Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Plan

December 2025

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1. Our approach to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

GBC firmly believes that everyone has a right to be treated with dignity and respect, and to be provided with equal opportunities to flourish and succeed in an environment that enables them to do so. We also value diversity of thought and experience within inclusive groups, organisations and the wider community.

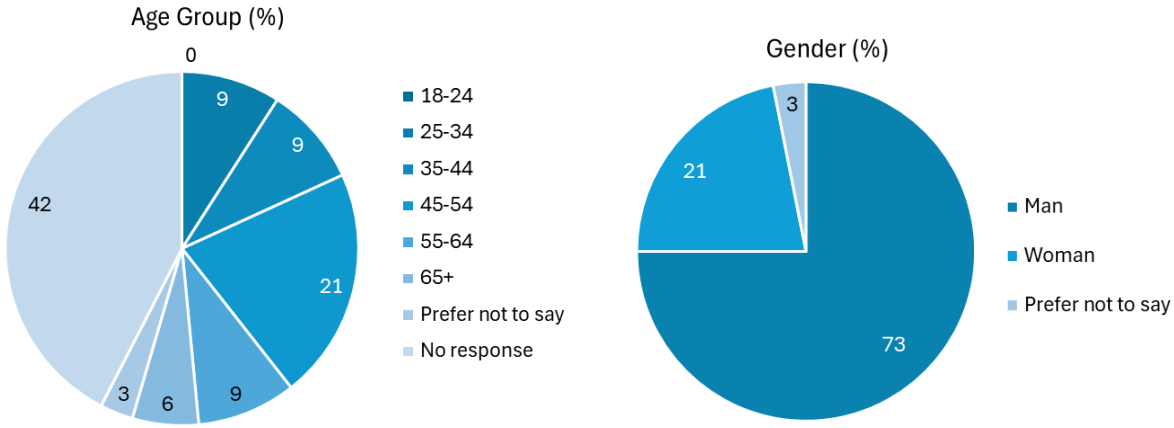
As the recipient of a substantial publicly funded research award, *GBC* is in a unique position to model Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) principles in our own actions and behaviours and take a strategic lead in promoting EDI in the research and innovation landscape, nationally and internationally.

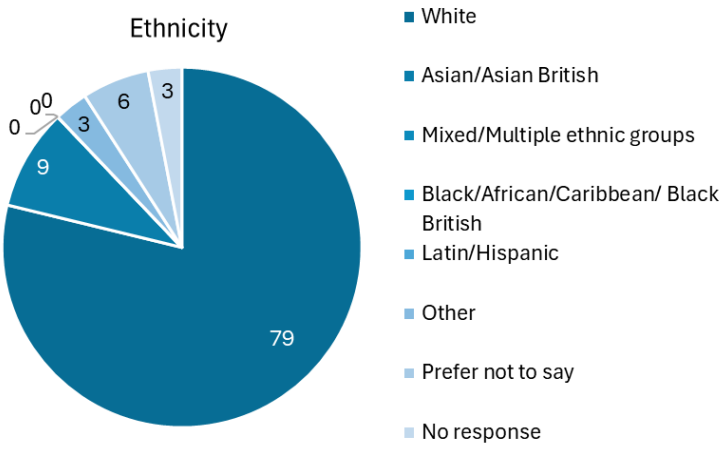
Every *GBC* member has a personal responsibility for implementing and promoting this EDI Plan, and its principles in their daily interactions with each other and when working with partners and collaborators outside the organisation.

This plan applies to all consortium members of *GBC* of a permanent and temporary nature, and to visiting workers, students or sub-contractors.

1.1 Current Profile

Composition of GBC in relation to protected characteristics:

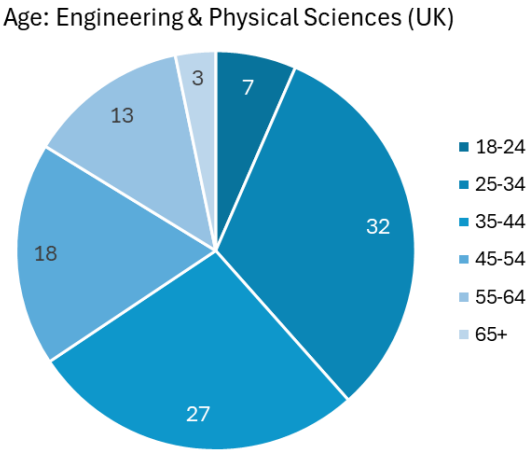




The following comparisons to the wider UK population use the latest available Census data from 2021.

