

UK Research and Innovation

Paper: 19-12
 UKRI EDI External Advisory Group
 Author: [REDACTED]

Minutes of the seventh UK Research and Innovation External Advisory Group meeting for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Meeting held on 17th July 2019, London.

Attendees	
Jennifer Rubin (Chair)	Karen Salt
Tom Welton	Eugene Oteng-Ntim
Simon McKeown	Rosanna Duncan
UKRI attendees	
[REDACTED] (Secretariat)	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] (item 5)
[REDACTED] (item 5)	
Apologies	
Dina Belluigi	Wendy Loretto
Zamila Bunglawala	Giovanni Razzu
Claire Murray	

1. Welcome and Introductions

[REDACTED] welcomed attendees to the seventh UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) External Advisory Group (EAG) meeting and fourth meeting in 2019. Apologies were noted from [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] highlighted that it was the groups 'one-year birthday' since they were formally appointed. [REDACTED] gave a summary of the group's achievements over the past year. It was noted that a celebratory press release will be suggested to UKRI comms to mark the progress over the year.

2. Minutes from last meeting and actions

Members agreed the minutes without amendment and the actions were noted as being 'in progress' or for discussion at this meeting.

3. Update on UKRI Strategic Framework and workplan

[REDACTED] provided a brief update on progress made with the Strategic Framework since the last meeting, including:

- Following the suggestion at a previous EAG meeting, 'procurement and supply chains' had now been incorporated into the strategic framework;
- A final paper setting out the approach, associated programme of work and governance will shortly go to the Executive Committee following positive discussions and endorsement from various internal governance groups, including the Strategy Committee.
- The proposed governance structure outlined a proposal to establish a new Internal Advisory Board (EDIAB) to help manage tensions between the UKRI EDI agenda and other operational priorities and resourcing, and to be chaired by [REDACTED].

- In addition to the EDIAB, the existing EDI Strategy and Implementation Group (SIG) would be reformed into an EDI Network and would have a role in supporting the EDIAB through raising and articulating issues and by helping to coordinate activities.

4. UKRI EDI Data and Analysis

██████████ was invited to provide an overview of the progress with the EDI data and analysis work. Members were reminded that there are three main areas of focus:

1. The diversity data we collect on the people we fund
2. The diversity data we collect on our UKRI employees (led separately by HR)
3. The diversity of the wider research and innovation sectors, and associated education and career pipelines.

██████████ informed members that the funding data analysis is underway, working to present harmonised data for the seven research councils on ethnicity, age, disability and gender, in a more consistent and informative way than has previously been possible. This data would be reported by applications, awards, success rates and potentially by the amount applied for versus amount awarded. Where possible, this information will be presented for Principal Investigators, co-investigators, fellowships and studentships.

Members noted that Research England and Innovate UK currently do not collect similar data due to the nature of the funding or loans, as the funding is predominantly awarded to an institution as opposed to a named project lead, such as with Quality Related funding (QR). However, work is underway to improve data collection capabilities across UKRI in the future Funding Service.

██████████ informed members that the current ambition is to develop a dashboard for the data in a similar way to that of the Race Disparity Audit which also allows for providing an accompanying narrative piece.

There was broad consensus that over time, UKRI should seek to expand data collection capabilities to the protected characteristics, socio-economic status, awards through matched-funding schemes e.g. international funding which potentially includes QR funding, as well as English as a first or second language.

Members noted the proposed timeline for publishing the data and analysis in line with the UKRI EDI Strategic Framework late Autumn. It was recommended that when the data and analysis is published, the messaging should signal that this is the start of more regular and comprehensive data and analysis that will continue to be built on.

5. Evidence reviews and additional outputs

██████████ updated following a final findings workshop on the three evidence reviews held earlier in the month with a number of key stakeholders in attendance, including representation from the EAG. Stakeholders were supportive of the overall approach UKRI is taking and found the workshop both interesting and informative. Members noted that a timeline for publishing the reviews will be confirmed following endorsement of the approach at the July Executive Committee.

Following an item at the previous meeting on equality impact assessments presented by two of the councils, members noted that further work was already underway. This included establishing a task and finish group expected to report back to a future EAG meeting.

Members also acknowledged that work is underway to develop a language guide alongside various evaluation tools which would complement the data and analysis work. This work would be brought back to a future EAG meeting for formal discussion in due course.

6. Quality-Related (QR) and formula capital funding

████ informed members that whilst the legal responsibility and risks sit with UKRI as the legal entity for compliance with the Public Sector Equality Act, Research England represents a substantial proportion of the UKRI budget. Therefore, in order to develop and maintain Research England's equality and diversity approaches, in line with the Public Sector Equality Act, they would continue to undertake an equality impact assessment (EIA) with regards to their functions and policy, where appropriate, act upon the findings.

████ advised members that through the undertaking of an EIA, it would enable a better, broader understanding of the sector, which can help to identify where direct and indirect discrimination happens and provides an opportunity to capture information on 'what works'. In addition to the EIA, Research England would also run surveys, stakeholder engagement as well their own analysis to understand the bigger picture of REF funding decisions across the sector. It was noted that the sector would be consulted on what action may look like.

Members discussed that it would be beneficial to consider undertaking a similar exercise of the REF process itself – i.e. how decisions are made - and not just the allocation outcomes. It was also recognised the importance of robust data in helping to understand issues particularly around intersectionality, socio-economic background, duration of contracts, and in the diversity of top senior staff.

Members noted the approach and were invited to attend a consultation workshop taking place in September.

7. AOB

Moving on: █████ informed members that this would be █████ last EAG meeting following a change of portfolio within UKRI. █████ led the wishes of best luck and thanked █████ for █████ significant efforts over the past 10 months. █████ returned thanks to group member for their input and support.

Future meetings: It was noted that members had been invited to extend their membership term by a future year and future meetings would subsequently be scheduled accordingly. It was agreed the next meeting should take place mid-September to coincide with a potential update to the UKRI Board.

Action: UKRI Strategy to set up future meeting dates.

Date of Next Meeting: Monday 7th October 2019.