# Drafting EDI & Accessibility Statements

EDI and accessibility statements are increasingly being requested by funders. Often they are left to the last minute which means it is difficult to demonstrate EDI and accessibility are embedded. Also, embedding EDI and accessibility can cost more money and funds may need to be requested and justified. More time may be required, or an extra person to record, monitor and evaluate EDI and accessibility. The statements should highlight how you have embedded EDI and accessibility into all areas of your research practice from networking and forming collaborations; research design, hypotheses and impact; how you have developed your understanding and awareness as a leader; how you and your group/department foster an inclusive culture and ensure an accessible research environment; recruitment and development of staff and students in the research group; outreach, public engagement and Patient Public Involvement; publications and conferences.

## Considerations and Links to the Researcher Toolkit Section

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| Area of Practice | Considerations | Inclusivity | Accessibility |
| [Personal development and awareness](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/health-and-life-sciences/research/ediw-researcher-toolkit/my-team/responsibilities-research-team-leader/) | See Checklist on section [Leading by example](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/health-and-life-sciences/research/ediw-researcher-toolkit/my-team/responsibilities-research-team-leader/) providing suggestions for training and awareness. Include this in your statement. | Understand how to be ally, to prevent creating barriers and how to overcome other barriers for people with differences | Understand your own biases. Research how barriers can be overcome by improving accessibility. Conduct regular [accessibility audits](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/health-and-life-sciences/research/ediw-researcher-toolkit/accessibility/) across your areas of practice. Be an advocate for disabled staff and students. |
| [Leading by example](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/health-and-life-sciences/research/ediw-researcher-toolkit/my-team/responsibilities-research-team-leader/) | Use the [toolkit checklist](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/health-and-life-sciences/research/ediw-researcher-toolkit/my-team/responsibilities-research-team-leader/) to reflect on your own behaviours. | Are you an ally? Do you understand barriers faced by others? | Have you considered accessibility? Do you know how to complete an [accessibility audit](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/health-and-life-sciences/research/ediw-researcher-toolkit/accessibility/) of all spaces, facilities, equipment and environments e.g. conferences, used by your group members? Do you need to request additional funds to ensure accessibility? |
| [Leadership Responsibilities](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/health-and-life-sciences/research/ediw-researcher-toolkit/my-team/responsibilities-research-team-leader/) | Have you reflected on your [responsibilities of a team leader](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/health-and-life-sciences/research/ediw-researcher-toolkit/my-team/responsibilities-research-team-leader/) with respect to creating an inclusive culture, being ally, raising your own awareness, responding to allegations of bullying and harassment, leading by example. | Do you take action to foster inclusivity in your group, your [Circles of Influence](https://learningloop.io/glossary/circles-of-influence) | Do you understand impacts of visible and non-visible disabilities and how barriers can be overcome. |
| [Staff Recruitment](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/health-and-life-sciences/research/ediw-researcher-toolkit/my-team/recruiting-staff-and-students/) | Understand the [11 types of unconscious bias](https://www.catalyst.org/2020/01/02/interrupt-unconscious-bias/) and what you can do to ensure they are not impacting your decisions. Look at language, imagery, and information included in recruiting materials to emphasise inclusiveness and welcoming culture. | Consider using positive action. Ensure you have diverse recruitment panels, trained in EDI. Consider issues such as maternity/paternity/parental leave, illness and other issues that may impact CVs. Inclusive place and timing of interviews. |  |
| [Student Recruitment](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/health-and-life-sciences/research/ediw-researcher-toolkit/my-team/recruiting-staff-and-students/) – PhD, Masters and summer studentships | In addition to understand the types of [unconscious bias](https://www.catalyst.org/2020/01/02/interrupt-unconscious-bias/). Look at your recruitment processes and language, highlight inclusive cultures and facilities e.g., quiet rooms, flexible working. Interviews (timing, place, facilities, questions) and diversity of the panel. How are you measuring diversity? What would be a diverse short-list. Summer students will require payment at minimum wage to ensure a diverse application cohort, ensure this is in the advert. Many students will need flexible working. Consider how you can support students attending conferences, placements and include in this information in the advert. | Consider using positive action and contextual data (do not just picked highest degree and school grades, be careful about giving added benefit to students who have studied abroad or undertaken summer studentships) e.g., widening participation students and students from different demographic, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds and cultures often appear less confident and may not get the highest grades dues to other responsibilities compared to non-WP students. | Ensure accessible interview facilities, look at timing and travel needs if in person. What question s and how will they be asked, e.g., neurodivergent students may need clear questions in advance, may not have eye contact or may not appear to be “enthusiastic”. |
| [Supporting staff and student development](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/health-and-life-sciences/research/ediw-researcher-toolkit/my-team/developing-my-team/) | How do you ensure all your team are being supported to achieve their career ambitions. | Do you ensure you offer opportunities to everyone without making subjective judgments about their desire, willingness, ability to engage or finding methods to support engagement e.g. caring responsibilities impacting time availability. | Do you ensure any development events, networking, conference presentations and courses are accessible? |