Within engineering and physical sciences, the academic staff population between 2019 - 20 was approximately 17,000.(EPSRC 3-year EDI Action Plan) The gender balance within this population is poor in comparison to the wider UK population with 20.5% woman and 79.4% man (UK: 51% female and 49% male) (2021 census: Population & Houseold). Women in engineering and physical sciences experience a "leaky pipeline", with greater representation at junior level. According to figures from 2024-2025, the number of women aged 16 - 34 working in the sector is growing. However, retention drops sharply between ages 35 – 64, with only 8% of senior roles held by women. (Engineering UK). Suggested barriers to progression include an average of 25% longer at each career level before promotion and a likelihood 20% less than male peers to receive promotions.

Of those, disclosing their ethnicity, 79% of the consortium are White, with 21% of the consortium disclosing their ethnicity as ethnic minority, compared with 18.3% of the UK population (2021 Census: Ethnic Groups). The largest ethnic minority within the consortium was Asian/Asian British (9%).



Given the high number of non-disclosures regarding consortium member age, a comparison to UK-wide statistics for HE academic staff in engineering and physical sciences cannot be made (HE Staff Data).

It is clear from these statistics, and relation to wider UK data, that priority areas for GBC to focus on are improving the ethnic and gender diversity within our research partners. As hiring practices begin and PDRAs enter the consortium, these figures are likely to change. Careful monitoring will be performed by the Programme Manager and EDI Lead. GBC recognises barriers to equity for disabled people, as well as neurodivergent individuals to ensure that they can reach their full potential.

The Athena Swan Charter is a "*global framework to support and transform gender equality within higher education (HE) and research.*" All of our founding academic partners are participants within the charter holding at least a Bronze Award – eight consortium members have obtained Silver Award. GBC encourages all consortium institutions to strive for Gold Award.

The Race Equality Charter exists to help "*institutions in their work to identify and address the barriers facing Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff and students, while also providing a framework for action and improvement.*" Eight of the founding academic partners possess a Bronze Award, one possesses a Silver Award, and one is not a member. GBC encourages all consortium institutions to strive for Gold Award.

The Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers is an agreement between universities, research institutes and funders to support the career development of researchers in the UK. The key principles are environment & culture, employment and professional development. GBC aims to work in acknowledgement of all principles, with particular focus on professional development. All founding academic institutions are Organisational Signatories.

The Leadership Team (LT) and Steering Committee (SC) expect all consortium members to have completed regular mandatory training at their home institutions as a minimum. Such training could include EDI Baseline Training, Disability Awareness, Cultural Awareness, Gender Equity, Race & Disability Equality, Unconscious Bias, LGBTQIA+ Awareness and more. We expect all members of the consortium to always adhere to the principles of the Equality Act 2010 and institutional requirements/ policies.

The co-Directors of GBC (Styring, George & Gibson) have a long track record of EDI excellence, as do the Project Leads at our academic partner institutions. As such, we intend to draw upon this expertise to ensure EDI is embedded at the core of all of our activities and develop wider networks.

An annual EDI Survey of consortium members will be developed, especially as our network grows, to obtain regular snapshots of EDI across our work and the impact that it is having in the wider community. For example, we will produce case studies highlighting the impact of our work on employment and skills training, particularly within underrepresented groups working within engineering and physical sciences sectors.

1.1.1 Challenges

Diversity improves research and innovation outcomes. A diverse group offers the potential for different ideas, opinions and solutions – solutions that should be accessible and affordable for all. An inclusive environment allows individuals to share these ideas, opinions and solutions without fear and to feel valued and welcomed. It is, therefore, vital for the engineering and physical sciences sectors to attract and retain a diverse and inclusive group to maximise the impact of research and innovation and develop a highly skilled and motivated workforce. *GBC* is no exception.

GBC will:

- address challenges specific to our sectors and work with the wider research community where these are sector-wide challenges
- ensure fairness, accessibility and inclusivity in our activities and investments
- enable good diversity and inclusion practices in the activities we provide, groups we convene and the research we undertake
- share our knowledge, learning and experiences while listening to and learning from others
- work in partnership with others to advance good practices, partnering in equitable ways by being open, transparent, accountable and participatory in our approaches

We recognise the challenges facing the sector as highlighted by EPSRC:

- precarity of contracts
- institutional gatekeeping
- bias and a lack of trust in peer review
- a lack of accessible workplaces and a feeling of exclusion
- challenging academic workload models
- being undervalued with limited access to opportunities, mentoring and crucial networks, which can lead to a lack of voice and connections

- a lack of ethnic minority role models, particularly in leadership positions

A focus for GBC will be people and skills development, ensuring opportunities are developed for delivering a highly skilled and engaged workforce. We will conduct impact assessments and produce case studies to measure the impact of our work against these challenges.

1.2 Aim and vision

As part of our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI), we adhere to the legal obligations outlined in the Equality Act 2010. This Act prohibits discrimination based on protected characteristics, which include age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. As a publicly funded body, we are also obliged to follow the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). Under the PSED, we are mandated to address three fundamental principles:

- Eliminate discrimination.
- Advance equality of opportunity.
- Foster good relations between different people during our activities.

