Paper 2: EDI Forum

Minutes of meeting held 16th May 2024

Present

Wayne Mitchell (WM)	Chloe Agg (CA)
Lesley Cohen (LC)	Rowena Wang (RW)
Kani Kamara (KK)	Sapna Halder (SH)
Rob Bell (RB)	Maxine Myers (MM)
Alex Dawes (AD)	Veronique Azuara (VA)
Anique Varleigh (AV)	Joao Cabral (JPC)
Simone Walker (SW)	Liz Elvidge (LE)
Sarah Essilfie-Quaye (SEQ)	Adam Sykulski (ASy)
Andreea Cojocea (AC)	Dawn Burby (DB)
Susan Littleson (SLi)	Johanna Jackson (JJ)
Sykes, Lee (SL)	Bernadette Byrne (BB)
Simon Levey (SLe)	Sevinc Kisacik (SK)
Aruna Sivakumar (ASi)	Darakshan Khan (DK)
Leah Grey (LG)	Chetna Vaghela (CV)
Jen Wiseman (JW)	Aurick Sahota (ASa)
Sophia Quazi (SQ)	Elliann Fairbairn (EF)
Spencer Cockerell (SC)	Adrian Mannall (AM)
Beata Wojciak-Stothard (BWS)	Sankalp Chaturvedi (SCh)
Aneesha Bhumber (AB)	Josh Hodge (JH)
John Tregoning (JT)	Lesley Regan (LR)
Aaron Lett (AT)	

No.	Item	Action
1	Welcome and Apologies	
2	Minutes of meeting held on 1 February 2024 & matters arising (**Paper 2**) • Membership and Terms of Reference of new EDI Forum Committee (**Paper 3**) Review	
3	Chair's Report (**Paper 4**) – WM Chair was read by WM, it was agreed that in the future not to read the Chair Report summary but to ensure the report is sent to the forum membership to review prior to attending the session.	AP-EDI to ensure minutes and reports are sent to at least 1 week prior to meeting
4	**New EDI Strategy (Paper 5) – WM and LC** LC and WAM outlined the key elements of the new EDI strategy, highlighting that the Imperial values are at the heart of the new EDI strategy. The 7 key themes of the strategy plus one from the Imperial Strategy; • Imperial Training and Monitoring • Imperial inclusive Recruitment • Staff Research and Teaching Culture • Student Experience, Community and Culture • Support, Empower and Celebrate	

	• Visibility Beyond Imperial • Imperial Community Cohesion • Imperial Talent - (From the Imperial Strategy) LC highlighted that having been at Imperial for 33 years the culture has changed enormously. Our role as AP-EDI can only be to 'assist, monitor, guide and influence'. Through regular communications with various faculties, departments and networks we aim to effectively identify the current working practices and work with appropriate teams to determine how to make them more inclusive for everyone at Imperial. The presentation was following by a forum discussion of the EDI Strategy using the breakout rooms.	
	New EDI Strategy Feedback (Zoom Breakout Rooms) WM outlined the new format of engaging and capturing EDI forum member whilst gaining their thoughts and views on the new EDI strategy. The session incorporated the use of zoom breakout rooms to create small groups discussion of the 8 key areas and padlet as a means of capturing the key points from each themed discussion. The discussion were on: 1. EDI Strategy: the forum was asked to discuss the 7 areas of the EDI strategy and submit via padlet, a summary of the points of the key ideas from their groups 2. EDI Forum format 3. Equality vs Equity for the E of EDI Responses from the discussion are available at EDI Vision (padlet.com). A summary of the key themes in Paper 3- The forum was sent to the breakout room to discuss, and returned to provide a brief summary of some of the key points from their discussion.	
5	Future Structure of the EDI Forum – To discuss the forum structure and format, the group was again divided and asked to focus on: 1. Please comment on the current format of the EDI Forum 2. How can we make the EDI Forum more inclusive? 3. How can we make EDI Forum more effective? Responses from the discussion are available at EDI Vision (padlet.com). A summary of the key themes in Paper 3- Generally, it was felt that the use of the breakout rooms had effectively facilitated better engagement and discussion and should be used in the future. Other points included ensuring that the notification of topic areas that to be discussed and using a variety of in-person events for the forum. Some suggestion that the forum could be more frequent (monthly/ every six weeks) for shorter duration (1 hour). The forum would then consist of 1 or 2 topics for discussion and could include presentations from specific departments or groups providing evidence of best practice. Final discussion point was to look at the potential for changing the name from Equality to Equity. JPC stated that Equity is the desired outcome but would be reluctant for us to just change the named from Equality to Equity without a clear strategy for	

