

EDICa



EDICa Newsletter- Jan-Feb

EDI Caucus: Supporting UK research and innovation with evidence-based reviews of equality, diversity & inclusion practices.

Not everyone likes the moving graphics of the software we're using for the newsletter. If you would like a static PDF version of the newsletter, please click here

<https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/Newsletter/2024-02>

If you want to see this newsletter in Sway, click here: <https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/Newsletter-05>

The newsletter will always be written in plain English, however if you would like a version summarised in British Sign Language, let us know.

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Call for Evidence

EDICa has been commissioned by UKRI to undertake additional research investigating **the impact of the UK's visa and immigration system on the diversity of our research & innovation workforce**. The **Call for Evidence** launched on 20 February and **will close on 11 March** in advance of three stakeholder workshops in mid-March. We ask our readers to please share our call widely, especially to anyone you know who may have considered coming to the UK to work in research & innovation but did not, due to the visa and Immigration system. <https://edicaucus.ac.uk/visas/>

Our report will be finalised this spring. We look forward to sharing our findings publicly once we have reported to UKRI.



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CALL FOR EVIDENCE

Are you a researcher or innovator with protected characteristics, who has applied for a UK work visa in the last 5 years?

(This includes the Global Talent, Skilled Worker, Temporary Work, and Visitor)

YES

Please complete our survey!

<https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/visasLived>

Or find out more:
<https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/visas>



EDICa

CALL FOR EVIDENCE

Are you a researcher with protected characteristics who considered, but opted not to pursue R&D in the UK due to the visa & immigration system?

(This includes the Global Talent, Skilled Worker, Temporary Work, and Visitor)

YES

Please complete our survey!

<https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/visasLived>

Or find out more:
<https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/visas>



EDICa

CALL FOR EVIDENCE

Have you, or your organisation, researched the impact of the UK visa system on researchers and innovators with protected characteristics?

(This includes the Global Talent, Skilled Worker, Temporary Work, and Visitor)

YES

Please complete our survey!

<https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/visaSupport>

Or find out more:
<https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/visas>



EDICa

CALL FOR EVIDENCE

Do you support researchers and innovators with protected characteristics applying for UK work visas?

(This includes the Global Talent, Skilled Worker, Temporary Work, and Visitor)

YES

Please complete our survey!
<https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/visaSupport>

Or find out more:
<https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/visas>



We're seeking the experiences of individuals and organisations that support/have supported and hire researchers and innovators with protected characteristics applying for a UK work visa.

This includes:

- line manager/recruiter of researchers
- HR practitioner managing institutional support for visas
- visa sponsor
- research funder
- trade union representative
- immigration law practitioner
- professional body
- learned society

This is not an exhaustive list.

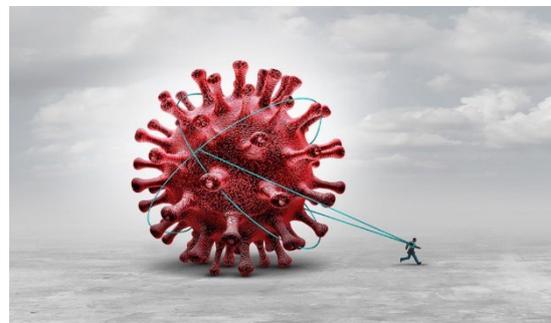


Call for Participants

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion after Covid-19: Designing enabling workspaces

We're searching for people working in - or have ever worked in - the UK's research and innovation (R&I) ecosystem. This includes researchers, technicians, administrators, managers, etc at any kind of organisation - whether small or large, private or public/Higher Education - whose main function is to conduct some form of research and/or innovation.

We are conducting online focus groups and interviews building on our Covid-19 survey, **to find out what more-inclusive and better-enabling workspaces might look like** - and how we might achieve those aspirations.



