

STFC EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STRATEGY FOR 2015 TO 2020

Vision and Strategy

Achieving a diverse, equitable and inclusive Community comprising our staff, our facility users and the people and institutes we directly and indirectly support is a fundamental, strategic goal for STFC.

We know that diverse, equitable and inclusive environments are more creative, more productive, more innovative and more rewarding for our organization and the people that are involved in interacting with it. In many areas STFC achieves this ambition, but we also recognize that there are times, places and areas where we sometimes fall short.

Achieving equality, diversity and inclusivity is not about simply complying with the law – STFC seeks to be fully compliant with all legislative requirements in this regard. It's much more about identifying and challenging the subtle and hidden barriers that are quietly preventing our organization from fully benefiting from the wider range of skills, experience and attitudes provided by a truly inclusive environment. Success in this will enable us to build a more agile and sustainable workforce, where everyone's talents are valued, allowing STFC to deliver its objectives and build a culture of inclusiveness for our partners and stakeholders.

This Equality and Diversity Strategy is developed with the specific aim of addressing those deficiencies that are currently preventing STFC achieving this key strategic goal. It is supported by the [RCUK Equality and Diversity Policy](#), and sets out the areas in which we will work to achieve this vision, the targets we will set and what we want to achieve by 2020. This Strategy is supported by a specific Action Plan (at Annex 1) that details how this will be done, which augments the RCUK Equality and Diversity Action Plan published in May 2016 (at Annex 2) that STFC, as part of this Strategy will implement in full.

A full commitment to this Equality and Diversity Strategy will be included in STFC's Corporate Strategy.

Basic Expectations

STFC expects all of its Community to demonstrate high behavioral standards in their workplace by affording dignity, trust and respect to everyone they interact with. This extends to having due awareness of the effect their behavior has on others, communicating honestly and openly and treating everyone consistently and fairly.

STFC takes its obligations, both legal and ethical, very seriously to make sure that when we provide research funding this is extending equal opportunity to all participants. We expect our employees and those in receipt of our funding to be treated fairly, with dignity and respect, and in an environment free from harassment and bullying. STFC will not tolerate harassment in any form and we expect all within our Community to comply with

the [Research Council's Harassment and Bullying Policy](#), which includes no tolerance of unwelcome contact, sexual harassment or any form of bullying. Members of our Community who experience harassment are encouraged to report such behavior immediately, either to their employer or directly to STFC itself via our [complaints procedure](#).

We acknowledge that advancing inclusion demands commitment and action from all levels of the organisation and in particular active leadership from those in senior roles. However, STFC recognises that not only is a discrimination-free environment the right setting for all people, it also fosters important learning, mentoring and research that are imperative to the advancement of science.

Implementation Oversight

To ensure we take a holistic view of inclusion throughout the organization, and that the obligations set out in this STFC Strategy, STFC Action Plan and RCUK Action Plan, an Equality and Diversity Steering Group will be formed to oversee their respective implementation with representatives from all key stakeholder areas. Additionally, STFC's Diversity Forum will also monitor our progress and will be used to provide direct feedback on performance and input and consultation on any additional actions. We will, where appropriate publish data in relation to our equality and diversity performance.

1. STFC Equality and Diversity Strategy as an Employer

Embedding Core Values - As an employer, STFC will put people at the core of our activities. We will embed a culture which reflects our core values of trust, transparency and respect, and where everyone is treated with dignity and fairness. STFC aims to attract and retain the best people from every part of the community. A diverse, inclusive workforce will give us a greater range of perspectives and styles, which in itself will help us to make better decisions for people and organizational success.

Removing Barriers - The skills shortage in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), together with the increasing worldwide competition to attract the very best recruits is challenging for STFC. The need to attract and retain talent from this scarce skill area is vital to the continued success of STFC. This means that we need to optimize our pool of potential recruits and make STFC welcoming to underrepresented groups by removing barriers, real or perceived, to social mobility and employment.

