

Housekeeping

- Please keep your microphone on mute while speakers are presenting.
- This webinar is being recorded and will be available on our website.
- If you do not wish to be included in the recording, please keep your camera off.
- The slides will also be shared after the session on our website.
- There will be time for Q&A at the end. Please add your questions to the chat.



Get Funded: Strengthening your application

12 March 2026, 1 – 3:30pm



Agenda

Time	Activity	Lead	Length
13:00	Welcomes & introductions	ST	10 min
13:10	Workshop 1 – Strengthening your application	ST	55 min
14:05	Tips from Sonnich Sonnichsen	SS	5 min
14:10	Break		10 min
14:20	Workshop 2 – Embedding EDI	OF	55 min
15:15	Reflections	ST	15 min
15:30	Close		

Project overview

UKRI EPSRC funded Network+

3-year term: Jan 2025 – Dec 2027

Budget: £2,500,000

Partner Organisations:

Ellen Macarthur Foundation, DEFRA, Techbuyer, Kao Data, BSI, Airbus, SAP, National Physics Laboratory, Faraday Institute, Royce Institute, Amazon, Ebay, Electrolux, OEMs from across the semiconductor industry

Nine universities, including University of Exeter as lead

"Leveraging the power of the digital revolution to drive a circular economy across sectors and value chains"



Swansea University
Prifysgol Abertawe

Current Flex Funds available

Fund	Total funding available (80% fEC)	Max funding per project (80% fEC)	Awarded projects to date	Expected number of projects to be funded	Total funding to be awarded	Deadline for application
Feasibility Studies	£300,000	£50,000	3	3	£151,525	Midday 27 April 2026
Demonstrators	£100,000	£50,000	-	2	£100,000	Midday 27 April 202

Full details on the use and application for these funds are available on the [DICE Network+ website](#)

Setting the research ambition

Purpose: to undertake **speculative and potentially high-impact research** to accelerate innovative solutions that promote the adoption of a digitally enabled circular economy.

Objectives:

- Evidence based & applied, taking a **whole system approach**.
- **Result in increased confidence** in the concept developed, which then has potential to attract further prioritisation and investment in the area.
- Be led by an **early career academic** or at minimum, have active participation of an ECR.
- Involve **at least one industrial, government or third-sector partner** to ensure real world application and impact.

Workshop 1: Strengthening your application

Silvia Tedesco





CENTRE FOR
**SUSTAINABLE
INNOVATION**

‘Empowering grant writing success’



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Dr Silvia Tedesco

*Associate Professor of Sustainability
at the University of Salford*

- / Extensive experience in bioenergy production and generating waste-to-resource solutions across different sectors
- / Supports SMEs to identify ways to be more sustainable



Who are we?



The Centre for Sustainable Innovation (CSI) is a catalyst for collaboration between academia, industry and policymakers, aiming to drive sustainable growth through innovation.



Grant Writing Mastery Agenda

- Golden Rules for Successful Collaboration
- Sustaining and Designing Collaborative Projects
- Practical Exercises for Bid Development
- Top Tips for Grant Writing and Consortium Success

Golder rules for collaboration



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Golden rules of collaboration



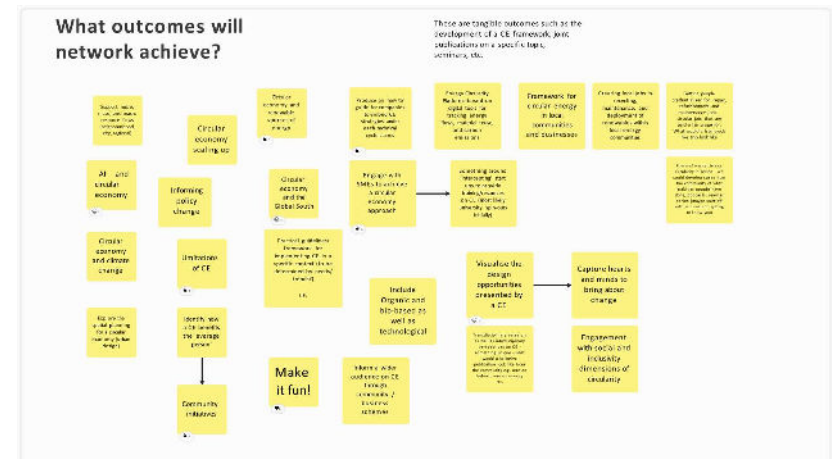
Three questions: *to always ask every time (Purpose, Who, How)*



