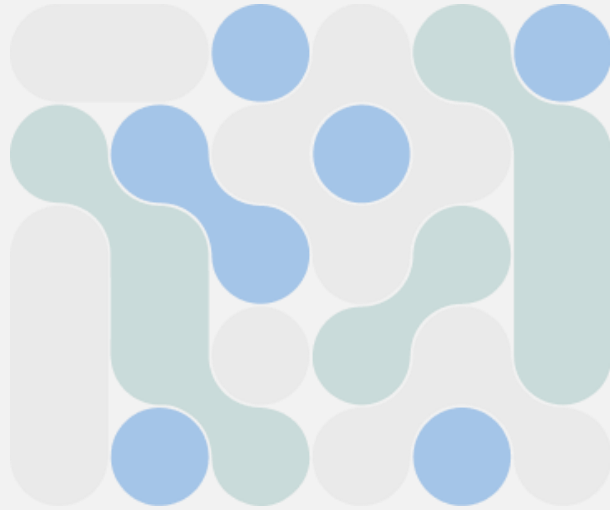


EDICa



EDICa Newsletter – Winter 2024

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

For the static PDF version of the newsletter, please click here

<https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/Newsletter-10>

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

In This Issue

- **Flexible Fund Announcements**
- **Calls for Participants & Updates**
- **Workstream updates**
- **EDICa Seminars**
- **Spotlight on the field**
- **Spotlight on accessibility**
- **Get involved**
- **Our Funders**

Flexible Fund Announcements

Our first round of Flexible Funded projects will begin presenting their findings at two upcoming events:

19 February 12:30-14:00 <https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/Seminar/MentalHealth>

Prof Dulini Fernando and her team will share their findings from their project titled: "The work and career experiences of women with mental health issues in STEM research and innovation". Another project unrelated to EDICa will also be presenting findings on mental health and women's lived experiences. Dr Hadar Elraz will be presenting for this project.

12 March 13:30-15:30 <https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/Seminar/Covid-Mitigations>

A mini symposium of three projects will present their findings on mitigating the impact of Covid-19 and public health measures on inequalities across research & innovation careers.

Dr Kamna Patel and her team presenting their project: "Feeding the research and innovation pipeline: COVID-19 and closing the degree grade awarding gap for Black and other minoritised students"

Dr Beldina Owalla and her team presenting their project: "Understanding the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the career life cycle of early career researchers in academia"

Dr Preethi Premkumar and her team presenting their project: "The Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the career progress of disabled researchers in intersection with race, gender and caring responsibility"

Our third and final round of Flexible Fund projects are currently undergoing the peer review process. We expect to make announcements on the successful projects at the beginning of March.

Calls and updates

Interview participants needed: Experiences in Writing Narrative CVs

One of EDICa's Flexible Fund projects, led by Dr Fasoli at the University of Surrey, is seeking participants.

Study Title: Experiences in Writing Narrative CVs



We are conducting a study aimed at understanding researchers' experiences of writing Narrative CVs and analysing the language used in such CVs. We are interested in identifying challenges and ways to support researchers in writing Narrative CVs as part of grant applications. The study is part of a project titled '[Breaking Barriers in Research Funding Applications: Evaluating Narrative CVs and Co-Designing Solutions for Application Processes](#)'.

What: The study involves completing a short online survey asking questions about yourself and the experience of writing a Narrative CV. **You will be asked to attach a Narrative CV you have written.** The CVs will be anonymised and analysed for language features and used for a second study assessing reviewers' biases.

Who: We are looking for individuals who:

- a) are active researchers working in the UK,
- b) have applied and submitted a Narrative CV as part of their grant application.

We are aiming to obtain and analyse Narrative CVs of both successful and unsuccessful applications written by researchers belonging to represented and underrepresented groups (e.g., gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, disability, etc).

When and Where: To participate, please click on this link:

https://surreyfahs.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bQ1jTOpgBCi8Dum. Make sure to have your Narrative CV ready to upload.

Incentive: In exchange for your participation, you can enter your email address at the end of the study to receive a **£10 Amazon voucher**. Only participants who provide a valid Narrative CV and complete the survey will be compensated. **The voucher will be sent to the participants at the end of the data collection (March 2025). To receive the voucher, participants will need to provide a valid email address associated with their university or institution.** If you have any questions, you can email Dr Fasoli (f.fasoli@surrey.ac.uk)

The study has been approved by received a favourable opinion from the University of Surrey Ethics Committee [REF 0064]

Please share the study only within your networks or contacts and refrain from advertising it on social media.

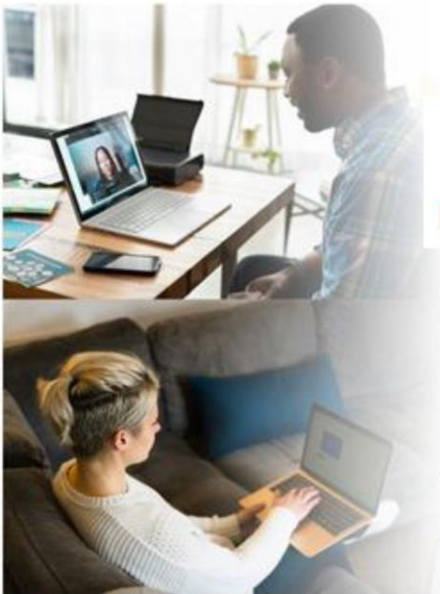
[Surveying Early Career Academics and Covid's impact on them](#)




One of EDICa's Flexible Fund projects, led by Dr Beldina Owalla. Join our 12 March symposium to hear more from this project.