Dedicated Funding - To ensure we can deliver on our commitments as an employer a dedicated proportion of our annual budget will be allocated to developing and promoting Equality and Diversity activity and the implementation of this Strategy.

Employer of Choice - STFC's aspiration to be an 'employer of choice' will be greatly enhanced by achieving the following workforce diversity and inclusion goals, and we will commit:

1. To recruit from a diverse group of potential applicants in order to secure a high performing workforce drawn from all parts of the community and a range of backgrounds.
2. To increase representation throughout the organisation and at all levels, of those from under- represented groups.
3. To develop a culture that empowers and encourages collaboration, flexibility and fairness, and which enables individuals to contribute to their full potential in support of our mission.
4. To foster an environment that supports the health and wellbeing of those we employ.
5. To provide a working environment that is free from harassment, bullying and unlawful discrimination where everyone feels valued for their contribution.

We will regularly review our employment policies and practices, and monitor our performance by annually collecting and analyzing employee and applicant data.

Recruitment Targets and Positive Action - STFC, in line with other Councils, will introduce aspirational targets for recruitment and internal promotion to provide a benchmark to track progress. However, we recognise that targets alone will be ineffective so we will strive to create the right culture and an environment where unnecessary barriers to recruitment and progression are removed. STFC will develop a more holistic and proactive view of career development with respect to diversity, cognisant of the additional (and sometimes significant) challenges faced by groups of differing protected characteristics. In order to achieve this we will introduce a set of expectations which relate to the recruitment process which will involve a change to our current processes.

Demographic by Grade – STFC will consider the distribution of people across the different job levels in STFC. By addressing any inconsistencies in these areas we will become more inclusive and reflective of the communities we serve, and be attractive as a place of work for a wider range of groups.

Attitudes to Age - With changing attitudes to retirement it is probable that STFC will have four generations working together. These groups will all have different expectations from the workplace and we need to ensure these needs are considered and we recruit, retrain and retain the best available skills and talent regardless of age.

Responsibility - Every person working in the STFC has a personal responsibility for supporting the implementation of our strategy and promoting our equality and diversity principles in their day to day dealings with each other, and with partners and collaborators outside the organization. Managers have a key role to play in ensuring that their teams are aware of the strategy and action plan and understand their role in implementing it. STFC will support this by rolling out a programme of *Unconscious Bias* training to managers.

2. STFC Equality and Diversity Strategy as a Partner

Partnerships - Partnership and collaboration are a key catalyst of scientific progress and innovation. STFC is constantly striving to identify organisations of every type and size that we can work closely with to generate agenda-setting research outcomes and make a real-world impact. These are diverse and include

- **Campus collaboration**

Our joint-venture campuses at Harwell and SciTech Daresbury, built around our national laboratories are promoting academic and industrial collaboration and translation of our research to market through direct interaction with industry.

- **Academia**

Our highly productive relationship with the academic community is reflected in the long term strategic research programmes in particle physics, nuclear physics and astronomy that we fund in collaboration with UK universities and the many thousands of academics that use our multidisciplinary facilities. We work with learned societies such as the Institute of Physics and the Royal Astronomical Society, while academic representatives play a key role in the STFC Council and our advisory bodies.

- **Industry**

Through the funding we provide and the leading-edge research and technology we deliver, we play a vital enabling role in a multitude of key sectors, including the aerospace, chemical, electronics and pharmaceutical industries.

- **Government**

As one of the UK's publicly funded Research Councils, we have strong links across UK Government and with a range of bodies including the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology and Innovate UK.

- **Partner organisations**

We highly value our UK and international partner organisations, which include CERN, the European Southern Observatory (ESA), ILL, ESRF and the UK Space Agency and Research Councils UK. We also represent the UK in major international initiatives and provide expert input to flagship experiments worldwide.

To ensure we promote diversity in everything STFC does as a partner we will continue to monitor and analyse our work with our partners with respect to diversity. Specifically this will include collecting and benchmarking our data where appropriate to inform the future development and implementation of equality and diversity strategy. This data will be made available as part of the RCUK assurance programme.

