

EPICS-UK

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy

The EPICS consortium is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) for all in our community. We aim to foster an inclusive culture that is fair, values diversity and supports the rights and dignity of our staff, researchers, students, partners and stakeholders. We aim to demonstrate best practice in EDI throughout the lifetime of the EPSRC funding and beyond. This strategy is specifically for the UK part of EPICS i.e. EPICS-UK but is aligned with the EDI ethos and practices of the EPICS Global Centre¹.

A study completed by an EPICS researcher showed that the UK energy research community is insufficiently diverse and that the inclusion of, for instance, ethnic minority groups and women is inadequate, particularly at senior levels. We take our responsibility to address these existing inequalities seriously (<https://ukerc.ac.uk/publications/power-shift/>).

Introduction

EPICS-UK is a research collaboration within the UK of three Universities and multiple stakeholders and partners. The three Universities, Imperial College London, University of Edinburgh and University of Strathclyde each have comprehensive EDI strategies, plans and resources, as referenced in this document. The aim of this EPICS-UK EDI strategy is to reinforce, support, localise and go beyond those procedures if appropriate. Below summarises the Universities' individual EDI strategies highlighting the most salient parts with respect to a research centre such as EPICS-UK.

EDI at Imperial

Imperial College, guided by its values and behaviours of Respect, Collaboration, Excellence, Innovation and Integrity, published its [Science for Humanity strategy](#) in March 2024. In that, it promises to:

“...continue to attract, nurture and support world-class talent from everywhere. Our strength comes from celebrating and harnessing the diversity of our community where everyone contributes their own perspective, experience and skills so that together we can excel in the delivery of our shared mission. We will champion an inclusive culture and invest in people so that they are inspired and equipped to unleash their potential. We will build and maintain a culture centred on the wellbeing, growth and belonging of our community. We will create a

¹ EPICS-UK (led by [Imperial College London](#)) is an integral part of the [EPICS Global Centre](#), collaborating with academic leaders from United States (led by [Johns Hopkins University](#)) and Australia (led by the [University of Melbourne](#)).

diverse and vibrant community where our values are evident to all, and we are recognised as innovators in every aspect of our work.”

Imperial has a dedicated Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Centre (EDIC), working to support staff and students to make Imperial a better place to work by promoting EDI initiatives, training and resources. It published its EDI Strategy – Inclusive Excellence – back in 2018 ([updated strategy](#) published in late 2024).

There are a wide range of initiatives tackling EDI issues at Imperial such as:

- The Athena Swan Charter – a framework used to support and transform gender equality within higher education.
- Stonewall Workplace Equality Index – to help Imperial develop as an organisation that is fully inclusive of LGBTQ+ people. The scheme provides external benchmarking against which we can assess how we are doing.
- Disability Confident Leader – a government scheme designed to encourage employers to recruit, retain and develop disabled people. Imperial originally gained Two Ticks (previous scheme name) accreditation in April 2012.
- IMPACT development programme – for staff who identify as being from a minority ethnic group, helping staff who wish to further their careers by developing and fine-tuning both new and existing skills and talents.

Staff and students are made aware of and encouraged to attend appropriate training such as:

- [Active Bystander](#)
- [Unconscious bias](#)
- [Disability at Imperial](#)
- [Harassment - confronting inappropriate behaviour](#)

All new members of staff are expected to complete Imperial's EDI online course within six months of starting and repeat this course every two years.

The university has several staff networks to represent different staff groups, inform and help develop policies, and raise awareness of issues. [Black Postdoctoral Network](#), several [networks for women](#), and [Imperial 600](#) are just a few examples.

Imperial College Business School takes diversity seriously; their successful reapplication for an Athena SWAN Bronze Award was posted on their website as a good example, and the Associate Dean (EDI) sits on the School's management board. The first two chairs of the School's Diversity Committee are both professors in the Department of Economics and Public Policy, which has a 50:50 gender balance at assistant and associate professor level and a 3:5 female: male ratio of full professors.

As EPICS-UK is led and hosted by a PI and several co-PIs within Electrical and Electronic Engineering (EE) at Imperial, below are a few pertinent EDI initiatives within EEE.

