



## **Re-Imaging Engineering Design (RIED)**

### **Policy and Action Plan For Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)**

#### **Issue 1 – 1<sup>st</sup> November 2023**

#### **Introduction**

The Re-Imaging Engineering Design (RIED) Programme is committed to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) among our research team and across our partnership.

The aim is for our team to be fully representative of all sections of society and for each team member to feel respected and able to give their best.

In RIED, we place a high value on diversity and inclusivity. It's not only the right thing to do but also enhances our collective performance. When we ensure that everyone, regardless of gender, ethnicity etc, has an equal opportunity to contribute and thrive, we benefit from a broader range of perspectives, skills, and experiences. This diversity leads to more creative problem-solving, better decision-making, and a stronger, more supportive team environment. In RIED we wish to foster an atmosphere where everyone feels respected and empowered to participate, ensuring that we all have an equal opportunity to succeed and make a positive impact.

These values and aspirations align with our parent higher education institutions who are committed to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations, and have a responsibility to publish equality information (data) and review and publish specific and measurable equality objectives periodically.

This plan outlines how we will further champion EDI to ensure our commitment is embedded throughout the programme.

#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to specify the how the RIED programme intends to deliver best practice in EDI over and above the foundational practices of the three academic institutions, Queen's University Belfast, Loughborough University, and the University of York.

#### **Roles & Responsibilities**

The Principal Investigator has ultimate accountability for compliance with EPSRC's equality obligations.

The Strategic Governance Board of RIED has responsibility for ensuring the team's compliance with EPSRC/UKRI Policy through its commitment to Research Culture in RIED. Statutory requirements are all met through individual institutions, their standard practices and obligations in this space, where appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks are already in place.



Responsibility for implementation of EDI is through the **Investing in People Team**, Chaired by the RIED Operations Manager, with the Principal Investigator carrying ultimate accountability. The liP Team reports through the RIED Operational Team Review and to the RIED Strategic Governance Board, as shown in the [RIED Governance Structure](#).

**All Team members** have a personal responsibility to read, understand and practically apply this policy alongside their own institutional requirements. They also have a responsibility to challenge and report unacceptable behaviour in a safe manner and in accordance with their own institutional policies and regulations.

**Academic staff** in RIED have a responsibility to:

- set a good example by treating all members of the team with dignity and respect and challenging unacceptable behaviour;
- ensure all team members, researchers and students are aware of this Policy and know how to report discrimination, harassment or bullying in their home institution, and that reporting incidents does not result in victimisation;
- present their team members with information (or knowledge about where to find such information) about employee rights as defined within the scope of the individual University policies
- deal with complaints fairly, equitably, thoroughly, confidentially and within the agreed timescales.

### **Objectives of the RIED EDI Policy**

The RIED Programme EDI Policy aims to:

- assess the impact on equality of our policies, procedures, and practices by completing Equality Impact Assessments.
- have an effective data monitoring and analysis process.
- involve team members and other stakeholders in the development and delivery of our equality objectives. And ensuring these groups are reflective of the diverse make up of our team and stakeholders.
- promote equality, diversity and inclusion through internal and external communications.
- Ensuring or verifying that all academic leads and team members take part in all equality training and that those who are involved in any part of our recruitment and selection processes undertake mandatory recruitment training.
- appoint, train, develop, reward and promote on the basis of merit and ability.
- ensure that all team members and their representatives are provided with and know how to contact, appropriate forums at different levels within their home organisation, to discuss equality, diversity and inclusion issues and raise any concerns.

### **Monitoring and Auditing**

Progress against the action plan will be reviewed quarterly in the Investing in People team and this will be reported to the Operations Team and the Strategic Governance Board. An annual review of progress and completion of an Equality Impact Assessment annually.

In the spirit of open governance our progress, external engagement and training activities in EDI will be reported on our website at: [www.riedesign.org](http://www.riedesign.org).



### **Implementation & Action Plan**

All EDI activity and reporting will be initiated through the Investing in People Team (liP). The liP Team has membership drawn from across the partner institutions and from different roles within the team. The membership of the liP team can be found on the [RIED Website here](#).

Our Action Plan is built on four Pillars:

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| <b>Pillar 1</b> | Increase Diversity in Recruitment                            |
| <b>Pillar 2</b> | Increase Diversity in RIED Operational and Management Boards |
| <b>Pillar 3</b> | Inclusive Operational Practices                              |
| <b>Pillar 4</b> | Advocacy for Equality, Diversity & Inclusion                 |

It is recognised that each individual institution has its own policies and procedures which must be adhered to in respect on any activity, with specific policies in recruitment activity. This is compounded by different legal frameworks in operation in the devolved nations of the United Kingdom. The action plan below therefore is a “best effort” action plan which aspires to promote best practice across the partnership within this complex context.

