

# Imperial College London

## Inclusive Excellence

Imperial's Equality, Diversity  
and Inclusion Strategy



Imperial  
In Engine

## Foreword

**Professor Alice Gast**  
President



Imperial's reputation as an international centre of research and teaching excellence has been built upon the achievements of diverse staff working over many decades – from leading haematologist Dame Janet Vaughan FRS, who set up the first national blood banks in the 1930s, to Abdus Salam, who received a Nobel Prize in Physics in 1979 for his work elucidating the nature of fundamental forces.

Tackling the global challenges of the future, such as climate change, emerging infectious diseases and the opportunities of the data revolution, will require a truly diverse, creative approach. For Imperial to be at the forefront of this effort, we will need to draw upon the talents of staff and students who come here from all backgrounds and from all over the world. Our community has work to do to ensure that everyone can participate to find solutions to these challenges, and to harness the full potential of all, and we are committed to doing that.

For that reason, valuing the diversity of our staff and students is one of the four cornerstones of the Imperial College Strategy 2015-2020, which rests on the need to harness our collective strength as “a supportive and considerate community based on diversity, mutual respect and a commitment to excellence”.

Building on this, we are now delighted to introduce the new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, through which we aim to secure the future success of Imperial and its ongoing mission to achieve enduring excellence in research and teaching for the benefit of society.

**Professor Ian Walmsley**  
Provost



## Mission

### Why does Imperial need a strategy for equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)?

The short answer is: because we want to ensure our future success as a university that wants to make the world a better place. We want to tap into pools of talent that have been neglected for too long, and to increase the quality, relevance and world-changing impact of our research and education.

To succeed, it is vital that the responsibility for promoting equality, diversity and inclusion is shared by everyone in our community. EDI is not an optional extra, or a job that falls only to a subset of managers or committees.

Our strategy is therefore also a call to arms, to everyone at Imperial – staff and students – who believes that the dignity and individuality of every person here should be respected and cherished.

Our strategy, which has been formulated after extensive consultation and deliberation, also represents a renewed resolve to be clear-sighted about the very real challenges ahead. Wherever possible we will seek to fulfil our mission as a university to be an agent of positive influence and change.

**Professor Stephen Curry**  
Assistant Provost  
(Equality, Diversity and Inclusion)



Stephen Curry (right)  
with the EDI Centre team.





## Why do Equality, Diversity and Inclusion matter at Imperial?

The ideas of equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are still sometimes seen as secondary to the core institutional and organizational goals. At Imperial we reject that view. We wish to be clear about what these ideas mean and the value that they can bring to everything that we are aiming to achieve.

Equality is about recognizing that everyone should have the opportunity to fulfil their potential. The Equality Act (2010) defines protected characteristics that have historically been the focus of discrimination (including, but not limited to, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion and sexual orientation).

Diversity is about being aware of and valuing difference as openly and as broadly as possible. It involves building a culture that respects and embraces difference for everyone's benefit.

Inclusion refers to the experiences of the individual within the organization. We are inclusive to the extent that people feel they are valued, listened to and belong at Imperial, and free to be fully themselves.

There are a number of different ways in which a commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion will make us a smarter, healthier, friendlier and more productive organisation. We need to be as diverse as the world we seek to serve if we are to connect with it fully and be relevant to people's lives.

## Where are we now?

# 1,500+

Over 1,500 staff have now attended Active Bystander training, and the College hopes to increase this figure to 3,000.

# 250+

Imperial now has over 250 Mental Health First Aiders who are trained to step in and give immediate help to others while at work.

*Top right: The College's Active Bystander training programme won an 'Excellence in HR' award at the 2018 Universities Human Resources (UHR) Awards.*



Our efforts to develop an effective EDI strategy build on existing work that involves many people and many different streams of activity.

The most visible components of this work are perhaps external benchmarking schemes including the Athena SWAN awards, the Race Equality Charter, Disability Confident Employer status and the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index.

Recent developments include the appointment of Imperial's first Assistant Provost (EDI); the establishment of an executive EDI Strategy Group, headed by the Provost; and the establishment of an EDI Forum. These two new bodies will work closely together to promote the integration of the values of equality, diversity and inclusion envisaged in this strategy document.

Importantly, we want to be open to dialogue and challenge. Sometimes we will find ourselves facing difficult choices because our resources are finite and we cannot immediately do everything that our aspirations demand. At such times, we will return to the principles articulated here as the starting point for discussions of how to do better.



## We will integrate equality, diversity and inclusion into all management processes

The responsibility for change has to be distributed throughout the organisation. We need to create an organisational culture in which consideration of equality, diversity and inclusion is central to all decision-making processes.



