

Disability Matter Staff Network Terms of Reference

Our mission

Our mission is to guide change within UKRI so that people with disabilities can thrive as people and as employees. We exist to provide support and be a voice for all disabled members of staff, colleagues who are carers and people with disabilities applying to work at UKRI. We will push for fair access to reasonable workplace adjustments, including assistive technology across the whole of UKRI.

Our vision

We aim to champion and drive change so that UKRI can become a fully inclusive employer with equal opportunities for everyone, giving colleagues with disabilities a chance to reach their full potential throughout their career. UKRI is on the list of disability confident employers and so we want to ensure that there is a consistent approach across the whole organisation when it comes to managing disability in the workplace. UKRI can then truly make the most of the talents that people with disabilities and impairments can bring to the organisation.

What we do

We run campaigns and events and arrange training, both UKRI-wide and for key stakeholders, to raise awareness and knowledge of disability issues within the organisation. We will lobby for change within HR policies and training for managers and will work with leaders across the organisation to help drive widespread culture change. We are also committed to continuous learning ourselves and will regularly attend training and conferences specifically for addressing issues faced by those with disabilities and impairments.

Membership of the Leadership Team

██████████ (Chair)

██████████ (Vice-Chair)

██████████ (Secretary)
██████████ (Comms Officer)
██████████ (Membership Officer)
██████████ (Membership Officer & Strategy)
██████████ (Inbox)
██████████ (Peer-support Group Coordinator)
██████████ (without portfolio)

The leadership team should ideally consist of 10-15 people. Additional members can be co-opted onto the group if required and are subject to the agreement of the Chair.

Meetings

The regular meetings of the leadership team are held every three weeks and will usually last 1 hour, including a break of 10 minutes per 90-minute meeting. Four members of the leadership team are required for a meeting to be considered quorate. The agenda covering the items up for discussion and any relevant documents will be emailed to the Chair and secretary 5 working days in advance of the meeting and any requests for items should be sent to the Chair and secretary 7 working days in advance. The Chair may request LT members to attend additional meetings to support specific activities, such as strategy meetings or event preparation meetings. Team members may need to check with their line manager or schedule before agreeing to attend these as relates to their capacity. If you are

unable to make a meeting it is important to message the organiser with apologies (even if it's an hour before the start time).

Decisions made and actions set in meetings will be recorded with specific numbers to enable reference. Actions will be clearly labelled with the initials of the person responsible and a due date. The notes of the meetings will be stored on the MS Teams site for accessibility and ease of access.

Key Responsibilities

Chair:

- Chair all member meetings and leadership team meetings
- Ensure all activity is approved by the leadership team
- Manage meetings and lead development of strategy action plan
- Meet with sponsor(s) as required
- Be a point of contact for potential members, existing members, leadership team members, other networks
- Ensure delegation of effective organisation of events
- Ensure professional conduct of the leadership team
- Foster effective collaboration and wellbeing within the leadership team, across organisation and externally (in the future)

Vice Chairs:

- Support the work of the Chair especially in management of meeting proceedings and following up on actions
- Represent the Disability Matters leadership team and champion the needs of our members
- Stand in for the Chair in their absence such as, chairing leadership meetings, leading member events and carrying out stakeholder engagement as necessary
- Take on tasks as needed by the Chair to facilitate the activities of the network (these might require additional authority or leadership skills for example)

- Have responsibility for the Strategy and Planning or Operational sides of Disability Matters, managing the groups and allocating resource

Secretary:

- The secretary will be responsible for ensuring that all members of the leadership team are invited to meetings and will manage apologies
- Arrangement of leadership team meetings
- Record attendance of the meetings
- Responsible for ensuring that agendas and meeting notes/ action plans are written up and circulated
- Continuous monitoring and updating of the actions list

Membership Officer:

- Maintain the network members' database (email list) on behalf of the leadership team for information distribution and communications
- Maintaining communication with members, subject to approval from the Chair
- Being a point of contact for new members
- Monitor network mailbox and alert leadership team to requests or issues

Comms Officer:

- Develop the communication and events plan
- Be the first point of contact for all comms outputs
- Work with Internal Communications team and external communications team to ensure all communication opportunities are leveraged

Inbox Coordinator:

- Monitor the inbox and forward on emails to relevant people within Disability Matters
- Send replies to people as needed

Support Group Coordinator:

- To support and coordinate the informal support groups and have a process in place for members to join the groups.
- Review best practice recommendations of the support groups to make sure we are supporting all groups consistently.
- Identifying and helping to create other peer-support groups based on the requirements of our members.