Communicating - In communications with partners and collaborators we will ensure they are aware of our policies regarding Equality and Diversity, and would not tolerate discriminatory practices or behaviors in any partnership.

3. STFC Equality and Diversity Strategy as a Funder

STFC invests funds throughout the UK – in doing so we will ensure that:

- Those who apply for and receive our funds are as representative of the wider population as possible
- The working environment is free from harassment, bullying and unlawful discrimination, where everyone feels valued for their contribution
- The institutions from which they come are doing as much as possible to promote equality and diversity; and
- Those who take the decisions for funding are drawn from as wide a pool as possible and fully aware of equality and diversity considerations, providing appropriate training as required.

Committed to Equality - This means we are committed to ensuring that the best researchers from a diverse population are attracted into research careers and that they can compete fairly and openly through the removal of any discriminatory barriers to any STFC funding award mechanisms. STFC will promote a diverse range of talent, creativity and ability to help science reach its full potential.

Inclusion - STFC aspires to increase inclusion. We will ensure that the processes for our research funding are designed to be representative of the needs and cultures that exist within the academic community and the people who are engaged with the processes operate these fairly and without prejudice or bias.

Transparency - STFC will improve data collection to better understand the diversity of who we fund and the impact of our funding on entry, progression and mobility within the scientific community. STFC will be proactive to increase the diversity of our Panels, Boards and Committees. STFC will publish annually outcomes of funding decisions with respect to key diversity characteristics.

To underpin these objectives RCUK set out a range of [terms and conditions](#), [guidance assurances](#) and [support](#) to ensure students and researchers funded by STFC are able to work in an environment free from any type kind of unfairness, harassment or discrimination.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN 2015-2020
Annex 1

Aim	Actions	Update on Progress
STFC as an employer		
<p>Position STFC as an employer of choice for everyone. Increase the number of applicants and successful recruits from underrepresented groups. This will ensure that we can take advantage of the wider pool of talent allowing us to select the best possible recruits in areas of skills shortage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain Athena Swan Charter Mark (the application process will provide a rich diagnostic tool which will inform future action planning) • Retain our ‘Two Ticks Positive about Disability’ accreditation • Make recruitment social mobility friendly, including advertising all entry level roles and making them available to as wide a group as possible • Introduce positive action, to appeal to a wider pool of applications as outlined in the RCUK Equality and Diversity Policy, to increase number of female STEM applicants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to sponsor WISE awards as a member of RCUK ○ Consider branding and wording of job adverts and website to positively encourage applicants ○ Provide peer support for female STEM graduates during the applications stage ○ Identify and target potential recruitment pools e.g. specific universities, communities and courses • Set voluntary aspirational targets for 	

	<p>recruitment from underrepresented groups to see an increase of 10% of recruits from diverse groups by 2020. 2015 Baseline is 12% women in STEM; 5% BME and 3% declared disability.</p> <p>This will be achieved by the introduction of these expectations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ At shortlisting stage – Monitor shortlist to ensure a diverse selection of candidates as possible. If no diversity is evident, review advertising strategy and re-advertise if appropriate to create a greater pool of diverse applicants ○ Include “STFC is a family friendly employer - flexible working will be considered” on all vacancy advertisement unless there is a sound business need otherwise ○ Whenever possible recruitment panels to include a gender and ethnicity balance. Where this is not practical ensure candidates are introduced a more inclusive culture via informal tours etc. 	
<p>Promote a culture of inclusiveness leading to development of talent, diverse and creative decision making and social mobility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure a realistic budget to allow for employee education, training and development • Refresh the current intranet site to include information on how people can support an inclusive working 	