The action plan, detailed for each pillar, is as below:



<b>Pillar 1 – Increase Diversity in Recruitment</b>				
<b>Number</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Success Measure/Action</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>P1.1</b>	<b>Increase field of applicants</b>	<b>Success Measure: Significant increase in number and diversity of applications for all posts.</b>		
P1.1.1		Advertise inclusively, using best evidence to encourage diverse applications	Lead Recruiters	For Each Post
P1.1.2		Use competency-based application forms (e.g. UKRI R4RI as opposed to CV and covering letter)	Lead Recruiters	For Each Post
P1.1.3		Collect data and review	Ops Man	Annually
<b>P1.2</b>	<b>Apply best practice in recruitment Panels</b>	<b>Success Measure: recruitment panel members all trained and all panels are balanced.</b>		
P1.2.1		Ensure all recruitment panel members have attended unconscious bias training and any other mandatory EDI training at each partner university.	Institutional Leads	Annually
P1.2.2		Ensure a balanced recruitment panel in relation to gender, ethnicity and age, as appropriate for and in accordance with the relevant individual partner university regulations. (e.g. use of external panel members if helpful and possible)	Institutional Leads	For Each Post
P1.2.3		Collect data and review	Institutional Leads, Ops Man	Annually



<b>Pillar 2 – Increase Diversity in RIED Boards</b>				
<b>Number</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>P2.1</b>	<b>Ensure Boards are representative</b>	<b>Success Measure: all boards are balanced and diverse</b>		
P2.1.1		Invite & Co-opt researcher and early career team members to SGB, ISAB and ICF	PI, Board Chairs	Ongoing
P2.1.2		Invite and co-opt external early career academics onto SGB, ISAB and ICF	PI, Board Chairs	Ongoing
P2.1.3		Collect data and review	PI, Ops Man	Annually
<b>P2.2</b>	<b>Ensure all boards have EDI as a prime objective</b>	<b>Success Measure: EDI Champion on each board and EDI is a standard item high on the agenda</b>		
P2.2.1		Appoint EDI Champion on each board	PI, Board Chairs	Annually
P2.2.2		Make EDI a standing agenda item and place early in the agenda.	PI, Board Chairs	Each Meeting



<b>Pillar 3 – Inclusive Operational Practices</b>				
<b>Number</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>P3.1</b>	<b>Education and Training</b>	<b>Success Measure: All team members have completed home institution training and participated in RIED programme training and events.</b>		
P3.1.1		We will encourage each team member to take part in the EDI training offered by their institution.	PI, Academic Mentors	Ongoing
P3.1.2		We will organise seminars on unconscious biases and EDI	PI, IIP Chair	Ongoing
<b>P3.2</b>	<b>Supporting Mental Health</b>	<b>Success Measure: All team members are aware of services available and comfortable to use them.</b>		
P3.2.1		We will publicise to the team the support, counselling and welfare services offered by each partner university for their staff.	Ops Man, Institutional Leads	At Induction, Annually
<b>P3.3</b>	<b>Meetings and Events</b>	<b>Success Measure: Team naturally flexes with all meetings and both attendance and engagement are high</b>		
P3.3.1		Wherever possible, core meetings will not be scheduled outside of a 9:30am-4pm window, to allow flexibility for colleagues with caring responsibilities.	Ops Man, All Team Members	Ongoing
P3.3.2		Meetings will be conducted in a mix of modes – online, face to face and hybrid - to ensure as many can attend as possible.	Ops Man, All Team Members	Ongoing
P3.3.3		Programme Team events and awaydays will aim to be accessible with regards to location, timings, and facilities, and designed so as not to exclude groups for cultural, access or other reasons.	Ops Man, All Team Members	Ongoing
<b>P3.4</b>	<b>Flexible Working Practices</b>	<b>Success Measure: all team members feel comfortable with their working environment and location.</b>		
P3.4.1		We will consider requests for flexible working where viable, in accordance with partner universities' policies.	Institutional Leads	As They Arise
P3.4.2		We will support any colleague who self-identifies as being disabled by making reasonable adjustments in accordance with the partner universities' policy, so that they can fully participate in activities.	Institutional Leads	As They Arise