Oxford Brookes University, in partnership with the British Academy of Management and the EDI Caucus, seeks to understand the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the career life cycle of early career academics (ECAs).

This survey is part of a study aimed at providing a comprehensive understanding of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the experiences and career development of ECAs. In examining the experiences of ECAs during and since the pandemic, the research will engage with questions of workload, mental well-being, job-security, and management support. These insights will be useful in helping us understand the impact of the pandemic on ECAs and to develop recommendations on best practices to support ECAs career progression, as well create a more inclusive research and innovation environment.

<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/SUX07N/>




  

EDI Caucus Project

Understanding the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the career life cycle of early career academics

Oxford Brookes University in partnership with the British Academy of Management and the UKRI EDI Caucus seeks to understand the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the career life cycle of early career academics (ECAs).

You can help us by completing our survey. For more information, please visit <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/SUX07N/>



DISCOVERy: DISability and the impact of COVID-19 and EqualitY across different intersections

An update from one of EDICa's Flexible Fund projects, led by Dr Preethi Premkumar. Join our 12 March symposium to hear more from this project.

We held an exhibition of the DISCOVERy project on 27th and 28th November 2024 to broadcast the experiences of disabled researchers during the COVID pandemic, (click on this link to view photos and read more [DISCOVERy Project - Impact](#)). DISCOVERy is the acronym for our EDICa project to understand DISability and the impact of COVID-19 and EqualitY across different intersections, [DISCOVERy Project](#). Held at the Borough Gallery of London South Bank University, the exhibition displayed 13 exhibits. These exhibits included artwork



by the investigators and participants in the project that they created during the pandemic. The exhibition also featured audio-installations of the voices of participants expressing their challenges about career progress during the pandemic, drawings by participants during the focus groups and an art installation portraying the barriers to career progress among disabled researchers. Two posters summarised the qualitative and quantitative research conducted for the DISCOVERy project. Fifteen members of the public visited the exhibition, including students and staff at

LSBU and research participants. Preethi Premkumar, Nicole Brown and Nicki Martin guided visitors through the exhibits. The setting was also used to film a video documentary about the DISCOVERy project and recommendations for policy and practice about the career progress of disabled researchers who are also minoritised by race, gender and caring responsibilities.

Please take a few moments to complete [this survey](#) about the career progress of minoritised researchers during and after the COVID pandemic. **Any academic researcher can take the survey**, regardless of whether or not you consider yourself to be minoritised. Your help is greatly valued.

Call for Participants: PIs, managers in UK academia who manage neurodivergent colleagues

PhD student, Lena Biermann, is seeking participants who lead a research team in UK academia, and who have team members who identify as neurodivergent. Lena is researching intersectionality between neurodivergence and gender in teamworking environments.

To express interest in participating, please email l.biermann@hw.ac.uk.



The flyer is titled "Call for participants!" and is for a PhD scoping study by Lena Biermann. It features two speech bubbles with questions: "Are you leading a research team in UK academia?" and "Do any of your research team members identify as neurodivergent?". Below these are icons of people holding hands and people with puzzle pieces. The flyer lists benefits, who to look for, what participation involves, and how to express interest. It includes a QR code and a request to share the flyer.

Call for participants!

PhD scoping study by Lena Biermann (she/her)

Are you leading a research team in UK academia?

Do any of your research team members identify as neurodivergent?

Use the opportunity to support research on intersectionality between neurodivergence and gender in teamworking environments by participating!

HOW DO YOU BENEFIT FROM PARTICIPATING?

- It provides you with the opportunity to take an active role in knowledge building on neurodivergence and intersectionality, and to make academia more inclusive.
- Participation can be included within EDI reporting and people development of your research project.

WHO AM I LOOKING FOR?

- **Research team leaders** within UK academia, such as Principal Investigators, Project Managers etc.
- Your research team must include **team members who identify as neurodivergent** (this includes autism, ADHD, Tourette's Syndrome, dyslexia, dyscalculia, dyspraxia). Medical diagnosis and self-diagnosis are accepted.

WHAT DOES YOUR PARTICIPATION INVOLVE?

- Participation requires taking part in a semi-structured interview that will take approx. 60mins.
- Interviews can be done via Microsoft Teams or in person, depending on preference.
- Main interview questions are provided beforehand.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN PARTICIPATING?

To express your interest in the scoping study or if you have any questions, please get in touch with me via email: l.biermann@hw.ac.uk or scan the QR code.



 Please share this flyer with anyone who might be interested to partake!

This research received approval by the School of Social Sciences Ethics Committee at Heriot-Watt University.