This extends to how we work with everyone, including our key stakeholders. However, we are keen to go beyond the legal compliance to reduce inequalities and create an environment in which a diverse range of participants can thrive and mutually add value to our centre. By valuing an individual's diverse strengths, ideas and insights, we are rewarded with unique perspectives that can enrich experiences and outcomes for all. Building diversity into our centre is also a way to ensure that we understand and are representative of the communities and stakeholders we aim to serve.

In addition, as employees of public sector institutions, we are committed to the Nolan principles of public life: selflessness, objectivity, integrity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership. The seven principles of public life apply to anyone who works as a public officeholder, including those in academia.

From an EDI perspective, we want our culture to reflect our key values of fairness, transparency, boldness, openness, and impact in the following ways:

- **Collaboration and collegiality.** We respect the variety of contributions made by both the consortium, and the wider community of stakeholders with whom we will interact.
- **Openness and integrity.** We will undertake activities in an open, inclusive and transparent way for the Centre and community, and we will commit to avoiding actions or decisions which lead to personal benefit.

- **Freedom to express ourselves, in a way which is respectful of others.** We want to nurture talent, to enable people to express themselves through their interactions with the Centre in ways which are creative and effective, but also mindful of our differences.
- **Fairness.** We will seek to identify and reduce or remove barriers that may prevent fair and equitable access to opportunities, including making reasonable adjustment for disabled colleagues.

Through taking this approach to EDI, our intended outcomes are to:

- **Improve diversity** in our consortium, events and Advisory Board, with an aim to making them more representative of the general population.
- **Provide equal opportunities** for all candidates, especially those who are underrepresented.
- **Support** Early Career Researchers' (ECR) career development.
- **Celebrate diversity** and the opportunities which diversity brings to new ways of thinking.

Over time, UKRI major investments have been required to develop approaches to EDI. As a result, there is good work on EDI strategy from research centres such as CREDS[8], UKERC, the Supergen Hubs, HI-ACT and National Centre for Energy Systems Integration (CESI). In addition, there are two networks on EDI for Energy, EDI+ (led by Durham University) and Ignite Network+[1] led by University of Strathclyde), and a UKRI EDI Caucus (led by Heriot-Watt University). We plan to engage with these other investments to enable a two-way exchange of best practice. We will liaise with other initiatives around issues of EDI, including the option of holding joint events, from a sustainability perspective.

1.3 Governance

GBC will represent and act as advocates for the chemical and chemical using industries and we commit to inclusion across the communities that we represent and the diversity of stakeholders in this work. As such, EDI will be embedded within programme operations and research activities, to ensure a just and inclusive transition. The programme governance is designed to act in a way which is inclusive, collaborative, and ethically motivated. All governance and leadership structures will strive to create opportunity and equal access for all consortium members.

An EDI Working Group will be formed from the academic consortium members, ensuring this is as diverse a group as possible (age, gender, career stage, protected characteristics) to assist with EDI operations, activities and reporting. The Project Manager and EDI Lead will also conduct impact assessments of all centre activities. These will account for the specific EDI context and challenges within the research area of the centre and community (e.g. access to skills and resources).

1.3.1 EDI Working Group

To ensure the embedding of EDI across all strands of the GBC and robustly monitor the progress and efficacy of our EDI Plan, we have a dedicated EDI Working Group comprised of a subset of our Co-Is, researchers and operations team staff. The EDI Lead will also sit on the Steering Committee (SC) to provide regular updates regarding EDI monitoring. When needed, we will make appropriate changes in the composition of the EDI Working Group to ensure it remains a dynamic group which welcomes new ideas and perspectives, whilst maintaining momentum. The EDI Working Group is responsible for developing and updating the EDI Plan and monitoring its implementation. Members of the EDI Working Group will have representation in SC meetings through the EDI Lead, in which EDI will be a regular agenda item.

Members of the EDI Working Group include (see Table 1):

Name	Role	End of Service
Richard Catlow	EDI Lead	November 2027
Martyn Poliakoff	Deputy EDI Lead	August 2027
Rachel Smith	Member	August 2027
Chris Hardacre	Member	November 2027
TBC	ECR Representative	TBC
TBC	Technical Representative	TBC

Table 1: GBC EDI Working Group

Length of service shall be 2 years, with an option to extend for a further 1 year, totalling a 3-year commitment. Ideally, these periods shall be staggered to ensure some continuity of leadership.

1.3.2 Strategic Advisory Board

The Strategic Advisory Board (SAB) has been carefully selected to include a diverse range of members. EDI will be a standing item on SAB agendas to ensure delivery against the GBC EDI action plan. We pay attention to the makeup of the SAB and GBC activities in terms of protected characteristics, for example the board will seek to achieve a minimum of 30% membership of any one gender and may request to receive EDI data and impact assessments of any or all Programme activities.

