

**Inclusion Matters Advisory Board Meeting 5
Tuesday 23 February 2021**

Minutes

In attendance:

Susan Johnson (Chair) (SJ), Bernadine Idowu-Onibokun (BI), Dorothy Monekosso (DM), Sarah Sharples (SS), Claire Warwick (CW), Patrik Ohberg (PO), Jeremy Sanders (JS), Javad Yazdani (JY), Derek Wann (DW), Colin Bain (CB), Rachel Archbold (RA) (Project Lead), Julie Wilson (JW) (Board secretary), Julia Guy (JG).

Apologies:

Cheryl Millington (CM).

	Item	Action
1.	Welcome	
2.	<p>Minutes and Actions of the last meeting</p> <p>Agreed as correct. To be published on the project website.</p>	JW
2.1	<p>Received – Actions Update.</p> <p>2.1.1 Impact Outcome – participant attendees at Advisory Board 6 (May). Agreed – 4 people to attend, schedule 5 – 10 minutes each, to cover all workstreams.</p> <p>ACTION - 4 participants to attend final Advisory Board – partners to identify and brief.</p> <p>2.1.2 Advisory Board to advise of networks or contacts. Still relevant for dissemination purposes.</p> <p>ACTION - JW to contact Board and request.</p> <p>2.1.3 Confirm location of May meeting – agreed final Board meeting will be online.</p> <p>2.1.4 RIS finance meeting with Colin Bain (CB) and project team, for clarity on finance and funding. Meeting took place 22/10/20. Budget reviewed.</p> <p>2.1.5 Look at viability of switch to CoA funding. Discussed at finance meeting 22/10/20. Agreed current funding was of greater benefit to the project. No change required.</p>	<p>In progress</p> <p>Outstanding</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p>

	<p>2.1.6 Request outstanding Finance reports. Received and forwarded to Board January 2021.</p> <p>ACTION - JW to request monthly Finance report from now until end of project to monitor spend.</p> <p>2.1.7 WP1 - Leeds to update progress at next meeting.</p> <p>2.1.8 WP2 – Senior Leader participants, request from the Chair to partners to make a final plea to senior leaders to prioritise as part of their commitment to EDI and the project. One referral received from Northumbria.</p> <p>2.1.8 Contact EPSRC regarding viability of a single online hub for resource deposits from all IM projects. Contacted and advised no clarity on webspace yet due to reconfiguration of site to come under UKRI.</p> <p>ACTION – to follow up again before the end of the project.</p> <p>2.1.9 Leadership workshop date (WP4) to be confirmed to Advisory Board. Advised potential dates are 27 April or 05 May (the latter clashes with final Advisory Board).</p> <p>ACTION - 27 April to be confirmed with Board as soon as the date is firm.</p> <p>2.1.10 Toolkit development - table as an agenda item for next stakeholder meeting.</p> <p>2.1.11 Log, monitor & review risk of personnel leaving project.</p> <p>2.1.12 All workstream leads/key activity leads to be present at the next Advisory Board meeting.</p>	<p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p>
3.	<p>General Project Update</p> <p>Received – Project Update.</p> <p>3.1 Project extension. Confirmed that an extension request had been submitted to EPSRC in January to extend to 31 August 2021 for dissemination purposes. Due to some activities continuing beyond planned end dates due to COVID, the evaluation timeline has been pushed back considerably. The evaluation report is due for publishing 31 May 2021 (current project end date). An extension beyond that date will allow for proper dissemination of the project outputs and findings.</p>	

3.2 Outputs. The Board received details of the outputs plan and timeline for completion. A supplier has been appointed for design and delivery of digital outputs.

3.3 End of Project Workshop. The workshop date was confirmed as 26 May 2021.

ACTION - Draft workshop programme to be circulated to the board.

The Board discussed the negative effect COVID has had in the workplace, exacerbating existing inequalities and widening the gap. Evidence already shows the significant effect of COVID on women and BAME groups due to caring responsibilities, and the higher likelihood of job losses in these groups. The resulting hiatus in progression and resulting impact on the gender pay has potential to negatively impact a generation. The emerging feeling is that this could set progress back by decades, and post pandemic there will be little opportunity to close this gap soon, with harsh spending reviews expected in 2021/22.

