ESE Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Culture (EDIC) Committee

Summary of EDI Activities 2023-2024

New Starters’ Residential Week for Widening Participation Students

* Faculty led project that was initially funded as a pilot in 2022 as part of the [Royal Academy of Engineering (RAEng) Diversity Impact Programme (DIP)](https://raeng.org.uk/programmes-and-prizes/programmes/uk-grants-and-prizes/support-for-education/diversity-impact-programme/cohort-2022/imperial-college).
* The project has been delivered for a third year and next year the residential programme will be implemented College wide in 2025.
* The programme was aimed at incoming first-year widening participation (WP) students
* The aim of the project was to improve the sense of belonging and flag sources of support for WP students. The high dropout rate in other engineering departments inspired this project. By providing an opportunity to get to know Imperial and its departments before the term started, the hope was that WP students would feel comfortable reporting issues and receive support before dropping out. Additionally, it’s an opportunity to remind students to contact support services if they still have not contacted DAS or the Student Wellbeing Advisor for support.
* The programme revolves around a pre-sessional residential week. The residential week consists of central College, Faculty, departmental and social sessions.
* The pre-sessional residential week received great feedback from the entire cohort citing that they made meaningful friendships and made seeking out support less intimidating.
* 2/6 eligible students signed up for the programme in 2024. Invitations were opened this year for students who stated on their UCAS application that they recieved free school meals.
* Overall, 73 students attended the residential this year which is 10 more than last year.
* The programme will be followed by a mentorship scheme in the spring term. This opportunity will be used to engage the other WP students who did not attend the residential week.

EDI Induction Talks for MSc and PhD Cohorts

* The EDI Coordinator delivered EDI induction talks for the incoming MSc and PhD cohorts for 2023-24. The aim was to spread awareness of EDI activities within the departments and let students know how they can get involved with EDI activities.
* The MSc cohort received a session of Active Bystander training delivered by Becky Bell and Sophia Quazi. The turnout was higher than expected but feedback was not collected. Feedback will be collected for 2024-25.

Ringfenced EDI training for PhD Students:

* The Graduate School (now called the Early Career Research Institute) has [an EDI stream of credited courses](%E2%80%A2%09https%3A/www.imperial.ac.uk/students/academic-support/graduate-school/professional-development/doctoral-students/professional-effectiveness/) for PhD students. To encourage buy-in from ESE’s PhD cohort, a ringfenced session is organised for incoming PhD students as part of the induction programme. The session is called [The Power of Diversity and Inclusion in Research](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/academic-support/graduate-school/professional-development/doctoral-students/professional-effectiveness/the-power-of-diversity-and-inclusion-in-research/).
* Course description from the website:

This course aims to examine the benefits of inclusive practice in research and innovation and how your identity can influence your viewpoint. Participants will identify how to build and expand the impact of their research or innovation, by including diverse audiences and perspectives in every stage. Identification of opportunities for inclusivity will make projects more impactful and increase the tangible contribution of their work to greater equity and social justice in society.

Decolonising geoscience seminar with Anjana Khatwa followed by a focus group

* Anjana Khatwa in October 2023 delivered a seminar about decolonising geoscience to the department. In addition, a focus group was organised for interested colleagues in Earth Science and Materials.
* A summary of themes discussed in the focus group included:
	+ Engaging children in the Earth Sciences
	+ Decolonising the curriculum - artefacts
	+ Decolonising the curriculum – geophysics and computing
* Email the EDI Coordinator for full notes from this focus group.

Contextualisation of RSM Statues

* The [History Working Group](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/equality/activities/history-group/) flagged the statues of Beit and Wernher at the entrance of RSM. The EDI Coordinator has been in contact with the College Archivist and History Working Group about the contextualisation of the statues.
* This item is still ongoing and with the College Communications team to address. The department is hoping for an outcome soon.
* The ultimate goal is to have both Beit and Wernher and the women in the statues contextualised. There is a square space at the entrance where the department hopes some kind of text or QR code can go. A temporary solution can be a pop-up banner at the reception of RSM.

