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Contact: Caren Ulrich Stacy

CEO, Diversity Lab

caren@diversitylab.com

303-520-5899



Registration Opens for Legal Departments to Pilot New Version of Mansfield Rule to Boost Diversity in Leadership and Outside Counsel Ranks

The Mansfield Rule: Legal Department Edition certifies that legal departments consider at least 50 percent women, LGBTQ+, lawyers with disabilities, and racial/ethnic minority lawyers for significant leadership roles internally and for outside counsel representation

San Francisco, April 4, 2019 – Diversity Lab announced today that it is opening registration for legal departments that want to pilot the Mansfield Rule: Legal Department Edition. This new version of the Mansfield Rule, which initially launched in law firms two years ago, measures whether legal departments have affirmatively considered women, LGBTQ+, lawyers with disabilities, and racial/ethnic minority lawyers — at least 50 percent of the candidate pool — for the legal department’s top roles and for outside counsel representation. The Mansfield Rule for law firms, now in its second iteration with more than 65 law firms, was one of the winning ideas from the 2016 [Women in Law Hackathon](#) hosted by Diversity Lab in collaboration with Bloomberg Law and Stanford Law School.

Caren Ulrich Stacy, Diversity Lab’s Founder and CEO, explained, “Many of the legal department leaders who supported the Mansfield Certified law firms by attending the 2018 Client Forums saw the significant positive impact it had on their outside counsel diversity, so they asked us for a legal department version. They appreciated the structure, accountability, and transparency that this effort brings to hiring, promotions, and leadership appointments.”

Named for the first woman admitted to the practice of law in the U.S., Arabella Mansfield, the Mansfield Rule was inspired by the NFL’s Rooney Rule, which requires NFL teams to interview at least one minority candidate for head coach vacancies. The Mansfield Rule’s inaugural pilot with law firms has resulted in an increase in several key diversity indicators, including 40% of participating firms increasing diversity in leadership roles and 100% of the participating firms now tracking their candidate pools for leadership, senior associate lateral hiring, partner lateral hiring, and equity partner promotions.

The Mansfield Rule: Legal Department Edition asks legal departments to consider at least 50 percent women, minority lawyers, LGBTQ+ lawyers, and lawyers with disabilities for key leadership roles and outside counsel representation, which is an increase from the 30 percent requirement for law firms. This change was based on the knowledge that “legal departments are often more diverse than law firms, so we had to raise the threshold,” said Lisa Kirby, Chief Intelligence & Knowledge Sharing Officer at Diversity Lab. Kirby also noted, “Even though legal departments tend to be more diverse overall, they still lack true inclusion at the top ranks, with women making up only 31 percent of general counsel in the US and minority lawyers making up fewer than 20 percent of Fortune 500 general counsel in 2018.”

Some of the categories where legal departments are asked to consider at least 50% historically underrepresented lawyers include:

- Hiring, internal transitions, and/or promotions for senior management (e.g., GC, AGC)
- Hiring for interns or temporary lawyer positions (e.g., law clerks, summer 1Ls, secondments)
- Discretionary high visibility opportunities that provide skills building and exposure to internal and external business leaders
- Engaging new or expanding existing outside counsel representation

After working with a group of legal department advisors who expressed early interest in the new pilot, Diversity Lab is pleased to have eight trailblazing legal departments already committed to pilot the Mansfield Rule: Legal Department Edition before registration officially opens, including: BASF Corporation, Compass Minerals, Lending Club, MassMutual, PayPal, Symantec, thredUP, and U.S. Bank.

“U.S. Bank is pleased to play a leading role in promoting diversity and inclusion by piloting this groundbreaking effort for legal departments,” said James L. Chosy, Executive Vice President and General Counsel at U.S. Bank. “While we’ve established our own D&I program and have been working closely with outside counsel to encourage and support their diversity and inclusion practices, the Mansfield Rule: Legal Department Edition will bring even more discipline and help drive further progress within our department and in the outside counsel selection process. It’s a clear demonstration of our commitment.”

“The Mansfield Rule has already helped to move the needle on diversity and inclusion in the profession, and we are thrilled to join the inaugural Mansfield Rule: Legal Department Edition,” said Brandon Pace, General Counsel and Corporate Secretary of Lending Club. “Participating in the pilot is a no-brainer for us because diversity and inclusion are core values for our legal department and our company as a whole. Applying the Mansfield Rule’s metrics will allow us to advance this long-standing commitment as part of a community of like-minded lawyers and legal departments.”

“The Mansfield Rule: Legal Department Edition will enable us to continue to promote progress with our law firms with respect to diversity and inclusion, while at the same time encourage us to ‘look in the mirror’ and ensure that we continue to challenge ourselves to achieve higher goals,” said Michael J. O’Connor, General Counsel of MassMutual.

Registration for legal departments to sign up for the year-long program opens today, April 4, 2019. The Mansfield Rule: Legal Department Edition certification process will officially launch on July 1, 2019, and certification will run through June 30, 2020. Legal departments interested in learning more or joining the pilot should email Leila Hock at leila@diversitylab.com with questions.

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About Diversity Lab

[Diversity Lab](#) is an incubator for innovative ideas and solutions that boost diversity and inclusion in law. Experimental ideas are created through Hackathons and piloted in collaboration with more than 50 top law firms and legal departments across the country. Diversity Lab leverages data, behavioral science, design thinking, and technology to further develop and test the ideas, measure the results, and share the lessons learned. For more information, visit www.diversitylab.com.

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