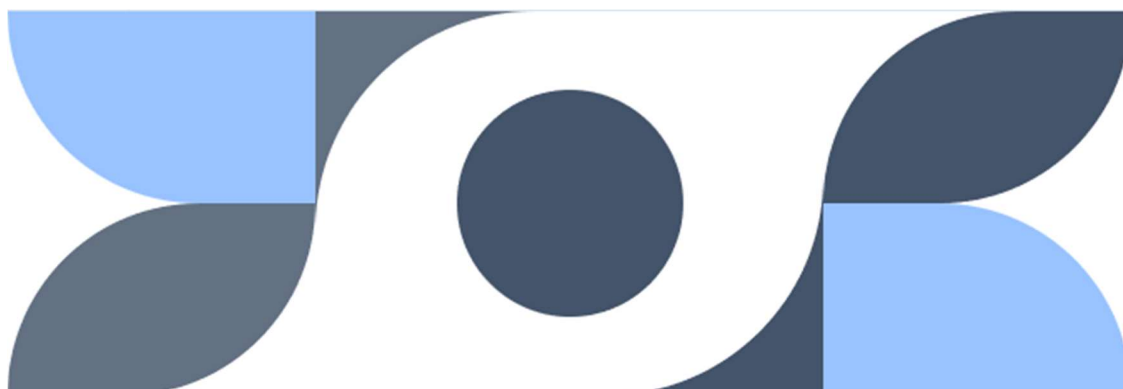


EDICa



EDICa Newsletter- July-August '23

EDI Caucus: Supporting UK Research & 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 - e.g. some autistic people. If you would like a static PDF version of the newsletter, please click here

<https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/Newsletter/2023-08>

The newsletter will always be written in plain English however if you would like a version summarised in British Sign Language, please reach out to us so that we can gauge the need for this.

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Call for participants: Covid-19 Survey

Have you completed our Covid-19 impact survey yet? Only 10 minutes of your time to add your experience – whether positive or negative – to our collection of data.

<https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/Covid19-2023>

We're seeking the experiences and views of everyone who works in the research and innovation ecosystem who was working in the UK from 2020 onwards. How did Covid-19 impact your career, your research and innovation, your working environment and relations, your personal life?

Our funders, UKRI and the British Academy, are keen to get the results of this survey, which will inform their EDI strategies. The survey is due to close on 29 September and is available via the full range of devices. You can help us by asking your networks, colleagues, direct reports and your manager to complete the survey.

Flexible Fund Call

A total of £1m (100% FEC) has been set aside for EDICa's Flexible Fund, over the course of 3 years, to enable the EDICa team to commission research which addresses the stubborn inequalities which persist across the Research & Innovation (R&I) ecosystem. All proposals will be considered, but for this call, we will prioritise research projects that focus on mitigating the effects of Covid-19 and public health measures on inequalities across R&I careers. For example, projects may include, but are not limited to, long Covid, menstrual health, and career implications of Covid-19 and lockdowns.

Full details, timelines and application documents, including a video providing the information in British Sign Language, can be found on our website. <https://edicaucus.ac.uk/flexible-fund/>

The full funding call opened on 4 September, and the deadline for applications is 31 October. If you are not able to submit an application for funding to this call, EDICa will launch another two calls for funding. Sign up to our newsletter to receive all announcements about the next funding call, including launch dates: <https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/Subscription>

EDICa are hosting two online webinars to introduce the Flexible Fund and answer your questions. Monday, 11 September 13.00 – 14.00 and Monday, 18 September 13.00 – 14.00. The first webinar will have British Sign Language interpretation. Both webinars will be recorded and published on our website. We will also compile an FAQ document.

Please register to attend the free webinars here:

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

Call for reviewers: We are looking for individuals to review applications in this round of funding. We welcome reviewers who are academics (at all career stages, from PGR onwards), non-academics and researchers and innovators across all sectors, with experience in reviewing and with a background in the areas of research that this call will focus on.

If you are interested in being part of the Flexible Fund reviewing process, please contact us at edicaucus@hw.ac.uk.

Internship

EDICa advertised its first internship, an exciting opportunity for an intern to undertake research, inviting those wouldn't normally see themselves in a research career to apply. The position closed on 29 August and we are pleased to report that we received a lot of strong interest and engagement with the opportunity. Recruitment for our second internship will be taking place in the spring 2024, with view to the internship taking place over the summer 2024. Our third and final internship will take place in summer 2025. More information about the internship can be found on our website <https://edicaucus.ac.uk/internships/>

Can your organisation or department offer a similar opportunity? Feel free to adopt this idea.