## We will integrate equality, diversity and inclusion into the student experience

Developing an inclusive curriculum that will attract, engage and support students of all backgrounds and identities is an integral part of the 2017 Learning and Teaching Strategy (LTS). Inclusive teaching will allow students to bring their unique identity into the classroom.



Above: A team of undergraduates supervised by Dr Ian Radcliffe has created a new low-cost design for a Wheelchair Fencing frame to open up the sport to people worldwide.

Top right: Imperial's Dr Aldo Faisal is a Reader in Neurotechnology and his research often relates to developing and improving assistive technology for disabled people.

### We will:

- Incorporate EDI-specific training as part of the Provost's board refresher leadership development programme.
- Refresh the membership of the College Council to reflect the diversity of present and future stakeholders, whom we expect to be drawn from all across the UK and the world.
- Ensure that anyone taking on significant management responsibilities receives appropriate EDI training.
- Identify and nurture talent from under-represented groups – e.g., using mentoring programmes for under-represented groups and reverse-mentoring opportunities for managers.
- Incorporate consideration of equality, diversity and inclusion in the design of research projects that have a direct impact on people – e.g. technologies to help disabled people.

Right: Welnnovate is an innovation programme and competition designed solely for women students at Imperial.

### We will:

- Pilot recruitment processes from 2019-20 which aim to increase the number of well qualified undergraduate applicants from widening participation backgrounds admitted to the College.
- Collaborate with Imperial College Union to articulate a common vision on how promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion will enhance the student experience.
- Ensure that all staff involved in delivering frontline student services have EDI awareness training.
- Develop "Imperial Expectations" induction packages for all students – designed to raise awareness of EDI issues and to define expected standards of behaviour.
- Review and enhance our support for students who have been in care or who are recent care leavers.



# We will take positive action to improve the opportunities and experiences of under-represented groups



Above: Desmond Samuel (centre) is co-chair of Imperial As One, the College's staff network for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) people.

Below: Imperial has a long-standing relationship with the Amos Bursary – a group set up to address the under representation of young black men in education and the workplace.



As a Reader, Aimee Morgans applied for an Elsie Widdowson Fellowship after the birth of her second child to give her space and time to get things in place for the start of a major grant. She is now a Professor of Thermofluids and holds a €2M ERC Consolidator Grant.

## Action in support of gender equality

Progress on gender equality remains a major goal at Imperial and has largely and has been driven through the Athena SWAN Charter. It remains an important initiative but should be kept under review to determine that it is delivering real benefits.

### We will:

- Aim for every department to attain at least a Bronze award by the end of 2019 so that the College will be positioned to apply for a Gold award.
- Support and celebrate the achievements of women through events and initiatives including Women@Imperial week, the Elsie Widdowson Fellowship and tailored training and development programmes.
- Support parents through parental leave, nursery provision, and family-friendly timing of College events whenever possible.
- Make year on year reductions in our gender pay gap. Focus action by providing heads of department with departmental-level breakdowns of the gender pay gap.

## Action in support of black and minority ethnic (BAME) staff and students

The government's race disparity audit shows starkly that BAME people still face very significant barriers in education and employment. The effects of this can be seen in the staff and student profiles at Imperial

### We will:

- Survey all staff and students, to gather information on and explore the particular experiences of BAME staff and students.
- Identify institutional impediments to the inclusion, recruitment and progression of black and minority ethnic people and formulate an ambitious and specific action plan to tackle these.
- Submit a full application for a university-wide Race Equality Charter (REC) Bronze award by the end of 2019.
- Support and promote the IMPACT training and development programme.







### Action in support of LGBTQ+ staff and students

- Make fuller use of our participation in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index to drive change at Imperial.
- Review HR policies to ensure they afford equal rights to LGBTQ+ staff.
- Review our provision of LGBTQ+ awareness training for all new staff and students to make sure this is sufficiently broad to include issues faces by transgender and non-binary people.
- Provide guidance to all staff and students on the importance of inclusive language for LGBTQ+ people and respect for individual choices of pronoun or titles.
- Ensure that at least one tutor per department is trained to support trans, non-binary and LGBTQ+ students.

*Above: Imperial at Pride in London March 2018, organised by Imperial 600 – the College's LGBTQ+ network.*

### Action in support of disabled staff and students

- Establish a formal and effective mechanism for recording requests for support for disability by staff and students.
- Ensure that all staff with line management responsibilities are trained to deal sensitively and appropriately with disability cases, and that they understand how to access expert support.
- Increase the number of trained volunteer mental health first aiders across all College to 1 in 50 people.
- Develop a plan to improve facilities that are used for College-wide events but that are not yet equipped to be fully accessible (e.g., wheel-chair ramps/lifts; hearing loops).
- Adopt as general practice strategies to benefit disabled students (e.g. use of microphones, lecture recording, advance provision of reading lists and course materials).
- Apply to be a Disability Confident Leader within two years.
- Support and promote the Calibre training and development programme and explore the feasibility of creating a similar programme for students.

