

# Diversity By Design

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Original article by [Bill Boorman](#), Lead Advisor at ProvenBase. (He never wears a suit and he always wears a hat!)

Diversity initiatives aimed at readdressing the clear imbalance in the workforce needs to be intentional. Over the last 18 months, I have been looking at what I can do about it in my world, other than trying to influence others by being angry Facebook bloke, and speaking from stages about the need for change. I don't want to be still talking about this in two- or three-year's time. Same topic, everyone nodding and agreeing, nothing really changing.

The problem for all of us with any of these big world issues we are so passionate about, like equality, the environment, homelessness, is how can I, one person contribute to the solution rather than the problem. I spend most of my time advising start ups and working with investors on products that measure up to making recruiting better for everyone. It keeps me up at night, and whilst I won't fix it, I want to help build technology that does this and get it funded by enthusiastic VC's. I will only work on things where I believe the problem is real, and the vision is to fix it. The founders have to share that vision first and foremost, and then I will go on a mission to talk, listen to every stakeholder impacted to help start to build a fix.

About a year ago I was approached by a startup, [ProvenBase](#), who had the intent to build a sourcing tool. After that first call, we came to the conclusion that the world really didn't need just another sourcing tool, unless the tool was entirely focused on identifying and reaching diverse talent, and giving them a fair opportunity to get on the short list. Hiring leaders were telling me they were struggling to get enough diverse talents in to the pipeline, particularly in underrepresented industries. If only **13% of all engineers identify as women**, as of 2019, how do you even up that shortlist. Is it not reasonable to expect that any search for engineers will only return 1 in 5 identifying as female, given a chance of on 1 in 5 of being selected for interview then being successful? This is the real problem, and others, that I wanted to tackle. Short lists mostly look the same, and we need to change those odds. I agreed to work with ProvenBase only if we worked to the principle of diversity by design.

It is key that diverse candidates get identified in sufficient quantity to balance the short list, which generally means looking in different places, and tailoring messages. A lot of

the time this means changing the search criteria and challenging the spec. Searching only for relevant skills, and masking gender or race identifying features in the results. It is the beginning of the journey, but I'm happy with what we are about to launch with as a starter.

If you want to be a part of helping us build this, you can sign up for free use. We need as many users as possible using the tool in anger to help us hone the data and ranking. We will give you first look, and plenty of searches to get going, all I want in return is some honest feedback. Sign up [here](#) for that first use. No need to wait for a demo.

If you happen to be signed up for Sourcecon tomorrow, you can catch me on the ProvenBase booth, telling the story of what Diversity By Design really means. Come join us.