

Chemistry Department EDI Priorities, Challenges and Activities since the last EDI Forum

Current priorities

- Organising events for Black History month
- EPSRC EDI sharing hub bid with University of York
- Athena Swan Gold renewal application
- Launching the iCHEM (inclusive chemistry) platform, which aims to bring gender equity to STEM with a chemistry focus
- Preparing for the annual World Food day event (attended by 200 people last year)
- Ramping up EDI training to encourage even more to take the courses offered by the College, Faculty and Department.

Challenges

- Trying to encourage College to address the need for multi-faith prayer rooms at White City. Currently, the Chemistry Department is hosting male and female prayer rooms in the MSRH building with the location of the rooms behind turnstiles causing security issues. Inductions have been given to 67 prayer room users from outside the department including Hammersmith campus, as well as 30 users from MSRH.
- Maintaining and encouraging engagement with EDI in the Department
- Helping to support staff and students during a new academic year that will bring the largest MSci cohort ever through the final year project stage in the Department's research labs

Recent achievements

- We are working with QMUL and Kingston University to support and encourage under-represented groups through a 3-year programme with [£200k support](#) requested from the Royal Society of Chemistry.
- EPSRC EDI Hub bid with York now well established through a series of meetings, also with other external partners at Royal Society of Chemistry and Royal Society of Biology.
- Supported the [African Caribbean Commercial Science Network \(ACCSN\)](#) at their launch event at the Royal Society of Chemistry as one of two sponsors. This partnership will help us to support current and future students of Black and mixed heritage to navigate and break through barriers and attract more diverse applicants.
- Ran the online Imperial Chemistry Scholars programme again with the [Brilliant Club](#) summer school for students from a widening participation background in Year 12. In addition to the week-long summer school, there was an in-person session in the [Chemical Kitchen](#) in South Kensington.

- We have updated requirements for our EDI Gold Badge to include 2 outreach events OR mental health training courses. This has led to 30 staff attaining Gold, 10 achieving Silver and 26 with Bronze status.
- Chemistry ran a pilot for the Annual Review Conversations (ARC) season from July to September 2023. ARC is a new approach to staff review and development that replaces the former PRDP process, placing a strong emphasis on meaningful conversations. 16 of our 40 Athena SWAN Actions relate to PRDPs (now ARC), indicating the importance of this process for our EDI ambitions.
- Successful student work placement scheme focused on gender and under-represented groups during the summer, covering lab experience, learning about operational aspects over 5 days.
- Seven Year 12 students from Black and mixed heritage backgrounds completed paid Summer Research Placements in five research groups over the summer in the Department, culminating in a presentation day with an external speaker from ACCSN and a bespoke UCAS workshop.
- Highly successful World Food Workshops were hosted by the Chemical Kitchen to celebrate culture and heritage from around the world, covering Tamil, Pakistani, Portuguese, Mexican, Indian, Ghanaian and Polish cuisine.