Workstream Updates

The Career- Life Cycle

EDICa continues to work with several test sites from across the UK's research & innovation sector. EDICa researchers have created a baseline survey which is designed to assess how an organisation is doing in terms of supporting menstrual health and peri/menopause. The results are then used to evaluate the success of any interventions implemented by the organisation. EDICa's underlying ethos is that changes made to improve equality, diversity & inclusion should be evidence-based, requiring a before and after picture to review and make improvements.

We now have more than 1000 responses to baseline surveys conducted at two separate sites. This data adds to our growing body of evidence on menstrual health in the research & innovation sector. As one of our outputs, we will be publishing the baseline survey questions for other organisations to use as a template.

We will soon conduct our first Menstrual Health Champion training sessions at some of our test sites. Volunteers will be trained in how to provide support on menstrual health in the workplace, and it follows the model of the Mental Health champion. Our data has shown that not everyone is comfortable talking to their manager (male or female) about challenges with menstrual health, and they prefer a person not directly linked to their line management to discuss issues or receive advice, support or signposting to helpful resources. We are also aware it is not a manager's responsibility to know about all menstrual conditions, so the champion will also serve as a point of reference and support for managers. Often people are not aware of policies, even when they do exist; they may not know where to look or how to proceed. The champions are a bridge to internal and external resources. The training will also cover "red flag symptoms" that would need attention from a GP.

If your organisation is interested in training Menstrual Health Champions, get in touch with us. edicaucus@hw.ac.uk

It's not too late to sign up to our workshop aimed at Doctoral Training Partnerships, and Centres for Doctoral Training (DTPs and CDTs). With PhD students belonging to a myriad of institutions, what solutions can be practically implemented to effect change regarding menstrual health in these multi-institutional doctoral training programmes? **Join us for a roundtable discussion on 12 February 2025, 13:00-15:00 on Zoom. Click here to <https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/CDT-Workshop>** This invitation is for supervisors, principal investigators, managers of programmes, and postgraduate researchers.



The poster features the EDICa logo at the top left, with icons of laboratory glassware, a toilet, a menstrual cup, and a pad. The main title is 'Workshop on Supporting Menstrual Health in CDTs' followed by the date and time. A registration link is provided. An illustration of a meeting is shown with a call to action: 'Come and brainstorm ways that CDTs can support menstrual health in the workplace.' Logos for The British Academy and UK Research and Innovation are at the bottom, along with a QR code and funding information.

EDICa

Workshop on Supporting Menstrual Health in CDTs
12 February 2025
13:00-15:00 on Zoom

Register here:
<https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/CDT-Workshop>

Come and brainstorm ways that CDTs can support menstrual health in the workplace.

Funded by  The British Academy  UK Research and Innovation

* Centre for Doctoral Training

Supporting pregnancy and early childcare in non desk-based research work: co-designing meaningful strategies towards inclusive research career pathways for mothers. A pilot study

Each EDICa postdoc has £1500 to put towards their own "seedcorn" project. Dr Chiara Cocco from this workstream is looking at family planning (including delaying starting a family), pregnancy and the early childcare (under age 2) for those in non-desk-based research work.

If you are a researcher based in the UK (or have been in the past), and have experience of pregnancy (including miscarriage and fertility journeys), breastfeeding and/or caring for a child under 2 during your research career, Chiara wants to hear from you. She is particularly interested in the experiences of those conducting non desk-based research (e.g., fieldwork, lab work) to learn how you negotiated being pregnant and/or caring for a young child with your career. We want to hear how family planning has impacted your career decisions and vice versa, with the aim of understanding how to make non desk-based research careers more accessible for those who also wish to have a family. If you'd like to hear more and would be willing to receive the formal call for participants, contact Chiara at C.Cocco@hw.ac.uk

The Research Process

In autumn 2023, EDICa recruited a cohort of "Equity Champions" who would undertake a programme of EDI training, and reflect on this using video diaries. The training programme has now reached its halfway point, with four training sessions having taken place and four further training sessions scheduled for 2025. The next training session will take place in February with the topic of menopause and menstrual health, led by Dr Chiara Cocco and Prof Kate Sang. The workstream team is also currently holding voluntary drop-in discussion sessions with Equity Champions to establish which aspects of the training and the video diary study work well, and what could be improved for the next year. One central aim of this initiative is to establish how EDI training can be made more effective in the research and innovation sector, and roundtable discussions with Equity Champions allow us to continue the discussion of points raised individually in video diary entries. Our intention is to involve those EDI champions that wish to do so in co-producing guidance around EDI training.

The workstream further continues efforts to test the effectiveness of EDI interventions with funders of the EDI Caucus. Following insights gained from this work, EDICa intends to reach out to the wider research and innovation community to schedule interviews to reflect on experiences with funding assessment panels, starting with the co-investigators group from the wider Caucus. Please get in touch with us to share your thoughts on this, or to share how you would like to get involved. edicaucus@hw.ac.uk

The Organisation of Work

Covid-19's impact on R&I careers and workplaces

Last autumn, EDICa conducted a comprehensive survey of people working in the UK's research & innovation sector looking at how Covid-19 impacted people. To support this quantitative data, we're now conducting interviews to provide a more nuanced picture of how Covid-19 and the lockdowns impacted people in different ways. We want to hear the positives and the negatives.