<b>Pillar 4 – Advocacy for Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion</b>				
<b>Number</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>When</b>
<b>P4.1</b>	<b>Share Information Widely</b>			
P4.1.1		We will ensure that opportunities to take part in networking, training events, conferences, outreach and public engagement activities are publicised to the team and discussed with individuals.	Ops Man	Ongoing
P4.1.2		EDI is included in our RIED Induction Training Guide and will be developed through the life of the Programme.	Ops Man	Ongoing
P4.1.3		We will share other EDI information and supporting material through the RIED website, social media sites (e.g. LinkedIn and Twitter) and / or on our Coaching and Development App on a regular basis to maintain focus and attention on this.	Ops Man, RIED Office	Ongoing
<b>P4.2</b>	<b>Promoting Networking</b>			
P4.2.1		We will encourage all members of the team to link with representative organisations who will help, support and inspire them, such as: Women in Engineering Society, Association For Black and Minority Ethnic Engineers, InterEngineering	Ops Man, RIED Office	Ongoing
<b>P4.3</b>	<b>Championing Balance</b>			
P4.3.1		When inviting external speakers or panel members to RIED events, we will ensure we have a diverse representation so that a variety of backgrounds and groups are represented.	Ops Man, All Team Members	Ongoing
P4.3.2		Promoting our activity openly – we will publicise our activity via our social media and website to demonstrate that we are actively advocating for EDI.	Ops Man, RIED Office	Ongoing



**Further Information**

The partner university EDI information and policies can be found via the links in [Appendix 1](#). Recently UKRI has published its Strategy around EDI and EPSRC specifically their “3 year EDI Action Plan 2022-2025”. Links to the documents are in [Appendix 2](#).

Our commitment is also informed by the EPSRC Programme [EP/S011919/1 “Inclusion Really Does Matter: Improving Reactions to Gender Equality Initiatives Amongst Academics in Engineering and Physical Sciences”](#) and its outputs, as conducted within Queens University , Belfast from 2018 - 2021. This contributed to a portfolio of research and is summarised in “Other Resources” below.

**Gender Equality**

Gender equality remains a major challenge in the engineering, manufacturing and digital fields. All three partner institutions are therefore fully engaged with the Athena Swan Charter, a framework that is used across the globe to support and transform gender equality within higher education (HE) and research. All three institutions have Athena SWAN awards, and QUB was the first institutional silver in the UK. The RIED partner universities adopt the principles of the charter in all the activities they undertake.

**Table 1:** Athena Swan award level at each RIED partner

University	Award Level
Queen’s University, Belfast	Silver
The University of York	Bronze
Loughborough University	Bronze

Useful Athena Swan links and resources

Silver Awards (at University and School Level)

[Athena SWAN at The School of Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering | School of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering | Queen's University Belfast \(qub.ac.uk\)](#)

[Athena Swan | School of Electronics, Electrical Engineering and Computer Science | Queen's University Belfast \(qub.ac.uk\)](#)

Bronze Awards (at University and School Level)

[Athena Swan - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, University of York](#)

[Athena Swan | Equity, Diversity and Inclusion | Loughborough University \(lboro.ac.uk\)](#)

**RIED staff profile**

**Table 2:** Positions funded and filled on the RIED programme (as of August 2023)

Role	Number Funded	Positions Filled
Investigators	12	12
Researchers	14	11
PhDs	14	9
Professional Support	2	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>34</b>





**Engagement** – to be published on RIED Website.

Event	Date	Description
1	7 October 2022	<a href="#">Gender Inclusivity Workshop – Gender Bias – RIED Symposium</a> – lead by Dr Ioana Latu
2	14 March 2023	Face to Face Induction Training in QUB, Belfast
3	16 October 2023	Beginning to share “Inspirational People” information via the RIED website “Library”
4		
5		
6		
7		



## Appendix 1 – Institutional Links

### Queens University Belfast

#### Policy

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/directorates/HumanResources/hr-filestore/Filetoupload.866894.en.pdf>

This Plan recognises and will be updated if necessary to stay aligned with the QUB New Equality Scheme and Action Plan (2024-2029) as it proceeds through consultation and implementation.

### University of York

#### University level website and resources

[Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - About the University, University of York](#)

#### Policy

[Equality and diversity in employment policy - Equality and diversity - Human Resources at the University of York](#)

#### School level website and resources

[Equality, diversity and inclusion - School of Physics, Engineering and Technology, University of York](#)

### Loughborough University

#### University level website and resources

[Equality, diversity & inclusion | Human Resources | Loughborough University \(lboro.ac.uk\)](#)

#### School level website and resources

[School of Mechanical, Electrical and Manufacturing Engineering | Loughborough University \(lboro.ac.uk\)](#)

## Appendix 2 – UKRI Documents

### UK RI level website and resources

[Equality, diversity and inclusion \(EDI\) – UKRI](#)

### EPSRC website and resources

[Equality, diversity and inclusion – EPSRC – UKRI](#)

[EPSRC-091222-EPSRC3YearEDIActionPlan2022-2025.pdf \(ukri.org\)](#)

## Appendix 3 - Other Resources

### i. EPSRC Inclusion Matters

In 2018, the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) funded 11 Inclusion Matters projects. The projects focused on new approaches to accelerating culture change to enhance equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in the engineering, physical and mathematical sciences. In 2022, EPSRC commissioned Advance HE to gather and demonstrate the contribution that our investment in the Inclusion Matters portfolio has made to the development of new knowledge and the implementation of new approaches, aimed at increasing diversity and tackling inclusion challenges in the engineering, physical and mathematical sciences research and innovation environment.

