

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Centre (EDIC) – Guidance for diversity staff network leads

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1 Introduction

The following guidance is intended for the co-chairs of the four staff networks overseen by EDIC: Able@Imperial, Imperial 600, Imperial As One, and the PA & Administrator Network (PAAN).

We acknowledge that PAAN have a different leadership structure with no chairs or co-chairs. Where this document says “co-chairs”, we would expect PAAN committee members to follow the same guidance, except for the section on elections, as PAAN committee members are not elected.

If for any reason you are unable or struggling to commit to the role of co-chair and the expectations outlined in this guidance, or there is evidence to suggest this e.g. absences from meetings, not engaging the networks or submitting termly reports etc., then EDIC will meet to review and discuss issues with you informally.

2 The purpose of a staff network

Broadly, the purpose of a staff network is to:

- Represent their members’ views
- Inform and help develop College policy and change procedures
- Raise awareness of issues and also the support available in College
- Act as safe spaces for members to discuss issues

We recognise that each staff network is different and unique. We encourage each network to operate in an organic manner that truly reflects who they are, and in the process to do the following:

- Engage members via events, training and development opportunities, regular activities and involve members in the organisation of those activities as well
- Collaborate with other networks, involving their own members in being allies to members of other networks
- Work with EDIC should they get advisory/consultancy related requests

The above list is not meant to be exhaustive or limiting. There are other things that staff networks do, or could do.

3 Induction for network co-chairs

New co-chairs are expected to do the following within 3 months of becoming a co-chair:

- Read this document
- Complete these two e-learning courses:
 - [Equality, diversity and inclusion at Imperial online course](#)
 - [Unconscious bias online course](#)
- Meet with the EDIC team, and have another meeting separately with Kalpna Mistry and Cynthia So

We would also recommend that co-chairs attend other [EDI training courses](#) and read these pages:

- [How to be a white ally](#)
- [How to be a LGBTQ+ ally](#)

Co-chair(s) who are stepping down should have handover meetings with the new co-chair(s).

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with Kalpna and Cynthia if you have any questions about your new role.

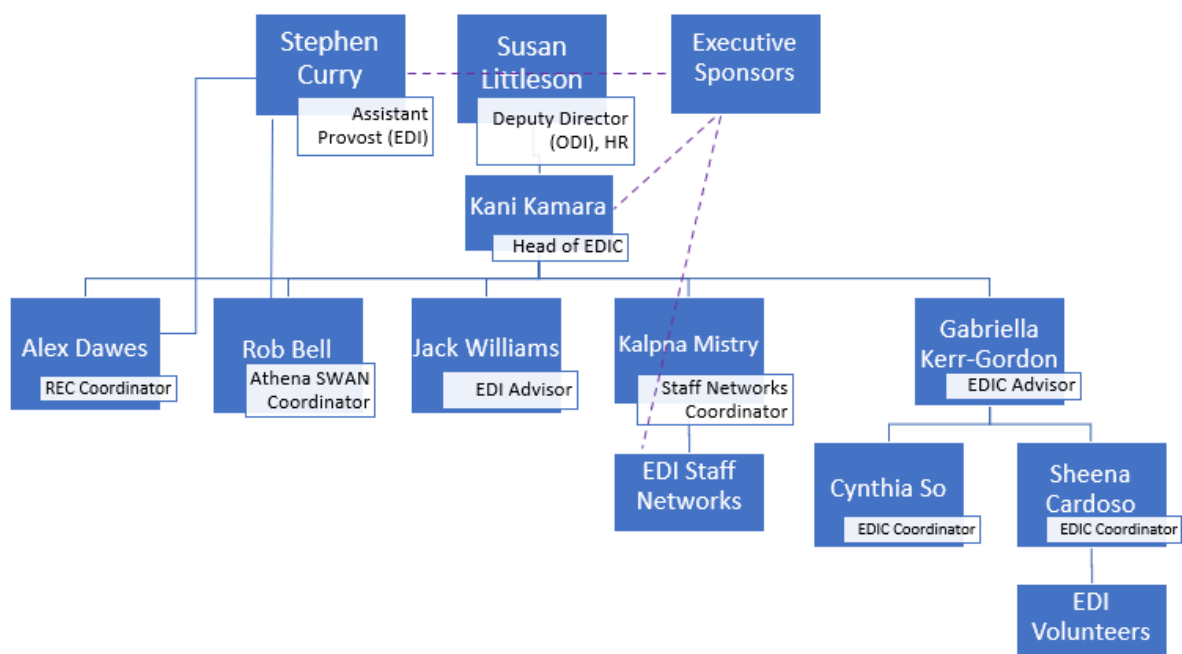
4 Protected time for network activities

Prior to becoming a network co-chair, a member of staff should discuss the role with their line manager and indicate that, as a co-chair, they might be expected to spend up to one day a month on network-related activities.