We encourage you to disseminate our call for interview participants widely. These interviews will take place online via Zoom. For more information and to sign up, click here:

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

EDICa **CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS**

How can we improve the work experience - home working, office, lab, hybrid?

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

Open to PGRs/PhD students impacted by Covid pandemic between 2020-2021; technicians, researchers, professional services. From academia, private sector, 3rd sector, & government.

To learn more, click here <https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/CovidStudy>

Using virtual reality to showcase enabling workspaces

EDICa is working with the company [Animmersion](#) who specialise in developing virtual reality training and simulations in the workplace. We are hosting a series of online and in-person co-design workshops to look at what an enabling workplace could look like. All our upcoming online workshops are full, but we are coming to the Royal



Geographical Society

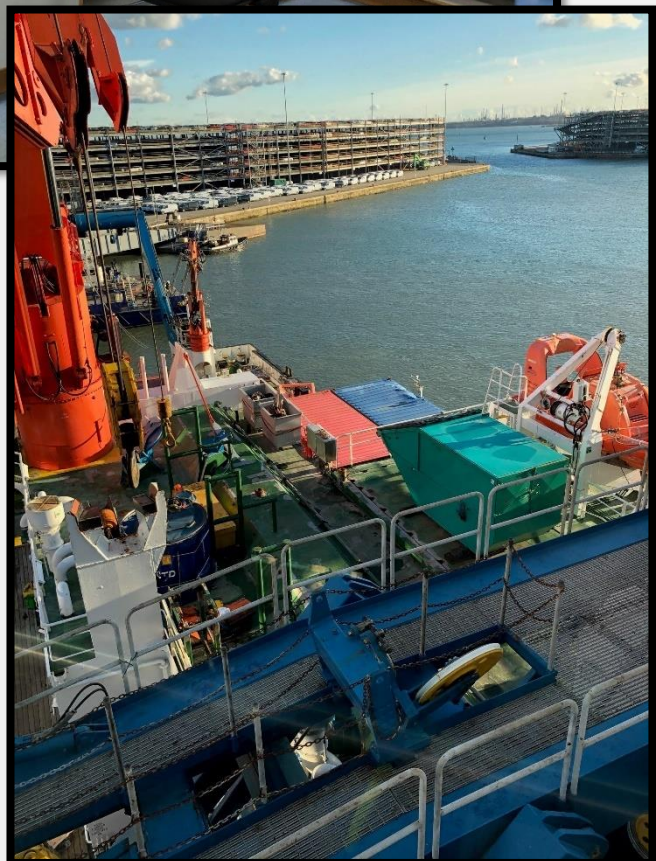
and to London South Bank University on 28 January to do in-person workshops. If you're available and near enough, get in touch to participate: edicaucus@hw.ac.uk

EDICa continued with more visits to places where research happens in the UK. In November we were fortunate to catch the RRS James Cook while it was in Southampton for a refresh and reload. The National Oceanographic Centre is dockside in Southampton, with excellent views of the busy port and close connections with the University of Southampton. We had a tour of the ship, viewing living quarters, recreational areas, toilets of course, ship engineering areas, and the permanent lab spaces. The vessels will often load additional lab space in converted containers, which sit on the decks. In addition, we interviewed several people who have worked at sea and heard about the particular challenges and constrictions of working at sea. EDICa has previously heard how the opportunities for some disciplines afforded by going on these trips can be career-defining, and was therefore of particular interest for us to study.

EDICa also visited a physical chemistry lab, containing lasers, a synthetic chemistry lab, and chemistry teaching lab. We learned, for example, that the reason the laser lab only had stools was to prevent workers' eyes from being at the level of the lasers. This, along with the dexterity and manoeuvrability required to manage the lasers and experiments, presents challenges for many with physical disabilities. Our host also explained that during inductions, staff are advised to let him know as soon as possible if they might be pregnant so alternative

arrangements can be made that prevents contact with dangerous chemicals in the lab. We also learned that even in supportive labs, the sheer amount of experiments required to be run for a standard PhD thesis leads to long hours of in-person lab work, which could be challenging for some people.

EDICa researchers are gathering data - including photos, sound recordings, and experiences - which will inform our later research and virtual reality scenes for enabling workplaces.