To read more, see our Workstream update on the Organisation of Work, or click here <https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/CovidStudy>

Flexible Fund Announcements

Round 1

We're delighted to announce the four projects selecting from the EDI Caucus' first Flexible Fund focusing on mitigating effects of Covid19 on inequalities across the UK's research & innovation ecosystem. The investigators are a diverse group from a range of institutions across the UK. For full summaries and list of investigators for each project, visit our webpage:

<https://edicaucus.ac.uk/edicas-flexible-fund-projects/>

Feeding the research and innovation pipeline: COVID-19 and closing the degree grade awarding gap for Black and other minoritised students

**Dr Kamna Patel, UCL
Paulette Williams, UCL
Leading Routes**

The work and career experiences of women with mental health issues in STEM research and innovation

**Prof Dulini Fernando, Aston Uni
Prof Elina Meliou, Brunel Uni London
Dr Krystal Wilkinson, MMU
Mind in Hillingdon, WISE (Women in Science and Engineering),
WIASN (Women in Academia Support Network)**

Understanding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the career life cycle of early career researchers in academia

**Dr Beldina Owalla, Oxford Brookes Uni
Dr Elvis Nyanzu, Oxford Brookes
Prof Tim Vorley OBE, Oxford
Brookes Business School
British Academy of Management**

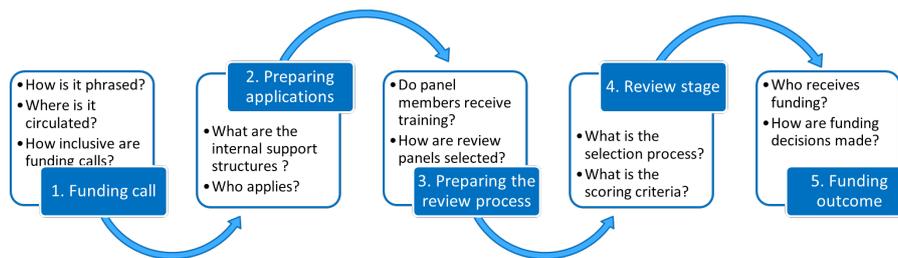
The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the career progress of disabled researchers in intersection with race gender & caring responsibility

**Dr Preethi Premkumar London
South Bank Uni
Dr Rachel Grant, LSBU
Prof Nicki Martin, LSBU
Dr Dominic Rees-Roberts at
Borderpoint Films.**

Round 2

In early January we opened the call for mandatory Expressions of Interest on our second round of Flexible Funding, which prioritises proposals that focus on the research process. This closed on 11 February and we received a substantial increase in applications from the first round. The formal call opens on 1 March and closes on 15 May. Two drop-in sessions are scheduled in March to answer questions. Full information can be found on our website: <https://edicaucus.ac.uk/flexible-fund/>

The diagram here offers one way of identifying stages in the research process relating to securing funding to support research or innovation.



1 - Stages in the Process of Securing Funding

Call for Reviewers

EDICa is looking for reviewers for the Flexible Fund Round 2. We welcome academics at all career stages, non-academics, researchers & innovators to review projects focusing on the research process

The call for reviewers closes on 30 April. The EDICa team will confirm the pool of reviewers by 20 May 2024. Each reviewer will assess no more than 3 proposals. Proposals will be sent by 28 May with a deadline of 18 June.

EDICa offers a one-hour introductory session for less experienced and first-time reviewers for this call, which will take place on 23 May 13:00-14:00 BST.

A one-hour briefing session for all reviewers in preparation for reviewing on this call will take place on 28 May from 14:00-15:00. This session will be recorded.

For further information and for the link to for form to express interest, please click here:

<https://edicaucus.ac.uk/flexible-fund/#Call-For-Reviewers>

If the form is not accessible to you, please email us at edicaucus@hw.ac.uk

Workstream Updates

The Career- Life Cycle

After more than 50 interviews of people from the research and innovation sector, EDICa has gathered together a collection of potential interventions to trial in the next phase of our research . We have already begun hosting co-design workshops with test sites (from the private and higher education sectors, and from professional and funding bodies) to review the possible interventions that would be suitable. This is a collaborative process supported by EDICa researchers and involving various stakeholders and decision-makers in the test site. We will work with the test sites over the next 18 months to support implementation of the interventions and gauge their effectiveness.

