

Quick reference guide: EPSRC equality, diversity and inclusion Action Plan 2026 to 2029

This is a summary of our equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) Action Plan. To discover more about our plans please read the detailed [EDI Action Plan 2026 to 2029](#).

Our aim is to create an inclusive and welcoming research and innovation environment that benefits everyone in UK engineering and physical sciences (EPS) research and innovation. An environment where people can contribute fully due to a sense of belonging, where people are well networked, well supported and have opportunities for growth and development, producing the best results for the UK. We detail what good looks like as well as set out our expectations for research organisations, collaborators, team leaders and individuals. Those expectations provide a framework for conversations with universities and our grant holders to facilitate embedding EDI across organisations.

Action Set	Key actions
1: Evidence and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a detailed definition of “what good looks like” using qualitative and quantitative evidence • Evaluate the impact of policies and interventions such as the Mixed Gender Panel Policy and Panel Process Advisors • Partner with the Royal Statistical Society for advanced intersectional analysis of EPSRC portfolio data • Develop robust evaluation methods, metrics and toolkits with the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) EDI Hub+ • Explore economic impact of EDI interventions (UKRI)
2: Improving our own assessment practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refresh our approach to EDI as part of grant assessment • Improve peer reviewer training on bias and decision making, and incentivise high quality reviews • Use funding pre-announcements to create a fairer application landscape (UKRI) • Continue to address cognitive overload in peer review and to develop inclusive panel and interview practices • Support flexible leadership models within applications to improve inclusion (UKRI) • Evaluate inclusivity of new peer review approaches (UKRI)
3: Empowering our community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve accessibility of EPSRC supported strategic research infrastructure and working environments through improved guidance and advice • Support EPSRC themes tackling diversity gaps including in critical technology areas • Integrate EDI and inclusive research design principles into UKRI framework for responsible research and innovation and associated training • Improve awareness of UKRI bullying and Harassment sector guidance (UKRI) • Working with UKRI colleagues, provide guidance on menstrual health and menopause support (UKRI)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with the EDI Hub+ to share and scale good practices; developing digital resources, toolkits and guidance (EDI Hub+)
4: Knowledge of EDI challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse socioeconomic barriers to participation, mobility and success • Examine workload models in academia to understand and promote greater inclusion and retention • Explore how career breaks are managed and how universities are supporting the career development of early career and mid-career researchers • Understanding challenges encountered by international researchers as they progress their career in the UK • Assess support needs for LGBTQ+ researchers, particularly transgender colleagues • Address participation barriers for researchers with disabilities and health conditions, including lab related risks
5: Widening participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot enhanced doctoral stipends in critical digital and technology areas to attract more diverse UK applicants • Run a national campaign on the value of a doctorate to students, to employers, to society, and to the UK economy • Provide over 500 additional vacation internships for undergraduates, with the aim of making doctoral training and research more attractive to a diverse group of home students, including an evaluation of the impact of the initiative • Engage with national STEM outreach organisations and education initiatives to broaden early-stage exposure to EPS, to inspire future researchers and to advocate for widening participation • Amplify campaigns to widen access to doctoral participation • Work with UKRI on interactive career pathway mapping