It is anticipated that most managers would be supportive once they are aware of what activities are being undertaken and why – it is just one way that managers are assisting to promote equality, diversity and inclusion and is very much in line with [Imperial Values](#).

Should there be any resistance, please let Kalpna and Cynthia know, so that further explanation of the policy can be given to the manager if needed.

5 Governance and organisation



Able@Imperial, Imperial 600, and Imperial As One have Executive Sponsors. The role of Executive Sponsors is to help promote the visibility of the network, to report to the

University's Management Board (UMB) the priorities of the network, and to inform the network of relevant priorities of the UMB.

The co-chairs of each network can agree with their Executive Sponsor(s) how often to meet, but we recommend this should be at least once a term.

Network co-chairs should mainly come to Kalpna and Cynthia in EDIC for any operational needs. If you are emailing us for support, please ensure you include both of us in the email:

- Kalpna Mistry (she/her): k.mistry@imperial.ac.uk
- Cynthia So (they/them): h.so@imperial.ac.uk

Co-chairs should also work collaboratively with the Assistant Provost (EDI) and the Deputy Director of HR (Organisation Development and Inclusion).

6 What kind of support can you expect from EDIC?

EDIC can provide the following support:

- Induction of new co-chairs
- Help with network priorities/strategies
- Support and guidance with events
- Administration - this includes raising purchase orders (POs)/financial requests, room bookings for events, ordering catering, etc.
 - For **ordering catering**, please give us at least 1-2 weeks' notice
 - For **room bookings**, please give us at least 1-2 months' notice
 - Please see the next section for further information about finance and budgets

Any additional support needed can be discussed with Kalpna and Cynthia.

We are here to support your professional development as co-chairs, and we can help if there are any relevant conferences/training related to your role as a co-chair that you wish to attend.

We provide the [Staff Networks MS Teams site](#) as a space for the leads of all the staff networks to come together and collaborate, and as a forum for discussions.

For any support, please get in touch with Kalpna and Cynthia to discuss.

7 Finance and budgets

7.1 Your current budget

Each network receives an equal budget from EDIC to support their activities. Networks may wish to seek extra funding for their initiatives from their Executive Sponsors or from other sources.

Although the financial year ends in July, networks should aim to spend as close to all of their budget as possible by **the end of June**. This allows time in July to tie up invoices. POs raised too late in July may end up coming out of the following year's budget.

EDIC will provide a budget update to each network at the end of each term.

As soon as you think of an idea for what you would like to spend your budget on, please let Kalpna and Cynthia know, and keep us up to date with your plans. We can then support you with the payment process (see 7.3 below).

7.2 Planning for the future

The “planning round” for HR normally starts in March every year, when budgets for the upcoming financial year start to be discussed. EDIC is required to provide staff networks’ spending plans when it submits its own plan for the upcoming financial year. Therefore, please send Kalpna and Cynthia a rough spending plan for the upcoming financial year by mid-February each year, so that your ideas and ambitions for the future can be taken into account. We would need to know what you are proposing to spend your money on, and an estimate of how much those things will cost.

7.3 How payment works

If you are paying externals for goods and/or services, you need to know the following:

- 1) Are they already set up as a supplier on the College system? Please ask us to check if you are unsure.
 - a. If they are set up as a supplier, we can raise a Purchase Order (PO) for you. Please give us at least one week’s notice to raise the PO for you. Once we have raised the PO, this will generate a PO number, which you will need to ask the supplier to quote on the invoice. The supplier should then send the invoice to apinvoices@imperial.ac.uk. Please note that this is the easiest and fastest way to pay for something.
 - b. If they are not set up as a supplier, are there any alternative suppliers you could use, that are already set up on the system? Please get in touch with us to discuss.
- 2) If they are not already set up as a supplier and you have identified them as the best/right/only supplier for what you need, are you likely to be purchasing from them again?
 - a. If you are **not** likely to be using this supplier again (i.e. you anticipate this will be a single use), and the amount of the payment is less than £5,000, ask if the supplier will accept credit cards. If they do accept credit cards, we can raise a request for a Virtual Credit Card (VCC), which you can use to pay as you would use a normal credit card.
 - b. If you **are** likely to use this supplier again, and/or the amount of the payment is more than £5,000, we will have to set them up as a supplier on the College system. Please give us at least 8 weeks’ notice to enable the Finance department to set them up as a supplier on the College system.
- 3) Is the person you’re paying a self-employed individual contractor, rather than a company? This could apply for certain freelancers, trainers who are independent professionals, musicians, actors, lecturers, etc. If so, we can use a NPF (non-payroll form) for any payment that amounts to less than £1,000 to that individual for the year.

If you are paying for internal services within the College (catering, printing, etc.), please obtain a quote for the service and send it to us. We can then give you the finance GL code which you can pass onto the team responsible for the service, which they will use to transfer money from your budget over to theirs.