Flip it: *use the power of technology to come together as a collaboration*



Collaborate at scoping stage: *include all collaborators in defining the project*



Golden rules of collaboration



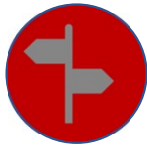
Some examples of **collaborative change techniques**:

- **Open Space Technology**: A flexible meeting format that allows participants to choose topics and time slots for discussion.
- **Future Search**: A method that involves future-focused discussions to explore potential outcomes and changes.
- **Appreciative Inquiry**: A process that encourages participants to identify and appreciate the best aspects of a situation before exploring potential changes.
- **Whole Scale Change**: A method that focuses on the whole organization to achieve significant change.
- **World Café**: A participatory approach that allows participants to engage in dialogue and decision-making in a creative and collaborative environment.
- **Applied Improvisation**: A technique that combines improvisation with practical applications to address specific challenges.
- **Liberating Structures**: A method that aims to create a more flexible and responsive organizational structure.
- **Impact Collaborative**: A collaborative approach that focuses on the impact of change on individuals and communities.
- **Fuel Box**: A method that emphasizes the importance of community engagement and participation in the change process.

Golden rules of collaboration



Collaborative design: *use collaborative change techniques*



Model it all the way: *sustained approach to collaboration*



Manage detail: *don't lose sight of vision*



Benefit everyone: *ensure every partner benefits (whether internal partners or external partners)*

Sustaining & Designing collaborative projects



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COLLABORATIVE DESIGN AND CHANGE TECHNIQUES

Collaborative Design Approach

Use collaborative change techniques to foster teamwork and shared decision-making in design processes.

Sustained Collaboration Modeling

Maintain a continuous and sustained approach to collaboration throughout the project lifecycle for effective outcomes.

MANAGING PROJECT DETAILS AND ENSURING MUTUAL BENEFIT

Maintain Project Vision

Focus on project details without losing sight of the overall vision and goals.

Ensure Mutual Benefits

Guarantee that all partners, internal or external, benefit from the project's outcomes.



The project will produce a validated technical demonstrator, an initial benchmarking dataset, and a prototype AI-ready Material Passport, alongside workshops that co-develop a whitepaper and adoption roadmap with industry partners (X, Y and Z). These outcomes will lay the foundation for future large-scale research programmes in material N grading, yield estimation, and certification.



Enable SMEs (e.g. X) early access to low-cost, scalable tools for material assessment.

An OEM partner will contribute £X,000 in-kind senior engineering/telematics time, host co-design encounters, and provide anonymised test cases to ground assumptions and minimise data burden. [...] OEM-hosted engagement will accelerate adoption of ...



Outputs include a two-page executive brief, a partner slide deck and letters signalling intent to adopt specified clauses and to participate in a follow-on demonstrator.

SUCCESSFUL
EXAMPLES

Practical Exercise for Bid Development



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IDENTIFYING SECTOR PROBLEMS AND OUTLINING CONCEPTS

Sector Problem Identification

Teams identify relevant problems in specific sectors linked to university expertise for better focus.

Concept Development

Outline innovative concepts addressing the identified problems with practical and creative ideas.

Multi-disciplinary Collaboration

Explore opportunities for cross-disciplinary teamwork to enhance problem-solving effectiveness.

Top Tips for Grant Writing and Consortium Success



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LEAVE YOUR EGO AT THE DOOR

Importance of Humility

Setting aside ego fosters open communication and collaboration in any environment.

Encouraging Teamwork

Leaving ego behind helps build trust and enhances team performance.





DEFINE COMMON GOALS AND SHARED OBJECTIVES

Establish Shared Objectives

Develop a clear understanding of the shared objectives guiding the consortium's work.