- We have a [Diversity, Inclusion, Culture and Equity Committee \(DICE\)](#) which acts as a forum for discussing and sharing matters related to EDI and department culture in general.
- We celebrated [Women at Imperial Week](#) and International Women's Day in March 2024
- We offer [the Professor Maria Petrou PhD scholarship](#) for women students which aims to help recruit, retain and advance the careers of all women, including cis and trans women in engineering.

University of Edinburgh

The University of Edinburgh is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) for all, and these principles are at the heart of our institution's values and strategic vision. The University's Equality Strategy and Outcomes are published (currently 2021-25) and commit the University to increase the diversity of our staff, including at senior grades, in leadership roles and on key decision-making bodies.

Policies, EDI plans, guidance and data are brought together on the University's EDI site (<https://equality-diversity.ed.ac.uk/>) and the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences EDI Committee meets quarterly to monitor progress against the College-level plan and discuss issues in detail, for example diversifying teaching resources.

EDI initiatives include:

- The University of Edinburgh successfully achieved an Athena Swan Institutional Silver in 2015 (the first in Scotland) and successfully reviewed this award in 2018 and 2024. Since 2006 all eligible Schools within the University have now achieved an Athena Swan award.
- EDI Networks – a disabled staff network, the Edinburgh Race Equality Network (EREN), a staff BAME network, a Jewish staff network, Staff Pride Network, and EDI Committees in each of the academic colleges and Professional Services.
- Respect at Edinburgh – a web hub of information and guidance on the University's zero tolerance stance to bullying and harassment.
- RACE.ED – a cross-university network concerned with race, racialization and decolonial studies from a multidisciplinary perspective.
- Collation of a range of data and information to ensure that legal responsibilities are met and to assess progress towards achieving our strategic ambition for EDI. This data is overseen by the Equality Diversity Monitoring and Research Committee (EDMARC) and is published openly at <https://equality-diversity.ed.ac.uk/data-insights>.

EDI in EPICS-UK

Reflecting on the EDI strategies for the three Universities, the following are the actions we are taking within EPICS-UK that are tailored to EPICS-UK specific circumstances.

Recruitment and retention

Imperial, Edinburgh and Strathclyde all have policies and processes in place to ensure diversity and inclusion in recruitment processes. EPICS-UK will ensure that these processes are followed, and equality and diversity are considered in all recruitment processes.

Actions include:

- A mandatory requirement for recruitment adverts to carry a positive action statement. For example, at Imperial this states:

We work towards equality of opportunity, to eliminating discrimination, and to creating an inclusive working environment for all. We encourage applications from all backgrounds, communities and industries, and are committed to employing a team that has diverse skills, experiences and abilities. You can read more about our commitment on our webpages.

- Ensuring job adverts use gender-neutral and inclusive language, following guidance at individual institutions. At Imperial this includes checking adverts in [Textio](#) to identify language which has a gender bias. All new members of staff are expected to complete their institution's EDI online course within six months of starting.
- Employment contracts are offered on a hybrid-working basis to allow staff the flexibility to work some of the time from home.
- We will strive to ensure our appointment panels are gender diverse (this is a set requirement on panels at the University of Edinburgh). We will also strive for racial diversity.
- We make staff and students aware of the university's wide range of EDI policies and encourage undertaking relevant training.
- We will introduce a survey for researchers in EPICS-UK in 2025 to collect information on job satisfaction and engagement, whether the team feel valued and empowered to make an impact and whether they feel opportunities are available for career progression.

Communications

- We will ensure that EDI is considered in all EPICS-UK communications. Image captions will be provided in publications, as will alt text for images used on the website and on social media (e.g. in tweets). All online and published materials will be compatible with screen readers for those with visual or hearing impairments. We will try to ensure author diversity.
- We aim to ensure that pictures on our website represent a diverse range of people or use pictures that do not feature people.

Meetings and Events

- We will continue to offer mixed-mode attendance at meetings and events to ensure maximum participation and enable those unable to attend in person to participate online.

- We will follow an accessible event checklist ([All Welcome](#)), produced by Imperial. We will use accessible venues and try to ensure speaker and stakeholder diversity as much as possible.
- We will ensure a diverse range of staff and external stakeholders are involved as speakers and participants in events.