	demonstrating the steps needed for making the transition. The change has wide-reaching implications and therefore we need to first clearly outline the steps and then start working towards the change we want to see. SCh highlighted the clear distinction between Equality and Equity, suggesting that we need to recognise the fairness of opportunity with the equality of outcome. Equality is the starting point and equity is the end objective, i.e. it's more than just getting people through the door, it's about engagement and inclusion. . LE highlighted the nuances of the English language and suggested caution before consideration of any type of change. Effectively the generally principle of equity was supported by most but all felt that a clear strategy to achieve this objective is needed.	
6	AOB SLe asked for an update on the Freedom of Speech Working group and how it impacts the various groups within the university. WM will invite a member of the FoS working group to attend. NB New government has suspended this HE FoS actions with the OfS – LE ask for a look at the nomination structure for the President and Provost Excellence Award. LC stated that we would need to get the data over the past 5 years to determine winners. Not sure that we can get information of those nominated but look at the proportions. LE stated that previously she had prepared a guideline for how to write unbiased references, but it does not seem to have been taken up. LE suggests that a total review of the recognition systems is needed. JPC highlighted that as the applications are not public documents, this may mean they are not subject to the same level of scrutiny but would be happy to do an evaluation to gain a better picture of the situation. LR, had previously worked with LE, and mentioned that regarding female promotion, the lack of recognition for their work within the EDI space meant that many no longer felt they could engage in EDI-related activities. This is a real 'own goal' as many have become disillusioned and stopped engaging as their efforts are not being recognized or rewarded. JT suggested having a forum discussion to raise awareness of these issues at the start of the nomination process could be a possible intervention to foster a behavioral change at this crucial timepoint.	Ask member of the FoS to attend a future forum and provide update of the FoS status.

Action Point	Activity	Responsibility
1	Contact Suzanna Christopher regarding update of the staff survey results and the implications for EDI	AP-EDI
2	Branding Team regarding the consultation process and how different departments/networks can utilise the new branding format	AP-EDI
3	Provision of Reasonable adjustment templates for teaching staff to better support students with disabilities	Need to contact Education Team
4	Review the submissions from the workload model survey	AP-EDI
5	Staff Network Lead Meeting: Agenda item to discuss the workload model at their meeting.	EDIC and Staff Network Leads
6	Check the Disability Website for Allyship information	EDIC and ABLE

Updates from last minutes

- To be included in the next chair's report are the list of successful EDI seed fund applications and also links to the reports from previous years. In relation to the Reasonable adjustment template, need to talk to DAS and determine the current provisions. Also mention the activity for the EDI seed fund project, 'Everything I wish I need' from a disability perspective.
- Simon Levey could provide update on the LGBTQ+ student video project funded through the EDI Seed Fund Award. The videos are available at (1310) Pride Month: LGBTQ+ Students of Imperial - YouTube. Thanks to be expressed to the LGBTQ+ Officer (Avi Ela) and Digital Media Lab at Imperial and all the team that assisted in the production of this resource.
- Medical School Publications Celia Brown, '*Is the awarding Gap at UK medical schools influenced by ethnicity and medical school attended? A retrospective cohort study'* and Paul Kemp relating '*The validity of Engagement and Feedback Assessments (EFAs) identifying students at risk of failing'.* Both articles are available in the Recent Publications folder.
- Administrative Support issues ongoing
- Stonewall Workplace Index outcome, with Imperial moving up to 33 on the overall ranking. Thanks, Cythnia for their work on pull this together. We recently had a meeting with Joely Greenbaum from Stonewall team who provided valuable feedback on the areas of good practice and how we could improve the score. Overall, it was a very good submission, and for future application we need to ensure that concrete supporting evidence is provided to corroborate the narrative.
- Follow-up with Melanie Lee about the Values Masterclass
- Disability Allyship Pages
- Impact of the EDI Strategy at PCC
- AP-EDI will be presenting the EDI annual report to UMB (16th September) and Imperial Council (27th September) outlining the key EDI related initiatives and activities.

Paper 3: **Comments of EDI Strategy**

EDI Strategy	Key Ideas	Summary of Participants Comments
1. Imperial Engagement and Training	Tools to deliver shared goals	Forum comments suggest: 1. Lack of engagement since Covid due to people being more conscious of their time and wanting a better work-life balance. 2. More targeted training with greater relevance to audience 3. Create clear and concise flow charts outlining standardized procedures for effective training. 4. Accessibility of resources that supplementary the current training provision and enables individuals to gain insight of systems. A 'one-stop shop' of key information related to the specific training topic. 5. The EDI essential training should have an equivalent passing rate as for other training courses. Conflicting messages for cultural change and learning practice. The option to skip to the test may prevent new learning
2. Imperial Inclusive Recruitment	Identifying Excellence	Forum comments indicate that they would like to see: 1. Better selection and recruitment processes with appropriate refresher training and panelist selection. 2. Standardization of the process for greater transparency 3. Be bolder in the recruitment process, to create schemes that address the challenges we face (diversity of Council / UMB) 4. Better use of the Know Your Pool, use of external experts to identify greater diversity of talent 5. Focus on inclusive language for job adverts.
3. Imperial Talent	Attracting and nurturing the next generation diverse leaders	Forum comments indicate that they would like to see: 1. Mechanisms for identifying and supporting individuals early in their careers and promoting greater visibility of diverse role models. 2. Transitional mentoring, support for demystifying the academic pathway, clearly defining criteria and the mechanisms for meeting the requirements for the transitioning. 3. Talent reference points - London/UK/ Global removing bias when looking for talent.

