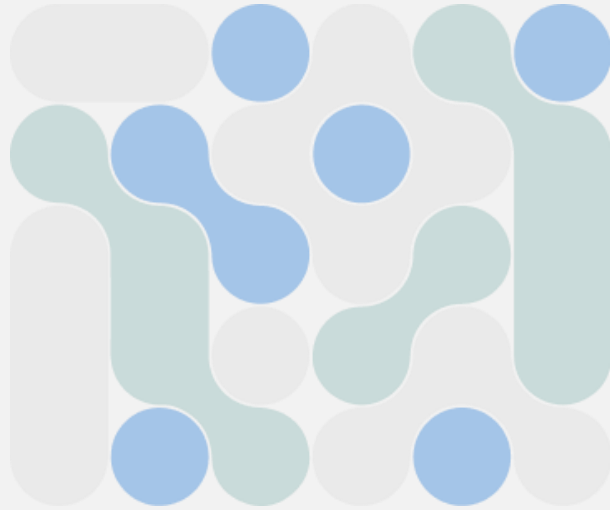


EDICa



EDICa Newsletter - Apr-May '26

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

For the sway version of the newsletter, please click here

<https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/Newsletter/2026-05>

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

In This Issue

- **EDICa Updates & Announcements**
- **Workstream updates**
- **Spotlight on the field**
- **Spotlight on accessibility**
- **Get involved**
- **Our Funders**

EDICa Updates & Announcements

Launch Webinar: EDI in the Research Process

EDICa's Workstream 2 set out to determine how EDI (equality/equity, diversity and inclusion) can be embedded in the research process and impact those career-defining decisions, like funding and publications. What works, in what context, and why?

Join us on **Tuesday, 30 June 2026 15:00-16:00 BST** as we launch a series of reports on the research process. Our researchers will discuss the findings, the challenges faced, and reflect more generally on the research and the current landscape in the sector.

- Good Practice Guide for Research Panels
- Good Practice Guide on EDI Training in the Research & Innovation Sector
- Good Practice Guide on Demand Management and EDI
- Guidance on Flexible Fund Administration



British Sign Language has been booked, and a recording will be made available on our website after the event.

[Click here to register.](#)

Is all publicity good publicity? Navigating public backlash to LGBTQ+ Research

An EDICa Flexible Fund project is hosting a free webinar on **Wednesday, 24 June 2026 12:30-14:00 BST online** (BSL is available).

The project has also published a paper in the journal, Sexualities, entitled "[On the edge of sustainable': LGBTQ+ researchers' experiences of harm, fear and community](#)". An abstract can be found in our "Spotlight on the Field" section further down the newsletter.

[Click here for full details of the webinar and to reserve your spot.](#)

"Join us for the launch of our research project report and accompanying toolkit of training resources and activities.

"This event celebrates the launch of a project report and accompanying toolkit of training resources and activities, resulting from the project, 'Is all publicity good publicity? Addressing Public Harassment in LGBTQ+ Research Impact & Engagement'. We will hear from invited expert speakers and provide a brief overview of the project's research findings and outputs.

"Research impact and public engagement now take place against a backdrop of rising public queerphobia and transphobia. For academics conducting UK-based LGBTQ+ research, public communication can come with the potential for harassment, as well as personal and professional damage. Despite these risks, they are rarely recognised or mitigated at either institutional or sector level.



"Our report outlines the outcomes of a project that took place between September 2024 and March 2026. We aimed to:

- explore the effects of harassment or the prospect of harassment on those researching LGBTQ+ topics and raise awareness of these experiences
- build a picture of the current landscape around LGBTQ+ research
- develop ideas for mitigating risk and supporting researchers, and identify existing good practice
- build a community of people with a shared interest in this issue, to try and combat professional isolation.

"Building an evidence base and documenting the many ways that public harassment affects LGBTQ+ researchers, higher education institutions, and the wider research landscape, is a vital first step towards recognising and reducing harm.

"We are happy to introduce a toolkit resource as a result of this research project, to aid with recognising the issues LGBTQ+ researchers experience in the conduct of their work. We will outline the components of the toolkit,

which are suitable for training sessions, individual reflection, conversations with line managers and networks, and developing internal support mechanisms.

"This event is open to all interested parties. We feel it will be particularly useful for: academics, researchers, professional services staff in research support roles, those working in grant funding bodies, university managers, research communication workers, and those in roles connected to academic research. Please feel free to share the event in your networks."