Consensus on Priorities

Ensure all partners agree on key goals and priorities for focused collaboration.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT PARTNERS FOR CONSORTIUM SUCCESS

Evaluate Partner Strengths

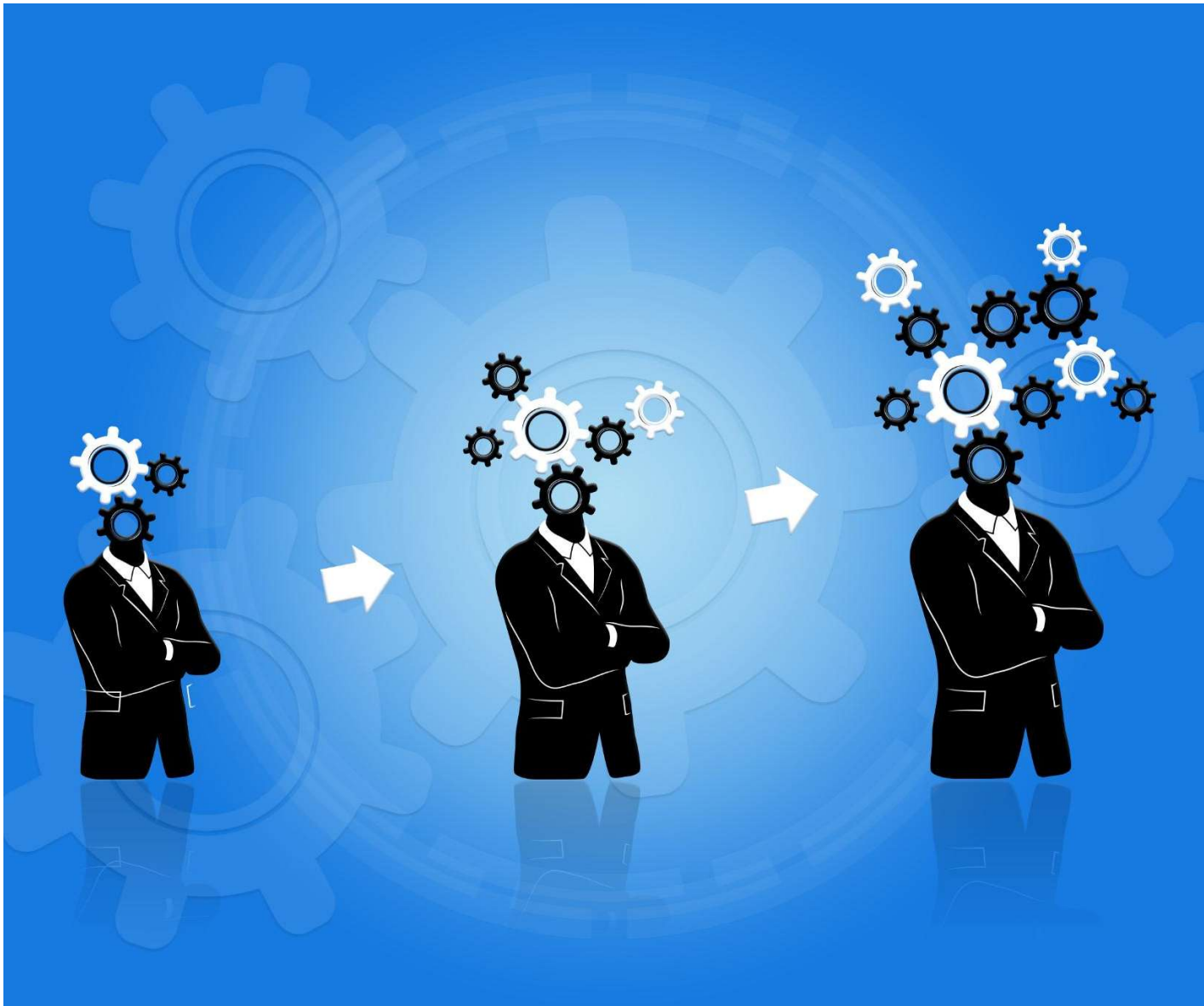
Assess the strengths and weaknesses of potential partners to ensure alignment with consortium goals.

Align Shared Goals

Choose partners best suited to achieve the consortium's shared objectives and mission.

Leverage Unique Skills

Seek partners who bring unique skills or valuable assets to enhance consortium success.





DEVELOP OVEN-READY PROJECTS FOR FUNDING CALLS

Proactive Project Development

Developing projects in advance allows quick adaptation to funding calls, saving crucial time.

Faster Partner Engagement

Oven-ready projects help overcome delays by swiftly bringing partners on board.