Non portfolio roles:

- To actively contribute to the work of the leadership team by volunteering and helping to deliver actions, tasks and key projects
- To lead a strategy workstream and produce and deliver an action plan
- To support all members of the leadership team in their roles
- To attend leadership team meetings

Representation

This is a list of other working groups and forums that the leadership team members are part of:

Name of group	Area covered	Initials
Change Agent Community	UKRI	■
Employee Engagement Forum	UKRI	■
Dyslexia Network	STFC	■

Health & Safety Committee	UKRI	■
Appraisal / Performance Champions	UKRI	■
Future Workspace Project	UKRI	■
MRC EDI Forum	MRC	■
UKRI Disability Group	UKRI	■

Executive Sponsors:

██████████ (STFC)

██████████ (NERC)

██████████ (STFC)

██████████ (UKRI)

The role of Sponsor

- A sounding board for activities
- Executive level champion for the network and the disabled community in UKRI
- Bridge the gap between the leadership team and upper management in UKRI
- Maintaining a grasp of the activities of the network and the pertinent issues to enable raising of network agenda in senior forums

Rules of Engagement

This document outlines agreed ways of working for the Disability Matters Network leadership team (LT).

The team recognises that each individual may have different needs and preferences around how we work together and engage with one another, regardless of disability or condition. To support the working practices of the leadership team we have come up with some guidance around this.

Behaviours -

We are all part of this group because we share the goal of reducing workplace discrimination towards those with disabilities and increasing inclusive and accessible practices within UKRI. Many of us have disabilities ourselves and as such may have fluctuating capacity to engage with the work of the leadership team. We have a duty to ourselves and others to clearly communicate our needs and preferences around ways of working.

Be kind - We will model the behaviours we would like to see from others. Treating others as they would like to be treated, with respect, empathy and fairness. Rather than making assumptions, we will instead ask questions and actively listen to the response. Whilst we may disagree on topics or actions, we will have considered each contribution and give clear reasons for our decisions. We will work to uncover our own biases and prejudices, allowing us to be aware of their possible influence on our thoughts and behaviours, actively working to remove their influence upon us.

Be leaders

We have the opportunity and responsibility to showcase how UKRI should treat their disabled staff. The processes and systems we use can become examples to other parts of

the organization, so we will develop them with inclusion and accessibility in mind. Where we have places on other working groups or forums, we will raise the issues important to our network, asking questions and requesting answers, to ensure disabled staff and their needs are a part of the conversation. Nothing about us, without us!

Team roles

Some members of the leadership team have specified roles such as 'Communications Officer' or 'Membership Officer'. These roles are defined in the Network Terms of Reference. The rest of the team (those 'without portfolio') provide support to the leadership team and can be asked to lead on specific projects or events, and cover for those with specified roles if needed.

Whilst we recognise that the network is run as a voluntary aspect of staff's roles it is understood that the leadership team agreed to dedicate a portion of their time to support the network and its activities. We understand that capacity is naturally fluid and may change from day to day - we agree that the best way to manage the work of the group is to communicate clearly with each other (especially the Chair) when we are unable to make meetings or meet deadlines. This will allow the team to re-allocate work or request support if needed in a timely manner, reducing strain on individuals to meet the goals of the network.

Communication

Leadership Team

- MS Teams chat - to share updates on actions or network activities
- Email - official network business matters

All Network

- Joint Mailbox - for communicating with our members, sending member updates or news and event invites – Membership Officer
- Yammer - for communicating with our network, sharing documents or resources, engaging with them about topics or events – Membership Officer
- Source Page – Event announcements, important documents for members and leadership team information – Communications Officer

Sponsors

- All communications with Sponsors via the Chair.

Working documents

All stored in the MS Teams area, so everyone has access. In addition, the documents would be worked on here too enabling all to comment on progress and work collaboratively. Useful resources for the network can be stored here too under the 'files' area. Where possible documents should have clear names that accurately describe their contents - making it easy to find when searching. Documents should be written using plain English and where terminology or acronyms are used they should be described or spelled out at least once.

Style

Templates for comms and documents - colours and fonts, links, and picture descriptions.

- Word, PowerPoint
- Dark blue font and beige background

- Comic sans as standard
- 1.5 line spacing
- Size 12 minimum font
- No italics, bold for headings but not within text
- Avoid extensive use of tables