1.3.3 Steering Committee

The SC provides operational control of key decision making within GBC. As such, the SC members have been carefully selected to include a diverse range of protected characteristics and career stages. EDI will be a standing item on SC agendas to ensure delivery against this EDI plan. We pay attention to the makeup of the SC and GBC activities in terms of protected characteristics, for example the board will seek to achieve a minimum of 30% membership of any one gender and may request to receive

EDI data and impact assessments of any or all Programme activities. The EDI lead will be a member of the SC and co-develop this EDI action plan for the Centre to ensure inclusion by design.

1.3.4 Core Team

Members of the Core Team have been selected to sit on the EDI Working Group. There is a wealth of experience within the Core Team and we will identify expert mentors to work closely with our ECR members. We will create an ECR Forum and work closely with them to develop supportive processes for the next generation of researchers.

Creating a positive research culture is essential to ensuring consortium members can thrive. We will work closely with our founding institutions to ensure this is enabled.

1.3.5 Equality Analysis

An EDI Impact Assessment (EIA) will be part of any new centre-wide policy, event or funding activity (including the FlexFund) and be factored in at the planning stage of such activities. In the assessment, for each protected characteristic, we will consider the potential for positive or negative impact and explain any evidence/data used. We will then describe the actions to address any negative impact. The EIA evaluation decision will then determine whether to proceed, stop, adapt or change, or justify the policy/process/action under evaluation. The EDI Working Group is responsible for developing an EIA form that is concise, pertinent and easy to use. The completion of an EIA form is the responsibility of the task owner. This is to ensure that all members of GBC are encouraged to consider EDI objectives. A member of the EDI Working Group will assist them on completing the assessment form if required. For example, the task owners could be GBC members that organise an event or develop a call for the Flexible Fund.

1.4 Monitoring

To ensure our strategy will reach the intended EDI outcomes, on a yearly basis we will monitor a portfolio of EDI Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), such as:

1. The involvement of underrepresented groups and people with protected characteristics in GBC (e.g. Advisory Board, staff, researchers and students), at its events (e.g. speakers, panellists and audience), and in the FlexFund (e.g. people and projects funded). Diversity is also reflected across GBC committees and on the Funding Advisory Panel (FAP).
2. Support for career development of ECRs with protected characteristics through mentorship, involvement in the FlexFund and other opportunities such as secondments.
3. EDI reporting based on our EDI survey will be an element in GBC's Annual Reports, to signal and report on the embedding of EDI across the research programme.

A summary of our progress towards achieving our intended EDI outcomes will be published on our website as annual EDI reports. In addition, through regular surveys, event registrations, FlexFund applications and interactions with the wider research community, we will collect feedback regarding perceived improvements in EDI in the Centre, and how we can do better.

Based on feedback, the GBC EDI Strategy and procedures will be reviewed annually and amended accordingly. Any amendments, along with rationale and evidence proposed by our EDI team, will be discussed and approved by the management committee. The most up to date version of our EDI Strategy will be made available publicly via the Centre's website within a month of its completion.

In summary, our EDI monitoring will include:

1. **Annual EDI survey** to measure our performance against the identified KPIs
2. **EDI questionnaire** collecting views and feedback from participants in our events and, activities including the Flexible Fund.

Key information from these surveys will be included into our **Annual EDI Report** which will be made available on our website. We will also have specific Actions and KPIs for working culture and practices, recruitment, career development and FlexFund, which are outlined next.

2. Working Culture

We aim to create a working environment that all our staff and stakeholders are treated with dignity and respect. Working culture encompasses our position and guidance on bullying and harassment, as well as the work we proactively undertake to prevent bullying and harassment from occurring in the first place. Bullying and harassment of staff, students, partners, or anyone connected to GBC will not be tolerated. All partner organisations have procedures in place to report and resolve instances of bullying and harassment, and we will ensure these are used where necessary.

When both involved parties are within the same institution, we will support resolution of disputes through procedures internal to that institution. In cases across institutions, procedures from either institution can be used. When complaints arise within the GBC team or related to GBC work, GBC leadership may be involved in advising on procedure. Responsibility will lie with the GBC directors, and relevant staff from affected institutions.

Beyond formal complaints procedures, we will work to create a culture that seeks to minimise these issues and enable people to come forward with any problems or queries that they have. Wherever possible, those affected by decisions will be consulted or involved in the decision-making process.

We will support the active interrogation of biases by regularly sharing resources and training opportunities and encouraging uptake. We will expect more senior staff to lead by example in this regard, so it is not only more junior or equity-seeking staff taking part in such activities.

Actions

We will strongly encourage GBC team members to take up **training opportunities** provided by their institutions to enhance their understanding of biases and diversity issues.

