

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Forum

Imperial College London

12 October 2020 via Teams

Minutes

Present:

Stephen Curry	SC	Chair, Assistant Provost (EDI) and Life Sciences
Deborah Adegoke	DA	BAME Officer
Hannah Bannister	HB	Director of Student Services
Jaclyn Bell	JB	Equality, Diversity & Outreach Public Engagement Computing
Emma Chapman	EC	Research Associate, Physics (1752 Group)
Benita Cox	BC	Faculty Senior Tutor, Business School
Liz Elvidge	LE	Head of Postdoc and Fellows Development
Sarah Essilfie-Quaye	SE-Q	Imperial as One Co-chair
Richard Green	RG	Business School
Cedric John	CJ	Dept of Earth Sciences (Mental Health)
Kani Kamara	KK	Head EDIC
Keir Logan	KL	LGBT+ Officer
Susan Littleson	SL	Deputy Director Organisational Development and Inclusion
Joel McConnell	JMc	Co-chair, Imperial 600
Wayne Mitchell	WM	Imperial as One Co-chair
Maxine Myers	MM	Communications
Susan Parker	SP	Unite Branch (joint) and Equalities Officer – Physics/Tech
Lisa Phillips	LP	Co-chair Able@Imperial
Priantha Pretheshan	PP	Gender Equalities Officer
Sara Rankin	SR	Medicine (Neurodiversity)
Shervin Sabeghi	SS	Imperial College Union Deputy President (Welfare)
Desmond Samuel	DS	Imperial as One Co-chair
Vahid Shahrezaei	VS	Diversity Champion, Mathematics and Fac of Nat Sciences
Becky Stewart	BS	UCU Equalities Representative
Andrew Tebbutt	AT	Director of Student Recruitment and Outreach
Caz Ulley	CU	Co-chair, Imperial 600
Jacalyn Murphy	JA	(Minutes) EA to Assistant Provost (EDI)

Apologies:

David Ashton, Academic Registrar
Lara Mistry, Public Engagement Programme Manager
Sally Parekh, REC Co-ordinator
Adya Rao, Disabilities Officer
Andrew Willson, College Chaplain

	Agenda Item	Action
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1.	Introductions	
	The Chair welcomed all, especially Priantha Pretheshan, Gender Equalities Officer and Keir Logan, LGBT+ Officer, who were attending their first meeting.	
2.	Minutes of last meeting and Matters arising	
	The minutes of the meeting held on 2 June were agreed as correct.	
2.1	Message of support re Black Lives Matter	
	The President and Provost had meetings with Imperial as One over the summer. There have been a number of workshops at departmental level and the very important race equality conversations continue, not least in the meetings of the REC Self-Assessment Team.	
2.2	Executive Champions Paper 3 - Revised role of Diversity Executive Sponsors (aka EDI Executive Champions)	
	<p>SL commented discussions with volunteers who are from Provost's and President's boards are being finalised. A Champion for women and how this would fit into the networks for women was also discussed at President's board but there was not a resolution to move forward at this stage.</p> <p>SL outlined the process of selecting EDI Executive sponsors. CU commented it should be more of a strategic role to define the networks and working with the Chairs. It was noted that there had been previous discussions as to whether this should be a senior leadership role. SC suggested having a meeting between the networks and the Chairs to define a greater understanding of what is expected. SC will ensure views are transmitted.</p> <p>The job description was circulated as part of the papers for today's meeting and is also on Teams. If anyone cannot access these please contact JM.</p>	SC
2.3	EDI Implications of COVID-19 at Imperial College London	
	Peter Lindstedt, Assistant Provost for Promotions has been working on the academic side of the short and longer term impacts on career	

