



Paper: 20-12
 UKRI EDI External Advisory Group
 Author: [REDACTED]

Draft Minutes of the 17th meeting of the UK Research and Innovation External Advisory Group for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion held on 30 June 2021 via Zoom

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

1. Welcome

The Chair ([REDACTED]) welcomed members to the last formal EAG meeting. The aim of this meeting was focussed on helping to inform the next iteration of the group and think critically about UKRI's relationships with different stakeholders. The strategy team has been considering the scope and terms of reference of the next iteration of group. The Chair noted this is an opportunity to reflect on areas for improvement and further consideration.

[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were introduced to the group. Apologies were received from [REDACTED].

2. Minutes and actions from the last meeting

The minutes were approved by the group. An update on actions was provided.

[REDACTED]

Key ideas and suggestions have been captured and will be continued to be explored with the EAG in the future.

[REDACTED]

This will be looked at as part of the 'New Deal for PGR' work that is starting now, as part of UKRI's commitments set out in the government's People and Culture strategy.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Action: The secretariat to follow up with EAG members to seek additional input by correspondence on disability and race ethnicity work.

Both actions are now closed.

Action: UKRI strategy team to continue working with [REDACTED] on disability.

The team have continued to engage with [REDACTED] on UKRI's work on disability. [REDACTED] has provided invaluable input into the synthesis report and the engagement approach, briefly discussed at the previous meeting. It was agreed there will be a future item on the disability programme, as it develops further.

[REDACTED]

4. Reflecting on the last 3 years

The Chair led this item. The group was asked to reflect on phases of UKRI and the EAG's development. What does UKRI need from an EAG member and the group as a whole? Members were asked to consider the role of a member of the EAG both within the meetings and in the wider sector. What would existing members tell a new member about the EAG?

Members noted that they have been asked to contribute to different projects across the sector due to being a member of the EAG, for example on the government's People and Culture strategy and the yearly disability festival. It has helped members connect to the research councils much more closely. Members also noted the opportunities the EAG has created to learn from others that have expertise within EDI.

The group would advise potential members to not expect to influence too much of change at a high (government) level but there is an opportunity to leverage being a member of the EAG to affect change in your own organisation.

The group noted that UKRI could fund research on EDI more broadly, experiment and explore ideas to see what works.

5. Detailed ethnicity analysis

██████████ led this item, outlining the upcoming detailed ethnicity analysis data release in July. The future plan is to combine detailed ethnicity analysis into the annual diversity publication. The team is reflecting on the current methodology and reviewing benchmarking as well.

██████████ noted that the EAG have played a huge role in shaping this work. ██████████ noted that this expected to be a data release, rather than a policy response. ██████████ noted that UKRI expects to do a future release on disability data.

The EAG queried how UKRI uses this data to inform its strategy. ██████████ noted that all Executive Chairs of Councils have individual council data. Many of them have been using this in a formal and informal manner with their senior leadership team. UKRI is considering plans to increase the frequency of the data analysis, looking at quarterly cuts of data to drive internal considerations. ██████████ noted that there is an annual report to BEIS as part of the new UKRI scorecard that measures effectiveness within the organisation, including performance against EDI indicators.

The EAG noted that the data continue to show significant under-representation. It noted the significant difference from population analysis benchmarks.

The EAG queried how UKRI wants to use these data and the policy objectives. It advised that there are a number of factors to consider such as the representation of the panel members awarding the grants, lack of reporting and poor capturing of the data.

The group noted that it is not helpful to have subjective comments such as 'the data should not be used to infer causality' as users can access the data and are able to analyse and interpret it regardless of these caveats.

██████████ invited the EAG to consider the wider system - such as research organisations, institutions, industry partners. If we are looking at wider representation across the whole system, what would the EAG advise?

The group encouraged working more closely with research offices to understand what they do to dissuade and support people. It advised considering who is eligible to be considered as a principal investigator and the consequences of this on diversity.

The EAG noted that a lot of the decisions and processes are opaque and not transparent. Panels play a big role but also need to consider the selection criteria, composition of peer reviewers, and how any challenges or complaints are handled.

6. Support for LGBTQIA+ researchers

██████████ led this item following the email from ██████████ and ██████████ to ██████████ about the Government recommendation that all Departments withdraw from the Stonewall Champions scheme.

██████████ noted that a response from ██████████ would be provided.

The EAG noted that this was a challenging time for many in the community and advised that UKRI should be doing more to show its support for this community. It commented that Stonewall membership could be a way to show that commitment.

7. AOB

The Chair thanked members for their contributions in the meeting and for the past 3 years of the EAG. The Chair noted that it has been a privilege to work with this incredible group, which has shared its expertise and learning with UKRI and each other.