UK=RC
UK Energy Research Centre

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Goals

2023

October 2023

Introduction to UKERC

The UK Energy Research Centre (UKERC) carries out world-class, interdisciplinary research into sustainable future energy systems.

It is a focal point of UK energy research and a gateway between the UK and international energy research communities.

Our whole systems research informs UK policy development and research strategy.

UKERC is funded by the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Energy Programme.

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1. Introduction and Aims

UKERC's Vision is to be the UK's centre of excellence for creating and applying knowledge to inform the energy transition and build a low-carbon, sustainable future. Our Mission is to enable the UK research community to conduct independent, interdisciplinary research to inform net zero decision making by exploring new questions, methods and agendas, and maximising impact through local, national and international engagement. We will not achieve these aims unless we commit to improving Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) across the consortium; actively reaching out to and involving diverse groups will ensure a sustainable future that benefits everyone, rather than a select few.

We aim to foster an inclusive culture that is fair, values diversity and maintains a working and social environment in which the rights and dignity of our staff, researchers, students, partners and stakeholders are respected. Although both promote fairness, it is also important to distinguish between equality and equity. Equality is providing the same support to everyone, regardless of individual need, and equity is providing differential support according to individual need. By engaging directly with underrepresented groups, we can develop EDI policies that are targeted and enable them to thrive.

UKERC'S EDI Goals were defined at the beginning of 2023 and sit alongside the updated EDI Plan which can be found here.

We recognise that UKERC has some way to go on diversity and would therefore like to invite the wider community, particularly underrepresented groups, to provide feedback on these goals by publishing them on our website as a 'living document'. We encourage stakeholders to get in touch with any feedback.

2. EDI Action Plan

UKERC's Phase 4 programme underwent a Mid-term review in 2022, and we have responded to some of the panel's recommendations by producing an Action Plan. One of the recommendations specifically regarded EDI, and the relevant section of the Action Plan that includes our strategy and objectives is fully included in the following section. This is followed by the updated EDI goals for 2023.

Panel recommendation:

> *Develop a solutions-focused strategy of engagement with wider EDI focus groups and/or other investments with strong EDI schemes, including how successes will be monitored.*

Strategy:

To draw on the expertise of exemplar EDI groups and initiatives, developing best practice in building an equitable and inclusive culture[1] that reaches beyond gender and career stage, using data to monitor and inform actions.

Aims:

1. To develop and communicate best practice within the EDI space.
2. To capture more comprehensive data, to measure initiatives, and accelerate UKERC's success in this space.
3. To consider EDI in its widest sense, looking beyond gender and career stage developing an integrated programme of activities and inclusive culture.

Aim 1: To work with the wider community - within academia and other sectors - to develop and communicate best practice within the EDI space.

Activities to date[2]:

- On 6 October 2022, UKERC (in partnership with CREDS) hosted the second annual Cross-Consortia Engagement Meeting (CCEM2). CCEM2 was attended by 20 people from 12 consortia, along with representatives from EPSRC and ESRC (those from NERC were unable to make the meeting). As EDI was identified as a key area for collaboration at the first Cross-Consortia Engagement Meeting (CCEM1) hosted in 2021, CCEM2 included an interactive exercise to identify the biggest EDI successes, challenges and opportunities for further support from UKRI. Many of these investments have strong EDI schemes, notably CREDS, The Faraday Institution and Supergen

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[1] There is a difference between diversity and inclusion, and inclusion is needed to make diversity stick (Sherbin & Rashid, 2017). We are seeking to establish a diverse and inclusive culture at UKERC, and following Gallup's reasoning we maintain that '*Inclusion has to be understood as very different from diversity because simply having a wide roster of demographic characteristics won't make a difference to an organization's bottom line unless the people who fall into any one demographic feel welcomed. Inclusion refers to a cultural and environmental feeling of belonging. It can be assessed as the extent to which employees are valued, respected, accepted and encouraged to fully participate in the organization.*' (Washington & Patrick, 2018).

[2] These detail activities undertaken post or during submission of the MTR

Bioenergy Hub. The meeting provided an opportunity for these exemplars to share their learnings with UKERC and the wider group.