	<p>environment; provide policies and guidance notes to proactively support inclusiveness, such as how to request the change of records following gender reassignment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include diversity awareness in the Corporate induction programme • Provide managers with guidance on how to manage team members with particular needs 	
<p>Increase number of female and BME employees at Band F to create more diverse decision making at senior level and provide role models and mentors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Board members to take on role of champion for a specific protected characteristic group. This is to ensure they represent these underrepresented groups in any policy formulation or decision making and check for any unfairness of approach or unconscious bias. • Set an expectation that key meetings or other events will be arranged during core-work hours and avoid any known school holiday periods or cultural festivals which may make attendance difficult for some people • All managers to complete managing diverse teams workshop • Continue to support the work of the WiSTEM and BME groups • Provide female specific leadership training • Peer mentoring scheme for specific groups • Unconscious bias training for all 	

	<p>promotion review panel members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review all current practices in recruitment and promotion to ensure the process to fair to all. Consider the panel membership of promotion boards. Aim to ensure these are as diverse as possible and truly represent the range of candidates • Monitor conversion from promotion nomination to recruitment for all minority groups and set aspirational targets to increase successful promotions into higher bands from under representative groups by 2020. Current baseline data is small and statistically insignificant so results will be monitored and reviewed annually. 	
<p>Raise awareness of disability and mental health issues. This will create a culture which respect difference and increased wellbeing for all staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness and challenge assumptions about mental health by knowledge sharing via articles in in.brief and information sessions such as learning lunches • Continue to support the work of the Dyslexia Working Group • Provide updated guidance for managers on mental health, disability and wellbeing • Provide awareness training on mental health, disability and wellbeing for all managers – including mental health first aid • Review absence data to identify trends such as stress/depression related 	

	<p>illnesses. Use this information to inform and monitor success of further interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage self-reporting by those who have a disability through awareness raising 	
<p>Consider the needs of the range of generations in the workplace to allow everyone to work effectively together and enhance knowledge sharing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of the specific needs of the different generations to managers • Provide support to retain, retrain and recruit older workers through providing a full range of development opportunities available to all • Facilitate the formation of specific support networks such as working parents and carers 	

Aim	Actions	Update on Progress
STFC as a partner		
<p>Remove any barriers to fair and open participation from our partner and user community. Allowing us to deliver on our mission; “to maximise the impact of our knowledge, skills, facilities and resources for the benefit of the United Kingdom and its people”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor our user community data and publish this in an annual report to Executive Board • Ensure our facilities are accessible to all visitors and users 	
<p>Demonstrate best practice in Equality and Diversity to our partners and expect the same from them. This is in line with our values of responsibility and respect</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaining Athena Swan Charter • Retaining Two Ticks positive about Disability status • Make available our Equality and Diversity data via regular reporting 	
<p>Have assurance that equality and diversity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the policies and practice of 	

practices are being embedded at all levels in the organisations which we enter into partnership with to be confident that our partners share our values and commitment to inclusiveness	organisations we work with reflect best practice e.g. Athena Swan accreditation or similar	
Aim	Actions	Update on Progress
STFC as an investor		
Have assurance that equality and diversity practices are being embedded at all levels in the organisations which are in receipt of our funding. This will ensure that we remove any barriers to progression and enhance social mobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively monitor the diversity statistics for grant applications and studentship recruitment. Benchmark against relevant data to provide an overview of our performance and areas for attention • Ensure the policies and practice of organisations in receipt of our funding reflect best practice e.g. Athena Swan accreditation or similar 	
Raise awareness of Equality and Diversity to grant awarding panels. Greater diversity of panels will ensure the membership reflects the community we serve and promote more effective decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All panel members to attend, or take part in unconscious bias online training • Review criteria for grant and facility access applications for biased language • Increase diversity of our Panel, Boards, Fellowships and Committees by aiming to include a proportion of female and BME members by 2020 	

Annex 2

RCUK Action Plan for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Our ambition is for RCUK to be recognised as a leader in equality and diversity in the research community, working with partners throughout the sector. This action plan represents the collective aspiration of the Research Councils and will be supported by individual Research Council plans setting out more specific targets as appropriate.