MANAGE SCOPE CREEP AND MAINTAIN SHARED VISION

Understanding Scope Creep

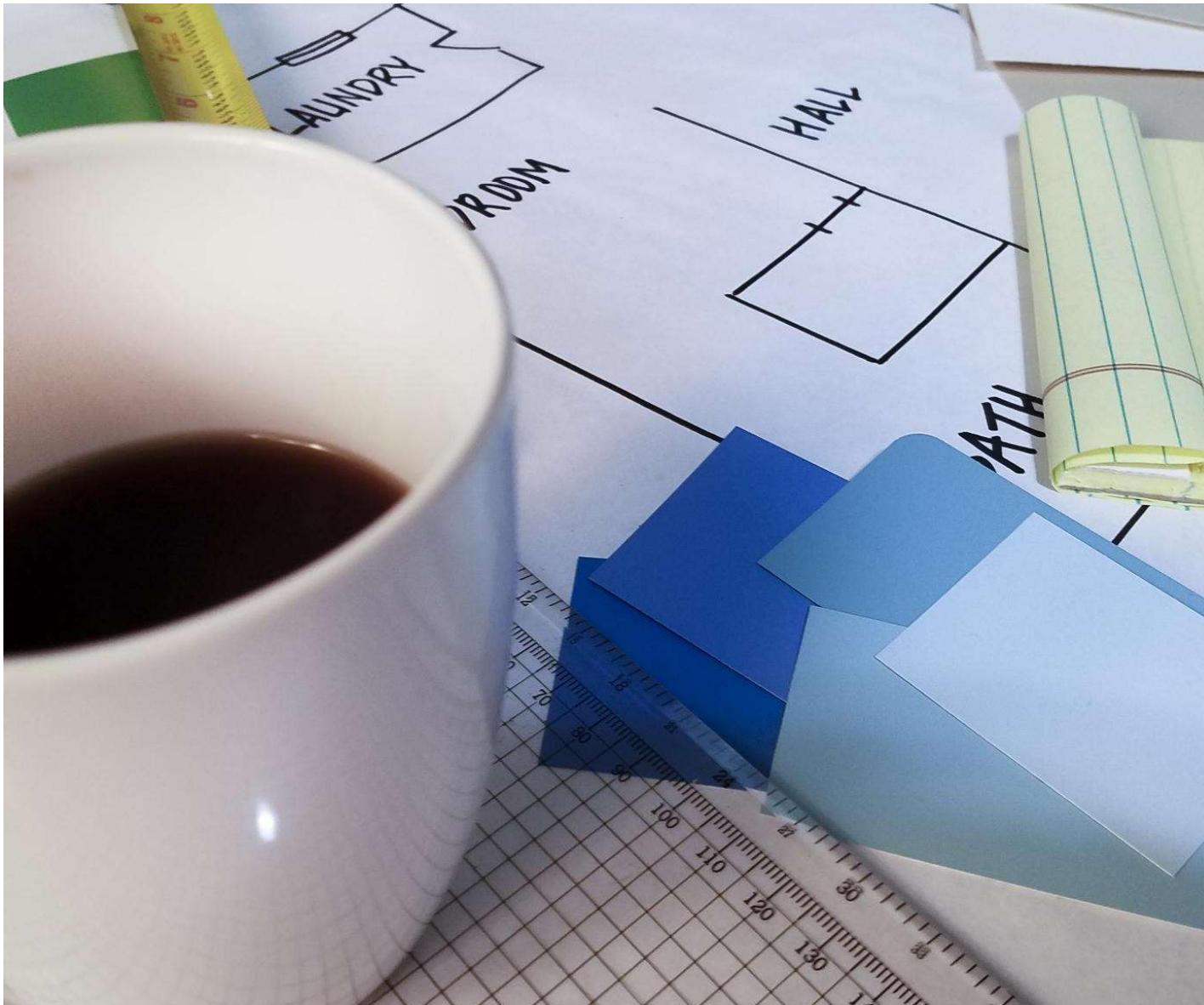
Scope creep refers to uncontrolled changes or continuous growth in a project's scope beyond its original objectives.

Importance of Shared Vision

Maintaining a shared vision among team members helps align goals and prevents deviations during project execution.

Keeping Tasks Focused

Keeping tasks well-defined and monitored ensures the project stays on track and scope creep is minimized.





ESTABLISH TRUST AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Importance of Trust

Building trust is essential for maintaining strong and lasting relationships between partners.

Open Communication

Effective communication should be open and transparent among all consortium partners to ensure collaboration.



CLARIFY ROLES AND MAINTAIN FOCUS ON END GOALS

Clarity of Roles

Clearly define each team member's responsibilities to avoid confusion and increase efficiency.

