

You are being invited to take part in the Inclusion Matters Research Project. Before you decide whether to take part, it's important for you to understand the purpose of the research and what is involved for you as a participant. Please take time to read the following information carefully, and if there is anything that isn't clear, or if you would like more information please contact us.

Thanks for your interest in the project.

MENTEE – SHARED CHARACTERISTICS AND INTERESTS MENTORING

What is Shared Characteristics and Interests Mentoring?

This activity allows Early Career participants* from under-represented groups in Engineering and Physical Sciences (EPS) the opportunity to be mentored by someone more senior who has similar identities or attributes, traits, qualities, and relevant experiences that are perceived to be similar.

The activities in this project have been designed with the aim of supporting participants to build networks and gain exposure to opportunities which will allow them to progress and develop their academic careers to their full potential.

*see webpage for the projects' definition of Early Career Participant

What is involved in taking part in Shared Characteristic and interest mentoring?

If you are offered a place as a mentee for Shared Characteristics and interests mentoring and agree to take part in the study, you will:-

1. Be asked to complete a more detailed questionnaire to provide information which will allow you to be matched to an appropriate mentor. Data will be stored securely and confidentially. The mentor allocated may be within your organisation, or from one of the other project partner organisations.
2. The time commitment will be attendance at an initial 3 hr mentoring training session (mandatory attendance is required to participate). It is envisaged that 6 to 12 mentoring sessions (face-to-face or remote, see below) will then be undertaken, of approximately 40 minutes to 1 hr duration each, taking place every 4-6 weeks. However, this will be determined by the mentee and mentor, depending on need.
3. It is anticipated the first one-to-one meeting with your Mentor will be face-to-face in a suitable venue that is convenient for both Mentor / Mentee. You will be reimbursed for any travel expenses incurred. After this initial meeting it is anticipated meetings are likely to be conducted remotely via Zoom, Skype or Blackboard Ultra.

Shared Characteristics
and Interests Mentoring

As a
MENTEE

What happens next?

If you wish to take part in Inclusion Matters project, we will ask you to complete an online registration form in which you will be asked to specify in order of preference the activities you are interested in participating in. As this is a research project, it is important that we also collect data to evaluate what has worked well within the project, what could be improved in the future and the impact that participating in the project has had for participants. We will therefore collect some demographic information about you, and find out a bit about your experiences within your career to date. A detailed list of information that will be collected is provided in the privacy notice.

A subset of the information you provide at registration will be used by the Participant Allocation Panel who will use this to allocate participants to activities. You will then have the opportunity to accept or decline to participate in the activity and may be asked to provide some additional contextual information to support your participation in the activity. Please note that all participants will have access to the online platform, whether or not they are participating in another activity.

Are there any potential risks involved in taking part?

The key risk in any mentoring situation is the potential for dependence between Mentor and Mentee. This will be covered under the mandatory 3 hr training session to mitigate the risk. Please see our Mentoring Handbook / Guidance on how best to structure your mentoring sessions to navigate this potential.

What are the potential benefits of taking part?

There are many benefits to taking part in a mentoring relationship, such as;

- Enabling open discussions regarding challenges under-represented groups have encountered with the aim to establish solution-focused pathways of support.
- Career development, research advice, opportunities to learn how to gain collaborative funding and to strengthen your academic networks.



Evaluation

An essential part of this project is the evaluation of the activities to understand the impact of the project, what has been effective, where there have been challenges and where refinements can be made. Evaluation for this activity will include: baseline and follow up surveys; a short reflective report by participants; observation of training sessions; observation of a sample of mentor sessions; collection of attendance/participation data and interviews with a sample of participants. All activities within the project are subject to agreement with the participants for the activities to take place.

The evaluation is being carried out by a team of researchers from Durham University and Northumbria University. As well as considering the impact of the project for participants, the evaluation will also be analysing information and policies from the participating HEIs and conducting interviews with key staff within these organisations to assess the wider impact of the project.

About the Project

What is Inclusion Matters?

EPSRC have funded 11 projects across the UK through the Inclusion Matters call. This is the first initiative of its kind, launched as part of the collective approach by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) to promote equality, diversity and inclusion.

<https://epsrc.ukri.org/newsevents/news/inclusionmatters/>

The title of this project is 'Northern Power: Making Engineering and Physical Sciences (EPS) Research a Domain for All in the North of England.' The study has received ethical approval from the Ethics Committee, School of Education of Durham University.

The rights and responsibilities of anyone taking part in Durham University research are set out in our 'Participants Charter':

<https://www.dur.ac.uk/research.innovation/governance/ethics/considerations/people/charter/>

What is the purpose of the Inclusion Matters research project?

The overarching aim of this study is to shape an actively inclusive culture in the EPS community (academic and beyond) in the North of England that supports, drives and sustains greater equality for all, including traditionally under-represented groups (e.g., women, disabled people, LGBT+, and black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) researchers).

Our objectives are:

to develop a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by groups under-represented in EPS across our consortium and beyond;

- to share this understanding with HEIs, research councils, industry and policy makers;
- to present cross-institutional networking, mentoring and disciplinary opportunities for members of groups under-represented in EPS within our consortium;
- to establish and share best practice with regard to developing inclusive EPS communities from HEIs and industry (and beyond) with other HEIs, research councils, industry and policy makers through seminars, publications and an online platform.



Do I have to take part?

Your participation is voluntary and you do not have to agree to take part. If you do agree to take part, you can withdraw at any time, without giving a reason. Your rights in relation to withdrawing any data that is identifiable to you are explained in the accompanying Privacy Notice.

Why have I been invited to take part?

Statistics show that the Engineering and Physical Sciences community is under-represented in a number of groups, including women, disabled people, LGBT+ and Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people. Participation in the Inclusion Matters project is being promoted to people who identify as being in one or more of these under-represented groups.

What opportunities are available as part of the Inclusion Matters project?

Having identified 7 critical challenges to recruitment, retention and progression for people in these groups, the Inclusion Matters project has developed 8 activities to address these challenges:

1. Shared characteristic and/or interest mentoring
2. Reciprocal mentoring
3. Online platform
4. Leadership Development Workshop
5. Networking for Career Development
6. University Industry Partnership – Work Shadowing
7. University Industry Partnership – EDI within EPS Events
8. University Industry Partnership – Engaging Collaboration: Being Prepared for Business Workshops

Will my data be kept confidential?

All information obtained during the study will be kept confidential. Information which is specific to the evaluation will not be shared with other activities in the project and where information is to be shared, we will always make it clear to you which information will be shared beyond the evaluation team. If the data is published it will be entirely anonymous and will not be identifiable as yours. Full details are included in the accompanying Privacy Notice.

What will happen to the results of the project?

We expect the outcomes of this project will fundamentally influence and shape policy and practice across the partner Universities and beyond in relation to increasing diversity in the EPS community. Reports, academic publications, other outputs and conference attendance are some of the dissemination activities which we will utilise to effect better working practices as a whole across the sector.

The end date of the project is 31 March 2021. All research data and records needed to validate the research findings will be stored for 10 years after the end of the project.

Who do I contact if I have any questions or concerns about this study?

General Queries about the Registration Process and Project –
inclusion.matters@durham.ac.uk

Data Protection and GDPR - information.governance@durham.ac.uk

Questions about the Activity – Jill Green, Project Officer, University of Leeds
j.r.green1@leeds.ac.uk

If you remain unhappy or wish to make a formal complaint, please submit a complaint via the University's [Complaints Process](#).

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Who will conduct the research?

The project is being conducted by a consortium of Universities and industry partners in the North of England.



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