Examples of interventions include training, provision of products, alteration to uniform or protective gear requirements, and policy change.

In our aim to **build communities of practice** we are pulling together a group of people working on menstrual health in the workplace. If you are an activist or a researcher in this space, get in touch with us to join this informal network. edicaucus@hw.ac.uk We will begin hosting online meetings to share good practice and developments on menstruation and (peri)menopause in the research and innovation sector.

Research Sites Needed for Menstrual Health & (Peri)Menopause Study

We continue to be open to new UK-based organisations interested in piloting menstrual health- and (peri)menopause-friendly practices and interventions. We will co-design bespoke solutions to fit the test site. If your organisation is involved in research and innovation in the UK, and you think it could pioneer improved practices, email us at edicaucus@hw.ac.uk

The Research Process

The completed report, **Peer Review Bias in the Funding Process**, will be available on our website shortly. As well as reviewing peer-reviewed literature, EDICa has examined funder documentation, such as action plans, EDI guidance and information for reviewers. We highlight several gaps in the research and some of the actions funders have taken to address bias (that are publicly available).

Peer review bias is the focus of **two seminars**; the first is on **Tuesday, 23 April 11:00-12:30 BST**, with speakers Dr Émilie Koum Besson, Professor Mustafa F. Ozbilgin and Dr Ruby Zelzer. We will discuss the report's findings, their research on funding bias and racism, and the effect on academic progression. To register for this seminar, [click here](#).

The **second seminar** will follow in **May**. A panel with speakers from different funding organisations will discuss the rationale for and effectiveness of interventions that have been implemented to make the application assessment process fairer. To learn of the exact date and list of speakers when confirmed, make sure you're signed up to our mailing list- <https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/Subscription>

A key strand of this workstream was recruiting last autumn a cohort of about 40 people from the research and innovation sector who come from a diversity of lived experience, discipline, career

stage and seniority. These **Equity Champions** will now undergo a series of training modules on various aspects of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) with a view to embedding EDI in the research process and improving their "diversity literacy". We have scheduled the first of four training sessions this year for the Equity Champions, which will be on Gender Equity delivered in April by Professor Dame Heather McGregor.

The Organisation of Work

EDICa has successfully completed the survey phase of our **study on the impact of Covid-19 on research and innovation sector**, meticulously gathering and analysing both quantitative and qualitative data. The insights garnered have illuminated various crucial themes, including job satisfaction, workplace well-being, mental health concerns, and the impact of diverse communities within the workplace. This analysis lays a foundation for Stage 2, where we will delve more deeply into these identified themes through focus groups.

We are **now recruiting participants for the online focus groups or interviews scheduled in April and May**. These sessions, via Zoom, will concentrate on four specific themes, but will be focused on moving beyond the abstract theory and putting it into the physical reality, looking at how we develop more inclusive and better enabling workspaces. To sign up, [click here](#). The four themes are:

- Age Diversity in the Workplace,
- Gender Inclusivity,
- Support for Mental Health and Well-being
- Safety and Health Measures in the Workplace

For further information and to sign up to participate, click here:

<https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/CovidStudy>

These focus groups will also inform the development of co-design workshops planned for a later stage of EDICa's research on the Organisation of Work.

EDICa Seminars

Seminar: Menstrual Health at Work- 22 Feb

EDICa's **February seminar on Menstrual Health at Work** was chaired by EDICa's Postdoctoral Research Associate, Chiara Cocco, and featured a panel of researchers from the natural and social sciences.