The Impact of Hybrid Working on Black Women Academics: Productivity and Visibility in Post-COVID Higher Education

This research project explores how hybrid working models shape the productivity, visibility, and career experiences of Black women academics in UK higher education following the COVID-19 pandemic. While hybrid working offers flexibility, it also raises important questions about professional recognition, career progression, inclusion, and wellbeing within academic workplaces.

Using interviews and focus groups with Black women academics across the UK, the project explores how institutional policies, digital engagement, and workplace cultures influence their experiences. The findings highlight both the opportunities and challenges associated with hybrid working and provide evidence to inform policy and practice within the higher education sector.

The project is supported by the Women's Higher Education Network (WHEN), which has assisted with participant recruitment and dissemination activities. Through stakeholder engagement and knowledge exchange activities, including a

stakeholder workshop taking place at UWE Bristol on 10 June 2026 10:00-16:00

UWE Bristol University of the West of England

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Caucus (EDICa) Research Stakeholder Workshop

RESEARCH TOPIC:
The Impact of Hybrid Work on Black Female Academics: Visibility and Productivity in Post COVID 19.

DR. TINKUMA EDAIOQHOR
Principal Investigator
EDICa Research Team | University of the West of England, Bristol.

DR. IFEOMA DAN-OGOSI
Co-Investigator
EDICa Research Team | University of the West of England, Bristol.

10:00-16:00

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS:

- What policies can we feasibly design to support Black Women academics in their roles in higher education?
- How can we amplify the impact of our study to benefit Black women academics and their employers?
- What policies should be introduced to recognise and address the impact of intersectionality on Black Female Academics (BFAs)?
- How can institutions better support BFAs to gain visibility, progression, and sustained productivity in UK higher education?

WEDNESDAY, 10TH JUNE 2026 | 10:00-16:00
Enterprise Park 1, Stoke Gifford, Bristol, BS34-3RB
SCAN THE QR CODE TO REGISTER NOW

([sign up here](#)), the project aims to contribute to more equitable and inclusive working environments in higher education.

Research Team

- Dr Tinkuma Edafioghor (Principal Investigator), Senior Lecturer in Human Resource Management.
- Dr Ifeoma Dan-Ogosi (Co-Investigator), Senior Lecturer in Public Health, University of the West of England, Bristol

EDICa's State of the Sector Survey 2026

As the EDI Caucus got under way in early 2023, our funders UKRI and the British Academy asked us to study the impact Covid-19 had on inequalities in the UK's research and innovation (R&I) sector. You can read our published findings on [our webpage here](#).

Two years on, we're undertaking **a follow-up survey** to assess the state of the R&I sector. We ask questions about the working conditions in labs, offices, and home; the relationships with managers and colleagues; access to flexible working, sick leave, occupational health; the balance of work and life; career development; and more.

<https://go.hw.ac.uk/Workplace2026>

Who should participate? Anyone who works in the UK's research & innovation sector, or has done at some point since January 2023. This includes PhD students (PGRs), administrators, managers, professional and technical service staff. This includes private sector big and small, the public sector including government departments, and the third sector including charities and learned societies.

