

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Forum

Imperial College London

Minutes of EDI Forum held 27 September 2022, 10:00 – 11:30 via Teams

Present:

Stephen Curry	SC	Chair, Assistant Provost (EDI)
David Ashton	DA	Academic Registrar
Jasmine Chan	JC	ICU Disabilities Officer
Liz Elvidge	LE	Head of Postdoc and Fellows Development
Sevinc Kisacik	SK	Public Engagement Programmes Manager
Susan Littleson	SL	Deputy Director, Organisational Development & Inclusion
Travis Mager	TM	PA & Administrators Network (PAAN) Representative
Adrian Mannall	AM	Able at Imperial Co-Chair
Wayne Mitchell	WM	Imperial as One Co-Chair
Maxine Myers	MM	AHSC Communications Manager
Susan Parker	SP	Unite Branch Chair and Equalities Officer – Physics/Tech
Lisa Phillips	LP	Able at Imperial Co-Chair
Sunday Popo-Ola	SP	Research & Teaching Fellow, Civil & Env Eng
Mark Richards	MR	Senior Teaching Fellow, Physics
Desmond Samuel	DS	Imperial as One Co-chair
Andrew Tebbutt	AT	Director of Outreach
Liv Walthaus	LW	Research Postgraduate for ICU Deputy President, Welfare
Ji Young Yoon	JY	Technical Staff Representative
Jacalyn Murphy	JDM	(Minutes) EA to Assistant Provost (EDI)

Apologies:

Richard Green	RG	Sustainable Energy Business, Business School
Lara Mistry	LM	Deputy Head Public Engagement Programme
Maureen O'Brien	MO	Head of Disability Advisory Services
Nathalie Podder	NP	ICU Deputy President, Welfare
Andrew Willson	AW	College Chaplain

	Agenda Item	Action
1.	Introductions	
	The Chair welcomed all and new member Sevinc Kisacik, Public Engagement Programme Manager (Inclusion) who introduced herself fully in item 6.	
2.	Minutes of last meeting held on 24 May and matters arising (paper 2)	

2.1	Resolution policy	
	<p>The Resolution Policy discussed by Ann Kelly, Deputy HR Director, is on the College web site. SP commented the policy states issues should be raised within 6 months with HR and is concerned this is a short time scale. TM echoes SP's comment from PAAN members.</p> <p>https://www.imperial.ac.uk/human-resources/procedures/resolution/</p>	
2.2	Religious Holidays	
	<p>The EDI Strategy group discussed a proposal raised by Andrew Youngson, Communications, for staff to choose bank holidays in alignment with their religious festivals or other culturally significant dates, but it was not accepted. Whilst the EDI SG was sympathetic – and recognises the value of flexible consideration of individual circumstances – it was firmly of the view that there is particular value from having set times when the College is closed to everyone that we would not have if holidays were flexible.</p>	
3.	Chair's Report (paper 3)	
3.1	<p>The Athena SWAN application for silver was successful and received positive feedback. Imperial is the first UK university to renew under the new transformed charter. The application is on the College web site.</p> <p>https://www.imperial.ac.uk/equality/accreditations/athena-swan/</p>	
3.2	<p>LE reported that the PFDC received a large grant supporting women progressing academia and shared the link to the report on the Teams chat. One of the main issues is there has been a lot of work over the last 10 years to support women but that progress remains slow. SC commented the Provost has received a copy of the report and one important consideration is how to align with existing priorities in creating the Athena SWAN action.</p> <p>SP commented that in Physics for an open lecture position there was a short-list without the desired gender balance. SC commented there are items in action plans that will focus on recruitment and good practice case studies, Rob Farace and departmental representatives will be speaking at a workshop in November with experience of measures to recruit women and other under-represented groups.</p>	
3.3	<p>The Visiting Professorships programme to recruit more professors from minority ethnic backgrounds has appointed four talented individuals. This will be an annual scheme for the next few years. It is hoped they will give</p>	

