Experts Available for Interviews

CTI President Lanaya Irvin is a global business executive and thought leader in workplace diversity, equity, and inclusion. She spent more than a decade at Bank of America Merrill Lynch, where she led strategic initiatives in global equities, managed client relationships, and led multinational teams. Most recently, Irvin was head of business development for the SKIMM news media company.

Since 2013, she has co-chaired the Human Rights Campaign’s Business Advisory Council. She also sits on the board of directors for NYC Anti-Violence Project, a nonprofit that provides counseling and advocacy services to survivors of LGBTQ hate violence. At Bank of America Merrill Lynch, she served as a co-chair of LEAD, a 35,000-member employee network, dedicated to growing, attracting, and retaining successful female talent. Irvin also was a founding executive member of OPEN Finance, a consortium of LGBTQ leaders advancing inclusion across Wall Street. In 2015, she mobilized over 30 financial services firms to sign onto a US Supreme Court amicus brief in support of federal marriage equality.

Irvin is a frequent speaker on topics of authenticity, race, gender, LGBTQ inclusion, and inclusive leadership in the workplace. Her thought leadership has been featured in Newsweek, the Wall Street Journal, the Financial Times, Business Insider, Forbes, Marketplace, and CNBC. She earned her undergraduate degree from the University of California and holds an MBA from the University of Texas, McCombs School of Business.

Primary Research Lead Julia Taylor Kennedy is an executive vice president at the Center for Talent Innovation. She led research on CTI’s The Sponsor Dividend and co-authored Disabilities and Inclusion, Mission Critical: Unlocking the Value of Veterans in the Workforce, and The Power of the Purse: Engaging Women for Healthy Outcomes. Taylor Kennedy has spoken at the United Nations, the Carnegie Council for Ethics and International Affairs, the Conference Board, New York City Bar’s Associate Leadership Institute, Brite Conference, Ellevate Network, and Lime Connect. She has also been featured in The Washington Post, CBS News, Bloomberg TV, Forbes, Time, and Harvard Business Review.

Prior to joining CTI, Taylor Kennedy hosted “51%,” a nationally syndicated public radio program dedicated to the perspectives and stories of women in the United States and reported for NPR and
NPR member stations. Taylor Kennedy serves on the board of Community Change, a nonprofit that advocates for and supports community organizing groups. She earned her undergraduate degree at Northwestern University and her master’s in international relations from Yale University.

Secondary Research Lead Pooja Jain-Link is an executive vice president at the Center for Talent Innovation. She leads CTI's research arm, which puts forth the organization's signature groundbreaking studies on how companies can best engage, retain, and leverage their talent across lines of difference. Jain-Link also works with clients to implement CTI's unique research methodology internally within their organizations. On this front, she helps drive organizational change through a rigorous diagnosis of critical cultural problem areas, uncovering potential solutions as well as charting clear roadmaps for growth. She has expertise in research design and analysis, as well as the use of business as a force for social change. Prior to joining CTI, she verified social and environmental standards of Certified B Corporations™, focused on corporate sustainability at Bigelow Tea, and edited academic journals at Cambridge University Press. Jain-Link received her bachelor’s degree in mathematics and English from Duke University and earned an MBA and master’s in environmental management from Yale University. Her thought leadership has been featured in Business Insider, Harvard Business Review, CNBC, NBC, and Scientific American.

Thought leaders and executives from the following sponsoring companies may be available for interviews upon request:

ServiceNow, Boehringer Ingelheim US, Google, Intel.