



We are a UK based charity seeking to transform the world of work for people who stutter – and for employers and society too.

Welcome to our latest newsletter! We touch on Jane Milne’s story, the Thames Path Challenge 2024, our recent Practice Interview event, some 50MV mentions online and other news. We also have a few exciting announcements for 2025 towards the end!

Meanwhile applications for our 8th global Practice Interview event starting March 3 are now open via our website (www.50millionvoices.org)

Thank you for to the people who stutter, allies, employers, volunteers, trustees, country leaders, speech therapists, researchers, friends, family, and more for your support.

Plus a special 'thank you' to all our funders whose generous donations keep us going.

All donations welcome through our [website](http://www.50millionvoices.org).

Inside this issue

PEOPLE

- Jane Milne, stammering champion at TSB Bank, shares her story
- Thames Path Challenge 2024 - Iman Sheperia
- Helping to find genes for developmental stuttering

IMPACT

- Practice Interview event October 2024
- Leading employers praise 50 Million Voices

EVENTS

- Announcing next Practice Interview event March 3 - 10
- Opportunities to become 50 Million Voices trustee
- Practical educational sessions

Jane Milne, stammering champion at TSB Bank, shares her story about making a difference

People often falsely equate fluency with intelligence and excellent communication skills. This can lead to prejudice and, as a consequence, people who stammer can find the world of work and the recruitment and interviewing process particularly stressful. Worse still, they can end up in positions below their real potential.

I know this because my son stammers.



Watching your child struggle with something beyond their control is incredibly hard. I spent countless hours seeking help for him including finding someone who might act as a mentor. One of the people I identified was Iain Wilkie, who had established 50 Million Voices. Iain helped him to connect with others who could offer support and encouragement and some practical solutions.

Inspired by Iain's kindness and my desire to raise awareness about the challenges faced by people who stammer (PWS), I decided to get more involved and approached our DEI and Ability teams at TSB where I work to see if we would consider getting more involved as a business. The support for this has been outstanding!

To date, TSB Bank has participated in six 50 Million Voices practice interview events, with nearly 40 incredible volunteers generously giving their time. Our collaboration with 50 Million Voices has not only provided better insight and understanding of the challenges and considerations for people who stammer but it has helped shaped our approach, ultimately changing the conversation for our customers and colleagues alike.

It's my belief that only by working together and educating the wider world that we can create more understanding, support and acceptance for people who stammer, freeing everyone to be their amazing and unique self. 50 Million Voices' prime purpose is to enable this.

I am so proud of the way TSB has embraced this and the difference we have made because of asking some simple questions around what we knew about PWS, how we currently supported them and how we might do this better.

So, if you want to make a difference, get involved, spread the word, and start that important conversation too.

Thames Path Challenge 2024 & 2025- Iman Sheperia

What's the secret to completing a 22 km charity walk? A fantastic team, engaging conversation, sunshine, and a refreshing breeze.

After two months of planning and fundraising, I joined fellow walkers Iain, Helen, Becky, and Katie, all of us carrying water and snacks, and in high spirits, as we walked along the Thames path from a bright and sunny Hurst Park to Runnymede.



Of course, Iain had one crucial task—bring the t-shirts. However, he managed to misplace them! He brought them along but left them where we greeted each other at the bus stop. So, my day began with an unexpected sprint from Hurst Park back to the bus stop—a perfect warm-up!

After that little interlude, we picked up our bibs, tacked them on and headed to the start line. It was abuzz with energy as participants, many armed with hiking poles and hefty 20-litre rucksacks, prepared to begin. After a warm-up session led by the cheerful Cara, we hit the trail!

The first half hour was all about finding our rhythm and setting a steady pace. Both Helen and Iain had trained enthusiastically for a few months prior to ensure they were feeling fit and ready for the day (putting the rest of us to shame!).

About 8 km in, we reached our rest stop at Thamesmead School in Shepperton. While still feeling energetic, we welcomed the chance to recharge.

With full water bottles and boosted energy, we pressed on through Shepperton, with Becky and Katie leading the charge, following the helpful pink arrows provided by the Thames Path Challenge organisers.

We ambled on through Chertsey, where we paused to ask a friendly fisherman to snap a photo of us along the river.



By the time we reached Staines, we were definitely feeling the strain. The journey's length—and particularly the suspiciously long 22nd km—was beginning to take its toll. We wearily trudged along the final stretch, before eventually reaching the end!



With the support of passersby to the stunning views of London and Surrey, the day was unforgettable for all of us at 50 Million Voices.

A massive thank you to everyone who supported us—whether through donations, messages, or cheering us on. Together, we've raised over £6,000. Your encouragement made all the difference. Here's to walking for a great cause and creating memories that will last a lifetime

We'll be undertaking the Thames Path Challenge again on 13 or 14 September 2025!

If you'd like to join our group and walk with us, or if you want to fundraise for us in other ways, please contact Iman on events@50millionvoices.org. We'd love for you to be involved!

Helping to find the genes for developmental stuttering

Helped by Chloe Rush, Specialist Speech and Language Therapist from The Michael Palin Centre (MPC), Iain Wilkie recently joined over 50 people in the UK who have already contributed a sample of their saliva to help unlock the puzzle of stuttering and stammering genetics.

