

EDI Seed Fund: Project Summary Reports

Deadline for submission: 31 July 2024

Maximum length: 2 pages

Please email any queries and your completed summary report to: [Associate Provosts \(EDI\)](#)

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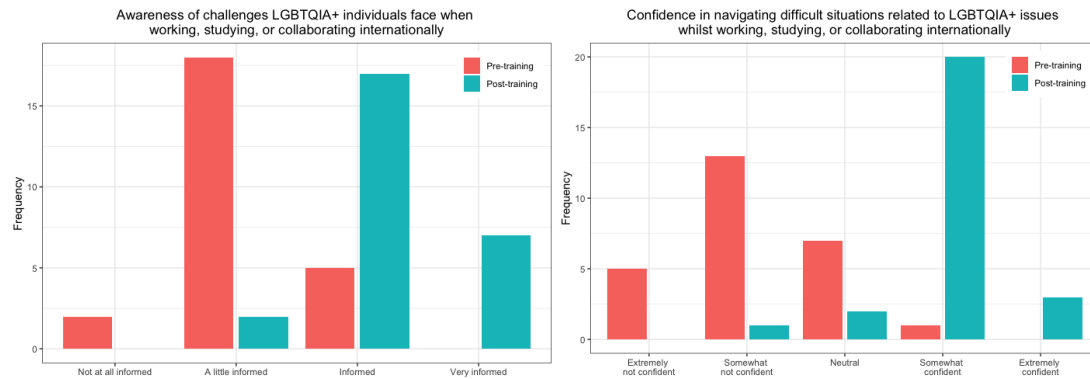
Project title: Provision of LGBTQIA+ inclusion, awareness, and mental health training with a focus on international travel and collaboration.

<p>Summary of project spend (please include how much funding granted and how much spent)</p> <p>We requested and were awarded £2000 from the EDI seed fund to run bespoke training sessions designed and delivered by the LGBTQ+ mental health charity MindOut. In addition to those funds, our department (Infectious Disease Epidemiology) awarded us £2,280. We spent £3080 developing and delivering three bespoke in-person training sessions. We spent £600 on a bespoke, 1-hour offline resource for self-guided learning. Finally, we spent £435.8 on catering for the in-person training sessions. In total, we spent £1835.8 of the EDI seed fund and all the £2,280 awarded to us by our department.</p>
<p>Summary of project achievements and impacts:</p> <p>The objectives of the project were to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase awareness for staff/students on the challenges of travelling to and collaborating with countries with anti-LGBTQIA+ laws or attitudes. 2. Empower staff and students to confidently approach challenging scenarios and navigate conversations safely through open discussion, role plays, and collaborative learning. 3. Provide LGBTQIA+ staff/students with a mental health "toolkit" when travelling to or collaborating with anti-LGBTQIA+ countries. <p>Using the EDI seed fund, we ran three in-person training courses for LGBTQIA+ and allied staff and students across the 2023/24 academic term. Before and after each training session, we asked participants to fill in questionnaires so we could understand needs, measure staff/student awareness and confidence, receive feedback and evaluate the success of our project. The first training in November 2023 was 4 hours long, including a wide range of content and delivered to 25 individuals. Feedback from this session was that the case studies in which we discussed handling difficult situations abroad from LGBTQIA+ and ally perspectives were the most useful and that a 4-hour session was too long to reach a broad audience. In particular, senior staff, who would have more power to make changes within research groups, would be more likely to attend a more concise course. Listening to feedback, we shortened the subsequent training sessions to 2 hours and reduced the size of the training from 25 people to 12, to better facilitate discussion between participants. Finally, we developed an offline resource (a one-hour video focusing on Imperial-specific case studies) for individuals unable to make the in-person training, for large groups such as undergraduate student cohorts going abroad, or those who want to go through it on their own time. This ensured the training was sustainable and long-lasting.</p> <p>Course attendance</p> <p>Over the three training courses, about 40 individuals received training. Most attendees were 'Ally Staff' (58%); the remainder comprised 'LGBTQIA+ Staff' (35%) and 'LGBTQIA+ Students' (8%). Of the attendees, 46% travelled to and 69% collaborated with a country with anti-LGBTQIA+ laws or attitudes as part of their work/studies at Imperial. Additionally, 27% had an interaction whilst working, studying, or collaborating internationally that made them feel uncomfortable due to their or</p>

someone else's LGBTQIA+ identity. When asked what they wanted to get out of the training courses, key themes emerged from the allies attending the course: they wanted to be better informed to support their colleagues and students and feel empowered to manage difficult situations. LGBTQIA+ staff and students were looking to gain confidence and ensure that they have the skills and tools to keep their mental and physical health safe when collaborating or working internationally.

Evaluation

The figures below show how the training course increased individuals' awareness of and confidence in navigating the challenges faced by LGBTQIA+ individuals. These increases were consistent for both LGBTQIA+ and allied staff and students.



In general, the courses were very well received, with attendees expressing their satisfaction and the need for further resources. Examples of feedback include:

- “More resources (certainly on the Imperial website) would be useful. A centralised series of docs/signposting would be useful.”
- “This is fabulous work, it absolutely needs to continue!”
- “As a pilot this definitely needs to be rolled out to wider audience and deserves funding”
- “This gave me a much better understanding of the challenges but think it's the tip of the iceberg. I strongly believe that all staff should be encouraged to come on this training and if possible make it definitely a part of leadership training if not all staff training as Imperial is supposed to be supportive of all communities and the more people are aware hopefully things will improve just from a human and mental health perspective”
- “It was great how broad this session was, however I could see the benefits of having a session specialised for LGBTQIA+ staff/students who travel for work/study (might encourage more of a safe space to share individual stories?)”

Outcomes:

Our project has made a significant impact on the LGBTQIA+ community at Imperial College London. We delivered three bespoke LGBTQIA+ mental health training courses to 40 individuals and developed an offline resource for future use. As a result of our training, everyone felt their awareness and confidence improved. Our work was raised at 'Conversation with the President,' highlighting the impact of our project, and we are currently in conversations with Imperial about ensuring our training is permanently funded.