

COMMERCE

Kering bolsters female presence on board of directors

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Image from Gucci Gifting campaign for 2015

By STAFF REPORTS

Conglomerate Kering is nominating three women to its board of directors, a move that will bring the female ratio on the executive committee to 64 percent if approved.

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Laurence Boone, Sapna Sood and Sophie L'Hlias were chosen by Kering for their diverse backgrounds and experience. Across its group, Kering employees are 58 percent female, the result of a commitment to place women in roles at its fashion and jewelry houses.

Now boarding

Kering's nominations would fill the seats left vacant by Luca Cordero di Montezemolo, Philippe Lagayette and Jochen Zeitz, whose terms are ending and are not being renewed.

Ms. Boone previously served on Kering's board from 2010 to 2014. Kering looked to renew her position as director, but she resigned to take a job as a macroeconomic advisor to the Office of the President of the French Republic.

In addition to her government work, Ms. Boone is currently an associate professor at the Institut de Sciences politiques of Paris. She has a PhD in economics from London Business School.

Ms. Sood has an undergraduate degree in chemical engineering from the University of Sydney, and graduated with an Executive MBA from IMD business school. She has been group senior vice president of health and safety at Lafarge since 2013.

Bringing a legal background is Ms. L'Hlias, who worked in law in New York and Paris before founding the first corporate governance advisory firm in France. She is also the co-founder and former director of the nonprofit International Corporate Governance Network.

"I will be very happy to welcome Laurence Boone, Sapna Sood and Sophie L'Hlias as members of the board of directors," said Francois-Henri Pinault, chairman and CEO of Kering, in a brand statement. "The diversity of their backgrounds and their renowned expertise will be valuable assets for Kering. Moreover, their profiles are consistent with our values."

If the nominations are agreed upon by Kering shareholders at a meeting April 29, the board would then consist of seven women and four men.



Bottega Veneta spring/summer 2015 ad campaign

In 2011, France put out an edict to companies, giving them six years to make their boards consist of 40 percent females. This move by Kering far surpasses the quota put forth in the law.

Kering's aim at placing women in leadership roles is group-wide, with females making up 51 percent of management.

French luxury conglomerate Kering Group commemorated International Women's Day on March 8 through its "We Are Women" campaign and by lending support to the United Nations.

The campaign support was part of Kering's three-year partnership with the UN Women French National Committee, in which the conglomerate provides financial support and actively participates in the organization of its global efforts. Throughout the year Kering vocally promotes women's issues with the help of its stable of brands, and it is this ongoing dedication to these causes that reads as authentic among consumers ([see story](#)).

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