

Associate Provost EDI Forum Chairs Report

16th May 2024

Overview

Since 1st September we have undertaken an 'Active Listening' exercise to experience and observe firsthand the many EDI-related activities and initiatives that are ongoing at the College. We have had the opportunity to meet with Faculty Deans, HoDs, staff networks, student representatives and many of Faculty and departmental EDI committees within the College and discuss the issues that are important to their settings. It has been a pleasure to see the many examples of good practice embedded across Imperial. Wayne and Lesley have been formulating their EDI Strategy 2024 'Imperial Cohesion', looking at bringing the community together, adding support to the many recent people facing strategies that have been set out in recent times and taking a deep dive on the statistics to identify gaps that need addressing. It is clear that there is still much to be done. The [EDI Strategy](#) document Imperial Cohesion will be launched later this year.

EDI Committee Updates

- **The Race Equality Charter SAT:** <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/equality/accreditations/rec/> Work on the first REC was started in 2018 and the first application was submitted in 2021. Next REC submission will be in 2026. We have a midterm review coming up in September. We have reviewed the 'red actions' from the Action Plan and discussed these at the EDI Advisory Group and a paper on critical bottlenecks was brought to the Feb 2024 People and Culture Committee. We are just reviewing committee membership to ensure we have appropriate representation across Imperial. EDIC (Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Centre) have also performed a thorough update of all statistics including UG, PG, RA, Academic, Learning and Teaching, and PTO staff. There is significant positive change in PTO staff, predominantly in central Imperial professional staff. We are drilling down to find and identify the pockets of good practice. We are below the national average in terms of Black academic staff numbers, and short term contracted academic staff masks these stark facts. We are also working closely with the Education Office to review statistics for offers admissions, retention and outcome for students. Here again there are specific actions that require attention, beyond the Access and Participation Plan. The work is superbly supported by Alex Dawes from the EDIC centre whose enthusiasm and abilities should be noted.
- **The Athena Swan Charter SAT:** <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/equality/accreditations/athena-swan/> A long standing activity across college. Last submission was 2022 for which we received Silver renewal. The [feedback on the application](#) informs our actions going forward. Midterm review will be in 2025 and next submission will be in 2027. Several departments have renewed their Athena Swan Charters, and all departments now hold an award, but of particular note is the Department of Surgery and Cancer, who have secured the first Gold Athena Swan award for a Medical Department in the UK leads Gina Brown, Christopher Peters, Karen Pontifex who are to be congratulated for their dedication and focus. The work across Imperial continues to be supported by the outstanding efforts of Rob Bell from the EDIC centre.
- **Stonewall Action Group:** <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/equality/accreditations/stonewall/> We submit to the Stonewall Work Equality Index every two years. Our most recent application was submitted November 2023, and we are expecting the outcome in June 2024. Cynthia So from EDIC pulled together a thorough and thoughtful report for submission to the Index and provides essential underpinning support. The index is quite prescriptive on actions, somewhat controversial in its emphasis and as a result many universities no longer

participate. Several policies have had to be or are in the process of being reviewed, that are in place because of our association with the Index. We have worked with the wider community via consultation at the committee and several discussions with the Imperial legal team to formulate an acceptable definition of Transphobia that also meets our responsibilities with respect to Freedom of Speech.

- **Disability Action Committee:** <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/equality/governance-and-leadership/disability-action/> The college is a Disability Confidence Leader <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/equality/accreditations/disability-confident/> The DAC brings together the key providers addressing Disability across staff and students and works to an annual action plan seeking to achieve 3 key objectives. The Disability Confidence Leadership status provides guidance for change but does not require a detailed action plan to be delivered. Having said that the committee itself is very active and well served by the Executive Sponsors of ABLE, the Disability Staff network. The workplace adjustment passport was recently established for staff, and a paper went to PCC to highlight and also to raise awareness of the new structure for implementation of Occupational Health recommendations. It was agreed to bring a report back to PCC after a review period of twelve months. It is noteworthy that there was a fifty percent increase of staff declaring disability status on the staff survey of 2022 than recorded on ICIS. Declaration rates are a fraction of those in the general population. The student union requests that a similar disability study passport structure is embedded for students to avoid students having to repeatedly request allowances as they move from course to course, or indeed UG to PGT or PGR status. EDIC is redesigning the Disability web pages to bring them in line with the Allyship pages for other underrepresented groups.
- **EDI Forum:** <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/equality/governance-and-leadership/forum/> This is a recently reconstituted committee with representation from staff networks, department EDI leads, Faculty leads, and EDI leads from various parts of Imperial. Although intended to bring the community together, it is unwieldy. It meets once a term only, so the AP-EDI have only chaired two meetings so far, but it requires a rethink to make it function.
- **EDI Advisory Group:** [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Group | Administration and support services | Imperial College London](#)

This new committee chaired by the AP EDI has vice Dean EDI, EDIC, HR and Comms representation and reports to the People and Culture Committee. The intention is to bring EDI matters of note to a representative group to construct and discuss paperwork to then take to the People and Culture Committee. The EDIAG initially met in November 2023 and again in February 2023 to discuss the embryonic strands of the next EDI strategy. Next EDI AG will be May 30. It replaces the EDI Strategy group chaired by the Provost.

