



NERC Diversity and Inclusion Knowledge Exchange Nov 2022



Full Report

The Equator Project

Working towards equity in postgraduate Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences research

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Illustrations by Storyset



Natural Environment Research Council

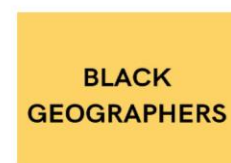
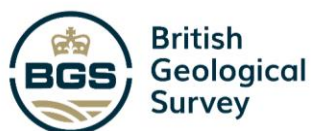
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UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM





What did we do?



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To increase retention and improve experiences

Created and evaluated a discipline-specific ring-fenced mentoring network pairing students with mentors from both industry and academia



To improve access and participation

Delivered and evaluated outcomes of a 5-day ring-fenced research school for ethnic minority undergraduate, masters and doctoral students



To remove barriers to access

Formed a doctoral training working group to share best practice and develop recommendations to make PhD recruitment more equitable



Student-led

Collaborative

Theory of Change

Action Research



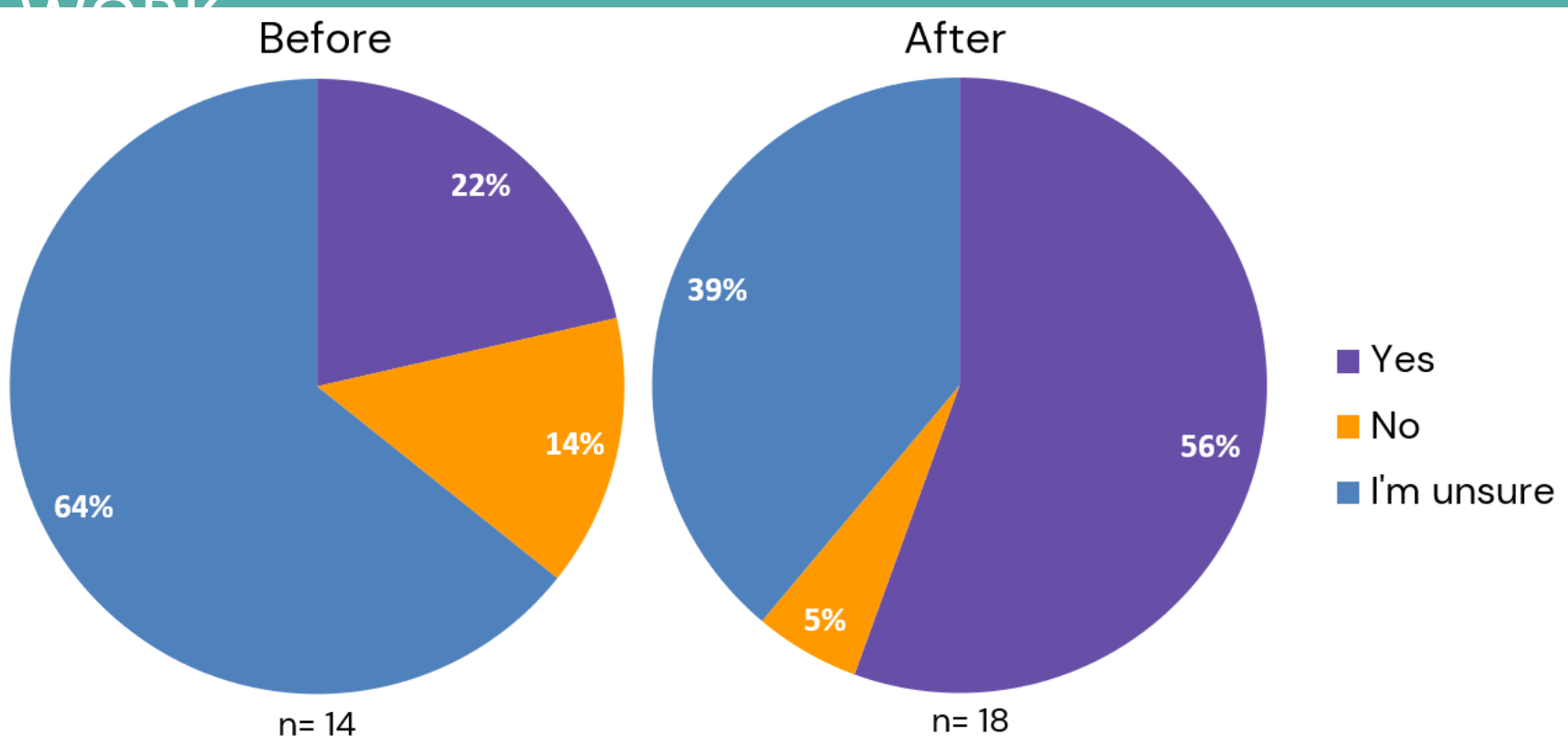
What did we learn?



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1. Inclusive, ring-fenced, fully-funded, discipline-specific interventions

WORK



“Before this research school, I didn't have any confidence that I can have a career in GEES or do a PhD, mainly because I am from a minority group and never in my university career met someone doing a PhD or research who was just like me. This research school gave me so much confidence that I am worth it and that I can have a career in GEES research”

Equator Research School participant, post-school survey

“Are you planning to apply to postgraduate research?”

from surveys before and after the Research School by Undergraduate/Master's level participants

2. Co-creation, and sharing ideas and best practise, is essential

3. Holistic efforts, sufficient resource, and coordinated thought leadership are needed from funding councils for effective EDI





Good practice we'd like to share



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We have created a series of outputs...

Recommendations for making doctoral recruitment more equitable

Making Doctoral Recruitment More Equitable

Did you know?
There is markedly lower representation of Black, Asian and minority ethnic students in Postgraduate Research than in undergraduate or taught postgraduate study in the UK, due to structural, organisational and cultural inequities

What can we do?
We can remove structural barriers by reforming discriminatory doctoral recruitment processes

Just 9% of UKRI PhD studentships were awarded to ethnic minority students in 2018/19

Student facing
Adverts on demographic specific networks | Standardised webform to express interest | Mentoring and support to applicants

Recommendations for building interventions to improve access and sense of belonging in postgraduate research

Building interventions to improve access and sense of belonging in Postgraduate Research

Did you know?
There is markedly lower representation of Black, Asian and minority ethnic students in Postgraduate Research than in undergraduate or taught postgraduate study in the UK, due to structural

These students are more likely to feel isolated,

A full report explaining what we did and evaluating our outcome: within a theory of change approach

The Equator Project

Interviews and studentships

Articles, blogs and resources on our website - and updates on future Equator activities

EQUATOR Funded by the Natural Environment Research Council

Home | What is Equator? | News | Equator Resources | Meet the Team | Related Reading | Related Projects

Working towards Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Geography, Earth and Environmental Science

NERC-funded project

The Equator project ran from December 2021 until May 2022. To read summaries of our NERC-funded project activities, click below:

<https://equatorresearchgroup.wordpress.com/equatorresources/>

Please feel free to get in touch:

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