

Edinburgh Napier University Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Research Framework

This framework the University expectations of equal opportunities on research and innovation (R&I) activities, funding and representation on funding decision panels. This is in line with the University [Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025 and Race Equality Action Plan](#) which commit to a positive environment where diversity and inclusiveness is celebrated and everyone is treated fairly regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability, age, ethnic origin, religion or belief, marital or civil partnership status or whether pregnant or on maternity leave.

A commitment to EDI in R&I activities is also important to demonstrating compliance with research culture and integrity practices such as UK [Concordat on Researcher Development](#), [UKRI](#), [Horizon Europe](#) and [REF](#). This includes ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion is considered and supported at all stages throughout the performance of a R&I project. Where the University is distributing funds to support R&I activities, we will ensure that funding call requirements and selection processes offer equality of opportunity between different groups of researchers and disciplines, recognise personal contexts, and promote positive research cultures (see sections below on RIE and School competitions).

Training and support on EDI

Mandatory training on EDI awareness is provided annually through the University training platform EssentialSkillz. The University also offers training aspects of EDI through courses available in HR connect.

In addition, other training and guidance will be available related to specific activities eg for those involved in REF, internal funding panels, specific funding calls. Some of these resources will be available externally to the University but will be signposted by HR or RIE staff.

The University will provide researcher development training on EDI in conducting research and what to consider when on funding panels.

Embedding EDI in your research project and team

When planning and conducting your research you should consider EDI in the research design, research materials and tools as well as project team composition and culture.

Equality: no one should have poorer life chances because of the way they were born, where they come from, what they believe, or whether they have a disability.

Equity: It requires the identification and elimination of barriers that prevent the full participation of some groups (project team and participants).

Diversity: Representational diversity in addition to diversity in education, expertise and lived experiences is fundamental to achieving research and training excellence.

Inclusion: Ensuring that all team members are integrated and supported is fundamental to achieving research and training excellence.

You should consider intersectionality which is an approach used by researchers to better understand and address the multiple barriers and disadvantages that individuals face with intersecting social identities, such as race, gender, sexuality and class. It is important when designing your research that you are not inadvertently designing in bias, which exclude really addressing the issues/aims your research or limit the assessment and value of the research or using tools that are potentially exclusionary to those who this work is trying to benefit.

When researching in areas related to specific characteristics eg gender, race, sexuality, disability you should consider ensuring that the project team has representation from this/these groups and if not include co-production of the research with members of these communities. Co-production activities could include doing a workshop with the community members to get feedback on the design of the research, collect data collaboratively or focus groups after primary data collection to inform future directions and conclusions. This will help your understanding of any specific issues related to the research for these groups, how to appropriately approach and interact to get the most of your research and to demonstrate integrity and applicability of any findings to the target population who will benefit from the research.

It may be useful to also think about:

- How will you utilise University policies, initiatives, and opportunities to actively support your research team?
- How will you support inclusive career progression?
- How will you promote EDI across the University and within the wider research community?

EDI in academic-policy engagement and knowledge exchange

When applying research to [policy and knowledge exchange](#) context it is important that EDI is considered in how the activity will be conducted. This is including who will do this engagement, how they select the people to engage with and where these people are located. This approach will affect how the impact is assessed and any findings from the engagement activity. If those involved lack diversity, then this naturally affects the pool from which diverse voices can be drawn to engage in academic-policy activities.

Where the University is involved in any funding applications (internal or external) for impact activities an assessment of the EDI characteristics of both the academic and external parties should be taken into consideration to ensure robustness in any outcomes.

RIE managed funding competition's

RIE receives a number of funds from the Scottish Funding Council to support and pump-prime research activities to meet the strategic needs of the University. These are distributed through open competitions to academic and research staff. This includes funds for researcher development, public engagement as well as strategic research and knowledge exchange projects. You should consider the principles of embedding EDI in your project as appropriate as described above.

Each competition will have slightly different requirements around the scope of the funding and the method of application, review and decision making. Details of each will be advertised before or at the time the funding call is announced.

The competitions will be open to all academics and researchers (equality of opportunity) and allocations will be based on quality and feasibility within the timeframe. As part of the monitoring and statistical monitoring of EDI of the competition we will seek to collect data on characteristics such as gender, age, ethnic origin, and disability including its nature (if applicable) and working pattern eg FT or PT. This is to ensure our processes are meeting the commitment to supporting EDI.

When convening funding panels the RIE team will collect EDI data from potential panel members to ensure that gender balance is considered and generally achieved. We will also ensure that members with other protected characteristics will have the opportunities to be represented on panels but due to small size panels and to avoid overusing individuals this will not be treated in the same way as gender.

School managed funding competitions

An allocation of funding is allocated to schools annually from the University quality related government funding to support R&I initiatives as appropriate to the needs of the School. You should consider the principals of embedding EDI in your project as appropriate as described above. A unified procedure in terms of how diversity- and inclusion-related aspects are taken into consideration in the context of internal funding allocations is described below. You should consider the principals of embedding EDI in your project as appropriate as described above.

1. School-level allocations of internal funding should be based on the principle of transparency, i.e., they should 1) outline a set of criteria based on which decisions are being made, 2) communicate the composition of the panel to be involved in decision-making and based on which criteria or in relation to which roles decision-makers were identified, and 3) how the decision-making process is organised (incl timings).
2. School-level allocations of internal funding should be based on the principle of equality of opportunity. This principle includes a commitment to considering relevant contexts which apply to applicants who do and do not share a protected characteristic (age; disability; gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation). In cases where a competition-based logic is employed, this will be achieved through an Equality Impact Assessment for each funding competition.
3. In cases where a competition-based logic is employed, allocation processes should be based on a peer-review process in which appropriate experts judge all applications on their academic merit through a stringent process. This process should be made explicit in relevant documentation and calls for submissions. Any changes to the process that might be necessary to make following the publication of the call should be clearly communicated to all academic and research staff members.
4. To facilitate reporting on equal opportunities, the following information should be captured in funding requests: Gender, age, ethnic origin, and disability incl its nature (if applicable).
5. Funding call forms should make clear that personal information provided will, at no stage, be used -or any part of the assessment process but will be collected for statistical and monitoring purposes only.
6. The School Inclusion Lead should act as a critical friend to the relevant School research funding panel to monitor data and recommend best practice as informed by relevant AdvanceHE and sector initiatives

Advice and reporting:

If you would like advice and support related to embedding EDI into your research or you wish to report an issue with the internal funding competition processes in the context of EDI you can contact

the Head of Research Governance. For general EDI support and advice, you can consult the [University Dignity at Work Policy](#)

We will collect EDI data on funding success rates where possible and this will be made available on request from the Head of Research Governance

References:

https://www.vitae.ac.uk/policy/concordat/Download_Concordat_PDF/@@download/file/Researcher-Development

<https://www.ukri.org/manage-your-award/meeting-ukri-terms-and-conditions-for-funding/>

https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/strategy/strategy-2020-2024/democracy-and-rights/gender-equality-research-and-innovation_en#gender-equality-plans-as-an-eligibility-criterion-in-horizon-europe

https://research.ubc.ca/sites/research.ubc.ca/files/vpri/Making%20EDI%20in%20Research%20Matter_Sept.2.2020_Slides.pdf

https://www.upen.ac.uk/what_we_offer/reports/Surfacing%20Equity%2C%20Diversity%2C%20and%20Inclusion%20within%20Academic%E2%80%91Policy%20Engagement.pdf

[Using intersectionality in policymaking and analysis: summary findings - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)