

UK Research and Innovation

Paper: 19-10
UKRI EDI External Advisory Group
Author: [REDACTED]

Minutes of the sixth UK Research and Innovation External Advisory Group meeting for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Meeting held on 20th May 2019, London.

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

1. Welcome and Introductions

[REDACTED] welcomed attendees to the sixth UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) External Advisory Group meeting and third meeting in 2019.

[REDACTED] introduced two new colleagues to the meeting who are based within the Councils working closely on EDI activities:

[REDACTED]

2. Minutes from last meeting and actions

Members agreed the minutes without amendment and the actions noted as complete.

3. Update on EDI UKRI Strategic framework and workplan

[REDACTED] provided an update on proposals for a programme of work to support EDI that set out the following:

1. Establish and launch UKRI's stance and voice on EDI issues via a programme of work, including the publication of the Strategic Framework by Autumn 2019.
2. Set a high-level, five-year plan to guide activities and to assess our progress by Autumn 2019.
3. Facilitate constituent parts of UKRI in developing EDI workplans – both distributed to address bespoke challenges, and centrally for cross-cutting or shared challenges by early to mid-2020.

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4. Facilitate constituent parts of UKRI in delivering against objectives, including Strategy Directorate from Autumn 2019 to Summer 2024.
5. Evolve the approach as we continue to learn, experiment and evaluate with a full review of progress and overall approach after five years by Summer 2024.

To support the work in to the future, this would be delivered through five proposed workstreams:

- Workstream 1: Governance and shared capabilities
- Workstream 2: Policy and activity coordination
- Workstream 3: Data capabilities and reporting
- Workstream 4: Evidence-base and resources
- Workstream 5: External engagement and public voice.

██████████ informed members that the focus for the strategic framework is to bring a coherence of approach and messaging across UKRI acknowledging that councils would have bespoke activities below this.

Members discussed the importance of using the right language and recommended making the framework as intuitive as possible e.g. through including more detailed content to provide explanations to the high-level messages within the framework. It was also acknowledged that some areas were quite precise with others potentially larger to address. It was agreed that providing a sense of scale would help identify priorities over the five-year period, and in turn would help embed the framework as a standard.

██████████ suggested that it may be helpful to include as part of the framework, accountability acknowledging that there may be some standard principles or policies that could be applied across UKRI. ██████████ advised we would anticipate, as the evidence-base builds, that the list of agreed principles or policies could be rolled out across UKRI would increase, and that this would complement the ongoing programme of work.

Members discussed the workstreams and agreed that it would be beneficial for this to be presented as a theory of change model to help identify more readily what we are trying to achieve and how we are going to get there. In addition, ██████████ suggested to underpin the framework with examples of existing activities across UKRI which would act as context to the framework, which was welcomed by members.

Members were content with the proposed approach and associated work-streams and recommended for this to be put before the appropriate committees within UKRI for formal approval.

Action: UKRI Strategy to work with colleague across the organisation to identify relevant examples of current EDI activities within councils for inclusion in the strategic framework publication

Action: UKRI Strategy to develop a theory of change model to accompany the work-streams.

4. Update on UKRI EDI evidence Reviews

██████████ provided an update on progress with the two EDI evidence reviews undertaken by Advance HE and the third review on bullying and harassment by the Global Institute for Women's Leadership, King's College London.

██████████ thanked both EAG and UKRI SIG members for their feedback into the early draft documents noting the international review was now near final however, some further work was needed before the UK review could be finalised. ██████████ is leading the engagement with Advance HE on next steps and a timeline for publishing the final outputs including a set of infographics.

Members noted that once the reports were finalised, attention will need turn towards considering the policy implications from all three reviews. It is proposed that a challenge workshop will be scheduled in due course to bring together key stakeholders to consider these across the landscape.

5. Additional UKRI Outputs

██████████ proposed two additional outputs to be developed and published alongside the strategic framework and the evidence reviews:

- Language guide – this would be published alongside the reviews and framework in the Autumn to ensure that the documents are accessible and consistent in its language.
- Evaluation framework – this would be to a longer timescale and would be for use in designing, monitoring and evaluating EDI initiatives both internally and externally, to support on-going contributions to evidence of ‘what-works’.

██████████ acknowledged the language and user guides previously developed by the Race Disparity Audit. ██████████ recommended that UKRI also consider once these guides are developed, capturing how they are being used to build case studies and offered to work with UKRI to share learning and approach.

██████████ informed members that a budget can be made available to support work of this nature, and to commission further research where evidence gaps are identified.

Members welcomed these two additional outputs. ██████████ agreed to follow up outside of the meeting with members who may be able to assist or contribute to this work.

Action: ██████████ to write to the EAG for assistance and support with the two additional UKRI outputs.

6. Equality Impact Assessments

██████████ and ██████████ presented a paper on Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs), highlighting an opportunity to bring consistency of approach towards EIAs across UKRI extending their usage to cover all UKRI activities.

██████████ informed members that, from an EPSRC perspective, the use of EIAs has helped colleagues to greater consideration towards supporting inclusivity and, in particular the potential impact of restrictive call application windows or deadlines which might coincide with holiday periods, for example.

Members discussed that, should UKRI adopt an organisational-wide approach to EIAs, clarity around responsibilities and accountabilities for managing, tracking and learning from EIAs is vital, and that UKRI should ensure that EIAs are part of an embedded process to support EDI, and are not viewed as a bolt on activity.

Whilst members were unable to endorse a UKRI-wide approach to EIAs, there was an indication that those using EIAs would advance with their work while considering additional ways that the forms could be complemented by material on culture change and evaluation. Members noted that the use of EIAs could also be a priority of the evaluation framework work.

7. UKRI Terms and Conditions

██████████ informed members that the current UKRI grant terms and conditions were in the process of being reviewed and updated, and a high-level statement has been included for EDI. It was noted that UKRI anticipates that as policy work continues, more detailed expectations can be articulated alongside appropriate monitoring and response mechanisms, so that UKRI can respond if and when an eligible organisation does not meet such expectations.

Members recommended some minor changes to the proposed statement acknowledging that the terms and conditions should reflect more clearly that these are for the recipient of funding.

Action: [REDACTED] to share feedback on UKRI EDI terms and conditions with central Grants team.

8. Accessibility

[REDACTED] gave a short presentation on accessibility encouraging members to start to consider how accessible UKRI is, particularly around its communications ranging from events, panels and funding.

Members agreed that UKRI should aim to establish 'minimum standards' across UKRI constituent parts as well as a developing a toolkit which would also be particularly helpful for those we fund.

[REDACTED] thanked [REDACTED] for raising such an important agenda and agreed that UKRI should undertake work to establish a common, UKRI-wide approach to supporting accessibility as a key element of the wider programme of work to support EDI at UKRI

9.AOB

Future meetings: [REDACTED] highlighted that there is currently only one further meeting scheduled and welcomed input from members on the frequency of meetings going forward. Members queried the length of their appointment which had been understood to be for an initial term of one-year.

Action: UKRI Strategy to clarify the term of appointment with the Chair and to schedule future meeting dates

Titles in minutes: [REDACTED] noted that the use of professional titles of members and guests has been inconsistent in meeting notes. Members agreed that the use of professional titles is not required.

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 17th July 2019, 13:00-16:00 – 58 Victoria Embankment, London.