KPIs[14]

- Tracking attendance at EDI training opportunities
    a. Unconscious bias training in grant reviewing
    b. EDI Hub+ Annual Conference & Webinars
    c. Courses and events identified on an ongoing basis by the Partnerships Manager and circulated to the Core Team
    d. Courses provided by the Institution of Engineering and Technology, RSC and IChemE
- Positive outcomes for staff satisfaction (minimum 85%) collected via Annual EDI survey.

3. Working practices

Inclusive working practices allows all colleagues to contribute to the best of their ability.

We define working practices as the established methods, procedures, behaviours, and routines that individuals and GBC follow in day-to-day activity. These practices encompass how tasks are performed, how time is managed, and how people interact in a work environment. As an employer, we have a duty under the Equality Act 2010[5] to make reasonable adjustments where a disabled member of staff (or job applicant) is put at a substantial disadvantage compared to others, by the application of a 'provision, criteria or practice'. We believe that the requirements of the Equality Act are a minimum requirement.

As a centre, we recognise that people may have caring responsibilities, have health conditions or disabilities that affect work, or work part time and/or hold roles with other projects. This may mean that people undertake GBC work outside of typical 9-5 hours. However, we do not expect anyone to undertake works or respond to emails outside of normal working hours. To accommodate individual circumstances as far as possible and reasonable, we will consult with GBC staff about preferred working practices within the first year of operations. Several measures that we expect to implement are, but not

limited to: establishing core times that all centre wide meetings will take place within; creating an internal events calendar to share information about our upcoming events and meetings with the GBC members as early as possible; where possible, offering good quality remote attendance options that allow for active participation; making minutes and materials from meetings available online through Teams and via email for those who cannot attend.

GBC is committed to the principle of collaboration and consultation to make the Centre truly inclusive. To ensure our working practices are appropriate and effective, we will develop mechanisms that allow individuals to give feedback on the working practices of the Centre and individual Research Streams, making sure any feedback is duly considered and acted upon if necessary. Our approach is to say yes to requests unless there is genuine business need to say no. We value the crucial contribution of our networks in sharing their voice to help shape policy and procedures which supports all our staff and ensures we meet our goals. Feedback will be collated by the EDI lead and Programme Manager , who will then take this to the GBC Leadership Team.

Actions

- **Preferred practices:** We will consult with GBC staff about preferred working practices within the first year of the centre.
- **Access needs:** We will consult with GBC staff about access needs within the first year of the centre.
- **Feedback:** We will develop a feedback mechanism to allow all the members of GBC to contribute to improving our working practices.

KPIs

- Satisfaction about the working practices promoted and implemented in GBC, collected via Annual EDI survey. Targeting a minimum of 85% satisfaction.
- Acting upon and resolving any identified issues with working practices with 3 months

4. Recruitment

During formation of GBC, the team selection was undertaken according to our EDI principles and record of excellence in research. Moving forward, GBC is committed to maintaining and improving the diversity of the people involved in the centre. This will be achieved through embedding EDI principles in the whole cycle of recruiting staff, researchers and students, i.e., job description, job advertisement, shortlisting, interview and selection. We recognise that the participating institutions have their own rules and regulations for recruitment, therefore as a consortium, we cannot enforce EDI in

recruitment at our participating institutions. However, we aim to share the best practice and encourage our investigators to follow them as far as they are compliant with the local rules.

Expectations

The following are expectations of the partner institutions on recruitment:

- **Job description:** Include an EDI statement to encourage applications from underrepresented groups; refer to the parts of the EDI plan relevant to flexible working and support available for career development.
- **Job advertisement:** Advertise job opportunities as widely as possible to reach diverse groups.
- **Shortlisting, interview and selection:** Ensure that all staff involved with recruitment and selection have undertaken EDI and unconscious bias trainings; ensure that appointment panels are diverse (e.g. in gender and ethnicity).

KPIs

- Diversity of GBC members and how this has improved over time, as collected via the EDI Annual survey.

Partner institutions already have strong and robust policies in place for recruitment. Therefore, GBC will monitor the outcomes of hiring across the programme.

5. Career Development

Early Career Researchers (ECRs) and researchers from underrepresented groups face disproportionate challenges in terms of career progression, including greater risk of precarity. We use UKRI's definition of ECR that includes PhD students, postdoctoral researchers and lecturers eligible for applying to the UKRI's New Investigator Grant.

We want to ensure the needs of ECRs, and underrepresented groups are recognised throughout the centre's activities, and that opportunities to support career progression are maximised. We will support ECRs whilst reflecting the specific needs and concerns of current GBC members. To do this, we will establish an ECR committee to provide ECRs with a voice as well as steering the centre's ECR initiatives. A nominated ECR Lead from the ECR committee will sit on the EDI Working Group to provide representation. We will also actively look to engage with other research consortia's ECR initiatives to maximise impact. Consortia we will look to work with include but are not limited to HI-ACT, UK-HyRES, IGNITE Network+ and initiatives within partner universities.