Workstream Updates

The Career- Life Cycle

Understanding menstrual health and (peri)menopause in Research & Innovation careers

One of the three main research projects of the EDI Caucus is to pilot interventions to help employers better support those experiencing problematic menstruation and (peri)menopause across the research and innovation ecosystem. Much of the extant research in this field focuses on the impact menstruation and menopause may have on employees' performance at work -- including productivity, absence and interpersonal relationships.

Our approach takes the opposite perspective: asking how can work be more inclusive, for example, working in laboratories or on field sites. One dimension of this is the need to decolonise healthcare. Prof Kate Sang is reading 'Divided. Racism, medicine and why we need to decolonise healthcare' by Dr Annabel Sowemimo (2023). Dr Sowemimo, along with other scholars, locates modern gynaecology and the study of women's reproductive health within the context of the abuses of enslaved women in the United States. Much of what we consider to be the methods and tools of modern gynaecology, the speculum for example, originate from the experimentation on, and torture of, enslaved women. These methods were used as tools of managing the physical and reproductive labour of enslaved women. It is essential then that we decolonise the study of menstruation at work, to counter the stigma associated with menstruation, a product of colonisation itself (Murphy, 2013, Martin et al., 2022), towards an intersectional analysis which resists the 'management' of menstruation at work (Hohmann-Marriott, 2021).

References

Murphy, N., 2013. *Te awa atua: Menstruation in the pre-colonial Maori world: An examination of stories, ceremonies and practices regarding menstruation in the pre-colonial Māori world*. He Puna Manawa Limited.

Hohmann-Marriott, B., 2021. Periods as powerful data: User understandings of menstrual app data and information. *New Media & Society*, p.14614448211040245.

Martin, J., Babbar, K. and Maschette, U., 2022. Menstrual health for all requires wider high level commitment. *bmj*, 378.

Sowemimo, A., 2023. *Divided: Racism, Medicine and why We Need to Decolonise Healthcare*. Profile Books.

Call for participants!

EDICa seeks participants to take part in a research interview about their experiences of problematic menstruation and/or (peri)menopause in the workplace. We aim to create inclusive and accessible careers across the R&I ecosystem by removing barriers to participation and career development for those who menstruate and/or go through (peri)menopause.

This is an intersectional and inclusive study; we particularly encourage trans men, non-binary, genderqueer individuals and people from marginalised groups to participate. BSL interpretation and alternative interview formats are also supported. Interviews are expected to take place from October.

Keep an eye on our [Twitter](#) (X) feed and [LinkedIn](#) pages for when the sign-ups for interviews will go live. Support us by sharing with your networks and destigmatise menstrual health.



The Research Process

Evaluating Peer Review

EDICa have been conducting an evidence review of bias in the peer review process. We have read 45 pieces of literature, and we have spotted some trends. Within existing literature, the STEM disciplines have the highest number of outputs (71), closely followed by Medicine and Health (51). The Social Sciences (30) and Humanities & Arts (10) have much fewer. Most literature concerns the peer review process in journals and publishing; fewer papers focus on peer review in the funding process. Gender has been a central focal point, in particular the effect of the author's gender on reviewer comments and recommendations. EDICa will co-design interventions that aim to combat

bias in the peer review assessment process of funding applications. **Please get in touch if you would be interested in taking part:** edicaucus@hw.ac.uk

An additional part of this desk-based study examines journal and funding guidance on reducing bias in the peer review process. We are reviewing the action plans as well as ethnicity and diversity reports from all funding councils of UKRI, and the guidance documents provided to reviewers of funding applications. We are also researching instructions given to peer reviewers and journal editors from major publishers across disciplines. Our findings will be published later this year.

The Organisation of Work

Workstream 3 has been focusing on designing and disseminating the Covid-19 survey. [Click here for the survey](#)



1 - A 2-minute video from Dr James Richards about the Covid-19 study.

We'd love to hear from the field – what good practice have you seen relating to the three workstreams? Email us at EDICaucus@hw.ac.uk with examples.

EDICa Seminar Series

19 September 13.00 – 14.00 “In Conversation with EDICa Workstream Leads” – Online via Zoom

Join us for the first in our seminar series. Our seminar series will keep the EDICa network informed on the work we are doing and promote industry wide knowledge. The series will showcase both work relating to the 3 workstreams, as they progress and focus on closely related topics and research that others are working on.

For our first seminar, we have Professor Jason Arday moderating a conversation with EDICa’s three workstream leads – Prof Kate Sang, Prof Robert MacIntosh, and Dr James Richards. Jason’s style will be informal and engaging, with an opportunity for the audience to ask questions towards the end. We are arranging a British Sign Language interpreter, and a recording will be made available after the seminar.