Shared Vision

Establish and communicate a shared vision to ensure everyone understands the end goal.

Continuous Reminders

Regularly remind the team of the programme's end goals to maintain focus and motivation.

SECURE FUNDING AND RESOURCES FROM DIVERSE SOURCES

Importance of Funding

Securing funding is essential to support the consortium's activities and achieve its goals effectively.

Diverse Funding Sources

Explore both public and private funding opportunities to maximize resources and support.

Aligning Goals with Funders

Seek financial support from organizations with shared goals to ensure aligned partnerships.



Questions?



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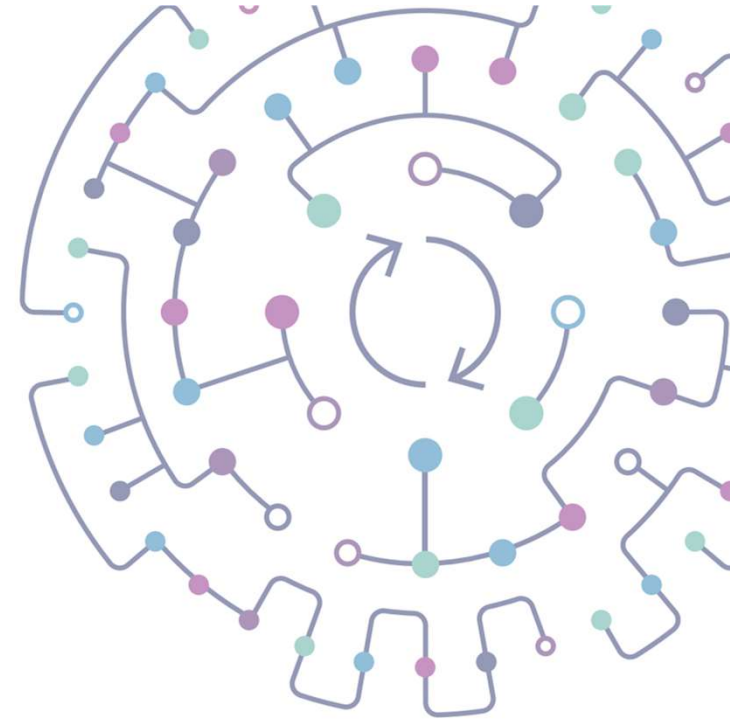
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Interested in finding out more/working with us?

Contact us at: sustainable-innovation@salford.ac.uk

Centre for Sustainable Innovation
Maxwell Building | University of Salford | Salford, Manchester
| M5 4WT

salford.ac.uk/csi



Workshop 2: Embedding EDI

Oliver Fisher



Embedding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) using the EDI Cards

Ollie Fisher (he/him)

EDI+ Fellow

Food Water Waste Research
Group, Faculty of Engineering

Team

Peter Craigon, Debra Fearnshaw
and Emma Hadfield-Hudson



Equality
Opening the door to everyone.

Equality is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents. No one should have poorer life chances because of the way they were born, where they come from, what they believe, or whether they have a disability.

It recognises that certain groups of people experience discrimination due to their characteristics.

Definitions



Diversity
Recognising who is in the room.

Diversity concerns understanding that each individual is unique, recognising our individual differences and exploring these differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing way to value each other as individuals.

Definitions



Inclusion
Belonging and being your whole self.

Inclusion is an effort and practice in which different groups or individuals with different backgrounds are culturally and socially accepted, welcomed, and treated equally. This concerns treating each person as an individual, making them feel valued, supported and being respectful of who they are.

Definitions



What do we mean?

Equality



The assumption is that everyone benefits from the same supports. This is equal treatment.

Equity



Everyone gets the supports they need (this is the concept of "affirmative action"), thus producing equity.

Inclusion



All 3 can see the game without supports or accommodations because the cause(s) of the inequity was addressed. The systemic barrier has been removed.



Why does EDI matter for research?

Embedding EDI isn't a "nice-to-have" — it's a driver of excellence, innovation, and real-world relevance.

