

# CLIENTS



The work we do for our clients reaches billions of people each year, presenting our greatest opportunity to create positive change

## WHO'S IN CHARGE?

Our agencies and client leads oversee our work with clients on sustainability. The WPP Executive Committee provides additional oversight and guidance on any ethical issues that may arise

We set clear ethical standards for our people and agencies through our policy framework and training including the WPP Code of Business Conduct. In 2022 we introduced a revised Assignment Acceptance Policy and Framework to provide additional guidance when taking on new work

## HOW ARE WE DOING?

78%

of our top 50 clients have set or committed to set science-based carbon reduction targets

GREEN  
CLAIMS  
GUIDE

and training launched to equip our people to make effective green claims that are not misleading in any way

8.2

Likelihood to Recommend score for diversity, equity and inclusion out of a possible ten from our clients in 2022

## IN THIS SECTION

### WORK WITH IMPACT

Our growing offer to support our clients in delivering lasting positive impact through their brands. Includes our sustainability capability to support our clients

### ACTING ETHICALLY AND WITH INTEGRITY

Maintaining high standards and strong compliance in areas such as environmental claims (including our new Green Claims Guide), ethics, human rights, privacy and data security

### NEW CLIENT ASSIGNMENTS

Includes our revised Assignment Acceptance Policy and Framework

## WORK WITH IMPACT

We believe in the power of world-class creative ideas to drive client growth. Businesses and consumers alike are feeling the effects of inflation, climate change, geopolitical uncertainty and rising social inequality. Businesses are looking for solutions that unlock growth, while also addressing their environmental and social impact.

Clients look to us to help find and scale solutions that address their most material impacts and the problems that matter most to their consumers through authentic, credible actions.

Driving behavioural change at scale can deliver real impact: the IPCC estimates that behaviour change could reduce global emissions by 40–70% by 2050.<sup>1</sup>

And consumers want to change their own behaviour. In a survey conducted by Wunderman Thompson, 85% of GenZ respondents said they believe people must be prepared to rethink the way they live and spend to tackle climate change, and 70% are prepared to make dramatic changes to their lifestyle if it will help tackle climate change.<sup>2</sup>

Our sustainability playbook, updated in 2022, showcases the diversity of our sustainability capability and innovative work (see page 28).

In 2022 Ogilvy Consulting's Sustainability Practice grew by 30% through work helping clients take a leadership position in sustainability, from developing ESG strategies to designing go-to-market brands and communications.

GroupM developed and released a methodology for calculating emissions from media and launched a coalition of leading advertisers — worth \$10 billion in global advertising investment — with a commitment to advocate for shared industry standards and accelerate the decarbonisation of the world's media supply chain. And, in February 2023, the agency launched a new media omnichannel carbon calculator for clients.

**i Find out more about GroupM's media decarbonisation initiative on page 29, and about how we support our clients on their own sustainability journeys on page 28**

### CLIENT SATISFACTION

We measure client satisfaction using our industry-leading platform, Vantage. In 2022 we created two additional metrics that align to our purpose as WPP:

- How well we support our clients' diversity, equity and inclusion goals
  - earning a score of 8.2 out of ten across 2022
- How well we support our clients' sustainability goals – earning a score of 7.9 across the second half of 2022

### BUILDING AN OPEN AND INCLUSIVE FUTURE WITH OUR CLIENTS

People are complex and intersectional and so are their needs. How we communicate with people depends upon how they define themselves. To be relevant to today's communities and to build meaningful connections with consumers, marketing must be inclusive, intersectional and intentional.

Our Inclusive Marketing Playbook and resource library, updated in 2022, embeds inclusive marketing principles in everything we do, and our Diversity Review Panel provides a forum to escalate and address concerns around potentially offensive or culturally insensitive work.

In 2022, we launched the Consumer Equality Equation report exploring the relationship between ethnicity and the consumer experience in the UK. Supported by the WPP Racial Equity Programme (see page 34), the study found that businesses that fail to engage meaningfully with these consumers stand to miss out on a cumulative disposable income of £16.7 trillion by 2061.