- Following the meeting we distilled the discussions into a set of EDI recommendations and presented them to UKRI and both EPSRC EDI Network+ centres on 15 December 2022. The recommendations can be found in Annex B, and we have agreed a timeline with UKRI to review progress on their adoption, supported by the EDI Network+ investments who have key expertise in this area.

Actions to take forward:

- Refine and communicate the recommendations to UKRI and partners ahead of broader distribution. We aim to do this by the end of February 2022.
- To build on the success of UKERC's EDI work and that of other consortia by disseminating strategies, methods and outcomes through our website and through direct engagement in meetings and events.

Aim 2: To capture more comprehensive data, that enables activities and initiatives to be measured, helping to accelerate UKERC's success in this space.

Activities to date:

- The EDI Subcommittee (EDI SubCo) has convened three times since its inception. The first two meetings focused on reviewing and informing the EDI plan and goals for 2022, as published on the UKERC website. We also sought input directly towards activities with an EDI focus, such as the Whole Systems Networking Fund (WSNF) and the inclusive writing retreat.
- In an effort to improve the diversity on the EDI SubCo, we enlarged it to include non-CoDs from across the consortium (e.g., WSNF and Flexible Fund awardees, and UKERC researchers). The expanded EDI SubCo met for the first time on 5 October 2022 and will meet four times a year going forward.

Actions to take forward:

- Draft a solutions-focused engagement strategy and action plan that includes a framework to measure and disseminate success. We aim to publish the strategy by 1 October 2023.
- The EDI SubCo will meet quarterly during 2023. Alongside collecting their feedback regarding the EDI dataset, we will set the EDI goals for 2023, and gather feedback in relation to the solutions-focused engagement strategy.
- Continue working with the wider community to develop best practice around EDI data collection and utilisation.
- The EDI SubCo will review our EDI baseline dataset to identify gaps, opportunities to develop a more comprehensive dataset, and provide suggestions regarding use, outputs, and monitoring going forward. Their review will feed into our solutions-oriented strategy.
- Perform a UKERC-wide EDI data-gathering exercise to improve our baseline dataset and take stock as phase IV ends.

Aim 3: To consider EDI in its widest sense, looking beyond gender and career stage to develop an integrated programme of activities that create an inclusive culture.

Activities to date:

- To improve diverse representation, on 5 October 2022 we expanded our EDI Subcommittee (as above).
- The Whole Systems Networking Fund (WSNF) is a unique research fund that seeks to improve EDI in energy research. Improving EDI across the energy research space is a key objective of the fund. It also seeks to widen participation across academic disciplines and sectors and offers ECRs a chance to gain experience of proposing and managing research projects. In this round of funding, we have awarded seven research teams funding to carry out projects that meet the objectives of the fund. The research teams are engaging more broadly within UKERC through our events and activities.

Actions to take forward:

- To focus on solutions and monitoring success when developing EDI goals, which will be published on our website by the middle of September 2023.
- To convene an annual meeting with other groups and consortia active in this space to identify best practice and share learnings.
- Deliver advanced workshops that incorporate inclusivity within their objectives, such as the impact workshop and inclusive writing retreat which will take place in May and November respectively.
- To develop case studies that display how UKERC works to achieve an inclusive culture and disseminate these through our website and other communication channels and engagement activities. We aim to publish these by the end of September 2023.

3. EDI Goals for 2023

Hence, the list below represents a mix of pre-existing goals and goals that have been added following the writing of the Action Plan, and on suggestion from members of the EDI SubCo to date.

Goal	Owner	Deliverable	Start date	Completion date
All Aims				
Gather input towards the 2023 Goals from the EDI CoD Sub-Committee	JB/JC		27 March 2023	June 2023
Table EDI as an agenda item for the Co-Directors meetings at least once in 2023.	DB		27 March 2023	September 2023
Hold quarterly EDI SubCo meetings for input into EDI activities and the EDI goals.	JB/JC		27 March 2023 (rescheduled)	Ongoing
Review the EDI Plan and report on progress to the Co-Directors (EDI Sub-Committee), Advisory Board and UKRI.	Champion/JB/JC		2021	Ongoing
Draft UKERC's EDI Goals for 2024, to be approved by EDI SubCo.	JB/JC	EDI Goals 2024 document	December 2023	March 2024