Drivers for embedding EDI in research

- Drives research quality and breadth
- Fuels creativity and innovation:
 - ✓ More patents
 - ✓ Higher citation rates
 - ✓ More successful funding bids
- Funders increasingly requiring EDI plan

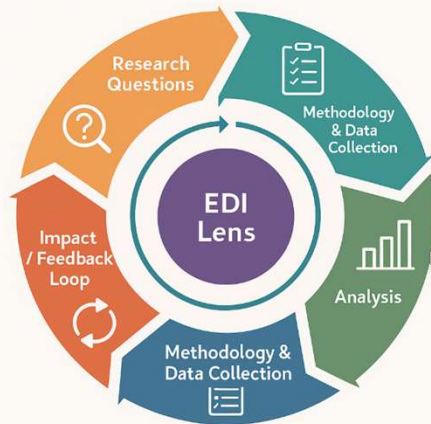
The collage features several research articles and preprints:

- scientific reports**: "Inclusion unlocks the creative potential of gender diversity in teams" by Balázs Vedres & Orsolya Vásárhelyi. Published: 23 August 2023. 8942 Accesses | 14 Citations | 44 Altmetric | Metrics.
- aps**: "The Diversity Gap: When Diversity Matters for Knowledge" by Justin Sulik, Bahador Bahrami, and Ophelia Deroy. Volume 17, Issue 3. https://doi.org/10.1177/17456916211006070.
- Journal of Economic Surveys**: "GENDER DIVERSITY IN RESEARCH TEAMS AND CITATION IMPACT IN ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT" by Abdelghani Maddi & Yves Gingras. First published: 28 February 2021. https://doi.org/10.1111/joes.12420 | Citations: 35.
- arXiv**: "The Preeminence of Ethnic Diversity in Scientific Collaboration" by Bedoor K AlShebli, Talal Rahwan, Wei Lee Woon. Computer Science > Digital Libraries. [Submitted on 6 Mar 2018 (v1), last revised 20 Nov 2020 (this version, v4)].
- THREE: Why EDI matters to research organisations** by Aleksandra Thomson and Rachael Gooberman-Hill. Publication Date: 19 Jan 2024. Pages: 55-71. DOI: https://doi.org/10.51952/9781447368014.ch003.
- Reflections From Co-Researchers With Intellectual Disability: Benefits to Inclusion in a Research Study Team** by Brittany St. John, Iulia Mihaila, Katelyn Dorrance, Leann Smith DaWalt & Karla K. Ausderau. Pages 251-262 | Received 07 Apr 2017, Accepted 02 Mar 2018, Published online: 16 Jun 2025.



EDI in research design and research practice

Research Design



EDI considerations are incorporated into each or any stage of the research process (research questions, study design, methodology and data collection, analysis, dissemination of results).

Research Practice



Applying EDI in research practice involves ensuring diversity in team composition and trainee recruitment, building an inclusive work environment and fostering equity in mentoring and training.



Writing a strong EDI statement

- There is no “one size fits all” approach – set specific goals for your context
- Include concrete practices in the EDI section of your funding application.
- Consider both research design and research practise
- Engage with university strategy and local activity in your school.
- Align with funders EDI strategies and actions plans.
- Think beyond one demographic group.

<https://edicaucus.ac.uk>





Mistakes to avoid



Write generic statements - e.g. 'we will break down barriers'



Over-commit - e.g. commit to objectives that are beyond the reach of your project



Copy and paste - examples provided by institutions are intended as guidance and support, not stock text



Think about it at the last minute - consider EDI from the planning stage onwards



Fail to embed EDI into other questions/sections in the application - e.g. costing, team expertise



Only think of EDI in terms of recruitment - supporting team members and embedding EDI in research design are equally important



EDI Cards – Brief background and origins

Designed to help people reflect on:

- How inclusive is your work?
- Who does it include or exclude? How?
- How can it be made more diverse or inclusive?
- How does EDI apply to me and my work?

Project to help people to think about these and similar questions and embed them in their work. – ‘EDI by Design’

Project Team



Peter Craigon



Debra Fearnshaw



Emma Hadfield-Hudson



Ollie Fisher

Funders



Future Food
Beacon



The EDI cards – Deck structure

- 4 broad **themes**, 12 categories, (156 cards)
- **Definitions**
 - Definitions (7)
 - Legal definitions (9)
- **Scenario**
 - Protected characteristics (9)
 - Other characteristics (13)
 - Activity or context (20)
 - Inclusion or exclusion (15)
 - Industrial digital technologies (9)
- **What am I going to do?**
 - Approach (20)
 - Measures of success (8)
- **Complications and Practicalities**
 - Complications (16)
 - Uncomfortable questions (11)
 - Digital manufacturing challenges (8)
- **Guide cards (11)**