Chiara Cocco shared initial findings from EDICa's evidence review and more than 50 interviews of people with lived experience. Ellie Honan, polar scientist and PhD researcher in snow petrel movement and diet, and Vice President of the UK Polar Network, shared her work on raising awareness and understanding in this area. Dharma Reyes Macaya, Senior Technician in palaeoceanography and biogeochemistry in the Lyell Centre for Earth & Marine Science & Technology and PhD researcher at MARUM, University of Bremen, Germany, shared her experience of menstruation and conducting fieldwork on research ships and in remote parts of Los Andes. Ashmika Motee, PhD researcher, explained her research on problematic menstruation and remote work environments. Juliet Nwafor, PhD researcher, introduced her research on menstruation in the

banking sector of Nigeria. And Gabriella Goodrich, PhD researcher, shares her research project on menstrual health in the hospitality sector.

The seminar is available, along with previous ones, on our website. <https://edicaucus.ac.uk/edica-seminar-series/#menstrual-health>

Closed captions on the recording have been carefully edited. A BSL version is being prepared.



Seminar: Peer Review Bias- 23 April

23 April 2024 11:00-12:30 BST online [Click here to register](#)

EDICa's workstream on the research process has prepared a report on **Peer Review Bias in the Funding Process**, which will soon be available on our website. As well as reviewing peer-reviewed literature, we have examined funder documentation, such as action plans and guidance and information for reviewers. EDICa highlights several gaps in the research and some of the actions funders have taken to address bias (that are publicly available). In this seminar we will discuss the report's findings, the panellists' research on funding bias and racism, and the effect on academic progression.

Part 2 of our seminars on peer review bias will follow in May. A panel with speakers from different funding organisations will discuss the rationale for, and effectiveness of, interventions that have been implemented to make the application assessment process fairer.

Speakers

- [Dr Cat Morgan](#), EDICa Postdoctoral Research Associate (Chair)
- [Dr Ruby Zelzer](#), PhD in Material Science, focusing on metadata analysis for the purpose of eradicating systemic and institutional racism.
- [Prof Mustafa Ozbilgin](#), Professor of Organisational Behaviour, research equality, diversity, and inclusion at the Brunel University London.
- [Dr Emilie Koum Besson](#), specialist in health finance at The Global Fund, and Advisory Board member on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at the European Global Health Research Institutes Network

Catch us here...

EDICa's Postdoctoral Research Associate Chiara Cocco recorded a podcast last autumn which came out in January. You can hear (and see) her talking about workplace taboos, breastfeeding and menstruation with founder and host of the Coffee & Cocktails Podcast, Dr Ann Wand. Dr Wand created the podcast to allow academics and other professionals to discuss their work 'over drinks' in a pub-like fashion that is entertaining and accessible to the public.



<https://coffeeandcocktailspodcast.wordpress.com/2024/01/12/ep-43-workplace-taboos-breastfeeding-and-menstruation/>

Catch Chiara Cocco and Dr Cat Morgan presenting at the 2024 Gender, Work & Organization Conference taking place in Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada. The conference is hybrid and will be from 17-20 June 2024. An online-only ticket costs 517 Canadian dollars.



Prof Kate Sang, Chiara Cocco, Dr Cat Morgan and Dr Nima Ali will be presenting a workshop titled "Supporting Menstrual Health in the Research and Innovation Ecosystems: Embracing Change to Create Accessible and Inclusive HE Careers" at the UHR (Universities Human Resources) conference taking place online from 14-16 May. Check with your institution's HR department to see if an institutional ticket has been purchased which could enable you to attend for free.

EDICa Senior Project Support Officer Fenella Watson will be attending the ARMA 2024 Conference, and hoping to present some of our research on funder demands for equity, diversity and inclusion in funding proposals. The conference takes place in Brighton 18-19 June.



Spotlight on the field



Thursday, 14 March 12:00-13:00 UK time
"mXplore: Advancing EDI training with the metaverse"

How can the metaverse revolutionise EDI training delivery? Register to see a showcase of one of the most comprehensive metaverse's in cultural awareness, along with a Q&A session.