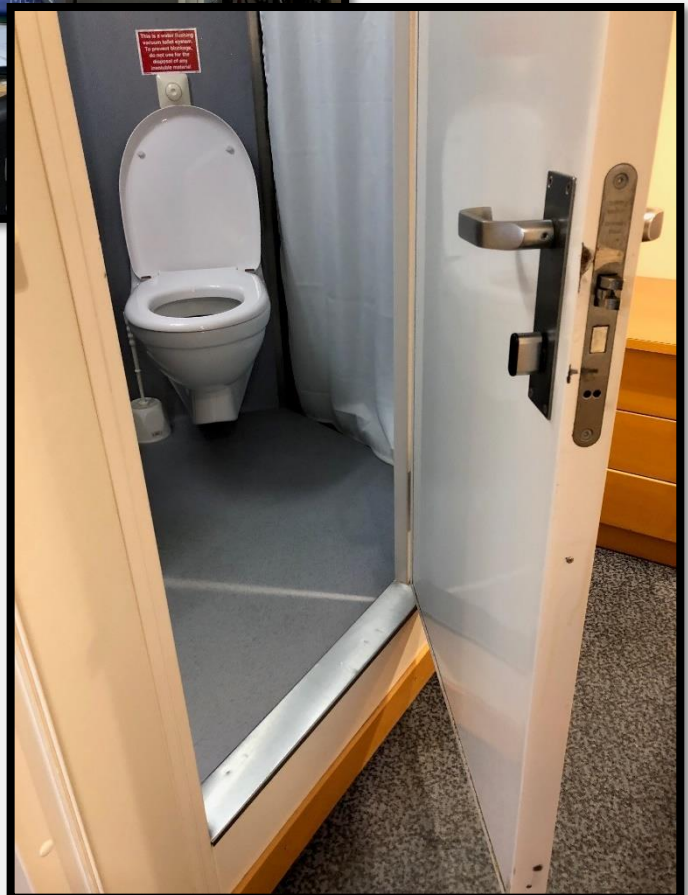
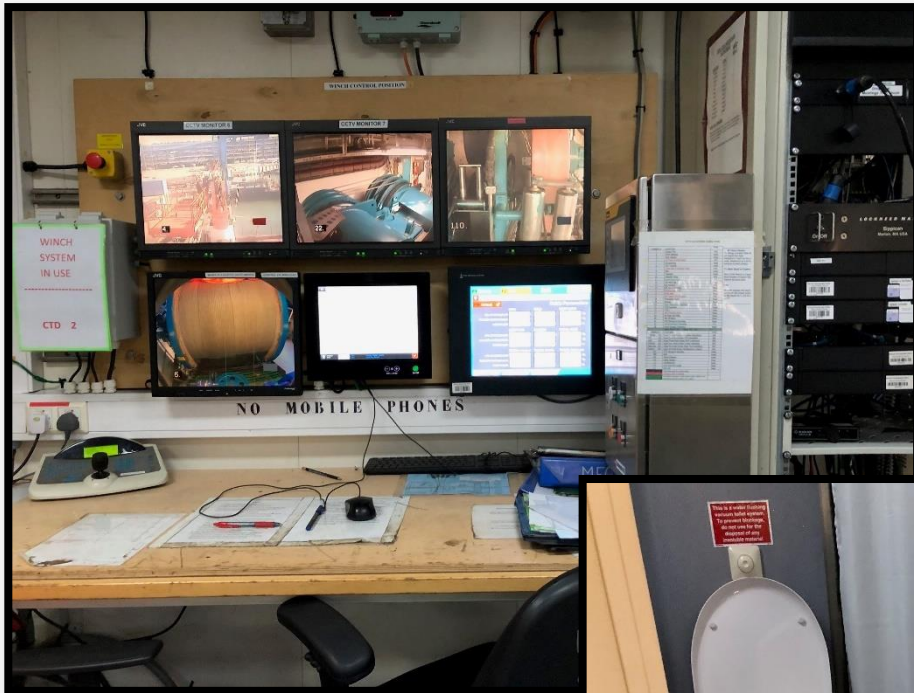


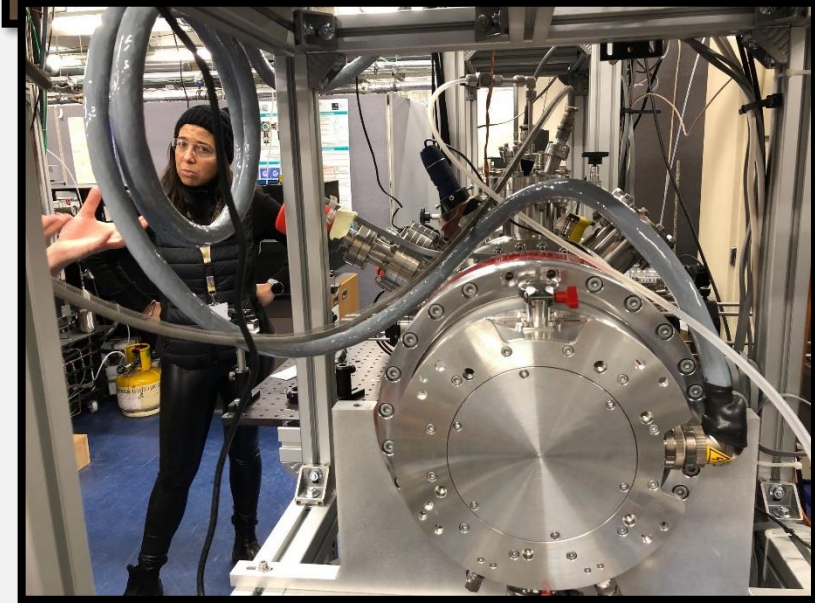
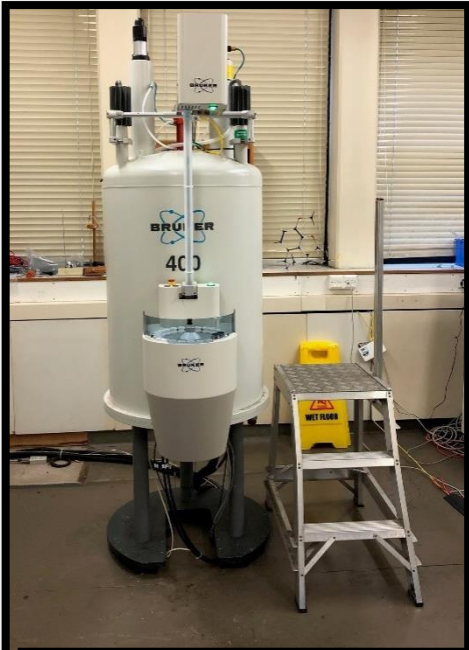
1 - One of the lab spaces. Researchers bring their lab equipment on board and fix it to the wooden benchtop.