Examples so far of EDI strategy being acted upon

- The UK PI of EPICS, Prof Mark O'Malley has made a conscious effort to be as diverse and inclusive as possible when inviting members to join our international EPICS Advisory Board. This has resulted in a relatively balanced gender ratio (five male, three female) with the Chair also female.
- We have ensured a diverse range of staff and external stakeholders are involved in recent events, for example at the [G-PST/EPICS Research and Implementation Summit, 6-11 June 2024, Copenhagen](#).
- We ran a [Summer School in September 2024 on IBR-dominated Power Systems](#) which resulted in participants from 14 different countries, 23 different research institutes, five industrial organisations, and 28 speakers from 19 institutions in 12 different countries across four continents.

Data and monitoring

- We will survey the diversity of current EPICS-UK researchers, based on protected characteristics, in 2025 and use this data to inform future EDI actions.
- We will collect data on gender diversity on panels in events run by EPICS-UK and report this to the Advisory Board annually.
- We will include questions on diversity characteristics (gender, disability, ethnicity) in EPICS-UK events with online registrations and review this annually.

Management and responsibilities

Delivery of the EDI plan will be led by Guler Eroglu, who will report progress to the Management Board and the Advisory Board on an annual basis.

Academic staff named in the Collaboration Agreement are responsible for delivery of the plan at their individual institutions.

Metrics

We outline our EDI actions below, against which we will track our progress. These can better drive our accountability, transparency and commitment to improving EDI within EPICS, whilst identifying areas for improvement throughout this journey.

Actions	Deliverable	Start date	Completion date
Broad / generic aims			
Table EDI as an agenda item at EPICS-UK meetings twice per year	Verbal report on EDI activities	March 2025	Ongoing (bi-annually)
Review the EDI strategy annually and report on progress to the EPICS-UK team and Advisory Board	Verbal and written update on EDI activities	September 2025	Ongoing (annually)
Recruitment and retention			
Ensure recruitment adverts carry a positive action statement	Recruitment websites	Start of each recruitment exercise at each institute	Ongoing
Ensure recruitment adverts carry gender-neutral and inclusive language following guidance at individual institutions	Recruitment websites	Start of each recruitment exercise at each institute	Ongoing
Try advertising in wider online networks to attract more minority ethnic talent eg. BBSTEM , LGBT Jobs , STEM Women	Recruitment websites	Start of each recruitment exercise at each institute	Ongoing
Ensure appointment panels are gender diverse and strive for racial and gender diversity	Interview assessment forms	As part of each recruitment exercise at each institute	Ongoing
Offer employment contracts on a hybrid-working basis to allow staff the flexibility to work some of the time from home	Employment contract	January 2024	Ongoing
Ensure new staff members complete their institutions' EDI online course within six months of starting	Email guidance	July 2024	Ongoing
Make staff and students aware of the three institute's range of EDI policies and encourage undertaking relevant training	Email guidance	January 2024	Ongoing
Introduce a survey for researchers to collect information on job satisfaction and engagement, whether the team feel valued and empowered to make an impact and whether they feel opportunities are available for career progression	Survey	July 2025	September 2025
Communications			

Provide image captions in publications and alt text for images used on the EPICS-UK website and on social media	Publications, website, social media	February 2024	Ongoing
Ensure pictures on website represent a diverse range of people or use pictures that do not feature people	Website, social media	February 2024	Ongoing
Ensure all online and published material is compatible with screen readers for those with visual or hearing impairments	Website, social media	February 2024	Ongoing
Meetings and Events			
Offer mixed-mode attendance at meetings and events to ensure maximum participation	MS Teams / Zoom	November 2023	Ongoing
Follow an accessible event checklist (All Welcome), produced by Imperial, use an accessible venue and try to ensure speaker and stakeholder diversity	Checklist	Next event in 2025	Ongoing
Data and monitoring			
Survey the diversity of current EPICS-UK researchers in 2025, based on protected characteristics and use this data to inform future actions	Survey	July 2025	September 2025
Collect data on gender diversity on panels in events run by EPICS-UK and report this to the Advisory Board annually, include questions on diversity characteristics (gender, disability, ethnicity) in EPICS-UK events with online registrations and review this annually	Survey	Next event in 2025 – date TBC	Ongoing (annually)

References

In writing this document, the following were consulted.

[Science for Humanity: How we shape the future](#)

[All Welcome: A guide to inclusive, accessible and sustainable events](#)

[EDI Strategy at Imperial](#)

[EDI Strategy and Equality Outcomes, University of Edinburgh](#)

[UKERC EDI Strategy and Plan](#)