	<p>progression of COVID-19. The College webpage on academic promotions has been updated to inform staff that account will be taken of Covid-19 impacts in the promotions process. See: https://www.imperial.ac.uk/human-resources/recruitment-and-promotions/promotions/academic-promotions/</p> <p>SL commented there is a core part of the PRDP process for PTO staff to discuss their role including challenges; managers will be reminded to use the PRDP for COVID related impacts and amendments to work objectives.</p>	
2.4	White Ally Training	
	<p>A well-attended event (Building Alliances in the Face of Atrocity) was held in July with interesting discussions on combatting racism. Melanie Lee is now leading workshops to facilitate difficult discussions about race in some departments. KK added many comments echoed some of the actions for the REC application and will be included in future strategies (and the REC action plan) – e.g. training available, mandatory training, how the impact is measured and how the College is reporting on progress.</p>	
4.	Chairs Report	
4.1	<p>A History group chaired by Nilay Shah, HoD Chemistry, has been set up who will also be looking at names associated with the College’s buildings and rooms. There is also an Art group chaired by Professor Sian Harding, NHLI, to better reflect our diverse community of images at the College.</p> <p>https://www.imperial.ac.uk/equality/activities/history-group/</p> <p>https://www.imperial.ac.uk/news/206933/our-should-reflect-today-imperial-artworks/</p>	
4.2	<p>The response from Advance HE following the Athena SWAN independent review was disappointing to a number of stakeholders (including the review group itself) as it was not as definitive on the actions they were going to take as had been hoped. However, one definitive recommendation adopted is that existing awards would last for 5 years instead of 4; the College has successfully been granted a one year extension and will be reapplying this time next year.</p>	
4.3	<p>The government recently published a policy paper on reduce bureaucracy in the HE sector (see https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/reducing-bureaucratic-burdens-higher-education). One of its central messages was that universities should not feel under pressure to engage in “voluntary</p>	

	<p>schemes” such as Disability Confident, Athena SWAN and the REC if it distracted them from their “core” mission. There is concern in the Medical School that the loss of the linkage between Athena SWAN awards and access to NIHR funding may lead to institutional disengagement from efforts to promote gender equality. These concerns are shared by the AP(EDI). However, so far there has been strong support for maintaining activities in these areas from College leadership.</p>	
4.4	<p>New policies and procedures on sexual and racial harassment for staff and students have been approved and published. SL commented the Report and Support tool went live on the College website last week. It was announced to staff in the staff briefing. At present the focus is on making the system available to staff. It will go live for students when training of student harassment support contacts is complete, which will be in the New Year.</p> <p>EC commented the guidelines on 1752 have been adopted by a protected safeguarding accreditation scheme with a timeline and EC would like to contribute to the College’s guidelines. EC will speak directly to AK, KK and AF.</p>	EC
4.5	<p>The last EDI Seed Fund was very successful despite delays due to COVID. The funding scheme for 2020/2021 has just been launched again. Applications for projects to support disabled staff or students are encouraged since no projects in this area were received last year.</p> <p>https://www.imperial.ac.uk/equality/activities/seed-fund/</p>	
4.6	<p>4.6 Lara Mistry, Senior Public Engagement Programme Manager, was hoping to attend and ask for comments on how we can make the Public Programme more diverse. LM will publish a paper and will then ask for comments.</p>	
5.	<p>Race Equality Charter update</p>	
	<p>SC reported the REC application should be submitted in February 2021; significant progress has been made in gathering the data which has been a very complex process. There is a clear picture on the low numbers of black students and patterns with other ethnic groups that will be looked at as part of the analysis. The second Focus Groups had a very successful rate with students and SC will share the link and the draft action plans.</p> <p>October is Black History month and there are a series of events organised by EDI and Imperial as One.</p> <p>https://www.imperial.ac.uk/equality/activities/black-history-month/</p>	SC

6.	Any Other Business	
6.1	<p>A discussion followed on the newly introduced post-graduate fees with concerns raised that this would act as an additional barrier particularly for underprivileged applicants. SEQ added Imperial as One have supported the media campaign led by Ben Britton in putting forward a response.</p> <p>SC commented the intention is that anyone in financial hardship is entitled to a waiver and there is a dedicated member of the admissions team who is processing waiver claims. The guidance on the waiver scheme will be shared with this group.</p> <p>https://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/pg/apply/fees/application-fees/</p>	
6.2	<p>SP commented on the excessive hours many staff are working. SC replied there is a College working group looking at workload models led by Professor Jonathan Weber, Dean Faculty of Medicine, and SC is a member of that committee; part of the discussions are the excessive hours worked by academics.</p>	
	<p>SC thanked all for attending and their valued input.</p>	