Survey closes 15 June

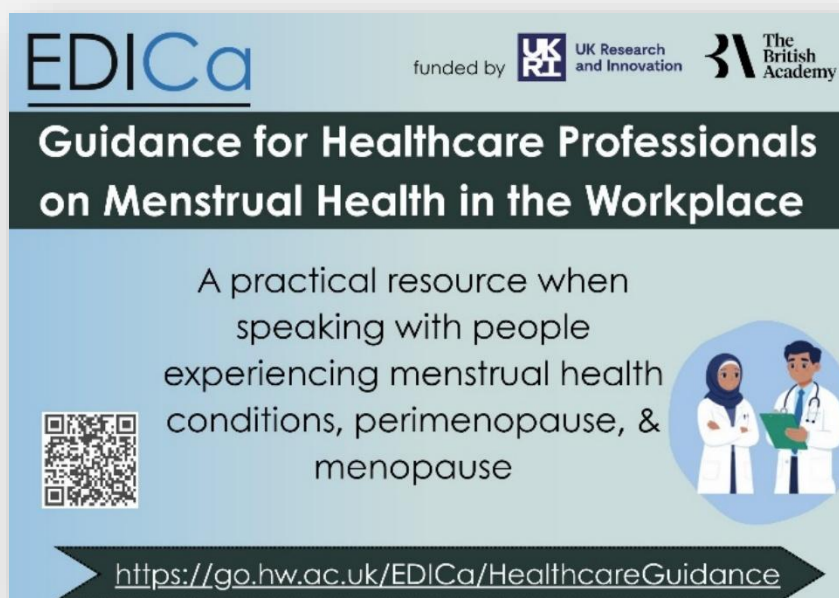


The poster features the EDICa logo at the top, followed by the text 'the UK's research & innovation State of the Sector Survey 2026'. Below this is a dark blue banner with white text: 'All job types in the research and innovation sector - from private to public to third sector. PGRs, admins, lab techs, managers, lecturers, researchers, etc'. The URL 'https://go.hw.ac.uk/Workplace2026' is repeated. On the left is a cartoon stick figure holding a clipboard. In the center is a clock face showing '5 min'. On the right is a QR code. At the bottom right, it says 'ends 15 June 2026' and 'funded by' with logos for UKRI (UK Research and Innovation) and The British Academy.

Workstream Updates

The Career - Life Cycle

EDICa is announcing our new **Guidance for Healthcare Professionals on Menstrual Health**. This brief but useful document provides healthcare professionals with prompting questions when talking with patients about menstrual health. The questions deal with the work context of the patient, their physical access to facilities and flexibility in their role, their understanding of menstrual health terminology, the interpersonal and organisational support they receive at work, and on considerations of how treatment could impact the patient's work. You can read the five-page report [on our website](#).



As part of our recent impact work, EDICa has been working closely with more partners across sectors to explore how workplaces can better support menstrual health and menopause. Over the past few months, we have led three co-design workshops bringing together employees and managers across different roles (such as HR, EDI professionals, policy advisors) to share experiences and collaboratively develop practical, evidence-based solutions. We also organised a session with Deaf women delivered exclusively in BSL.

These workshops focused on discussing **what meaningful support looks like** in practice, while also addressing current and emerging legislative

requirements. In particular, discussions considered the Employment Rights Act 2025, which will require organisations with over 250 employees to develop Equality Action Plans (mandatory from 2027) that include explicit actions to support employees experiencing the menopause.

The outputs stemming from this work are:

- 1) **Menstrual Health Baseline Survey** and guidance;
- 2) **Menstrual Health and Menopause Action Plan** and **accompanying employer guidance**;
- 3) **a resources document** comprising practical resources like case studies and useful links.

All these resources are grounded in EDICa's foundational research and have been shaped through these co-design processes. By embedding feedback from participants with diverse lived experiences, job roles and organisational contexts, these materials aim to provide realistic, inclusive and actionable support for workplaces.

We will be sharing these resources in the coming weeks, and will be published on our website. Watch this space!

Allyship in Organisations

EDICa held 4 workshops on menstrual health in the workplace developing guidance relating to the Employment Rights Act 2025 and the requirement to report on a "Menopause Action Plan". It was noted in several workshops that there was an absence of men in attendance (a few men signed up but did not attend). EDICa has now organised and are promoting a men-only session, calling it **Allyship in Organisations**. This will take place on 2 June 2026 10-12 BST on Zoom. <https://go.hw.ac.uk/EDICa/Allyship>

Comic - Isabella's story of menstrual health and deaf communication

Last newsletter we shared [our first comic strip on menstrual health](#). It was created with Dekko Comics and featured Frances, a lab technician with severe menstrual health conditions. This time we're pleased to share our second comic, working with a different artist. [Maria Stoian](#) works at the Edinburgh College of Art (recently taken over by University of Edinburgh) and collaborated with Cécile Ménard and Lena Wångren on an EDICa Flexible

Fund project, [In Their Own Time](#), which was about long-term casualised academics.

We commissioned Maria to tell the story of "Isabella" a deaf researcher of computer studies who experiences menstrual health conditions and has had challenges in medical settings when communicating her needs. Read the full comic strip here: <https://edicaucus.ac.uk/isabella/> Click here for the [alt text for the comic](#). We are currently working on a report specifically looking at menstrual health experienced by the deaf community, based on the experiences we have heard from research participants. This will come out in the next few months.