**Download the Consumer Equality Equation report at [wpp.com/consumer-equality-equation-report](http://wpp.com/consumer-equality-equation-report)**

Unite, WPP's company-wide LGBTQ+ community, and Choreograph, our data company, published Beyond the Rainbow, a survey of over 7,500 people in the United States, UK, and Canada. This report aims to provide data around how queer communities view themselves as depicted in advertising and marketing.

GroupM's media inclusion initiative aims to direct investment in, and create opportunities for, diverse media companies and content creators with an initial focus on Black-owned media in the United States. In its first 18 months, the initiative resulted in a +250% increase in client investments in Black-owned media.

Superunion launched Design for Difference, inclusive design principles and guidelines that focus on celebrating difference and making design accessible (see page 12).

### SCALING IMPACT THROUGH INDUSTRY ALLIANCES

#### UNSTEREOTYPE ALLIANCE

As a founding member of the Unstereotype Alliance, we partner with UN Women to work towards eradicating harmful stereotypes from all advertising and media and to drive positive social change. To mark the fifth anniversary of the Unstereotype Alliance, we hosted a celebratory panel at Cannes Lions, discussing the importance of mobilising public action, and engaging employees worldwide as influential advocates.

In 2022, we shared insights and data with the global Unstereotype Alliance network on issues including body autonomy and the Consumer Equality Equation report. We also engaged locally in Australia, Brazil, India, Kenya, South Africa, Turkey and the UK.

#### AD NET ZERO

Collaboration will be critical in delivering our own carbon reduction targets (see page 24) and promoting low-carbon and regenerative living at the scale needed to address the climate crisis. WPP is a founding member of Ad Net Zero (ANZ) in the UK, an advertising industry initiative to help tackle the climate emergency by decarbonising advertising operations and supporting every industry to accurately promote sustainable products and services.

In 2022 at the Cannes Lions Festival of Creativity, ANZ launched globally with the support of 25 companies, including major holding companies, tech companies, advertisers, and worldwide trade bodies. In November, leaders from six WPP agencies led discussions on issues from future proofing business to consumer behaviour change at the ANZ Summit. And in February 2023 WPP was proud to support the launch of ANZ in the United States alongside the ANA, 4As and our peers.

#### CHANGE THE BRIEF ALLIANCE

WPP is a founding member of #ChangeTheBrief Alliance, which aims to harness the creative power of our industry to bring the climate crisis to life. The alliance scales an initiative which originated at Mindshare into a not-for-profit industry partnership between agencies of every size and type – media, creative, design, PR – and their clients. Through an on-demand sustainability learning programme, expert advice at a category level and an interactive community, the alliance encourages and challenges members to adapt their work to promote more sustainable choices and behaviours through every channel available to them.

<sup>1</sup> IPCC Working Group III report, *Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change*, April 2022