		4. Better contextual understanding of intersectionality (i.e. ethnicity and class) and how these impact on talent identification and assessment of developmental needs. 5. Clearer definitions of workload models and visible role models/ mentors.
4. Support, Empower and Celebrate	Integration and recognition	Forum comments suggest: 1. Greater empathy and awareness from Senior Management on the impact of work practices of individuals with protected characteristics 2. Emphasis on celebrating the community throughout the year not just within recognitions months. 3. President's and Provost's awards should give more recognition to professional services staff - too much emphasis on academic staff 4. Better renumeration and recognition for this engaged in EDI activities 5. More internal communication focusing on intersectional stories and diverse people within the community.
5. Imperial Student Community and Culture	Improving equity and understanding	Forum comments suggest: 1. Peer mentoring program to assist with academic progress of younger students. 2. Culturally appropriate counsellors and support staff to assess student's well-being (Chinese/ Black/ Asian counsellors). Overcoming cultural barriers. 3. Provision of organogram highlighting the various initiatives and their objectives. Make more streamlined, transparent and accessible the initiative being developed to support the student community. Must ensure the students are actively aware and involved in the process. 4. Specific funding for student reps to develop initiative that supports the student community. 5. Greater inclusion of student reps in the departmental community. For example, sitting on panels/ committees and providing the student voice on issues that affect them.
6. Imperial Community Cohesion	Creating a sense of belonging	Forum comments suggest:

		1. Utilize as a platform for sharing and celebrating good practice across the Imperial community. 2. Important for developing a clear communication strategy/ style for cascading information throughout the community. Can the system be streamlined
7. Visibility Beyond Imperial	Communication	Forum comments suggest: 1. Understanding for the criteria for obtaining 'Gold Standard', this requires time to raise the profile/showcase the activities 2. Identification of strategic models for promoting, celebrating and gaining greater external visibility for EDI activities. 3. EDI workload needs to be properly monitored, measured and rewarded for individuals engaging in these activities. Appropriate time allocated to make effective engagement and report part of the cultural identity of Imperial. 4. Should we try to identify big pieces of successful work from recent years across Imperial, and then encourage/support those who delivered that work to find external opportunities to showcase and raise their visibility?
8. Imperial Research and Teaching Culture	Enhancing collaboration, innovation, respect and integrity	Forum comments suggest: 1. Identify what external organizations are doing to make their research and teaching cultures more inclusive. 2. Sharing best practice, foster more collegiate/ collaborative environment for developing and institutional best practice. 3. Communicating and monitoring best practice. How to overcome 'fixed' institutional memory/mindset, 'this is the way that we do things'. Can we develop more flexible and adaptive organizational culture? 4. Greater inclusion between the various communities that make up Imperial. Academic, PTO, Teaching and Learning, students. How to ensure everyone's voice is heard, acknowledged and including in the decision-making process. 5. Communications styles, greater illustrations of senior leaders promoting cultural change in working practice

Appendix 2: Comments of EDI Forum Format

EDI Forum Format	Key Ideas	Summary of Participants Comments
Please comment on the current format of the EDI Forum	Viewpoints of the EDI forum format	Forum comments suggest: 1. Use of various campuses for in-person events 2. What's different between EDI forum and Cohesion? 3. Unique opportunity for all EDI practitioners to come together 4. In-person networking opportunities, Provision for faculties/dept/teams to update and also having more involvement in the topics for future discussions. 5. Receive documents in advance to read and properly process 6. Effective use of time. Refrain from reading long updates 7. Clarification on the purpose of EDI forum and Imperial Cohesion 8. Frequency and duration of the meeting (open a poll to find out)
How can we make the EDI Forum more inclusive?	Inclusive Practice	Forum comments suggest: 1. Shorter introductions and faster transitions to the breakout rooms to maximize the discussion. 2. Randomize the discussion groups to increase the number of connections with other practitioners. 3. Involvement of more student representatives in the forum

How can we make EDI Forum more effective?	What improvements would you like to see?	Forum comments suggest:
		1. Experiment with format to maximize the awareness of the different activities across the department i.e. potential EDI conference with posters and guest speakers
		2. Suggested topics for future discussion:
		  a. Creating culture change
		  b. Department to provide annual EDI progress report outlining their progress. These to be published online with the minutes.
		  c. Have specialists talks on areas of interest. These to be provided in advance of the session
		3. Forum size: Consider limiting the number of representatives who can attend the session
		4. Limit updates to AP-EDI and Head of EDIC

		5. Early notifications of format, so suitable arrangements can be made to speak freely.

Appendix 3: Comments of Equality versus Equity

Equality or Equity	Key Ideas	Summary of Participants Comments
What are your thoughts on using Equality for the E in EDI?	Viewpoints of the EDI forum format	Forum comments suggest: 1. The forum was split of the use of Equality and Equity. Looking at the definitions to suggest Equality of Opportunity and Equity focusing of fairness relating to adaptions required for an individual in order to make the opportunity truly equal. 2. Some highlighted the financial model of equity which has less desirable connotations. Therefore require better understanding of the two terminology before considering renaming the E in EDI.
What are your thoughts on using Equity for the E in EDI?	Inclusive Practice	