EDIC Committee

* The past year focused on refining the committee’s priorities. This included establishing what was the committee’s remit and where the committee can support other key staff/groups who have key responsibility over a specific area. The key areas identified were:
	+ Addressing bullying and harassment
	+ Decolonising ESE
	+ Communication of EDI activities
	+ Staff workload
	+ Increase staff diversity
	+ External outreach

Bullying and Harassment Mitigation Strategy

* As a result of bullying and harassment being identified as a priority for the EDIC committee, a separate strategy was developed to summarise short, medium and long term actions to address bullying and harassment in the department. Here is a summary of the themes listed in this strategy:
	+ Awareness raising
	+ Training
	+ Support

International Day of Women in Girls in Science (IDWGS) Fund

* In honour of IDWGS which takes place on 11 February, the EDIC committee opens an outreach fund for students and postdocs to deliver outreach events. This is the 3rd year this activity has taken place.
* To launch the fund, the committee invited previous successful applicants to present their projects. A recording of the event can be viewed here: [ IDWGS Outreach Fund Launch Lunch-20240209\_123914-Meeting Recording.mp4](https://imperiallondon-my.sharepoint.com/%3Av%3A/g/personal/squazi_ic_ac_uk/EZzM2ghkC3hBnM-8M-U1gZUBlM_N9d324aY-ovaFH_WyRw?e=yWXIki&nav=eyJyZWZlcnJhbEluZm8iOnsicmVmZXJyYWxBcHAiOiJTdHJlYW1XZWJBcHAiLCJyZWZlcnJhbFZpZXciOiJTaGFyZURpYWxvZy1MaW5rIiwicmVmZXJyYWxBcHBQbGF0Zm9ybSI6IldlYiIsInJlZmVycmFsTW9kZSI6InZpZXcifX0%3D)
* There were 5 applications submitted and the panel decided to fund 2, one domestic and another international.
* The international project was delivered in July 2024 in Nigeria. The event had 35 attendees. More info about the event can be read in this news article: <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/news/255698/ese-msc-student-delivers-outreach-event/>
* The domestic project is still in development and will take place as a virtual escape room.

Decolonising ESE Teams Page

* As a response to conversations around underrepresented historical figures, prize names and decolonising Earth Science, a Teams page has been set up where staff can share articles, resources and thoughts on the topic.

Association for Black and Ethnic Minority Engineers (AFBE) Membership – Careers event

* Faculty of Engineering became a member of AFBE for 2023-24. Part of this package includes access to mentorship and a transition to employment event.
* A transition to employment event took place in the spring term 2024. Despite lots of interest and registrations, only 11 students attended. There was a maximum of 40 attendees for the event with 36 registrations. The dropout rate was high.
* The 11 students who did attend provided great feedback, with 2 students receiving internship opportunities. The event was with a corporate partner Ansys. There were various career talks, CV reviews, mock interviews and presentations. Additionally, there were plenty of networking opportunities where students could have 1-1 discussions with the Ansys partners.
* Low engagement and high dropout rates are a problem throughout the university and sector. Even though the 11 students who did attend truly benefited from the event, further discussions need to be had about increasing engagement with events.

College Staff Survey

* Surveys will run every other year to alternate with the College survey. This is to avoid survey fatigue.
* The College Survey ran in the Spring term 2024. Results were disseminated in the first departmental all staff meeting in September 2024. There was a 49% response rate.
* Next steps will involve consulting with staff groups with historically low response rates like research staff.

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) session for GeoSafe

* Part of the research project GeoSafe’s EDI strategy was to include a session on EIA training. This was to give participants a framework for making policies, procedures and events more inclusive of EDI considerations. It was a practical session based on Imperial’s [EIA process](https://www.imperial.ac.uk/equality/resources/equality-impact-assessments/).