[https://www.linkedin.com/events/mxplore-](https://www.linkedin.com/events/mxplore-advancingeditrainingwit7155486879084068864/about/)

[advancingeditrainingwit7155486879084068864/about/](https://www.linkedin.com/events/mxplore-advancingeditrainingwit7155486879084068864/about/)

A key deliverable for EDICa is a co-designing along with [Animmersion](#) prototypes of enabling workspaces which will be tested in interactive virtual reality simulations. Users will be able to experience certain aspects of exclusion.

The **Black Women in Science (BWIS)** Network is a community for women of African and Caribbean heritage in various stages of their scientific careers. They're keen to impact legislation and influence change in the STEM industry so that Black women feel comfortable and supported in their careers. They produce **monthly newsletters** and the latest issue features a podcast by **Dr. Chinedu Agwu** talking about her passion for the biosciences and introduces her ground-breaking social enterprise. It also features a **postdoctoral fellowship tailored for scientists of Black heritage** backgrounds funded by the Medical Research Council's Laboratory of Molecular Biology. Read more here:

https://www.bwisnetwork.co.uk/files/ugd/6abd7d_eaf4bee00dc8425d9b63b7410497748a.pdf

Last month the **Wellcome Trust announced £20 million in funding for Black, Bangladeshi and Pakistani researchers in the UK**, to advance their careers and improve representation in science. Wellcome also stated they would be introducing positive action in shortlisting for its competitive open funding calls and schemes this spring. Read their full press release here:

<https://wellcome.org/news/wellcome-launches-ps20-million-funding-black-bangladeshi-and-pakistani-researchers-uk>

The **University of Glasgow** recently advertised **fully-funded 4-year PhD positions in computing science for Black UK students** (deadline extended to 15 March, email JMSPHD@glasgow.ac.uk for more information).

The **Sanger Institute** also opened a call for their **Sanger Excellence Fellowship, offering 4 positions for early career researchers (ECRs) from Black heritage backgrounds**. Closing date 25 March. https://sanger.wd3.myworkdayjobs.com/en-US/WellcomeSangerInstitute/details/Sanger-Excellence-Fellowship_JR101706?q=excellence Last year the Sanger Institute commissioned a **review of this fellowship** which has useful takeaways for recruiting candidates in general, but especially those from under-represented backgrounds. <https://www.sanger.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/Excellence->

[Fellowship-summary-report-Feb-2023-final.pdf](#) Specific to these positions targeted at an under-represented group was this quote from page 3:

"Interviewees feel there is a **big risk** that people misunderstand recruiting/funding Black candidates as the solution to a problem that is systemic and long-term. They believe too much responsibility is often placed on the few successful candidates to represent their entire group in exceptional ways. Work needs to continue within organisations to transform governance, working practices and culture to adequately support more diverse, equitable and inclusive environments."

Spotlight on accessibility

EDICa will be hosting an end of project conference in late 2025. We look to sister projects like IGNITE+ and EDIS to learn good practice.

EDIS - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Science and Health - hosted a symposium last September which we attended virtually. In this reflective piece, EDIS Communications and Administration Officer Robin Craig shares their learnings. We have to confess, Learning #4 has our attention!

This piece is worth reading for those who organise events and for those budgeting for events in your projects: <https://edisgroup.org/lessons-learned-how-do-you-organise-an-inclusive-symposium/>

"How do you organise the most inclusive symposium possible? Is inclusion a diverse range of speakers, an accessible venue, a hybrid format, or all of these and more? How do you measure inclusivity, and how do you know if you've succeeded?"



You can also see the posters from the EDIS symposium here: <https://edisgroup.org/edis-symposium-posters/> Though from the health science sector, there are themes more broadly applicable in the posters - e.g. speaker diversity, diversifying university leadership, and diversifying research careers talent pipeline.

Get Involved

Sign up to receive our newsletter, calls for participation and Flexible Fund: <https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/Subscription>

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