BCCK
BRITISH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN KOREA

BCC International Chamber of the Year Awards 2024

The British Chamber of Commerce in Korea

"The Empower Programme"

GREAT BRITAIN & NORTHERN IRELAND

British Chambers of Commerce International Affiliate

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1. Executive Summary

The Empower Programme is a year-long personal and professional development programme for mid-level career women organised by the BCCK in partnership with the British Embassy Seoul and UN Women Korea

The Empower Programme showcases:

- **Local Impact:** The Programme addresses a key need in Korea, attracting over 60 applicants who although they didn't know what it was going to be, knew it was something they wanted to be part of;
- **Innovation:** the Programme was conceived and launched within 3 months, used expertise that the Chamber, partners and members already had and attracted UK Government funding within its first 6 months;
- **Collaboration:** the Chamber, our members, the Embassy and UN Women were all united by a common purpose in delivering the Programme;
- **Commercialisation Strategies:** the programme required zero investment to start, but has successfully attracted sponsorship in its second year and increased membership revenue;
- **Member retention, engagement & recruitment**: members credit the Empower Programme as a key reason to be involved with the Chamber.

2. Overview – The British Chamber of Commerce in Korea

1977

The year the BCCK was established

150

Number of BCCK members

£520,000 2023 Revenue

£27,000 2023 Profit

Services Offered

Advocacy

Learning & Development

Market Entry

Information Briefings

Marketing

Networking Opportunities

7 full-time employees

1 contractor for the Empower Programme

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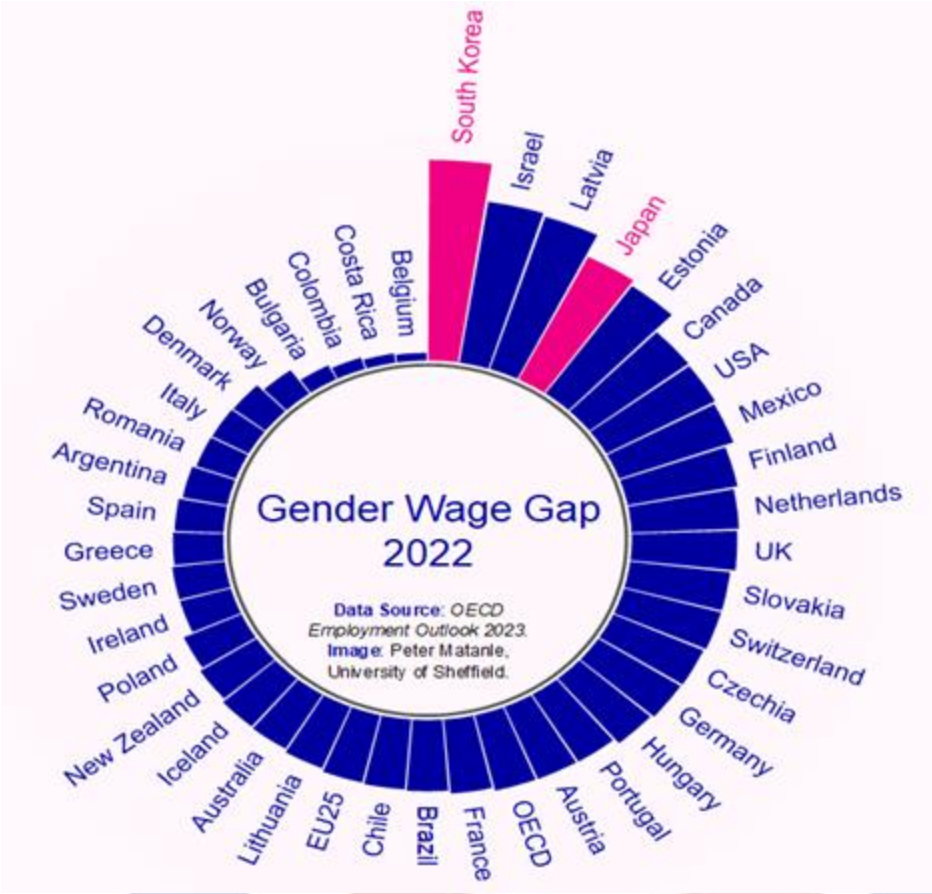
3.1 Overview – Empower: what was the need?

The Chamber designed the Empower Programme to address gender inequality in the workplace in Korea

- **Context**: OECD data highlights the challenges faced by women in Korea.

- **Key Issues**:
  - Korean women have the highest level of education for women in the OCED, yet:
  - the largest gender pay gap;
  - “M shaped curve” – women in Korea tend to be highly employed in their 20s, take a break from the workplace in their 30s and return in their 40s/50s but in a part time or less high-earning professions;
  - Korea has the lowest birth rate in the OECD at 0.7
  - Women in BCCK member companies reported not having enough networking opportunities, not having access to female role models and not having the time to gain cross-industry knowledge.