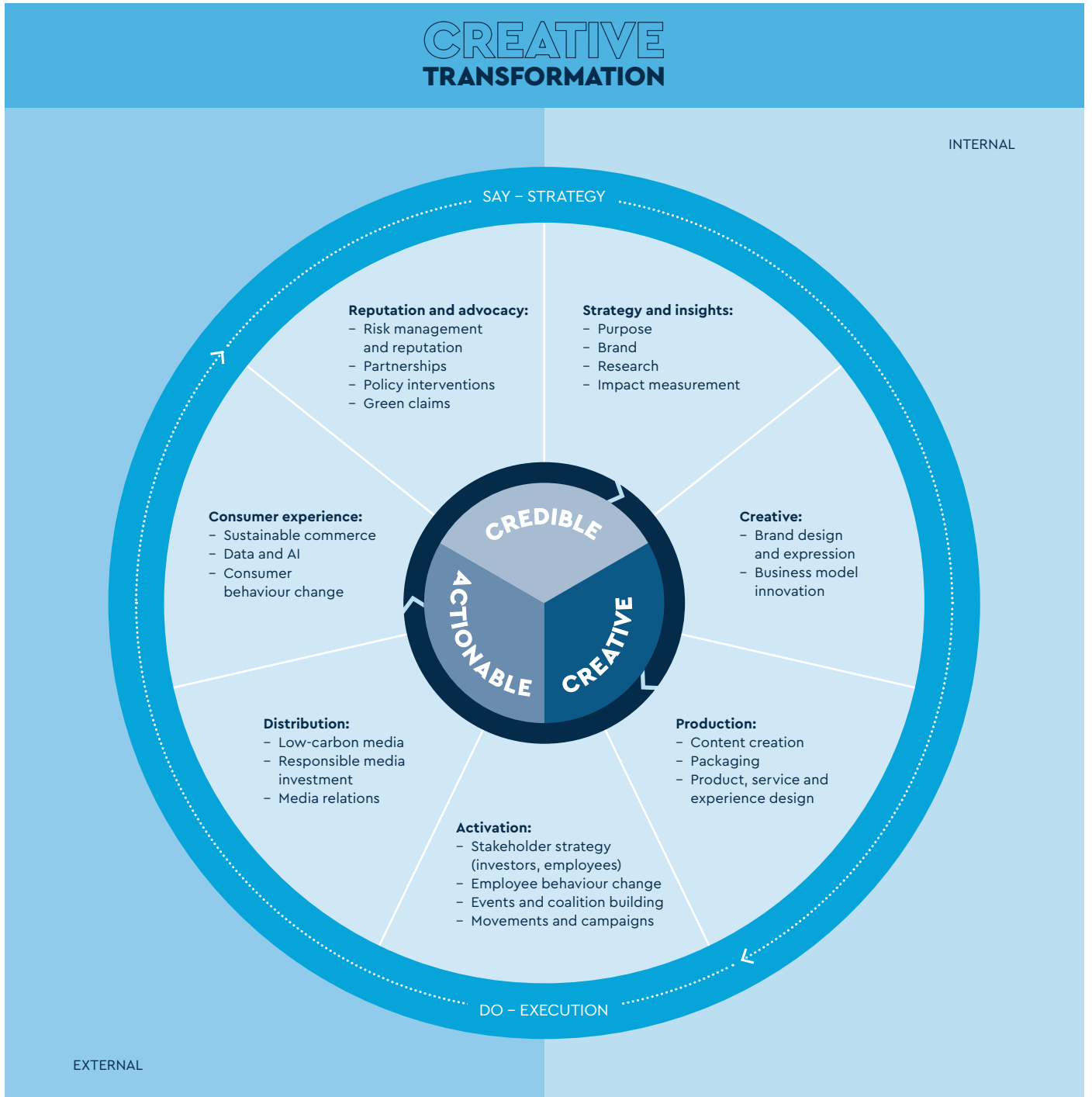
<sup>2</sup> *The Future 100*, Wunderman Thompson

# SUSTAINABILITY CAPABILITY

From strategy and consulting to delivery and flawless execution, we continue to strengthen our offer to ensure we provide clients with the support and expertise they need to deliver against their own sustainability and diversity, equity and inclusion goals.

Throughout this report we demonstrate how we deploy these skills, coupled with our creativity, to help clients find solutions not only to commercial problems, but also to some of society's biggest and most complex challenges.

Examples include helping Hellmann's raise awareness of the scale of food waste in the UK, and a collaboration between Microsoft and WPP for Haleon that harnesses AI to help blind and low-vision people access information on healthcare packaging.



# CALCULATING MEDIA EMISSIONS

Decarbonising the media industry



**WE INTRODUCED OUR GLOBAL FRAMEWORK WITH A GOAL OF UNITING THE INDUSTRY. WE KNOW WE CAN ACHIEVE MORE, TOGETHER, THAN WE CAN WITH SEPARATE AND DISPARATE ACTION"**

Christian Juhl  
Chief Executive Officer, GroupM

GroupM is the world's largest media buyer, placing more than \$60 billion each year on behalf of clients. In line with WPP's commitment to halve supply chain carbon emissions by 2030 (from a 2019 baseline), in 2022 GroupM launched an ambitious and bold new strategy to decarbonise media advertising.

Working with independent carbon measurement specialists, and with input from clients, industry partners and third parties, GroupM developed and launched a global carbon measurement framework that makes it possible, for the first time, to measure carbon consistently across different media channels. To help drive industry-wide progress and work towards a common measurement system for emissions from media buying, GroupM made the framework open source.