The EDI cards – Things to note

- Developed in a UK context – Elements, particularly legal elements may be different elsewhere.
- Not comprehensive or definitive – intended to spark and support discussion
- Developed for a digital manufacturing context (Connected Everything)
- We are using cards via Miro but they are also available via an app – see QR code for phone
- List of all cards on Miro
- Browse through to familiarise yourself with them.
- Discussion is priority
- Feedback is appreciated



Scan for digital
version of EDI cards



Anatomy of a Card



Socio-economic background

Socio-economic background can relate to an individual's family, status or financial background. This can influence how they experience issues of Equality Diversity and Inclusion.

How can you ensure that you and your work are equal, equitable, diverse and inclusive of people according to socioeconomic background?

Other characteristics

Other characteristics

- **Image-** Illustrate provoke and provide an alternative perspective.
- **Title** – Name and identify the issue
- **Explanation** – Explain what the card means
- **Open question** - to encourage people to put it in the context of their work. Cannot be dismissed – prompt to find out more.
- **Category** - on bottom and back



Today's activity – Discussion guidance

- Please be respectful of others in discussions – EDI is not a ‘them’ but an ‘us’ and is personal so can be sensitive.
- Please don't feel compelled to share or discuss anything that you would prefer not to. We will treat all data anonymously.
- Please treat discussion sensitively and according to the Chatham house rule – may discuss what is said but not who said it.
- Please ask any questions at all – all feedback welcome.
- Support organisations at the end and in guide documents linked.



Activity – ‘EDI by design’ (c 20 mins)

- Topic:
 - How can EDI be meaningfully integrated into both the design and practice of your research project to enhance its quality, relevance, and impact?
- Use the card to help identify
 - A potential EDI benefit/positive related to it
 - A potential EDI challenge related to it
 - Ways of maximising the benefit
 - Ways of minimising/overcome the challenge
 - Challenges of implementing
- Take a few minutes to look through the cards
- Move cards on to Miro Board and annotate with sticky notes





Any questions?

- Please ask any questions at any point – I've probably missed something obvious.
- Discussion, reflection and engagement are key (contribute in different ways)
- Think of what you would like to feedback – discuss with your group
- Resources are available for you to use afterwards – see links for app etc.
- Support information at the end.



Today's activity – Feedback session

- Reconvene as group at 15:00 to feedback on the key insights gained from the activity
- Can be related to:
 - What was interesting or surprising?
 - Take home message for your own work?
 - Any other feedback? – Improvements, suggestions.



AI-Enabled EDI Action Plan Coach

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the following elements:

- Browser Tab:** EDI Action Plan Coach
- Address Bar:** edi-action-plan-coach-805422013145.us-west1.run.app
- Navigation Bar:** My Tasks, Sign in to your child..., Edit course: Process..., Module: MEng Proj..., Engineering Staff Hub, AI Tools, Bookings - Oliver Fi..., All Bookmarks
- Page Header:** EDI Action Plan Coach (left), Privacy Protected Session (right)
- Main Content:**
 - Welcome**
 - This tool is designed to help researchers reflect on how effectively Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is embedded within their research applications, and to identify areas where this could be strengthened.
 - The coach provides structured, constructive feedback to support your own thinking. It is not intended to write or complete EDI sections for you, nor to replace your professional judgement. If you have questions about the appropriate use of generative AI in research, please refer to guidance from your funder and your institution.
 - THIS COACH WILL:**
 - Ask probing questions to deepen your thinking
 - Identify gaps and opportunities in your plan
 - Connect you to funder requirements
 - Provide discipline-specific considerations
 - THIS COACH WILL NOT:**
 - Write your action plan for you
 - Provide prescriptive answers
 - Replace consultation with affected communities

The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the time as 15:18 on 11/03/2026, along with various system icons and open applications.



Sign up for early testing



Sign up to use tool to help develop your EDI action plan

To use the tool, you will be asked to enter:

- A short summary of a research project (real or hypothetical);
- A draft EDI action plan;
- (Optionally) relevant funder call guidance.

After using the tool, you will be asked to complete a short online questionnaire (approximately 15-30 minutes) about:

- The clarity and usefulness of the feedback;
- How the tool influenced your thinking;
- Any limitations, concerns, or suggestions for improvement.