IN CONVERSATION WITH

EDICa

LEARN FROM INDUSTRY EXPERTS

19 September 2023
13:00 - 14:00 on Zoom

We hope you’ll join us. Register in advance for free here: <https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/Seminar1>

Other seminars in the field

Free seminar from GREeN (Gender Research & Equalities Network) on Wednesday 4 October 13:00-14:00

“LGBT+ academics’ and PhD students’ experiences of visibility in STEM: more than raising the rainbow flag”. Join Dr Jessica Gagnon and Dr Marco Reggiani to explore how visibility is perceived and navigated by LGBT+ academics and PhD students in STEM, with a focus on the ways that compounded and multiple axes of oppression impact people and groups who are marginalised and historically excluded.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/lgbt-academics-and-phd-students-experiences-of-visibility-in-stem-tickets-621799377677>



Do you know of a seminar about EDI in the research & innovation sector? Let us know so we can share it.

Spotlight on the field

Fast, slow, ongoing: Female academics' experiences of time and change during Covid-19

by **Kate Carruther Thomas** <https://rgs-ibg.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/area.12894>

"Fast, slow, ongoing" provides some great qualitative data on female academics' experiences of living and working through the Covid-19 pandemic in the UK. The paper uses Nixon's theory of 'slow violence' to "frame the impacts of the pandemic as gradual, unseen and banal despite potentially negative implications for female academics' career progression." The paper uses the diary, diary-interview method, where the participant keeps a diary in any format followed by an interview to clarify and avoid misinterpretation. If you skim down to Section 4 Research Findings, there are powerful block quotes from participants.

'I started lockdown 1 with a laptop on the dining table. My husband was working in the lounge, he brought home a chair and big screen and a desk, so it stayed there all the time whereas I was clearing stuff away to eat dinner.' (#7, Diary 1)

Working from home disrupted routines of flexible working in place pre-pandemic, placing further burden on women with caring responsibilities. This particularly impacted research outputs and publications, the main criteria for progression in academia.

'Writing for publication? No chance!' (#20, Diary 2)

'You can't write anything if you're just burnt out and exhausted' (#14, Diary 2).

The paper also highlights the impact of working from home on physical as well as emotional health (i.e. tiredness). 'I'm seated at my desk by 6am. By the time the first meeting starts at 9am I might already have a headache which intensifies during the day and I really need a break from the screen, but it's not to be.' (#5, Diary 1)

Carruthers Thomas writes that the data "represents a necessary form of witness with the potential to be utilised for future interventions". EDICa's focus groups co-designing our Covid-19 impact survey uncovered evidence of the long tail of Covid-19. The living lab cultures culled that take years to rebuild; the archival material not seen; the field trips not taken. As well as those papers not written. Help us find out more by sharing our survey as widely as possible.

<https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/Covid19-2023>

IGNITE Network+ announces four projects funded from its Flexible Fund.

<https://www.ignitenetplus.ac.uk/view/items/id/1346/news-four-exciting-new-projects-from-the-ignite-network-flexible-fund-fa2-edi-challenges>

IGNITE, funded by EPSRC, is specific to the energy sector, but the projects funded will be relevant to all disciplines. Funded projects include cartoons putting a spotlight on continuing sexism in the sector, an assessment of the Graduate

Apprenticeship in Civil Engineering programme, co-

development of a framework for inclusion of neurodivergent energy researchers, and the

development and testing of a new method of reviewing grant applications. The latter project closely



aligns with EDICa's Workstream 2 looking at bias in the peer review process for grant funding and publications.

IGNITE's next funding call will be on increasing the number of diverse PIs on UKRI grants, opening towards the end of 2023 and closing in early Spring '24. Check out their website for more information.

Free online conference Exploring Equitable Research Careers for Disabled Researchers – 21 September hosted by the Open University.

Reserve your spot here: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/exploring-equitable-research-careers-for-disabled-researchers-tickets-662861294977>

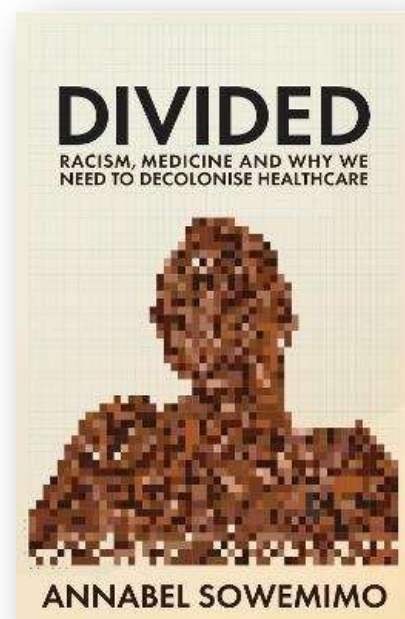
The conference will explore ways of promoting equitable research careers for disabled researchers by showcasing best practice, bringing to the fore the lived experiences of disabled researchers, and supporting tangible outcomes. The conference will be recorded! So if you're busy on 21st September, you can catch up later.