To push for the biggest change in the shortest timeframe, GroupM formed a client coalition to bring together leading advertisers, collectively representing \$10 billion in global advertising investment. The coalition will advocate for shared industry standards and advance efforts to reduce the amount of carbon created by the placement of advertising.

In February 2023, GroupM launched an omnichannel version of its carbon calculator, enabling clients for the first time to factor channel-level carbon emissions data into their media planning.



Scan to access the research



## ACTING ETHICALLY AND WITH INTEGRITY

Our work has the power to bring about change – it regularly changes attitudes, opinions and the way people behave. As it is critical that these changes are for the better, we are committed to acting ethically in all aspects of our business, and to maintaining the highest standards of honesty and integrity.

We will not undertake work that is intended or designed to mislead or deceive.

We require that all the work our agencies produce for clients complies with all relevant legal requirements, codes of practice and marketing standards. There are occasional complaints made about campaigns we have worked on, and some of these are upheld by marketing standards' authorities. Our agencies take action where needed to prevent a recurrence.

We work hard to maintain strong compliance in areas such as ethics, human rights, privacy and data security. All of this is covered in our Code of Business Conduct and in our mandatory online ethics training, which all employees (including freelancers working for more than four weeks) are required to complete annually.

Our agencies have copy-checking and clearance processes for the legal team to review campaigns before publication. These processes have strict requirements in highly-regulated sectors such as pharmaceutical marketing.

### ENVIRONMENTAL CLAIMS

Work that includes environmental claims is being held to ever-higher standards of fairness and objectivity, both by regulators and the general public. This means that it is more important than ever that any claims we make on behalf of clients are authentic, material and matched by real action.

In 2022 we launched a Green Claims Guide, designed to equip our people with principles and practical tips to make effective green claims that are not misleading (read more below).

## A FORMULA FOR EFFECTIVE GREEN CLAIMS

Consumer behaviour change could drive down global carbon emissions by 40-70% by 2050.<sup>1</sup> Effective green claims can help shift opinion and change behaviour at the scale needed to transition to a low-carbon economy. But more than 60% of consumers are cynical about the motivations behind brands' sustainability actions.<sup>2</sup>

In 2022 we launched a new Green Claims Guide, informed by guidance from regulators such as the UK Competition and Markets Authority and US Federal Trade Commission, and underpinned by legal compliance advice. The guide is designed to help our people worldwide in making environmental

claims on behalf of clients that are accurate, authentic and material, and not misleading in any way.

The guide provides principles and practical tips for account managers, strategists, creatives and media planners to use from brief to behaviour change. Training sessions share a formula for effective green claims, and give people the chance to explore real case studies and rulings to help them identify and avoid greenwashing.

The guide is complemented by a legal toolkit, which has been incorporated into our legal clearance process.

In 2023 we launched a client version of the guide, and will offer targeted training focusing on green claims in specific sectors or markets to our people and – where requested – to clients.

<sup>1</sup> Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability, Sixth IPCC Report  
<sup>2</sup> Sustainability Communications Need to Get Real, Ogilvy Consulting



**BE TRUTHFUL & ACCURATE**



**DO NOT OMIT OR HIDE IMPORTANT INFORMATION**



**ONLY MAKE FAIR & MEANINGFUL COMPARISONS**



**CONSIDER THE FULL LIFECYCLE OF THE PRODUCT**



**SUBSTANTIATE THE CLAIMS**



**BE SPECIFIC**



**BE CLEAR & UNAMBIGUOUS**



**USE PLAIN LANGUAGE**



**DO NOT OVERSTATE THE BENEFIT**



**AVOID SWEEPING OR UNQUALIFIED CLAIMS**



**CAREFULLY CONSIDER IMAGERY**



**BE SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE**

**ONLINE ADVERTISING**

Our agencies have policies and processes to mitigate against online advertising appearing on sites with illegal, illicit or unsuitable content.