Objective	Actions to be taken	Lead Responsibility	Date for completion of action
Leading by example			
1. Achieve improved diversity in the membership of RCUK Councils, advisory and peer review bodies.	1.1. To work with BEIS to develop best practice guidelines on increasing the diversity of Council membership. To include: searching widely for candidates, shortlisting, interviewing and recommendations to Ministers.	RCUK CEOs/ BEIS	Paper to be completed by April 2016
	1.2. To manage Council appointments to achieve at least 40% of the under-represented gender on each Council	RCUK CEOs/ BEIS	April 2017
	1.3. To agree and achieve appropriate minimum published targets for the under-represented gender on all advisory and peer review bodies and referee pools across the Councils. The overall target should be 30% of the under-represented gender across RCUK.	RCUK CEOs	Agree by April 2016 Achieve by 2017-18 ¹
	1.4. Develop appropriate targets – informed by data – for the ethnic balance across Councils, peer review bodies and referee pools.	RCUK CEOs	Agree by April 2017 Achieve by 2019
	1.5. To look at improving the data on disability that RCUK hold.	RCUK CEOs	Agree process by April 2017

¹ Date for achievement of target to be set by each Council

<p>2. Ensure that RCUK has a diverse workforce, equipped to act as ambassadors for equality, diversity and inclusion in all that we do.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>And</u></p>	2.1. To improve the diversity and career progression data on current RCUK staff. To undertake separate monitoring (including using staff surveys) for staff employed at head office and as researchers.	RCUK CEOs/ HR Directors/ BEIS	Agree process by April 2016 Achieve/publish by end 2016
	2.2. Take appropriate actions within each Research Council to avoid single gender panels on all recruitment and promotion panels at head office and in institutes	RCUK CEOs	April 2016
	2.3. To run a small number of pilots to explore anonymous shortlisting when recruiting to Research Council vacancies and to use the evidence of these pilots to assess the feasibility of a wider roll-out. In addition to investigate whether there is any way this could be feasible in terms of research posts in research units, centres and institutes and if so to implement any appropriate action.	RCUK CEOs	April 2017
	2.4. Ensure end to end tracking of diversity characteristics of applicants for RCUK employment.	RCUK CEOs	Start internal engagement April 2016 ²
	2.5. Embed open discussion of equality and diversity issues amongst Research Council staff informed by data and in line with equality and diversity guidance. ³	All RCUK CEOs and managers	September 2016
	2.6. Provide a programme of learning opportunities (seminars, workshops, masterclasses, etc.) for all staff covering all aspects of equality and diversity. Develop plans at Council level for a future programme of equality and diversity learning for staff.	RCUK CEOs	Resource and materials together by April 2016 Achieve by Sept 2016

² The tracking of diversity characteristics will be explored in parallel with discussions around a new internal HR system.

³ Internal links: <https://moss.ssc.rcuk.ac.uk/HR/Documents/Equality%20and%20Diversity%20Policy.aspx>
<https://moss.ssc.rcuk.ac.uk/HR/Documents/Equality%20and%20Diversity%20Guidance%20for%20Research%20Funding.aspx>

Challenging bias and ensuring fair and inclusive funding processes			
3. Raise awareness of and take steps to remove the impact of unintentional bias in RCUK systems, processes, behaviours and culture. <p style="text-align: center;"><u>And</u></p>	3.1. To evaluate recent pilots of anonymous peer review processes in EPSRC and ESRC. All Councils to define their approach to anonymous peer review, tailored to their communities and funding schemes.	RCUK CEOs	April 2017
	3.2. To raise awareness amongst RCUK staff of the effects of unconscious bias and equip staff to challenge bias in all of its forms.	RCUK CEOs	Starting April 2016 Completion/mostly complete during 2018
	3.3. To deliver face-to-face or online unconscious bias training for peer reviewers and those involved in strategic advice to RCUK and decisions on RCUK funding. To work with our training partner, Pearn Kandola, to put in place effective monitoring and evaluation of the training.	RCUK CEOs	Roll out started in 2015 Completion by end 2018
4. Ensure RCUK funding is not influenced by the gender of the applicant or by other protected characteristics.	4.1. To update the RCUK Statement of Expectations for Doctoral Training and the Conditions of Research Council Training Grants to ensure that equality and diversity are promoted in all aspects of the recruitment of postgraduate students. Requiring research organisations to have a robust process in place to attract and recruit the most talented applicants, irrespective of background, and gather equality and diversity monitoring data on all applicants. To plan, communicate and implement a monitoring regime linked to this.	RCUK CEOs/ University partners	Starting April 2016 and subject to reporting cycles mostly complete by April 2018
	4.2. To publish data on the RCUK doctoral population by gender and other protected characteristics, and once applicant data is available, success rates.	RCUK CEOs	Publish data on RCUK doctoral population by April 2016 and success rates by April 2018
	4.3. To work with BEIS to commission research to explore how we can effectively measure and assess access to postgraduate study for those from disadvantaged backgrounds.	RCUK CEOs	October 2016