| Research group culture | See the suggestions for creating an inclusive culture section in the [toolkit](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/health-and-life-sciences/research/ediw-researcher-toolkit/my-team/responsibilities-research-team-leader/). | Ensure allyship and inclusive language and behaviours are the norm. Bullying and harassment is not acceptable and will be acted upon. Expect engagement with EDI training of all. | Regularly conduct accessibility audits to ensure group members are not inadvertently excluded. |
| Department facilities and culture | Is there an EDI Committee and Action Plan. Have there been sign ups to the Race and Gender Equality, Mental Wellbeing and LGBTQ+ Charters | Is there inclusive imagery; are their policies on inclusive meetings, ensure diverse recruitment to committees; is diversity and inclusivity a priority? | How do you report issues with accessibility? Does your procurement process ask about accessibility e.g., accessible software for a new piece of equipment. Is their an accessible campus or equivalent committee? |
| Networking and collaborations | How/where/when do you network? Does this exclude some cohorts e.g. those with caring responsibilities, disabilities, different faiths | Diversify how you find potential [collaborators](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/health-and-life-sciences/research/ediw-researcher-toolkit/partnerships/) | Ensure networking events (online and in person) are [accessible](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/health-and-life-sciences/research/ediw-researcher-toolkit/accessibility/) to ensure anyone with a disability is able to participate fully and feel included |
| Placement and collaborator facilities and culture | Don’t assume your collaborators have accessible and inclusive facilities. Ask questions. | How inclusive is your collaborators group and culture? Where are they located e.g., some countries are not welcoming to people from LGBTQ+ communities, or have repitations of violence against wome, disabled individuals or people of colour. How will you support members of your group if they need to visit? What time do they have group meetings? Do they expect everyone to attend social activities outside of working hours and/or in places that serve alcohol, or have loud music. | Are their research, office, seminar rooms and travel facilities accessible? |
| Hypothesis | What information have you used to formulate your hypothesis, does include work from across the globe? Have you considered the thoughts and opinions of diverse groups and researchers. | You hypothesis may be changed by increasing the diversity of your network and collaborators. Also, consider reading articles and other of information from globally diverse sources i.e. not just UK, US, Australia, Europe etc.. How diverse/biased are the research findings you are basing your hypothesis upon e.g. human subjects, cell culture, omics data. | For research involving humans, does the literature use human subjects with accessibility needs e.g., if they used an app was it accessible, were people with sensory needs excluded, was the testing equipment only suitable for able bodied participants? |
| [Research Design](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/health-and-life-sciences/research/ediw-researcher-toolkit/designing-research/ediw-research-design/) | You may need to request extra funding for a more inclusive research design and to fund and consider how you will monitor inclusivity. | Have you considered the inclusiveness of your [research design](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/health-and-life-sciences/research/ediw-researcher-toolkit/designing-research/ediw-research-design/)  If you cannot meet inclusivity expectations e.g., genders of animal models, diverse cell cultures or tissue samples, diverse participants (age, culture, sexuality, gender, caring responsibilities, socio-economic background) explain why not and how in future this could be improved. | Accessibility is especially important when humans are involved e.g., patients, carers, public, human subjects, community engagement, pet/animal owners. The physical and online environments need to be [accessible](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/health-and-life-sciences/research/ediw-researcher-toolkit/accessibility/) and inclusive. |
| Impact | By increasing the diversity, inclusivity and accessibility of your research design you will widen and increase the potential impact of your results. | How are you ensuring as the needs of as wide a diversity of beneficiaries as possible are being met by your research? Do you need to ask more funding to ensure this happens e.g., costs to monitor diversity and inclusivity. | How are you ensuring your impacts are accessible e.g., if the outputs are online resources how are you ensuring they meet online accessibility expectations. |
| [Outreach, Public Engagement](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/health-and-life-sciences/research/ediw-researcher-toolkit/ppi-outreach/outreach-public-engagement/) and [PPI](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/health-and-life-sciences/research/ediw-researcher-toolkit/ppi-outreach/patient-public-involvement/) | See the [PPI](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/health-and-life-sciences/research/ediw-researcher-toolkit/ppi-outreach/patient-public-involvement/) and [diversify outreach](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/health-and-life-sciences/research/ediw-researcher-toolkit/ppi-outreach/outreach-public-engagement/) sections of the toolkit and associated links for ideas on how to engage, meet the needs, of diverse communities and evaluate impact. | Use inclusive imagery and language. Diverse representation in people delivering the event. Diverse cases, examples, activities. Ensure, timing, locations, catering, toilets and other facilities e.g., gender neutral toilets, breast feeding and quiet rooms, and venues are inclusive including travel to the venue. Consider using name labels that state pronouns (if required). | Ensure materials, venues and timing are accessible. Look at using inclusive name labels e.g., to indicate whether a person wishes to be approached for conversation, whether photographs. |
| [Publications & Conferences](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/health-and-life-sciences/research/ediw-researcher-toolkit/ppi-outreach/patient-public-involvement/) | Read the [PPI section](https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/health-and-life-sciences/research/ediw-researcher-toolkit/ppi-outreach/patient-public-involvement/) of the toolkit and follow the links to find suggestions on how to engage people from diverse and underrepresented communities in your research. Undertake training on developing inclusive PPI. Be clear ion what diverse means and how it will be measured and monitored. |  |  |