Our approach to limiting risk and improving trust and quality in the digital supply chain is multi-layered, involving our trading, operational, technical, legal and industry engagement teams. Our guides on brand safety in gaming and advertising to children

help our clients safely reach online audiences. To help navigate the rise in climate misinformation, we include a dedicated climate change list as part of our exclusion list of harmful content sites and apps.

We take a zero-tolerance approach to advertising placed adjacent to harmful content, in pirated content environments or on fraudulent or non-viewable placements. We recognise that zero tolerance does not always equal zero risk. That is why we apply

a consultative approach to brand safety and brand suitability. We believe clients should be fully aware of the strategic, implementation and tactical implications of managing brand safety across all buying methods and media channels.

**1 Find out more about our approach to data ethics, privacy and and security on page 43**

**NEW CLIENT ASSIGNMENTS**

We have a process in place to review new assignments and clients.

Each of our agencies has a global Risk Committee, chaired by its respective CEO, to ensure that leadership has a full understanding of the risks across businesses and markets (see 'Risk Governance Framework' on page 86 of our 2022 Annual Report).

During the year we put in place a revised Assignment Acceptance Policy and Framework, covering all client sectors, that requires various categories of work to be considered by our agencies' Risk Committees or escalated to WPP for review. For an example of how we apply this policy, see below.

**WORKING WITH ENERGY CLIENTS**

At WPP we support the aims of the Paris Agreement and believe in the urgent need to transition to net zero.

Energy companies<sup>1</sup> must meet the energy needs of the world today while playing a central role in an orderly transition, if a transformation of this scale, complexity and impact is to be successful. Our agencies work with a number of clients in the energy sector.

We believe it is essential that the communications of energy companies are truthful, fair and accurate. We require rigorous standards to be applied to the content we produce for our energy clients, as we do for all clients, and seek to fairly represent their actions and commitments at all times. Our policy is not to take on any client work, including lobbying, designed to frustrate the objectives of the Paris Agreement.

When considering assignments for energy clients, we give particular attention to whether:

- The proposed work is truthful, fair and accurate
- The proposed assignment is designed to influence public policy decision-makers such as government officials
- The client has made a public commitment to the transition, and is seen to be developing transition plans
- The work relates to the approval or development of new greenfield oil and gas fields
- The work relates to the extension or development of particularly high-emission forms of energy, such as coal, or forms of extraction that have a higher environmental impact

This is an area that we keep under ongoing review, as we continuously evaluate the nature of the work we perform for clients and the context in which it occurs.

To learn more about our commitment to honesty and integrity in our work, and how we ensure adherence to marketing standards, see page 30.

<sup>1</sup> 'Energy companies' in this context refers to those involved in the extraction, production, sales or distribution of oil, natural gas, coal or other fossil fuels, utility companies making use of such fuels and any relevant trade associations or organisations

# HALEON AND MICROSOFT'S SEEING AI

"Always read the label".  
But what if you can't?

**OFFER**  
EXPERIENCE, TECHNOLOGY

**AGENCIES**  
GREY (AKQA), H+K STRATEGIES,  
WUNDERMAN THOMPSON

**CLIENT**  
HALEON

There are 285 million visually impaired people in the world who might have difficulty accessing vital healthcare information, simply because they can't read the labels on products.

As one of the world's largest consumer health companies, Haleon had an opportunity to give those with trouble seeing or reading renewed control over their healthcare with accessible packaging. Grey New York suggested leveraging the one universal element on every packaged good: the barcode.

Through Haleon's partnership with Microsoft's Seeing AI app, all Haleon barcodes in the USA and the UK became access codes. The world's first barcodes which speak important healthcare information aloud to the visually impaired. When scanned, access codes read aloud important information such as usage and safety instructions, dosage, allergy warnings and more.

The WPP agencies interviewed members of the visually impaired community, established a radio-centric PR plan, and partnered with The Royal National Institute of Blind People. With an audio-first approach to paid and earned media, the agencies created a catchy original song and accompanying video in collaboration with a visually impaired director, urging the community to help spread the word about access codes.

**10x**  
more downloads of  
Seeing AI since launch

**547m**  
earned reach

**17%**  
growth in awareness