	4.4. All Research Councils to have undertaken a comprehensive investigation of funding mechanisms to identify and remove potential barriers and biases. This would then inform any revision of the Peer Review and funding processes.	RCUK CEOs	April 2017
	4.5. To continue to publish research grant success rates by gender, age and ethnicity and by other protected characteristics where sufficient data is available and to procure an independent external validation of the data and its analysis.	RCUK CEOs	Annually
Leading and supporting change in our research community			
5. Show strong leadership to change the culture, practices and makeup of the research community.	5.1. To use success rate data for research grants to raise the awareness of equality and diversity issues at a senior level within Research Organisations.	RCUK CEOs and HEI VCs	July 2016
	5.2. To commission research to understand more about the barriers to increased participation and career progression of under-represented groups	RCUK CEOs	2016
	5.3. To develop an RCUK Framework for partnership between Research Councils and their leading HEI partners; working together to change cultures and practices to increase diversity in the research workforce All Councils, working together where appropriate, to develop and implement interventions tailored to the issues in their research communities.	RCUK CEOs	Development of Framework by July 2016 Achieved by April 2017
	5.4. To develop and deliver online equality and diversity training for all RCUK funded students, to support a change in culture and practice within institutions. To work with our training provider to put in place effective monitoring and evaluation of the training.	RCUK CEOs	Implement in 2017
	5.5. To investigate ways in which flexible working in research can become more mainstream, specifically: a) To ensure that there are no barriers to any form of flexible working in RCUK funding terms and conditions b) To ensure there is a cross council policy on career breaks and to ensure that funding panels/committees/boards have guidance on how to treat career breaks and	RCUK CEOs and Managers	a) January 2016-completion June 2016. b) Start April 2016, completion
<u>And</u>			

	<p>alternative working patterns</p> <p>c) To continue to show our communities the diverse ways in which a research career can be built and to draw more attention to this work</p> <p>d) To work towards a policy in Research Council institutes, units and head offices where all vacancies are advertised as open to flexible working. Exceptions to this policy would relate to safety, animal welfare or other operational considerations and should be well-evidenced.</p>		<p>September 2016</p> <p>c) Start April 2016, ongoing</p> <p>d) Start consultation April 2016, completion April 2017</p>
<p>6. Use RCUK assurance processes to ensure progress in equality, diversity and inclusion processes across the research system.</p>	<p>6.1. To undertake a pilot policy assurance process with HEIs to ensure that appropriate equality and diversity measures are in place and making a difference</p>	RCUK CEOs	<p>Questions to be devised by April 2016 and to be embedded into Terms and Conditions by July 2016. Questions to be tested on HEIs from September 2016. The final/agreed questions will be implemented for 2017.</p>
	<p>6.2. RCUK will work with other funders to agree a set of questions which will provide assurance that funded Institutions are addressing their priority areas in Equality and Diversity. The defined criteria will be encompassed in the RCUK Terms and Conditions and the data will also be available to other funders. This will ultimately lead to less duplication and minimise work for the institutions.</p>	RCUK CEOs	April 2016