What we're into just now

Divided: Racism, Medicine and Why We Need to Decolonise Healthcare

For more information on this book discussed in our Workstream 1 update, check out <https://wellcomecollection.org/books/ZBHiqhQAAB3yFgDb> to read an extract. There is also a one-hour video of a panel discussion on decolonising healthcare featuring the author Dr Annabel Sowemimo hosted by the Wellcome Collection.



Making the business case for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

A podcast hosted by Canadian economist and futurist, Linda Nazareth, spoke with Professor Eddy Ng, Professor of Equity & Inclusion in Business at Queen’s University in Ontario, Canada. The half-hour podcast is from the business angle and makes the case for why EDI should take up precious time for profit-making businesses. It also touches on how to go beyond the raising of a rainbow flag during Pride month. The question of *accountability* comes up 16 minutes in – how do you incentivise managers to make the changes? This topic is a recurring one that EDICa are looking at in the UK’s research & innovation sector. Prof Ng speaks of linking targets to bonuses, but how does that work in the charity or the higher education sector? Send us your thoughts and examples you’ve seen in practice of accountability for EDI progress. <https://relentlesseconomics.com/uncategorized/episode-105-how-can-organizations-walk-the-talk-on-diversity-in-the-workplace/>

Boosting confidence for presenting

One of our postdoctoral researchers recommends this resource – available via Twitter, LinkedIn, website, newsletter sending tips to our email inbox. Duncan Yellowless is definitely selling his products of training, but there’s plenty of free tips in a humorous tone that can help people who want to improve their presentation style. What is the Worst Slide Crime? (answer: too much text). Why white slides are THE WORST! What to do when there’s silence during your Q&A section.

If you have PhD students or perhaps a manager who is guilty of “death by PowerPoint”, pass on the link. <https://thepresenteracadamy.podia.com/>

Spotlight on accessibility

Web Accessibility Overlays

Recently, we’ve noticed a wee icon which provides an accessibility toolbar on a website. This is called a “web accessibility overlay” – a broad term for tools that improve accessibility on websites by applying some relatively simple code on top of the original source code for the website. It sounds like an ideal, cheap and simple solution. There are certainly people who will find the tool useful. Here are three examples we’ve recently seen.

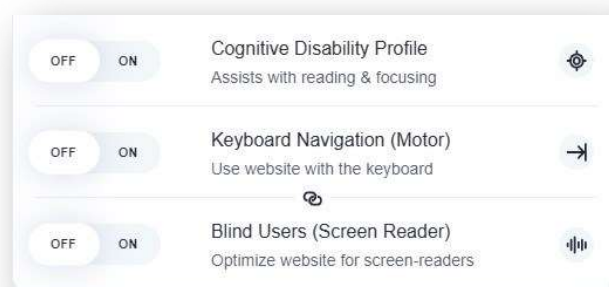


Exhibit A – [National Association of Disabled Staff Networks](#) Click on the wee figure in a circle

Exhibit B – [Royal Society of Edinburgh](#) Click on the cog at the bottom right

Exhibit C – [GMB Union](#) See the bar of options at the top

They can offer various colour combinations, fonts, removal of distracting images, and some have a focusing tool that blacks out everything but a narrow band. Try the RSE’s ADHD Friendly profile, for example.

Recently, however, criticism has grown over these overlays. Haben Girma (the deafblind lawyer and disability activist mentioned in our previous newsletter, [linked here](#)) posted a video cautioning against relying on them. The Economist ([linked here](#)) wrote about the rise of lawsuits in the USA over web accessibility in their 2 September 2023 issue, saying use of the overlays has not prevented lawsuits as they can interfere with the technology blind people use. “UsableNET reports that over 400 companies using overlays were hit with lawsuits in the first half of 2023. Experts say there is no substitute for auditing sites, designing fixes and manually testing them.” Here’s a fact sheet compiled about overlays and what they say is an unbiased assessment – [linked here](#).

As EDICa commissions its professionally-built website, these are developments we’re keeping an eye on.

Have you got any good practice to share? Tell us at EDICaucus@hw.ac.uk

Get Involved

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

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