Network leads must seek written permission from EDIC when they are planning to pay for network-related hospitality or gifts using their own expenses which they then hope to reclaim later through the College's expense claims process. We realise that there are instances where this may be the most efficient and only method of payment, e.g. where the cost of a committee social is unknown. Once EDIC have agreed this payment method, we will provide you with the budget code to use to reclaim your expense and ask that you state the details of your network-related claim and upload your receipts or other payment evidence when making the claim on ICIS.

8 Reporting

8.1 EDIC

EDIC is held accountable for the staff networks that it oversees. EDIC provides regular reports to the HR management committee and network activities form a part of these reports. We also report on network activities in the College's annual EDI report and EDIC's own annual report. It is therefore helpful for us to receive regular updates from the networks.

All network co-chairs should report to Kalpna Mistry and Cynthia So in EDIC. At minimum, they should meet with Kalpna and Cynthia twice a term. This can be as part of your regular network committee meetings.

Co-chairs should fill in the termly report template and send it to Kalpna and Cynthia at the end of each term. The report at the end of the summer term should also include a rough spending plan for the next financial year. These reports should be sent to your Executive Sponsors as well for their information.

Deadlines for the termly report:

- Autumn term: Before the Christmas College closure period
- Spring term: Before the Easter College closure period
- Summer term: By 15 July of each year

At least one co-chair from each network should attend the Staff Networks Leads Meeting and provide updates at the meeting. This meeting takes place bimonthly at minimum and provides an opportunity for all four staff networks to come together, share news and expertise, and collaborate.

8.2 Other committees/meetings

The Able@Imperial co-chairs are expected to attend and report to the [Disability Action Committee \(DAC\)](#), which meets termly.

The Imperial 600 co-chairs are expected to attend the Stonewall Action Committee, which usually meets every two months, and support the College's Stonewall Action Plan.

The Imperial As One co-chairs are expected to attend the [Race Equality Charter Self-Assessment Team \(REC SAT\)](#) meetings.

The networks are expected to send at least one co-chair or representative to attend the [EDI Forum](#), which meets termly.

8.3 Network strategy

Each network is expected to have a strategy that covers a 3-4 year period. This should be a minimum of one page, outlining the network's aims, in line with the [College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy](#). Network members and EDIC should be consulted in the writing of the strategy.

The strategy should include the following:

- A statement of what the network is about
- The network's goals (these can be broken down into short-, medium-, and long-term)
- KPIs/measurable outcomes

9 Terms of office and elections

Co-chairs are elected for a **3-year term**. Any co-chair can run for re-election once, therefore serving for a **maximum of 6 years**.

When one co-chair steps down, the remaining co-chairs can appoint somebody else to be co-chair in the interim, to fill the remainder of the 3-year term until the next election. This decision should be announced to the whole network.

9.1 How to run an election

1. EDIC runs diversity network elections to ensure transparency and that elections are independent of serving co-chairs and any network committee members. Please notify EDIC at least two weeks in advance when you wish to begin the election process.
2. EDIC will announce to your members on your Teams sites that an election is upcoming. If you have a network newsletter, please ensure this announcement is shared via that channel as well.
3. EDIC will set up an online form for individuals to nominate themselves to stand in the elections. This guidance document will be available for anyone interested in standing to download and read. This form will be open for at least 2 weeks.
4. EDIC can provide guidance to anybody who wishes to nominate themselves. Anyone standing in the election should also discuss the expectations of the role with their line manager and have their manager's approval. This guidance document should be shared with the manager as well.
5. EDIC will collate the nominations and set up an online form for elections.

6. When voting is open, members should be emailed to invite them to vote. Voting will be open for at least two weeks.
7. After the voting period closes, results will be distributed to all the candidates first.
8. An announcement about election results should be made to your members on your Teams sites (and newsletter if you have one). This can be done by yourselves or by EDIC depending on your preference.
9. If the election results in a new leadership, the transition process will also have to be announced to the membership by the current co-chairs via newsletter and/or Teams.

10 Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) calendar

There are many EDI-related dates celebrated nationally or internationally, for example Black History Month, LGBT+ History Month, Disability History Month, etc. The [EDI calendar](#) is available online and gives a general idea of when and what awareness days/months or major cultural/religious festivals are happening.

Please check this resource regularly to be aware of what's coming up. If you see any dates that are relevant to the interest of your network, please do consider organising events and activities to celebrate and mark them.

11 Questions?

You are always welcome to contact Kalpna Mistry and Cynthia So if you have any questions. Please include both of us in any emails.

- Kalpna Mistry (she/her): k.mistry@imperial.ac.uk
- Cynthia So (they/them): h.so@imperial.ac.uk

We hope you enjoy your time as co-chair and find it a rewarding and fulfilling role.