Sources of Support

- <https://reportandsupport.uea.ac.uk/support/call-it-out-be-an-active-bystander#:~:text=Distraction%20%7C%20Direct%20Action%20%7C%20Delegation%20%7C,you%20are%20going%20to%20do.>
- [NHS: 5 steps to mental wellbeing https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/five-steps-to-mental-wellbeing/](https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/five-steps-to-mental-wellbeing/)
- [ACAS: supporting mental health at work https://www.acas.org.uk/supporting-mental-health-workplace?gclid=EAIaIQobChMI0t_Gsfm99gIVs4FQBh25FAhuEAAYBCAAEgJ9XPD_BwE](https://www.acas.org.uk/supporting-mental-health-workplace?gclid=EAIaIQobChMI0t_Gsfm99gIVs4FQBh25FAhuEAAYBCAAEgJ9XPD_BwE)
- [Citizens Advice: equality advisory support service discrimination helpline https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/discrimination/about-discrimination/equality-advisory-support-service-discrimination-helpline/](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/discrimination/about-discrimination/equality-advisory-support-service-discrimination-helpline/)
- [Togetherall https://togetherall.com/en-gb/](https://togetherall.com/en-gb/)
- [Samaritans https://www.samaritans.org](https://www.samaritans.org)



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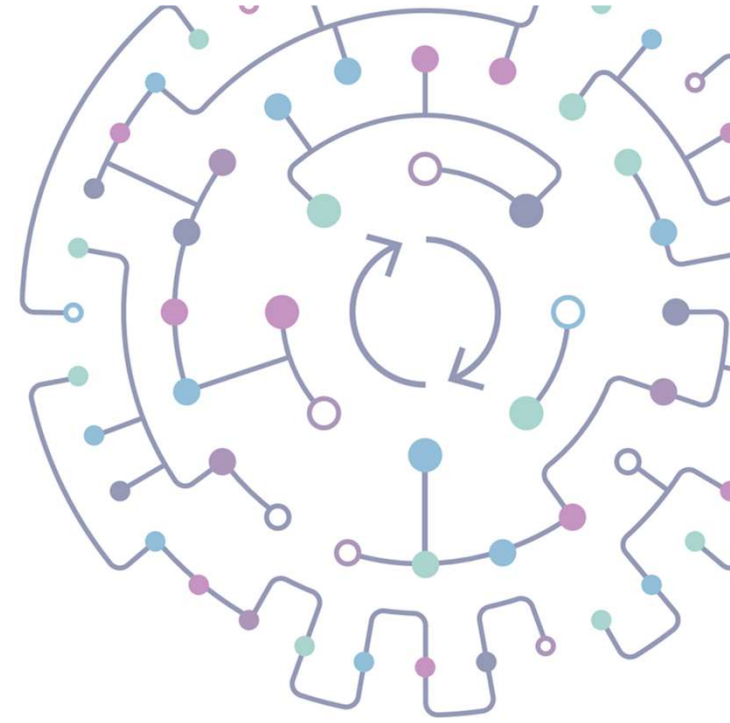
Thank you

If you would like to know more, please get in touch:

Oliver.Fisher@nottingham.ac.uk

More information - <https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/edi/university-initiatives/edi-cards.aspx>

Next steps



Feasibility Study & Demonstrator Call



We're here to support

Project development

Supporting the development of your concept and project application, including collaboration with non-academic partners

Mentoring

Helping you access and build your project support network for lasting impact

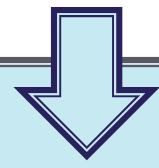
Networking

Linking academics to industry, policy & third-sector partners from across our network

COLLABORATION NOTICE BOARD

Please add to our [collaboration board](#) to share your challenge focus, project idea or research area.

We can provide introductions across our network.



Slide 54

HG1 Kate. -could you please confirm we still want this running in the short term and that the link is correct?

Hopkins, Georgie, 2026-01-27T20:37:51.693

FK1 0 Hi, I've setup a Padlet which will be much more efficient and easier for everyone to work with. I have added a moderation setting meaning all posts will need to be authorised before they are made public:

<https://padlet.com/kfrewer/dice-n-collaboration-board-d38xskj3ng54kyl3>

Frewer, Kate, 2026-01-28T13:36:45.924

Thanks for your time

Please complete the evaluation:

[DICE Network+ Evaluation – Fill in form](#)



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