### Mock EDI/Accessibility Statement

I am a Professor in XXX and am deeply committed to advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) within my work and research environment. As part of this commitment, I actively participate in EDI training and initiatives, most recently attending a Male Allyship workshop and completing training on Equality Impact Assessments. I serve as a member of our Departmental EDI Committee, where I am responsible for implementing and monitoring our inclusive PhD studentship action plan. In this role, I strive to lead by example in fostering a work environment that is welcoming, accessible, and fair for everyone.

To ensure accessibility for all team members, I prioritize flexible scheduling for meetings and seminars to accommodate staff and students with caregiving responsibilities. I cultivate an open and supportive environment where all concerns, no matter how minor they may seem, are taken seriously and addressed promptly. I believe in transparent communication, and I always report back to individuals raising concerns, reinforcing a culture where group members feel safe to speak up. This proactive approach underscores my commitment to an inclusive atmosphere where inappropriate behaviour or attitudes are not tolerated.

Understanding the diverse needs of my team is central to my leadership. I make it a priority to assess individual training and development requirements, ensuring everyone feels supported in achieving their ambitions. I am equally committed to recognizing and valuing all contributions to our research, with every team member acknowledged in publications and conference presentations. We are proud supporters of the Researcher Development Concordat and the Technicians Commitment, reinforcing our dedication to the growth and recognition of every researcher and technician.

In our academic and research environment, I strive for diversity and inclusion in all areas, including seminar representation. We invite speakers from diverse backgrounds and encourage them to share pronouns (if they are comfortable) to foster an inclusive environment. We also ask presenters if they would like to provide PowerPoints in advance to accommodate those using accessibility software, and all seminars are subtitled. Recently, I was recommended for a staff award in recognition of my contributions to fostering inclusivity in our department. I also leverage my international reputation to promote accessibility and inclusivity principles at conferences organized by collaborators and learned societies, such as advocating against hosting events in locations where human rights for women and LGBTQ+ individuals are restricted.

In our current research proposal, we plan to work with cell culture and human tissue samples. Although a single cell line derived from a male of European descent currently exists in this field, we are collaborating with researchers in Africa and Asia to develop more representative cell lines. This will ensure our work reflects the genetic diversity necessary for meaningful impact. Additionally, our diverse collaboration base allows us to source tissue samples from various populations, taking into account differences in age, gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic backgrounds. This approach may increase sample size requirements, but it is essential for generating comprehensive and inclusive research outcomes. Through this lens, we also aim to examine socioeconomic factors, as we already suspect poverty significantly impacts patient outcomes—an area historically overlooked in biomedical studies.

We are also establishing a new Patient and Public Involvement (PPI) group, with an emphasis on reaching traditionally underserved communities. To increase inclusivity, we are proactively addressing accessibility by ensuring our facilities accommodate all participants and providing resources such as British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters. We are committed to monitoring and evaluating our outreach efforts to ensure this group reflects the full demographic diversity of patients affected by this disease.

Thank you for considering our commitment to advancing EDI in every facet of our research and public engagement efforts.