actions to mitigate or minimise the potential consequences are put in place and assigned to individuals or teams, depending on the identified risk. DLRC also maintains a suite of insurance products to mitigate/transfer risk in certain situations, including coverage for business interruption.

The executive team reviews the risk register monthly, which is a standing agenda item at every board meeting.

DLRC maintains a business continuity plan that is reviewed and updated annually to cover the principal risks and emergencies that may arise and ensure that critical business functions can continue in the event of disruption.

DLRC encourages all employees to report any perceived risks or vulnerabilities in their day-to-day activities to their direct line manager or senior leader/director. DLRC has a robust set of cultural values that promote ethical behaviour and integrity throughout the organisation, emphasising the importance of transparency and accountability.

## ISO 9001 Certification by end of 2024 Goal

2023 was spent preparing the organisation for ISO9001/2015 certification. We hope to achieve this goal by the end of 2024. We acknowledge that embracing ISO 9001 isn't just about achieving operational excellence; it's about being a responsible global citizen.

While its primary focus is on quality, ISO 9001 also plays a significant role in promoting sustainability. The beauty of ISO 9001 lies in its adaptability. By integrating sustainability practices into the quality management system, we can harmonise our efforts for quality improvement with environmentally responsible actions. We identify and assess the environmental aspects of our operations and services, which allow us to make informed decisions that reduce our ecological footprint. Moreover, the recent ISO 9001:2015/Amd 1:2024 amendment, effective February 2024, will require us to assess the impact of climate change on our operations and strategic objectives and further embed sustainability and environmental responsibility into our QMS.

## B-Corporation

In 2024, DLRC will apply for B-Corporation certification. This is a highly regarded and recognised third-party certification body that holds companies to high sustainability standards. It will help us measure our progress and display our commitment to all areas of sustainability.

## End to End Projects

We are reviewing our current project management processes to support the organisation's growth. We have identified two key improvement areas: proposal management and introducing a system-based resourcing solution. These initiatives will both drive efficiencies in how projects are managed internally end-to-end.

Proposal management seeks to leverage functionality in our finance system 'Business Central' to systemise our cost builds whilst, in parallel, defining proposal templates to support the process. In turn, this will allow us to review the accuracy of our proposals more quickly against the actual work delivered.

Systemised resourcing in Business Central aims to significantly streamline the project resourcing process, allow project managers to forecast, and switch our resourcing style from a 'reactive' to a 'proactive' approach.

## Artificial intelligence and Machine learning

Artificial Intelligence/Machine Learning is a simultaneous threat and opportunity to the organisation. External reports and models show the highly significant impact that AI/ML is expected to bring, and we must address this. Due to the nature of a consultancy business, we are leveraging the technology to build our own AI/ML platform, enabling us to protect our client's data and customise the platform to provide a personalised output to the DLRC high standards. AI/ML at DLRC is viewed as an "Assistive AI"; it reduces the low-value tasks as part of project delivery to allow our consultants to focus on the high-value tasks, thus supporting our goal of promoting SDG 8. Due to the nature of AI, it will significantly lessen the time taken to deliver work for our clients in some scenarios.

## DEI Policy

We wish to formalise the framework for being a good, equitable employer of an already diverse workforce. We want to make the right adjustments, where necessary, to show that everyone is included, whether this be at team building events or day-to-day working in the office or at home. We want all staff to feel like they belong to the organisation. Diversity and Inclusion, as well as cultural awareness, will be discussed by all team leaders and will be part of the annual team building event.

## Environmental Policy

We will develop and launch our environmental policy in 2024.

# Closing word

Through this report, we have endeavoured to display the range and depth of DLRC's sustainability actions. We will use our four pillars of sustainability and our core values to continue to develop these initiatives, especially in the areas of our team, clients, and community, as we have the most scope to affect positive change. In 2024, we will be applying for B-Corporation certification; additionally, we will be using the B-Corporation framework alongside the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals to create new goals and assess our progress across areas of sustainable impact.

DLRC is committed to operating a sustainable business that will ensure its longevity and the health of the planet and its population.





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