Some Key Activities that the AP EDI have been involved with:

'How The Values Can..' Values Senior Leaders Masterclass – participated in this role enactment on how the Imperial Values can be used helpfully or weaponized when in the wrong hands. A very insightful session using actors to assist learning, run by the POD (People & Organizational Development) team in ODI.

Inclusive Recruitment: A number of departments moved forward constructively as a result of the first Inclusive Recruitment workshop in November 2022. The I-X recruitment model has been held up as an extremely successful hiring strategy (50% female in first round, 75% minority ethnic in the second round). Discussions with Eric Yeatman and separately with Rob Farace have been held to try to understand more specifically why the I-X process was so successful, hiring a high percentage of women and ME staff. Bottom line was the time taken to formulate a programmatic approach, promotion on social media channels and use of network contacts to promote the scheme. We are in

the process of interviewing the new staff hired and plan to circulate a draft report once we have captured their perspective.

Provost Visiting Professor Programme: 78 applicants for this round with a good number of interesting high-quality applicants. Five strong candidates have been selected to go forward.

Excellence Fund for Learning and Teaching: Tackling Racism within the Curriculum

This Education Office's Excellence funding call received 21 applications with 3 being directly supported at the initial review phase. Discussion to refine and develop a further 3 collaborative projects are ongoing. This however is a good reflection of the appetite and desire to develop tools and strategies for greater inclusion and awareness within our community.

Celebrating Diverse Excellence: Official Unveiling of Plaque for the Nobel Prize winning Physicist Abdus Salam Library, Monday 29th January with keynote speakers Professor Brian Cox and Prof. Atish Dabholkar (Director of the [Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics](#) (ICTP)). Prof. Atish's main message (outside of unifying fundamental forces) was an elegant discourse on the importance of the diversity of thought. Very much resonated. A historical one-day exhibition on Salam life being held in the Queen Tower Rooms, including his 1979 Nobel-Prize Winners Medal.

What Do Women Need to Progress in Academia – report commissioned by PFDC. Attended a pilot workshop (commissioned by AP EDI) to trial a tool produced by Research Coach for line managers to consider the 10 facilitating factors recommended in the report

International Women's Week March 4-8 theme 'Support for Women Throughout their Career Journey' – activities being collated by Sheena Cardoso (EDIC). Invited speaker Uzoamaka Nwamarah a Climate Change Adviser at the Commonwealth Secretariat and the champion for the Secretariat's Gender and Youth Climate Action Programmes, gave an inspiring [International Women's day talk](#).

Julia Higgins Award and Medal An excellent response from across Imperial. Award holders not yet announced. Celebration together with Julia Higgins and the Provost June 10, 2024.

EDI Seed Fund Supports up to £2K for early stage or exploratory activities. Has been a very successful scheme in the past, supporting 'Decolonising the Curriculum' activities, and 'Shifting the Lens'. Current round closes mid-May 2024

Imperial Cohesion: First on-line event for the staff and student community serving on departmental EDI or PCC committees, staff networks and others interested. Takes place May 1.

Connect Africa: Working with past and current appointees on the Provost Visiting Professor program to maximize the connection for developing equitable research opportunities within the EDI between Imperial and researchers in Africa and within the African Diaspora. We have planned a series of meetings to evaluate the Equity Model implemented by [Professor Gbenga Ogedegbe](#) at NYU. The consortium aims to determine the feasibility of developing a context specific approach to enhancing¹⁵ the equity model of research practice between Imperial and partnering universities in Africa.

Black Networks of Imperial: Initiation of a network to understand the perspectives of studying and working at Imperial. The Black Networks of Imperial is part of a 'Theory of Change' model to evaluate and co-create the structures to provide a great sense of Belonging and enable Imperial to be seen as a place where equity of opportunity is a reality for under-represented communities. (Termly meetings)

BEYOND IMPERIAL

National EDI Academic Leads (NEDIAL) Feb 2024: Meeting senior leads from across the country to discuss the REF 2029 environment and culture, structure and governance, and a new disability action group RISE Higher

Reinventing Higher Education – March 2024 international conference Miami USA with a focus on the impact of AI (Artificial Intelligence) in Education. WM attended. Imperial will host it in 2025.

How Diamonds Shines - March 2024 invitation to run EDI workshops for Department of Psychiatry, University of Oxford- WM attended

Universities UK Conference - Closing Ethnicity Awarding Gaps 2024 – April 2024 Invited chair of panel session on 'Having effective conversations about race' at the Uni. WM attended.

How to Change the World, Times Higher Education and the Global Business School Network virtual roundtable on the topic of: Tackling the Sustainability Skills Gap – What role(s) for higher education? April 2024. Invited participant. WM attended

EDIC activities (not a complete list)

Both Impact ([IMPACT development programme | Administration and support services | Imperial College London](#)) and

Calibre ([Calibre leadership programme | Administration and support services | Imperial College London](#)) are active and ongoing.

New Staff Networks development programme ([Staff network leadership programme | Administration and support services | Imperial College London](#)) is being rolled out.