If you are UK-based and a person with a developmental stutter, or the parent of a child with a stutter, you may be able to take part in this project. **Contact Leanne Taylor (leanne.taylor22@nhs.net) at MPC for more information.**



Practice Interview event - October 2024

Impact

We're thrilled to share the success and impact of our 7th global Practice Interview event that brought together over 100 participants from 22 countries across 6 continents.

For the first time, we welcomed participants from Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, Nigeria, Pakistan, Spain, and Switzerland. This expanded geographic and cultural representation underscores our commitment to building a global community that fosters understanding and inclusion for people who stutter in the workplace.

As part of the event, we also held a session on Intersectionality with Dr Claire Tupling - UK, Dr Derek Daniels - USA, and Puneet Singh Singhal - India. Woven throughout the session were the themes of how differing life experiences can affect our careers, and the complexities of the impact that gender, race and health, combined with having a stutter or stammer, can have on interviews and in the workplace.

It wouldn't have been possible without the support of our partner employers. A huge thank you to Amazon, British Council, Cargill, EY, Mishcon de Reya LLP, Rolls-Royce, Sage, SLB, and TSB Bank for championing inclusive workplaces. Your collaboration and commitment inspire us to keep pushing boundaries and breaking down barriers.

The impact on participants

The event had a profound impact on both people who stutter and allies, as reflected in the feedback we received:

- 100% of interviewees now feel more confident about their next interview as a person who stutters.
- 87% of interviewers feel more confident about their next interview with a person who stutters (with the remaining 13% feeling just as confident as before).
- 88% agree that participating in the event helped them take a step toward becoming a more inclusive listener.

More feedback

'Excellent set of interviews. Learned a lot, got great practice and met some amazing people. Speaking to people who have succeeded in their career despite their stutter was also amazing.'
- Interviewee who stutters

'Little did I know how impactful this opportunity would be for me, but also for the interviewee by creating a psychological safe environment by being patient, allowing extra time for them to answer questions then following up with candid feedback regarding their CV/resume and overall interview.' - Interviewer who does not stutter

'Exploring the intersectionality between stuttering and other human characteristics'



Dr. Claire Tupling

Researcher of Education
UK



Dr. Derek Daniels

Associate Professor, Wayne State
University
USA



Puneet Singh Singhal

Co-founder Billion Strong
India

Looking ahead to 2025

As we reflect on this event's success, we're more inspired than ever to continue our mission of amplifying stuttering voices and supporting the creation of inclusive workplaces.

Leading employers praising 50 Million Voices

EY Impact report 2024



We're thrilled that leading global professional services firm EY have again reported on the highly positive impact of their ongoing collaboration with us in their 'UK Impact Report for 2024', page 18. This is the second year running that we've been called out by EY who employ over 20,000 people in the UK and over 400,000 people globally.

Rolls-Royce PLC – International Day of Persons with Disabilities 2024



Sarah Armstrong, chief people officer at Rolls-Royce, posted on LinkedIn, how Rolls-Royce's participation in the 50 Million Voices practice interview event for individuals with a stammer taught us valuable lessons about communication and accommodation. From avoiding assumptions – like finishing someone's sentences – to offering alternate ways to engage, small adjustments can have a big impact. This work essential to transforming Rolls-Royce into the company we aspire to be.”

What's next in 2025?

Practice Interviews - March 2025



Applications for our 8th global Practice Interview event are now open. It will take place from March 3-10.

Click [here](#) to apply.

Opportunities to become a 50 Million Voices Trustee

As 50 Million Voices is a registered UK charity, we have a small group of trustees who provide strategic leadership and governance oversight.

To reflect our increasing size and activity, we're now planning to increase the number of our Trustees from 4 to 6. This is a great opportunity to make a difference for people who stutter all over the world!

More information about these opportunities will be on our website and social media soon!

Practical educational sessions

Here are a few examples of talks recently given by 50 Million Voices to different audiences and communities

- **People who stammer-** STAMMAFest 2024 - '50 Ways to be Stammering assertive' – Rory Sheridan and Iain Wilkie.
- **Employers** - Cargill Group - 'Creating a stuttering inclusive culture - Shilpa Sagwal and Iain Wilkie
- **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion leaders (DEI)** - Diversity Network Conference - 'Creating Stuttering inclusive workplaces' - Iain Wilkie



Rory Sheridan presenting at StammaFest 2024

Welcoming new country leaders

We are happy to welcome new country leaders from Turkey- Diyar Zorlu and Halil Tayyip Uysal. We are excited to expand our network to help more people who stutter.

Resources

Check out [this](#) page for a range of resources covering different work-related stuttering topics and personal experiences.

Donations

We are a small charity making a big difference; any donation, whatever size, will help to to "create a world where everyone who stutters can enjoy a fulfilling working life". Please visit us [here](#) to donate and learn more about our impact.

Contact us

For more information, please contact Shilpa Sagwal, our Global Co-ordinator, at info@50millionvoices.org or events@50millionvoices.org