The Research Process

Following four studies conducted over the past three years, EDICa's Workstream 2 is holding a series of stakeholder co-design workshops to create a series of Good Practice Reports.

Reports will be published over the next couple of months on these topics:

- Good Practice Guide on the Research Funding Process
- Good Practice Guide on Organising Flexible Funds
- Effective EDI Training in Higher Education Institutions: A Good Practice Report
- Good Practice for Inclusive Demand Management



We hope to see you at our launch webinar on 30 June 15:00-16:00 on

Zoom, as EDICa researchers discuss these reports, the findings, the challenges they faced, and the directions the research could take in future.

EDICa postdoc Dr Stefanie Schneider participated in **GuildHE's Research Doctoral Festival**, which took place in early May at Northeastern University London. Alongside [Peris Thuo](#), Head of the Early Career Researcher Network at the British Academy, and Dr [Nieky van Veggel](#), Programme Director at Anglia Ruskin University. The panel reflected on often-unspoken challenges for postgraduate and early career researchers.

EDI in Demand Management - Sector Guidelines and Resources

When funders expect a call to be too popular, the institute "demand management" to help manage this. University A is allowed to submit 3 applications, University B is allowed 5, University C is allowed 1, etc. - allocations based on criteria like previous success and size.

When there is demand management in place, institutions usually have an internal competition to decide who gets to be one of those allocated slots. "The University of Oxford's 2023 report on [Equity and Inclusivity in Research Funding](#) identified demand management as one of a number of areas of the research funding process that are at risk of bias and unaddressed

inequalities. A Funding Forum was convened to discuss the sector-wide recommendations made by the report. The initial meeting of the Forum in 2024 brought together 30+ Universities and 11 funders to develop a shared action plan for a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive funding ecosystem, focussing on areas where joint action was necessary."

EDICa's study on challenges and good practices for inclusive demand management was in collaboration with this group.

"As a result of this action plan, the EDI in Demand Management working group was set up by members of the Forum in mid-2024. The group is co-lead by colleagues from the Universities of Birmingham, Nottingham, and York and includes representatives from a wide range of different Research Organisations and funders. The working group has [produced a set of sector guidelines and resources](#) to help organisations address inequalities in funding selection processes."

1. Principles in Best Practice
2. Parameters for Equitable Demand Management
3. Considerations for Funders
4. EDI in Demand Management Working Group and Contributors

For more information, <https://zenodo.org/records/17618410>

Comic - Peer Review Panels

EDICa have worked with [Dekko Comics](#) to depict the kinds of conversations that lead to 50% of competitive research funding from UKRI going to roughly 15-18% of UK universities. EDICa's Workstream 2 has been researching peer review bias over the last three years. In 2024 we published a [Report on Peer Review Bias in the Funding Process](#) which looked at the broader range of bias. 14% of the literature we reviewed examined institutional prestige. And it's this element we have highlighted in this fictional comic here.

Read the story here: <https://edicaucus.ac.uk/peer-review-comic/>

EDICa Peer Review Panels

Research funded by UK Research and Innovation The British Academy

Four research-funding assessors are meeting to review two funding applications.

I appreciate your time today, I know we're all busy.

We are, but it's exciting to see some great research ideas!

There is limited funding to go around, so it can only be awarded to one of the applicants.

Has everyone had a chance to review both applications in full?

Yes, I've got both research applications in front of me now.

The two applicants they're reviewing are Applicant 1 from a well-known, research-intensive university, and Applicant 2 from a modern, teaching-focused university.

Let's begin with Applicant 1, then. What do we think?

I must say, I was impressed with both applications. Both score well, so this was difficult.

The main weakness that I see in their track record - but I know that Applicant 1 works at the same university as Professor Wow, and their team could provide great guidance!

Applicant 1's university really is excellent - several leading thinkers in the field will be in and around this application.

The application is very well written, too.

As for Applicant 2 - they also have some fantastic ideas.

They could have said a bit more in terms of institutional support, though. I can't see how much expertise there is and I don't know much about the research environment? It seems riskier...

I can't say I know much about their university.

If I'm honest, I don't feel the same level of confidence overall about Applicant 1's ability to deliver the research.

I have both applications but on balance, I'm leaning toward Applicant 1. It's probably the safer bet.

I agree, especially given the benefits of being supported by great academic colleagues.

However, this assessor is trained in recognising systematic biases.

If I may, are we in danger of overlooking some context here?