We will engage directly with ECRs within GBC to establish areas/issues that we should prioritise in terms of support, as well as gain their perspectives on proposed initiatives. We will do this through self-report surveys and direct consultation on an annual basis.

We will then look to arrange a series of training events/initiatives in response to areas which have been raised in the surveys. We will look to learnings from other hubs' ECR related activities. In addition, we will look to provide mentoring options for ECRs who would find this beneficial and look to tailor their mentor according to the individual's preferences. We will also signpost interested ECRs to relevant support groups if appropriate.

To improve career and skill development of ECRs, the centre will encourage and provide ECRs with opportunities to present and attend conferences and other academic events. We will also look to build on these skills internally by giving space for ECRs to present on their work within the centre.

Actions

- **ECR support plan:** We will consult with ECRs within GBC to better understand the kinds of precarity being faced, and to identify priority areas for support and training within the first year of the centre. We will then develop and implement an ECR support plan.
- **Working with other Centres:** We will establish links with other UKRI-funded programmes and evaluate opportunities for running joint summer schools, writing retreats, fellowship application training etc.

KPIs

- Monitor EDI statistics of FlexFund applicants and recipients to evaluate the accessibility of the scheme for ECRs and underrepresented groups. Aiming for a minimum of 30% of awards received by under-represented groups.
- Annual survey of ECRs and those from under-represented groups to identify if they are satisfied with the level of support provided to them through GBC. Minimum 85% satisfaction.
- One ECR-targeted event every 6 months.
- EDI statistics of attendees and speakers at these events. Actively inviting those from under-represented groups to increase participation from those groups by 5% each year.

6. FlexFund

We wish to embed issues of equality, equity, diversity and inclusion in the GBC FlexFund process. To achieve this, we will provide guidance for ECRs within GBC on how to apply to the FlexFund. We will also aim for a proportion of funding for any given scheme to be dedicated to supporting the work of ECRs and underrepresented communities. We will

monitor the EDI characteristics of applicants and recipients to iteratively adapt the scheme to ensure its accessibility. All staff involved in the selection process will also be encouraged to undertake unconscious bias training, which is usually an institutional requirement. GBC will also provide refresher guidance for selection panel members. We will also encourage FlexFund applicants to use tools such as The EDI Cube developed by CREDS. We will track the progress on inclusive FlexFund practices through our KPIs.

There is an expectation for inclusion in all consortium projects, including FlexFund projects. Attractive funding calls will be developed in close collaboration with the SAB and SC, ensuring these are presented in accessible and inclusive ways to the consortium and wider community. The Partnerships Manager and EDI Working Group will have an integral role in ensuring this.

Actions

- **FlexFund process:** The EDI Lead will be part of FlexFund processes and decisions.
- **Training:** We will provide guidance on FlexFund application.
- **Promotion:** FlexFund opportunities for the wider community shall be widely promoted through our mailing list, and through connected projects.
- **Call deadlines:** The timing of FlexFund calls shall be considerate of part time working, and of periods of religious and school holidays.
- **Peer review:** Any peer review of applications shall be done using a diverse panel.
- **Anonymity:** To avoid selection bias, some parts of the FlexFund may use anonymised applications. This will be discussed and finalised when the Funding Advisory Panel (FAP) is formed. Monitor diversity across submitted applications and the FAP. A diversity questionnaire should be included as part of the application.

KPIs

- Minimum 30%of applications with lead and team members from protected characteristic groups
- Minimum 30% of funded projects with lead and team members from protected characteristic groups
- Minimum 30% of peer review panel from protected characteristic groups
- **7. Communications and Events**

Ensuring that our Centre's communications and events are both accessible and inclusive enables both internal and external actors to contribute to the best of their ability. To increase efficiency and effectiveness in the use of public funding for knowledge exchange (KE) and to further a culture of continuous improvement within and between universities

and research Centres, GBC is committed to furthering collaboration opportunities and sharing appropriate research outputs wherever possible.

Actions

We will ensure that ED&I are considered in internal and external **communications** including:

- **Website accessibility:** Ensure that all parts of our website meet the current guidance for accessibility and reassessing this regularly so that improvements can be made as technology improves.
- **Inclusive language:** The Centre should always aim to use inclusive language. GBC will provide ongoing training to ensure that members are taught about/ how to use inclusive language, to promote better internal communications.
- **Use of images:** Ensure that stock images and video used across our outputs are appropriate, inclusive, and represent the diversity of the UK population.