2 - The deck of the RRS James Cook and the Port of Southampton

3 - RRS James Cook control centre for the winch

4 - A toilet of a Principal Investigator suite. Note the step up. Lower-ranked toilets don't have sinks; they're in the single room instead.





5. Nuclear Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy (NMRS) in a chemistry lab.

5 - Chemistry teaching lab

6 - Chiara listens to an explanation of the physical chemistry lab's collection of lasers

7 - Synthetic chemistry research lab



EDICa Seminars

Mental health in the research & innovation ecosystem: understanding the lived experiences of women.

We are hosting a seminar on **19 February on Zoom from 12:30-14:00** where two projects looking at mental health in the research & innovation ecosystem will share their findings.

The first project was funded by EDICa's first round of Flexible Funding.

Prof Dulini Fernando, Dr Krystal Wilkinson and Prof Elina Meliou will be presenting findings from their project, **“The work and career experiences of women with mental health issues in STEM research and innovation”**.

Dr Hadar Elraz has completed a short study, separate to EDICa but related in subject to Prof Fernando’s project, on **“Examining the workplace experiences of female academics with Mental health conditions in the UK: Work intensification and intersectional effects”**.

Register here to attend: <https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/Seminar/MentalHealth> Let us know ASAP if you need BSL interpretation. You can read more information about the projects and the presenters here: <https://edicaucus.ac.uk/seminar-mental-health/>

A recording of the seminar will be published on our YouTube channel.



EDICa

Seminar
Mental health in the research
& innovation ecosystem:
understanding the lived
experiences of women

Free, on Zoom:
19 February 2025,
12:30-14:00 GMT

More info + register here!

<https://edicaucus.ac.uk/seminar-mental-health/>

Symposium: Mitigating the effects of Covid-19

As the Flexible Fund Round 1 projects come to the end of their funding, we are hosting a symposium where the projects will share their findings. EDICa funded four projects in the first round. Three will be presenting on **12 March 13:30-15:30 on Zoom**. You can hear from the fourth project in the seminar on Mental Health on 19 February.

The theme of the first round of funding was to look at how to mitigate the effects of Covid-19 on the research & innovation sector. In this symposium you will hear from the following projects:

Project 1 led by Dr Kamna Patel –

Feeding the research and innovation pipeline:

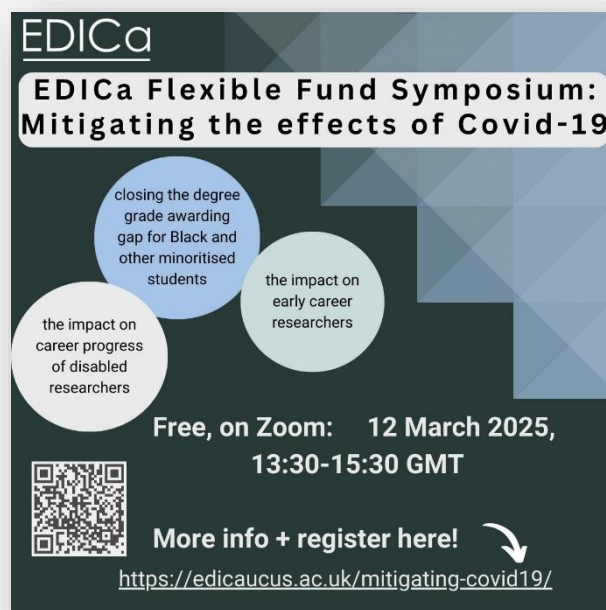
Covid-19 and closing the degree grade awarding gap for Black and other minoritised students.

Project 3 led by Dr Beldina Owalla – **Understanding the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the career life cycle of early career researchers in academia.**

Project 4 led by Dr Preethi Premkumar – **The Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the career progress of disabled researchers in intersection with race, gender and caring responsibility.**

Register here to attend: <https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/Seminar/Covid-Mitigations> Let us know ASAP if you need BSL interpretation. You can read more information about the projects and the presenters here: <https://edicaucus.ac.uk/mitigating-covid19/>

A recording of the symposium will be published on our YouTube channel.



Spotlight on the field

Qualitative researchers' experiences of peer review feedback

“Being really confidently wrong”: Qualitative researchers' experiences of methodologically incongruent peer review feedback.