For example, Applicant 1's university is world famous. We might be inferring excellence because of the prestige of where it's coming from.

Not every application from a world-class university is automatically world-class in everything they propose.

Applicant 1 also has a great idea, but maybe we're assuming it's a higher risk because we don't know people or projects from their university. Both applicants have strong proposals.

What are you saying?

Maybe, but it can't be denied that Applicant 2's proposal - from their budget - isn't as detailed.

I agree. Surely these details matter.

I'm saying that when the vast majority of funding goes to just a few universities, the pattern is hard to break.

No, on paper Applicant 1 has done a 'better' job of setting out their plans and we are naturally reassured by that.

But Applicant 2's proposal is actually remarkable, given that they likely didn't have access to the same level of advice and proof reading. They are much more likely to have been building from scratch.

We face the familiar challenge of more funding applications than there is funding to go around.

And so we assessors tend to rally around the safe bets.

But what else are we to do? These applications made it to the final stage because they were scored by independent reviewers before today's meeting.

We should feed back to the funder that some training would help us handle concerns about institutional support.

But for these proposals we should think about organising some mentoring for Applicant 2. We could recommend that the funder asks both applicants to adjust their budgets so that we can fund both.

That would mean we fund two great projects and address the concerns we've raised.

We've never done that before.

But that doesn't mean to say we can't.

I agree, we should try it.



The Organisation of Work

Virtual Reality - An Enabling Workspace

EDICa developed, in partnership with Animmersion, a virtual reality simulation of an enabling workspace. This VR was co-designed by gathering a broad collection of thoughts, feelings, and lived experiences from buildings' users, and how their working environments affect them. You can get a sense of the Enabling Workspace with the 7 minute video clip [here](#).

In May, EDICa took the VR programme into the classroom, conducting a workshop for an MBA module in the Edinburgh Business School. The class of about 20 consisted of students from many different countries. The EDICa team started with the foundational principles of the Social Model of Disability (people are disabled by barriers in society, not by their impairment or difference), which was a new concept to most of the students. They were open to the new perspectives shared on how to foster an enabling workplace, and the value this holds to businesses. They enjoyed navigating

the virtual reality and pulling out ideas they would take back to their own organisations - even simple things like ensuring contrast between the floor and walls for visually impaired people.



EDICa are working on arranging a time and place in Manchester to have people experiencing our virtual enabling workspace - tentatively scheduled for this November. We will announce details when finalised.

Spotlight on the field

“On the edge of sustainable”: LGBTQ+ researchers’ experiences of harm, fear, and community

[EDICa Flexible Fund](#) project "Is all publicity good publicity? Addressing Public Harassment in LGBTQ+ Research Impact" has [published a paper in the journal Sexualities](#).



Abstract: "Those who research LGBTQ+ issues find themselves at the intersection of multiple pressures, including conservative research cultures, public backlash, and intensive workloads. This paper explores the experiences of LGBTQ+ researchers in UK higher education institutions (HEIs) through a qualitative focus group study. Four focus groups demonstrate that LGBTQ+ researchers experience specific barriers and challenges due to their research topic and the currently hostile political climate. We argue that the harm, fear, and (lack of) community that LGBTQ+ researchers experience can be interpreted through Ahmed's (2014)

conceptualisation of stickiness, whereby queerness holds many contradictory meanings beyond its practice. This queer stickiness impacts LGBTQ+ researchers' careers, resulting in a challenging and stressful balance of duties and self-management in neoliberal HEIs. This article develops conceptualisations of stickiness, understandings of UK research culture and pressures, and indicates the challenges of working in commercialised neoliberal HEIs. We conclude with some suggestions on how universities could better support the researchers putting themselves at risk to benefit their research cultures."

Also, a reminder about this project's [webinar on 24 June 2026](#).

Glasgow Science Festival: Disabled Researchers in AI: Why Diversity and Inclusion Matter

Organised by and featuring EDICa co-investigator Dr Marion Hersh, based at the University of Glasgow.

AI is transforming how we live and work. But who is shaping it? Join researchers from the University of Glasgow to explore why including disabled and neurodivergent people in AI research matters and have your say on how we might create more ethical AI research.