The study established the breadth of impact the portfolio has made to date.

<https://www.ukri.org/what-we-offer/supporting-healthy-research-and-innovation-culture/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/epsrc/inclusion-matters/>

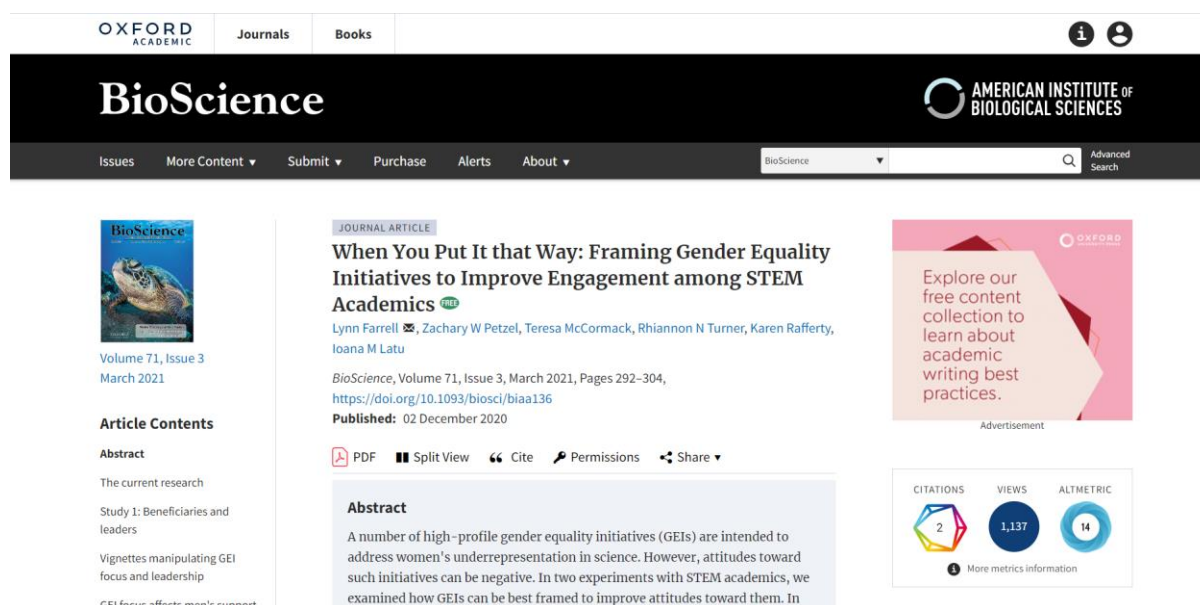
### ii. Inclusion Really Does Matter: Improving Reactions to Gender Equality Initiatives Amongst Academics in Engineering and Physical Sciences EP/S011919/1



biaa136.pdf

Inclusion Really Does Matter: [Improving Reactions to Gender Equality Initiatives Amongst Academics in Engineering and Physical Sciences \(ukri.org\)](https://www.ukri.org/what-we-offer/supporting-healthy-research-and-innovation-culture/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/epsrc/inclusion-matters/)

<https://gtr.ukri.org/projects?ref=EP%2fS011919%2f1&pn=0&fetchSize=10&selectedSortableField=firstAuthorName&selectedSortOrder=ASC#/tabOverview>



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**JOURNAL ARTICLE**

**When You Put It that Way: Framing Gender Equality Initiatives to Improve Engagement among STEM Academics**

Lynn Farrell ✉, Zachary W Petzel, Teresa McCormack, Rhiannon N Turner, Karen Rafferty, Ioana M Latu

*BioScience*, Volume 71, Issue 3, March 2021, Pages 292–304,  
<https://doi.org/10.1093/biosci/biaa136>  
 Published: 02 December 2020

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**Abstract**

A number of high-profile gender equality initiatives (GEIs) are intended to address women's underrepresentation in science. However, attitudes toward such initiatives can be negative. In two experiments with STEM academics, we examined how GEIs can be best framed to improve attitudes toward them. In

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### Change History

Issue Number	Description of Change	Date
1	First issue of Plan	November 2023