Clarke, V., Braun, V., Adams, J., Callaghan, J. E. M., LaMarre, A., & Semlyen, J. (2024). *Qualitative Psychology*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1037/qup0000322>

We know how important peer review is to academic publishing, but this paper discusses how that much of the research on peer review in publishing is on the quantitative subjects - e.g. numerical data. But peer review of papers that use qualitative methods - like the interviews of lived experience and co-design methods at the heart of EDICa - hasn't been studied as much.

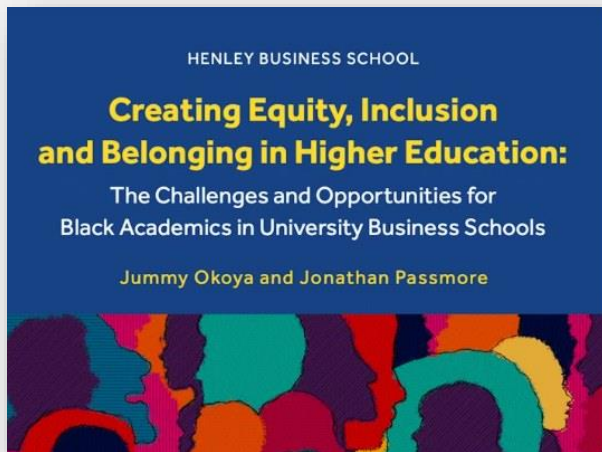
"This article developed from an exchange on *Twitter (X)*, when one of us vented frustration about reviewers “not getting” qualitative research, and requesting revisions incongruent with the methodological approach of our submitted research. The frustration was not ours alone! After an animated exchange, we decided a more rigorous exploration of incongruity in peer review of qualitative research was needed, and so began a project to understand what appeared to be a widely shared problem."

"Contributors were concerned that peer reviewers often accept review invitations when they lack relevant methodological expertise and editors often select peer reviewers without such expertise." Contributors can try and push back, but this was not always successful, and the authors highlight the particular challenge early career researchers have in pushing back. "Earlier career researchers especially highlighted the powerlessness they felt in the peer review process in the context of a “publish or perish” academic climate."

Read one of the opening paragraphs, full of cited research, and hopefully this tempts you to read the full article: "Peer review is a cornerstone of academic publication, understood as both assuring quality and bolstering the trustworthiness of our knowledge production (Tennant & Ross-Hellauer, 2020). However, it is already widely acknowledged that peer review is flawed. Not only is there the challenge of too many articles and too few experts to review them (Rodríguez-Bravo et al., 2017), the process is resource intensive (Aczel et al., 2021), lacking transparency (O'Brien et al., 2021), inequitable (Steinberg et al., 2018), and at times actively hostile (Mavrogenis et al., 2020). Research on authors' experiences of peer review has highlighted the harms of peer review for authors and particularly early career academics (e.g., Horn, 2016; Watling et al., 2023), and those from marginalized groups (e.g., Silbiger & Stubler, 2019)." <https://doi.org/10.1037/qup0000322>

Creating Equity, Inclusion and Belonging in Higher Education: The Challenges and Opportunities for Black Academics in University Business Schools

"Systematic and pervasive barriers are hindering the progression of Black academics in UK business schools and more must be done to foster a more inclusive and representative higher education sector, according to a new report co-authored by the University of Reading's Henley Business School and University of East London.



"The groundbreaking report, *Creating Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging in Higher Education: The Challenges and Opportunities for Black Academics in University Business Schools*, examines the varied experiences of Black academics working in the UK and US, delving specifically into the internal factors that have historically contributed to a lack of career progression, including towards professorship.

"Co-authored by Dr Jummy Okoya, Dean of UEL's Office for Institutional Equity, and Professor of Coaching and Behavioural Change at Henley Business School, [Dr Jonathan Passmore](#), the report calls for radical change at an institutional and individual level, to bridge the gap between Black academics and their peers, and ensure they have every opportunity to thrive and feel a sense of belonging.

"The report's findings highlight significant underrepresentation, with Black academics holding less than 1 per cent of professor roles, despite making up 4.4 per cent of the working-age population. This lack of representation was associated with adverse effects on curriculum diversity, leadership, and student experiences, as well as more widely perpetuating systemic inequities.

"In response to the barriers identified, the report proposes a forward-looking BRIDGE – Building Recognisable Inclusiveness, Diverse Growth, and Equity – framework, which advocates for transparent promotion criteria, inclusive leadership, and tailored career programs for Black academics, alongside recommendations for professional bodies and research organisations to embed equitable practices."

<https://www.henley.ac.uk/news/2024/action-needed-to-dismantle-systematic-barriers-faced-by-black-academics>

Toilets at Work

The TUC (Trades Union Congress) recently published *Toilets At Work: A report on workers' experience of toilet access and facilities*.

"Access to toilets is a fundamental workplace need. When workers lack adequate access, they may delay using the restroom, leading to serious physical health issues over time. It also causes stress and distraction, a serious risk in safety-critical roles where workers must be able to concentrate on the job at hand. Regular restroom breaks are also crucial for staying hydrated and maintaining bodily health, particularly in physically demanding jobs. However, teachers, drivers, postal workers, firefighters and many others report urinary tract infections, kidney strain, digestive issues and other health complications as a result of having to 'hold it in'. There is an additional concern for pregnant, menopausal or disabled workers."