Aim 1: To work with the wider community - within academia and other sectors - to develop and communicate best practice within the EDI space.				
Goal	**Owner**	**Deliverable**	**Start date**	**Completion date**
Cultivate relationships with specific organisations that represent diversity in STEM to ensure that opportunities are widely advertised.	JB/CD	Updated list of comms contacts	March 2023	Ongoing
Update UKERC's Communication Strategy to reflect the EDI plan and monitor the delivery of commitments made throughout 2023.	JB	Updated Communication Strategy	Sept 2023	Ongoing
Link to best practise guides on producing accessible/inclusive comms for use across consortium.	JB/CD	Guidance Document	June 2021	December 2023
Create guidance/checklist on planning accessible and inclusive events	LT	Guidance Document	June 2021	October 2023
Ensure all publications are screen reader compatible.	JB/CD	Accessible publications	April 2021 (ongoing)	Ongoing
Review all comms to ensure language used is inclusive, for example a balance of gender-coded language.	JB/CD		28 July 2021 (ongoing)	Ongoing
Add captions/alt-text to all images on the website, social media and in UKERC publications.	JB/CD	Accessible images	April 2020	Ongoing

Aim 2: To capture more comprehensive data, that enables activities and initiatives to be measured, helping to accelerate UKERC's success in this space.				
Goal	**Owner**	**Deliverable**	**Start date**	**Completion date**
Review and develop data monitoring forms appropriate to UKERC's various events and activities.	LT	Updated/new monitoring forms	June 2023	July 2023
The EDI SubCo will review our EDI baseline dataset to identify gaps, opportunities to develop a more comprehensive dataset, and provide suggestions regarding use, outputs, and monitoring going forward. Their review will feed into our solutions-oriented strategy.	EDI SubCo JB/JC	New EDI survey	March 2023	September 2023
EDI baseline dataset – improve EDI data for speakers, awardees, and collaborators	JB/JC		March 2023	Ongoing
Draft a solutions-focused engagement strategy (see Action Plan) and action plan that includes a framework to measure and disseminate success. We aim to publish the strategy by 1 October 2023	JC	Engagement Strategy	May 2023	October 2023
Perform a UKERC-wide EDI data-gathering exercise to improve our baseline dataset and take stock as phase IV ends.	LT	Survey results	September 2023	December 2023
EDI baseline dataset – evaluate performance by comparing data from 2022 and 2023	EDI SubCo JB/JC	Brief on comparison/contrasts and successes to be shared with EDI SubCo	March 2023	December 2024

Aim 3: To consider EDI in its widest sense, looking beyond gender and career stage to develop an integrated programme of activities that create an inclusive culture.				
Goal	**Owner**	**Deliverable**	**Start date**	**Completion date**
Run career development activities for ECRs, WSNF and Flexible Fund project teams. • Writing retreat • Proposal writing • Impact workshop • Engagement with policy makers • Fellowship applications **The events are open to applicants outside of UKERC.**	JC	Verbal reports on activities to be given in EDI SubCo; blogposts	Proposal writing workshop: 8 March 2023 Impact workshop: 23 May 2023 Fellowship workshop: early June Summer School: 19-23 July 2023 Writing retreat: November 20-21	December 2023
We will develop case studies that display how UKERC works to achieve an inclusive culture and disseminate these through our website and communication channels. We aim to publish these by the end of July 2023.	CD/JC	Case studies	June 2023	Autumn 2023
Organize an inclusive writing retreat to provide energy researchers with the space and time to work on publications (Particularly welcoming applicants from underrepresented groups).	JB/JC	Blogpost on retreat, verbal report to be given to EDI SubCo	2022	November 2023
To convene an annual meeting with other groups and consortia active in this space to identify best practice and share learnings	JB/JC		June 2023	Ongoing
Utilise existing lists of diverse speakers, authors, and panellists, such as that published by Energy UK.	JC		June 2023	Ongoing
Improve visibility of experts from diverse backgrounds by setting up an open call for blogs on UKERC's website.	JB/CD		Sept 2023	Ongoing