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Subject: Tim, Apple's VPG R&D Team Shut Me Out—Now It's a Legal Battle for Inclusion

Date: 12 March 2025 at 18:40:12

To: tcook@apple.com

Dear Tim,

I never thought I'd be writing this email, however I believe it deserves your time and attention given the impact Apple has now had on my life.

Right now I should be working on the **VPG R&D** team at **Apple London**, helping push the boundaries of the Vision Pro and it's upcoming successor, and shaping the future of spatial computing with new developments in **Persona** and **Apple TV** for many unannounced features. Instead, I'm writing to you as someone who had their dream job stolen—not because I wasn't capable, but because Apple refused to accommodate my disabilities in a way that would allow me to thrive.

This job wasn't just a career move—it was the start of my life integrating into society.

I made it through **10 rounds of interviews**, receiving positive feedback throughout, all while pushing myself to be the best I could. I was told an offer would be made in 48 hours, and even have emails to prove I was going to offer. But after a candid and honest phone call detailing my my disabilities to one of your recruiters, I became an inconvenience to Apple, and everything changed.

I wasn't asking for special treatment. I wasn't even asking for permanent remote work. I asked for a phased approach—support to help me transition to the in-office expectations Apple required. I wanted to get to three days a week, then living in London full time. I wanted to build relationships, contribute fully, and be part of a team that shared my values and my passion.

Instead, Apple manufactured a narrative that I was unwilling to work in person—despite:

- **Me explicitly stating my goal was to work in the office full-time all through the process**
- **Offering to pay out of my own pocket for support workers to accompany me to London**

- Apple's own VPG teams working flexible days remote, contradicting their own justification

- Apple itself operating remotely during COVID, before Vision Pro hardware even existed

None of this was about hardware. None of this was about collaboration. It was about the fact that, when presented with a candidate who needed temporary support, Apple chose to shut the door instead.

This isn't just an employment dispute—it's a betrayal of Apple's values.

Apple's Vision Pro and What It Meant to Me

The painful irony is that Persona for Vision Products is designed to help people communicate beyond their limitations—whether physical, mental, neurological, or otherwise. I know how important that is, I have dreamed of a tool like this for embodied telepresence with fellow humans.

I'm autistic, I have ADHD, panic disorder, agoraphobia, and depression—all of which Apple has now legally conceded in an active UK Employment Tribunal case.

In my early career, I was undiagnosed. I pushed through the isolation, bullying and ostracism, working in the VFX industry as a teenager, self-teaching everything because there was no support for someone like me. I worked remotely—not because I wanted to, but because it was the only way I could succeed in a world that wasn't built for people like me. But I didn't want to stay isolated forever. That wasn't the goal.

As I moved into R&D, I pursued an MSc in Computer Science—gaining entry to a Russell Group university without any formal education since high school. In despite of my daily challenges, and constant struggles my condition's present I went onto gain a distinction. It was a huge leap, but I made it, I fought for my passion. I wasn't just an engineer anymore—I was someone ready to step into the world, to build something bigger than myself. Apple was supposed to be the place for this to happen.

Joining Apple wasn't just about a job, it was my future. It was my chance to work with people who shared my values, my passion, my relentless pursuit of innovation. It was my chance to move to London, to finally start 'Life 2.0'—where I wasn't just existing, but could thrive. I wanted to be in the office. I wanted to collaborate, to be surrounded by the best minds. I just needed a little support to get there.

But instead of offering that support, Apple took it all away. Because of Apple's actions, I'm still isolated, in fact more so than ever. I nearly ended my life, and despite been slightly more stable, I'm still waiting for my life to begin beyond an existence in isolation. And now, at 28, I'm not just fighting for my career anymore—I'm fighting against the black hole Apple threw me into.

I Know What It Means to Fight to Be Seen

Tim, you've broken barriers as a gay CEO in an industry that hasn't always been welcoming, and I looked at you as an icon for this more than anything. I know what it means to fight to be seen for who you are. Being gay has come with its own challenges in my life, but the painful reality is that my disabilities have always been the bigger barrier. I've never even had the chance to be discriminated against for being gay in my career—because my disabilities shut the door long before that. And Apple truly shut the door on me.

Apple not only prides itself on inclusion, diversity, and accessibility, you built you built your brand on it. But when someone like me actually tries to step through the door, with the skills needed for the role, without taking any shortcuts, instead having conditions that cause a slight inconvenience... Well Apple's principles collapse, leading me to question if they existed to begin with.

The Justification That Doesn't Hold Up

Apple justified rejecting me by claiming I needed to be in-office full-time for hardware access. But that claim falls apart under scrutiny:

- **The Vision Products software I would have worked on runs on Apple Silicon — the same SOC's used in MacBooks and iPads. There was no fundamental reason why I couldn't have contributed remotely for part of the week.**
- **During my interviews, the very team I would have worked with was working remotely. The hiring manager I spoke to? At home. In fact 9/10 of the interviewers were working from home.**
- **Apple itself operated remotely for years before Vision Pro hardware even existed due to Covid.**

These contradictions prove that the issue was never about logistics—it was about bias.

Apple's Hypocrisy on Privacy and Inclusion

The issue doesn't stop at discriminative hiring.

Apple is actively withholding my GDPR data in violation of UK law, refusing to disclose key internal documents that I have a legal right to access—documents that may contain evidence of bias or discrimination in my hiring process. This is now under review by the UK's Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), following a formal complaint.

Meanwhile, Apple is suing the UK government over privacy laws—fighting for user protection when it benefits the company, but actively obstructing transparency when it comes to fair hiring practices and legal accountability.

At the same time, Apple remains part of the UK's Disability Confident Scheme, publicly presenting itself as an inclusive employer while quietly denying opportunities to disabled engineers behind closed doors. I still admire the engineering, science, and innovation at Apple—that respect will never fade. But I cannot respect a company that allows its employees to manufacture exclusionary policies, deny disabled people life-changing opportunities, and then cover it up behind corporate facades.

I'm the only one who has truly lost.

Apple will survive this.

I know in the very small chance you even see this email and the fallout from my case. You'll move on. Your executives will move on. The company will keep making billions. You know my career will be even more doomed to fail.

Right now, I should be getting ready for work tomorrow—taking the London Tube to 22 Bishopsgate, stepping into the Apple office, collaborating with like-minded engineers, pushing the boundaries of spatial computing, building a future for myself and others.

Instead, I'm here—writing this email, surrounded by the wasteland of my life, buried even deeper now that Apple's façade has collapsed on top of me, and at this point it will be a miracle if I make it to see my 30th.

Apple had the chance to live up to its values. It chose not to. Now, all I can do is make sure the world sees that choice for what it is—and what it means for the next disabled R&D engineer who dares to dream.

Regards,

Niall Horn (England, UK),

**Apple VPG R&D Outcast & Litigant in Person – UK Employment Tribunal Case
6009910/2024.**