We will ensure that the **events** we organise are inclusive and in line with our EDI aims by:

- **Accessibility:** Ensure that the venues we use, dates of the events and programmes we set can accommodate participants and speakers with access needs. We will ask for any access needs in advance, including the provision of quiet spaces, as part of registration processes.
- **Remote attendance: Where appropriate,** provide good quality remote attendance options for those who cannot attend in person.
- **Availability of event materials:** Circulate slides, video or materials (where appropriate) after the event.
- **Representative speakers:** Ensure that events have a diverse range of contributors and that topics are presented in an appropriate and inclusive manner.
- **Hear diverse voices:** Ensure that chairs and facilitators understand the role they play in ensuring that a variety of perspectives can be presented.

KPIs

- Zero accessibility issues or stakeholders unable to attend events due to lack of access
- EDI statistics of event speakers and audience – increasing attendance by under-represented groups (as identified in section 1) by 5% each year.
- Blogs, podcast, events and other activities to celebrate diversity

8. Support

Plenty of support is available for embedding EDI in operations and training. Many such initiatives have been highlighted previously. GBC aims to develop an EDI toolkit to address challenges specific to the sector. Many of the founding institutions possess similar toolkits to provide a framework.

EDI mentoring will be tailored to individual needs, circumstances and opportunities and will be provided confidentially.

The PEOPLE fund within the programme will be used to develop the skills, training and development necessary to build a diverse, inclusive and effective workforce for the chemical sector. Researchers will be encouraged to develop EDI-focussed projects, with those from under-represented groups especially encouraged. This fund could also be used for secondment opportunities to further develop skills and training opportunities.

As signatories to the Technician Commitment, we are tasked with developing an Action Plan to support technical training and development. EDI will be a core aspect and the EDI Working Group will be consulted frequently during this process.

9. Outcomes

A key metric to gauge success will be reflection on where people will be at the end of the programme compared to the beginning. The evidence-based KPIs listed in this plan will be used to report on the success of our EDI actions. Furthermore, feedback from conferences, events and training sessions will be gathered and analysed with learnings used to shape future initiatives.

Following the researcher lifecycle will be important. Tracking the number of successful fellowship applications or further employment will be a key success metric.

We will reflect iteratively, ensuring that FlexFund awards are reflective of applicants and striving to address the sectoral challenges facing under-represented groups.

Metrics will be collected by the Project and Partnerships Managers and analysed to feed into annual reporting. EDI will also be standing agenda items for the SC and SAB.

To be successful, EDI must not be treated as an afterthought which would lead to inequitable allocation of funding and access to resources. Addressing this requires EDI to be intentionally integrated into every stage of the programme lifecycle, from governance and application review processes to resource allocation and reporting requirements.

Some sector-specific actions will be implemented by GBC:

- Inclusive Safety and PPE
    - Gender-specific and inclusive PPE: avoid unisex PPE and proactively provide PPE designed for women and those with religious requirements
    - Site accessibility audits: engineering sites and plants are often inaccessible. Audits will be conducted to ensure accessibility for all
- Diversifying the talent pipeline
    - Targeted apprenticeships and 'returnships': explore and develop pathways for career-changers or those returning after a career break
    - Blind assessments: measuring applications and/or contributions on technical merit to reduce unconscious bias
- Culture and Retention
    - Active bystander training: to reduce the possibility of exclusionary engineering "site culture"
    - Flexible working: GBC encourage flexible working arrangements tailored to individual needs
    - Mentorship programs: tailored to technical, academic or managerial routes in consultation with ECRs
- External impact
    - Partner with organisations like *NSBE* (National Society of Black Engineers) or *SWE* (Society of Women Engineers) for specialised career advice/training
    - FlexFund applications: explore using targeted applications to under-represented and/or ethnic minority groups
    - Supplier diversity program: leverage procurement power by setting spend or project targets with minority-owned engineering and consultancy firms

10 . Summary

GBC aims to be a Centre which puts people at the heart of it, engaging widely with a range of researchers and stakeholders. We have embedded EDI in our research programme from the Centre's development phase. We seek to ensure that with continuous monitoring, surveying and listening we can improve the EDI outcomes from our programme. This EDI Plan will be reviewed and updated annually based on feedback from the EDI survey, KPIs and Advisory Board.

Next review date: TBC

APPENDIX

EDI Questionnaire

GBC has a strong commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I), in line with the UKRI's ED&I commitment, and strives to ensure that all of our activities are open and accessible to all. To this end, we are ensuring that all activities are reviewed for diversity amongst protected characteristics as identified in the Equality Act 2010, through asking participants to complete the following (optional and confidential) ED&I monitoring form. We would be grateful if you could complete the following questions:

Please tick the appropriate box.

Are you…?

Female		Male		Prefer not to say	

Does your gender differ from your birth sex?

Yes		No		Prefer not to say	

Age

Under 24		25-29		30-44	
45-59		60-64		65-74	
75 and over				Prefer not to say	

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

Yes		No		Prefer not to say	

What is your ethnicity?