3.2.1 Overview – Empower: the cohort

The Chamber offered places on the Programme to mid-level career women

2023 / 24 Cohort:

- 14 women
- Mid-level - at least 5 years' experience
- 65% from BCCK member companies
- Selected from a total of 65 applicants by the Empower Committee
- Applicants had to answer, "how will you use the Programme to empower yourselves and others".

2024 / 25 Cohort

- Expanded to 18 women
- Increased number of cohort members from Korean companies
- More diversity in the type of companies with 4 cohorts coming from start-ups

2023 / 24 Cohort

Position	Company	Industry
Operation Support Service	ASML Korea	Semi-conductor
Compliance Director	Diageo Korea	Alcohol/Beverages
Product Director	DNK	Tech Start-up
Client Service Director	HSBC Korea	Finance
Project Director	Intralink Korea	Consulting
Senior Buyer	Jaguar Land Rover	Automotive
Medical Science Liaison	Johnson & Johnson	Pharma
Partner	Lee & Ko	Law firm
Assistant Editor	Munhwa Ilbo	Newspaper
Associate Director	Robert Walters Korea	Recruitment
Partner	Samil PWC	Accounting
Director	Deloitte	Sustainability
Associate Principal	Schneider Electric	Energy
Regional Executive	The Associated Press	News

BCCK member companies

3.2.2 Overview – Empower: the Business Partner Workshops

The Chamber recruited members to become Business Partners for the Programme

2023 / 24 Business Partners

- Business Partners hosted half-day workshops for the cohort providing industry knowledge and insights on leadership and Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- The Business Partners were - Deloitte, Diageo, Dulwich College, HSBC, Jaguar Land Rover, Korn Ferry, PWC;

2024 / 25 Business Partners

- The number of Business Partners has increased due to demand;
- All 2023 / 24 Business Partners have agreed to take part again, plus BAE Systems, Hyundai General Motors & Intralink Korea.

Example: PwC Empower Workshop 2024

Time	Activity	Lead(s)
8:15 -	Networking with coffee	Sanghee Rha, PwC Partner & 2023/24 Empower Cohort
8:45 -	Welcome Remarks	Steven Kang, Network Alignment Leader, PwC & Sean Blakeley, Partner, PwC & Chair, BCCK
9:00 -	Session 1: Power of Branding	Eldad Heilweil, Global Planning Head, Samsung Galaxy
10:00 -	Session 2: LinkedIn Optimization	Anna Kim, Director, Korea, LinkedIn
11:10 -	Session 3: DEI Panel	PWC Partners
11:50 -	Closing Remarks	Daniel Fertig, Senior Partner, PwC
12:10 -	Lunch	All

3.2.3 Overview – Empower: the UK Trip

- The Chamber organised for the Empower Cohort to go to the UK;
- The objective was for the Cohort to discuss, with UK organisations, how to empower themselves and how to empower others plus numerous networking opportunities;
- The travel costs for the trip were funded by a grant from the UK Government's FCDO.

Itinerary for 2023 / 24 UK Trip:

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
UK Government, Foreign & Commonwealth Development Office: • Talks on female economic empowerment and • Meeting the "Women in Diplomacy" Network (female Ambassadors in the UK)	**BBC:** Tour led by the Head of Trending **Women of the Future:** networking session at Fortnum & Masons **Women of Influence**: launch hosted by Barroness Verma at the House of Lords	**British Chamber of Commerce:** meeting with female leadership **British Council:** session how to foster DEI internally and in global programmes	**Deloitte:** Meeting with Emma Codd, Global Chief Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Officer

- Funding for the 2024 / 25 UK Trip has been secured;
- In addition to the UK trip, the Cohort were also invited to conferences and given speaking opportunities.

3.2.4 Overview – Empower: the Partners

The Chamber arranged for the British Embassy Seoul and UN Women to be partners for the Programme

- **The Embassy** has been a Committee member from the beginning of the Programme;
- The Embassy hosted the launch event for the Programme with visiting Asia Pacific Minister Anne-Marie Trevelyan and the graduation;
- The Embassy arranged for the Cohort to meet with visiting officials, including Natalie Black, His Majesty's Trade Commission for the Asia Pacific and Baroness Goldie, the Minister of Defence for the House of Lords.

- **UN Women Korea** joined the Committee in 2024 / 25;
- They hosted a workshop for the Cohort on how to become a changemaker for women's empowerment;
- They have invited cohort members to attend and to speak at their conferences and roundtables;
- UN Women entered into a corporate partnership with the BCCK(their first in Korea) and the BCCK has signed up to the UN Women's Empowerment Principles.

7. The Future of the Programme

The Chamber has a plan to expand the influence and impact of the Programme without diluting its essence

Expanding our core Programme

- We have decided not to increase the number of cohort members, as the power lies in the close-knit nature of the group;

Growth: new Empower Affiliate Programmes

- International School members are setting up “EmpowerED” - A year-long mentoring programme for aspiring women leaders in education
- We have had discussions over founding Legal and Defence affiliate groups

Growth: other countries

- The Chamber has been appraoched by other British Embassies, Brunei and Fiji, to discuss how our process could be applied in other geographies.