	talks to staff and students as well as collaborating and being involved in teaching.	
3.4	<p>The College has updated the webpage to clarify the relationship with Stonewall. This explains that whilst the College values the work done through Stonewall and are now a top 100 employer of participating organisations in the Workplace Equality Index, this does not mean that we necessarily subscribe to the position that Stonewall might adopt in public debates; we also reasserted our commitment to freedom of speech.</p> <p>TM commented on behalf of PAAN but also speaking as a member of the LGBTQ community that by making a statement it undermines the ethos of that relationship. SP commented older people who are in the rainbow community find Stonewall highly problematic. The message from the College needs to be extremely clear and careful, as there is an increasing amount of violence towards rainbow people reported in the news. SP fully understands the College's commitment to supporting diversity but it needs to be very clear how that support comes so that it is clear to everyone.</p> <p>SC commented there was careful consideration given to the text that was modelled on similar statements that the College has made on religious intolerance. We do have to recognise that we have a very diverse community and we have to give space to reflect our views in a respectful manner to create a supportive community for all of our staff and students.</p> <p>https://www.imperial.ac.uk/equality/accreditations/stonewall/</p>	
3.5	<p>On 4 November, supported by Alex Dawes (REC co-ordinator), Imperial as One will be running an early careers conference in STEM called Beyond Ethnicity Diversifying STEM Business with workshops and key speakers that follows key areas highlighted by Michelle Palmer, her PhD was in chemistry and is now working in business in her own tech company.</p> <p>https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/beyond-ethnicity-diversifying-stemm-business-early-career-conference-tickets-418919127387</p>	
3.6	<p>The new President, Professor Hugh Brady, held a management board at Windsor in early September and there will be changes to the College governance and management, he will set out aims at his inaugural address on 11 October that all are encouraged to attend.</p> <p>https://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/leadership-and-strategy/president/writing-and-speeches/presidents-address/inaugural-presidents-address-2022/</p> <p>https://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/secretariat/college-governance/governance-structure/council/review/</p>	
3.7	<p>Congratulations to Mark Richards, who is the first recipient of the Royal Society Research Culture Awards given for outstanding work to support</p>	

	<p>diversity. MR commented he is very humbled to accept the award that will encourage others.</p> <p>https://www.imperial.ac.uk/news/239371/royal-society-awards-imperial-physicist-dedication/</p>	
3.8	<p>SC commented his 5-year tenure due to end this month is extended for a further year from 0.7 to 0.8 FTE and his work will be concentrating exclusively on EDI.</p>	
4.	<p>Discussion: Possible merger of the EDI Forum and College Athena SWAN Committee (paper 4)</p>	
	<p>A discussion followed on the possible merger between the Athena SWAN and EDI Forum committees. The proposal outlining further details had previously been circulated requesting members' views and most were in favour. The new merged committee would consist of around 45 members; the first hour of the meeting could be for departmental level discussions and the second half to a wider agenda. SC will talk to the Athena SWAN Committee and raise with the EDI Strategy Group at the November meeting.</p>	SC
5.	<p>ICU's response to the UUK's consultation on the cost of living crisis (paper 5)</p>	
	<p>LW reported on the cost of living that is a matter of concern to staff and students and summarised her report including the student support application that takes a number of hours to complete. Nathalie Podder, ICU Deputy President, Welfare, is taking forward recommendations to the Access & Participation committee and LW is publishing a paper to look at the student support fund application process, the average award is currently £800.</p> <p>DA commented following meetings the ceiling of the hardship fund is increased to £5,000 and the cost of living re-evaluated; the hardship funds are open to all students including international students and covers the cost of living. The College is encouraging students to use the College arrangement with Blackbullion on how to manage money and provide them with resources to help.</p> <p>https://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/fees-and-funding/financial-assistance/student-support-fund/</p> <p>WM works with Postgrad students in terms of Graduate Teaching Assistant and the availability of work is variable and not always easy to find. There was a significant increase in the rate of pay in August and WM will raise with Hiring Managers to make the work more visible. SC commented we can establish if the College sets the rate of pay or if Departments have autonomy.</p>	

	<p>AT commented Outreach may be able to offer some GTA work and he will arrange for someone to talk to LW; with the current cost of living there are new challenges faced by prospective students particularly from WPP backgrounds to attend Outreach and other events</p>	<p>AT</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p>	
	<p>SK commented on her new role looking at inclusion across the Public Engagement programme. Her work includes the Great Exhibition Festival and the young people's programme. One of the programs is the "Young Producers" and they are 18-24 year olds recruited from local boroughs. There was a big decline in numbers attending last time, as there were difficulties with the financial costs to attend each week. This time they will be paid to take part in the course at the new London Living hourly rate and positive feedback has been received, hopefully that will have more of an impact on young people staying with us.</p>	