Venue: University of Glasgow, Advanced Research Centre (ARC), 11 Chapel Lane, Glasgow, G11 6EW

Date: Tuesday, 9 June

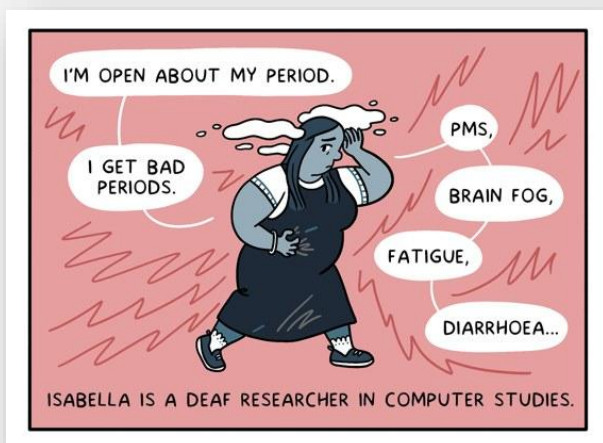
Time: 6.15pm to 7pm

Cost: Free

Booking required by [clicking here for Eventbrite](#)



PCOS to PMOS - What's in a name?



Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS) has been renamed to polyendocrine metabolic ovarian syndrome (PMOS).

What's the difference? Why all the fuss over a name change? This [article from The Conversation](#) explains. "[The name PCOS] has not only impacted how the condition has been understood, it has also affected how seriously it is taken.

The inaccurate name has negatively influenced awareness, education, and

even the level of research, attention and funding it has received" (emphasis our own).

In [this BBC article](#), "Jessica Pinel, a nutritionist and the chair of PCOS Jersey, said she felt the term PCOS 'limited the condition to having an effect on women's ovaries, whereas we know that it is a full body condition'."

EDICa joins calls for further funding in the area of women's health. (Refer to [this very visual Nature paper "Women's health research lacks funding"](#))

Supporting researchers returning from parental leave

The White Rose University Consortium consists of a partnership of three Yorkshire universities: Leeds, Sheffield and York. (For those unfamiliar with medieval English history, the white rose was the symbol of the House of York during the Wars of the Roses in the 14th century.) One of their ongoing projects is looking at parental leave. In early May, they published [their latest update here on their website](#).

This project has shown "the issue is not lack of support, the issue is **inconsistent activation of support in practice**. ... Participants confirmed that researchers in near-identical circumstances can have completely different return experiences.... Support exists but isn't consistently enacted."

"Breakdown happens when:

- support isn't translated into later processes (e.g. promotion, recognition)
- no clear point of coordination exists
- guidance is fragmented or hard to access
- responsibility is unclear"

Read more, including the emerging directions on their webpage:

https://whiterose.ac.uk/news/supporting-researchers-workshop-insights/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=socials&utm_campaign=&utm_content=button



Exhibition - "Claiming Space: Muslim women's experiences of academia"

You're invited to the launch of the "Claiming Space: Muslim women's experiences of academia" exhibition.

6th - 18th June. Open to public Mon-Sun, 9-6.

UCL East (Gallery B - first floor, Marshgate Building).

This exhibition is part of wider research project exploring Muslim women's experiences of U.K. Higher Education, funded by [The British Academy](#) and [The Wolfson Foundation](#) Fellowship.

**Claiming Space:
Muslim Women's
Experiences of Academia**

6th – 18th June
Exhibition open
Monday– Sunday: 9am – 6pm

Gallery B (First Floor), Marshgate
Building, UCL East
7 Sidings St, London E20 2AE

The British Academy **The Wolfson Foundation** **UCL**
University College London

Male Students' Mental Health - Reframing Self-Care

EDICa's home department, Heriot-Watt University's School of Social Science, hosted a talk for Men's Mental Health Week which is celebrated 15-21 June 2026 but falls during HWU's graduation week. Organised by the Athena SWAN team, graduating psychology student Daniel Hirst shared his research conducted with male students on what they see as self-care.

You can view the recording here:

https://youtu.be/sSgdVAZfH3M?si=aWzL2_wuT7lkSdbf

You can view the slides here: <https://go.hw.ac.uk/SoSS/Mens-Mental-Health>

What do young men think of when they hear the term "self-care"? With male suicide rates at an all-time high, and male higher education students even

REFRAMING MEN'S SELF-CARE:
the bridge to better mental
health engagement for men

Sponsored by: Athena Swan
Bronze Award
Heriot-Watt University
School of Social Science

By Daniel Hirst – 27 May 2026

higher, traditional masculine norms that prize self-reliance and emotional restriction make seeking help a threat to their identity.