Arab		Asian or Asian British: Pakistani		Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi	

Asian or Asian British: Indian		Asian or Asian British: Chinese		Asian or Asian British: Other	
Black or Black British: African		Black or Black British: Caribbean		Black or Black British: Other	
Mixed: White and Black African		Mixed: White and Black Caribbean		Mixed: White and Asian	
Mixed: Other		White: British		White: Irish	
White: Other		Any other ethnic background		Prefer not to say	

Do you have any caring responsibilities? There may be funds available to support participation in network activities for those with caring responsibilities, e.g. those caring for older people, children or those with disabilities.

Yes		No		Prefer not to say	

Privacy Notice

In this instance GBC's legal basis for processing your personal data is "necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller" GBC stated in its application for funding to the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC) that we would implement structures to monitor equality, diversity and inclusion (ED&I) data so we can learn if we are being effective in how we are managing the project through ways that promote EDI. In the EDI monitoring form, we process personal and special categories of data including ethnicity or race, health, sex life or sexuality. This form is voluntary and data subjects have the option to state "prefer not to say". The stored form will be pseudonymised in as much that it will have a reference number on it so it could be tracked to an individual / application. Only limited authorised personnel will have access to the reference number and be able to match it to the data subject.

All published data will be anonymised and will be used for the following purposes: Reports to the project board, advisory group, funder (UKRI, EPSRC, NERC). Anonymised data may be used for another purpose at a later date such as reporting our learning in an EPSRC/NERC blog.

Information will be retained for 7 years, in line with EPSRC grant conditions. The source of personal data will be from the data subject. In accordance with our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and as part of our public task we process personal data to monitor ED&I, so we can learn if we are being effective in how we are managing the project through ways that promote equality, diversity and inclusion. No automated decision making or profiling is considered as part of this data processing.

For office use only:	
Date received:	
Reference number:	

Equality Impact Assessment Template

If you require this template in an alternative format, such as large print or a coloured background please contact t.w.franklin@sheffield.ac.uk

This template is designed to be used alongside the EDI Strategy.

EIA covers policies, functions, practices and activities, including decisions and the delivery of services, but will be referred to as 'activity' hereinafter.

A. Key Information	
Policy/practice name:	
General background/aims of policy/practice:	
School/Dept:	

Assessed by: (name & job title)	
Approved by: (name & job title)	
Sign off date:	
Review date:	

B. Reason for EIA	(check one)
New policy/ practice is proposed	☐
Change to existing policy/practice is proposed	☐
Other (describe in Section D below)	☐

C. Who will most impacted by this proposal?
Consider carefully how your activity will impact both positively and negatively on people from different groups.

Consider the 9 protected characteristics as below in your activity. There may be other identity characteristics that you wish to also include in your impact assessment. It is expected that you will consider all equality groups for impact. Please indicate below (with a tick) which groups you feel will be most affected by your activity.

Age	☐	**Race (including ethnicity and nationality)**	☐	**Marriage and civil partnership**[1]	☐
Disability	☐	**Religion or belief (including no religion or belief)**	☐	**Sex**	☐
Gender reassignment	☐	**Pregnancy and maternity**	☐	**Sexual orientation**	☐
Other characteristics	☐				

D. Consideration of Impact

Show your considerations of how all of the above protected characteristics may be impacted. The following prompts will help you to reflect: • What information and evidence do I have about the needs of relevant equality groups – is this sufficient to fully assess impact? • Could this policy/practice lead to discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment, victimisation, or create barriers or less favourable treatment for particular groups and how can you mitigate any negative impacts? • Does this policy/practice contribute to advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations? • How can communication of the policy/practice be made accessible to all relevant groups?

[1] Note: only the duty to eliminate discrimination applied to marriage and civil partnership. There is no need to have regard to advancing equality or opportunity or fostering good relations in this respect.

E. Equality Impact Assessment Outcome Select one of the four options below to indicate how the development/review of the policy/practice will be progressed and state the rationale for the decision.	(check one)
Outcome 1: No change required – the assessment is that the policy/practice/activity is/will be robust.	☐
Outcome 2: Adjust the activity – this involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance equality and/or to foster good relations.	☐

Outcome 3: Continue the activity despite the potential for adverse impact, and which can be justified.	☐
Outcome 4: Stop the activity as there are adverse effects which cannot be prevented/mitigated/or justified.	☐

F. Action and Monitoring

Describe any actions you will take to address the findings of this EIA.

- How can I involve equality groups or communities in the ongoing monitoring, review and potential future development, of this activity?

Describe how the activity will be monitored going forward, to ensure that impact is frequently reviewed. Make sure you add a review date in Section A above.

G. Publish

Send your completed EIA to the Programme Manager and keep a copy for your own records.