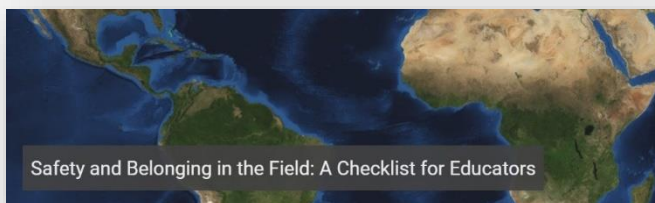


You can read the full report here:

<https://www.tuc.org.uk/research-analysis/reports/toilets-work>

Safety and Belonging in the Field: A Checklist for Educators

Safety and Belonging in the Field: A Checklist for Educators



"Ensuring taught fieldwork is a positive, generative, collective, and valuable experience for all participants requires considerations beyond course content. To guarantee safety and belonging, participants'

identities (backgrounds and protected characteristics) must be considered as a part of fieldwork planning and implementation. Furthermore, getting fieldwork right is an important step in disrupting the ongoing cycle of exclusion of participants from marginalised demographics. This document aims to provide those involved in field teaching in Geography, Earth, and Environmental Sciences (GEES) disciplines with a brief overview about how identity affects experiences of taught fieldwork, as well as some general tips and a practical checklist for creating a safe learning environment for all staff, demonstrators, and students in the field."

<https://eartharxiv.org/repository/view/2607/>

Yes, it's for taught fieldwork, and yes, meant for a specific field, but we hope it may still be useful inspiration applicable to other areas.

Fieldwork and caring costs

The Royal Geographical Society (RGS), whose Head of Research & Higher Education Dr Catherine Souch is EDICa's Engagement Lead, have on their website a review of policies on fieldwork and caring costs. There is a list of examples of good practice from the UK, Europe, and USA, as well as 5 cited references. Read it in full here:

<https://www.rgs.org/research/higher-education-resources/fieldwork-and-care>

"The Society and the Development Geographies (DGRG) and Gender and Feminist Geographies (GFGRG) Research Groups have been working together to better signpost funder policies on care costs associated with fieldwork. This is part of a broader programme of work on the impact of care responsibilities on academic careers and work. A [Gold Standard for funding](#) has been proposed by DGRG.

"While some funding bodies have agreed to cover care costs (travel, childcare/school fees, visas and living costs), this is rarely explicit within available guidance. Here we provide links to current funder policies. We welcome suggestions of additions (please email rhed@rgs.org)."

Spotlight on accessibility

Last autumn, EDICa spoke with someone who uses a service dog for their medical condition. They mentioned support from their institution to have the dog by their side, with the exception of the clean labs. This led to a discussion of **Sampson the Science Service Dog**.

We are sharing in case there are other service dogs who are excluded from clean labs. In 2006 Joey Ramp was in a horse riding accident that broke multiple bones and caused brain damage. Joey had PTSD and mobility issues meaning she was unable to leave the home, until she took a chance in getting a service dog, who helped her re-enter the world. She also decided to study brain injuries further, returning to study at the



University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana. This led to the co-development of changes to policy and practice to enable Joey and Sampson to work in a clean lab. "Each day while she conducts her experiments, a lab coat, booties, and Rex Specs-clad Sampson stays close, monitoring Joey for signs of stress and anxiety and serving as a physical aid when her chronic pain flares. Joey's symptoms often include dissociating and becoming non-verbal. He also watches to see when she may need to pick something up off the floor or kneel down, and he'll spring into action to serve as balance or brace to minimize Joey's vertigo and nerve pain." You can read more of their backstory [here](#).

Sampson has become an ambassador for service dogs in science spaces. You can follow this charming golden retriever on [Twitter](#), [BlueSky](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#). He was recognised at the Hero Dog Awards last week by the American Humane Society.

You can find out more about custom lab coats for dogs here:

<https://www.customdogcoats.com/labcoat>

[UCL Call for wheelchair users working in wet labs to user-test lab coat](#)

The UCL Innovation Lab is looking for wheelchair users to test their prototype lab coats in wet labs. Wet labs are "where 'wet' hazards including chemicals and biological agents are used to perform experiments. Participants must be aged 18 or over and use their wheelchair at least part-time in a lab environment and be willing to test the prototype while using their wheelchair. In return, those taking part will be paid £50 for their time and input.

If you are interested, please email uclcast.labcoats@ucl.ac.uk with an expression of interest by 30 January 2025."



Get Involved

Sign up to receive our newsletter, calls for participation and Flexible Fund:

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

Follow us on Twitter [@EDI_Caucus](#), [LinkedIn](#), [BlueSky](#) [TikTok](#), and on [Instagram](#).

To unsubscribe from our newsletter, please email EDICaucus@hw.ac.uk

EDI Caucus, Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh

The logo for EDI Ca features the letters 'EDI' in a bold, black, sans-serif font, followed by 'Ca' in a blue, sans-serif font. A thick black horizontal line is positioned below the text.

Funders of the EDI Caucus