**250+**

**Imperial now has over 250 Mental Health First Aiders who are trained to step in and give immediate help to others while at work.**



*Below: Jonathan Graham works in the College's cafés. He joined Imperial following a trial period arranged by charity Action on Disability.*





## We will reduce the incidence of bullying and harassment

An organisational culture that values diversity and aims to be inclusive must be built on respect for the individual, whatever their identity, circumstances or background. We are making positive strides through the 'Have Your Say' campaigns and ongoing work arising from the 2016 institutional culture report towards implementing our zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment. Yet we know from surveys of staff and students that unacceptable behaviours still affect a significant number of people.

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### We will:

- Develop a coherent and credible approach to eliminate bullying and harassment. A working group chaired by the Assistant Provost (EDI) has already been charged with reviewing existing policies and processes for reporting and dealing with cases sexual harassment.
- The working group will bring forward proposals to more effectively enable staff and students to report incidents, and to receive support and redress.
- Publicise the ongoing work to improve our organisational culture and create more opportunities for staff and students to get involved.
- Facilitate the roll-out of Active Bystander training for staff and students (pioneered in the Faculty of Engineering) across the College.

## We will gather and publish data to monitor our progress

To ensure that the actions we take to promote equality, diversity and inclusion are effective, we need to gather and analyse data on our staff and students as a function of their various protected characteristics.



### We will:

- Develop robust and user-friendly tools for monitoring student and staff data to enable departments to track progress.
- To reduce duplication of effort, we will ensure that data-gathering and analysis is consistent as far as possible with the demands of external benchmarking schemes.
- Publish an annual summary of diversity data on staff and students and track year-on-year changes.
- Build the confidence of staff and students in our ability to handle data confidentially and to use it responsibly. This will increase declaration rates and the utility of our data.



The Calibre Programme is a leadership development programme for disabled staff. Since its launch in 2013, over 60 staff have graduated from programme.

## We will collaborate internally and externally to develop good practice

At Imperial, our mission to disseminate knowledge and practice will include our work on equality, diversity and inclusion. We are also keen to learn from the diversity of experience within and without the institution.



## We will be open to dialogue on our work on equality, diversity and inclusion

Equality, diversity and inclusion are difficult and contested ideas because they challenge the status quo.



### We will:

- Establish an EDI Excellence Fund to identify and encourage local initiatives. The fund will recognise and reward people at Imperial with a passion for EDI.
- Work with outside groups to learn, develop and share best practice (e.g. other universities, networks, international bodies, and experts). We are determined to be a leading voice in this endeavour.
- We will work with other relevant organisations (e.g. UKRI, the Office for Students, Russell Group, Universities UK, League of European Research Universities) to develop and disseminate best practice across the sector.
- Work with Advancement to identify new sources of support, both to advertise our efforts to be more inclusive and to fund new activities.
- Harness the experiences and perspectives of our alumni, especially those from diverse backgrounds and work with them to develop post-graduation support.

*Above: The Mohn Westlake Foundation gave a transformative gift of £2million to support The Invention Rooms, a new community innovation space at the White City Campus, where local residents of all ages can get involved in making and creative pursuits in collaboration with Imperial staff and students.*

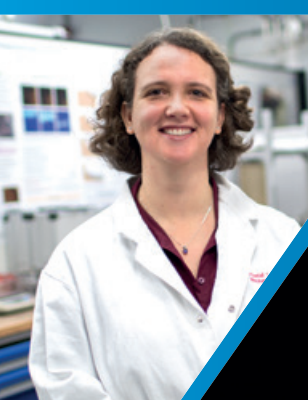
### We will:

- Explain our EDI strategy clearly and keep it open to challenge. Be constructive and open-minded about mapping out routes to further progress.
- Establish meaningful two-way channels of communication to ensure that people feel listened to and valued
- Create regular opportunities for staff and students to interact formally and informally with the leadership team at College and departmental level.
- Advertise the EDI Forum as a major opportunity for staff and students to make their views known and to get directly involved.
- Ensure that EDI information on the College website (e.g. support, training opportunities, events) is presented in a coherent and accessible manner.



*The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Centre holds an annual thank you event to recognise people who have made significant contributions to inclusivity at Imperial.*





For more information, and the full  
EDI Strategy and Action Plan visit:  
[www.imperial.ac.uk/equality](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/equality)