How can university staff reframe self-care in day-to-day interactions? By referring to self-care like going to the pub with friends, playing a sport, praying, reading, playing video games. Find out more in this presentation.

EDI Hub+ Annual Conference 2026 - reflections

"On 24 March 2026, nearly 200 delegates gathered in Leeds and online for the EDI Hub+ annual conference, *Shaping the future of research through inclusion*, which focused on advancing inclusive research and innovation across Engineering, Physical and Mathematical Sciences (EPMS). Our conference brought together the EPMS community to share evidence, highlight emerging interventions, and explore how inclusive practices can be embedded and scaled across the EPMS research ecosystem. A palpable sense of momentum ran throughout the day; fuelled by the energy and contributions of both in-person and online delegates with a hopeful vision for EDI in EPMS."



Read more about the day here: <https://edihubplus.ac.uk/edi-hub-annual-conference-2026-evidence-culture-and-collaboration-for-inclusive-epms/>

A reminder that the EDI Hub+ flexible fund call for applications closes 24 June. Projects start 1 April 2027 and final reports should be submitted 30 June 2028.

Spotlight on accessibility



1 - A black Labrador in a laboratory

Could you bring a lab into a lab?

Yes, you could. After a bespoke risk assessment and with a highly trained assistance dog.

EDICa were first inspired by Sampson the Science Service Dog back in 2023 when Twitter was still a nice place. We have shared the Golden Retriever's experience with research participants EDICa have met over the last few years, who have felt the lab was

somewhere they could not work due to needing an assistance animal. In March, the story came to a full closure and the details are now published on our website as a resource: <https://edicaucus.ac.uk/dogs-in-labs/>

In 2006, Joey Ramp-Adams in Arizona, USA, suffered a traumatic brain injury, broken bones, and permanent nerve damage. As a result, she required the aid of a service dog to help her navigate life.

She embarked on a neuroscience degree at the University of Illinois but faced difficulty in being able to do labwork without her service dog. Working with the university and then spending 9 months training Sampson, her Golden Retriever service dog, she was able to carry out tasks in the lab following individualised risk assessments.

Joey explained in an [interview](#), "He had to learn to differentiate to pick up stuff off the ground but not in the lab. Medical alert movements also needed to be learned. But the biggest adjustment was learning to discern between outside commands vs. lab-related commands."

Joey and Sampson came up against the USA Centre for Disease Control's guidance: "*Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories (BMBL)*". This had a sentence that said "Animals and plants not associated with the work being performed are not permitted in the laboratory." This statement was being interpreted in such a way that no animal ever was allowed. Joey and Sampson spent more than 2 years campaigning to have this wording clarified to allow risk-assessed service dogs in labs.

In March 2026, the CDC issued clarification. We'll let Joey explain in her own words, from her LinkedIn post trumpeting the new guidance:

"CDC has issued a formal clarification:

"Clarification on Service Animals in Laboratories: Compliance with Federal Laws and BMBL Guidance."

And it says what should have always been clear:

- The BMBL does not override federal, state, or local law
- It cannot be used to deny reasonable accommodations
- It is guidance—not regulatory authority
- **Risk assessment—not blanket exclusion—must drive decisions**

Most importantly, service animals must be considered within the framework of lawful accommodation and individualized risk assessment. This is more than a clarification. It is the first time this has been explicitly stated in alignment with biosafety guidance at the federal level. This is precedent setting. It closes a policy gap that has harmed careers, limited access, and forced talented scientists out of the field.

To every Environmental Health & Safety office, compliance leader, biosafety professional, and institution: Please read this. Share this. Implement this. Because inclusion and biosafety are not in conflict—they were just never clearly aligned. Until now."

[Read the CDC one-page document here.](#)

As a postscript, Sampson is now retired and can be found sunning himself and getting lots of love and pets from Joey (or Mom as she's referred to by Sampson on social media), while his successor, a black labrador named Pax (pictured), does the hard work of keeping Joey safe. Sampson (and Joey) can be found on [Facebook](#), [Twitter/X](#), and [Instagram](#).

Get Involved

Sign up to receive our newsletter and calls for participation:

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

Follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and [BlueSky](#).

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

EDI Caucus, Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh

EDICa

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