EHRC have recently launched an inquiry into racial inequality in health and social care workplaces, to understand the experiences of ethnic minority people working on the frontline in lower-paid roles, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

There was a brief discussion of the potential benefits of the pandemic in being the catalyst for alternative and more flexible ways of working. These could be harnessed longer term to provide more family friendly ways of working with no career penalties.

There was acknowledgement of the mental health burnout many people are experiencing due to working from home and the inability to switch off and step away due to increasing demands from employers. Fundamental changes are needed to employer expectations, rather than rolling out one wellbeing initiative after another, which do little to address the underlying issues around excessive workloads. This is seen as commonplace in academia, but is also apparent in other sectors.

The Board discussed REF impact on individuals, and acknowledgement that the REF macro already does not play to part time workers. While there is the potential to submit COVID impact statements, that people are currently too fatigued to think about writing them, on top of existing pressures and increased workload with online teaching, combined with home-schooling etc.

It was commented that HEIs are looking at data around grant applications over the past year to determine if application rates have dropped for minority groups. Also some types of research have been impacted more due to their nature (field and lab work).

	<p>There was acknowledgement that the majority of people have been impacted in some way, with disproportionate impact on certain groups.</p> <p>Caution was advised around interpreting aggregated statistics, an example was given of the headline that earnings were up 5% during the pandemic. Because a high number of lower earners had been hit with unemployment, this had effectively taken a significant proportion of lower paid workers out of the equation. Pay is not increasing but unemployment is and this has disproportionately hit some sectors and groups. Granular data is important to understand the true impact.</p> <p>The Board discussed Gender Pay Gap reporting enforcement being suspended in 2021. While this is to ease the load on businesses, the loss of visibility of data in a crucial period is concerning. In HE and banking sectors the GPG is significant and the repercussions of the pandemic will exacerbate this.</p> <p>Discussion followed around promotion criteria in HEIs and how this could be fairer in current circumstances, a points system per activity was suggested</p> <p>The Board urged partners to consider the 'What next'. What can the outcomes of this project do to support closing the gap as we move out of the pandemic. Where do we take the outcomes and learning of the project and apply these? Is there the potential for, and should HEIs prioritise initiating a study on the impact on long-term progression for minority groups following COVID, to determine where traditional support for ECRs in minority groups is no longer be enough, and what else can we do to mitigate this. As well as understanding the issues, we should look to offer solutions.</p> <p>ACTION - To consider as a theme for the Workshop 'So What Next – redressing the balance after the Pandemic'.</p>	
4.	<p>Finance</p> <p>Received - Budget report. There is currently an underspend on travel which is being repurposed to produce project outputs.</p> <p>The Board advised that the partners should utilise the remaining funds well to optimise impact of the project. The Board requested a monthly statement from now until the end of the project so that the draw down on the budget can be monitored.</p> <p>ACTION: Request monthly budget statements from RIS.</p>	
6.	<p>Workstream Updates</p>	

	<p>The Board reconvened for Session 2, joined by partners for workstream updates.</p> <p>Received – Dashboard report. The Chair asked partners to give an overview of highlights, lowlights and risks since the last Board meeting and to give a line of sight to the completion of the project.</p> <p>WP1 & WP3 Leeds – Vania Dimitrova, Jill Green (JGr) David Broad (DB) WP2 Durham – Rachel Archbold (RA) WP4 Newcastle – Sharron Kuznesof (SK), Judith Rankin (JR) WP5 Northumbria – Roger Penlington (RP), WP6 Durham/Northumbria – Helen Cramman (HC)</p>	
6.1	<p>WP1 & WP3 Leeds</p> <p>The Project Officer and Web Developer postholders have been extended to May 2021 to coincide with the project end date. Priorities now are to wind up the activities and deliver on the embedding of learning and longevity work to create sustainable change.</p> <p><i>WP1 - Mentoring</i> All mentoring meetings have now concluded, feedback indicates this has had a positive effect for participants. The evaluation report draft which is due in April will be useful to identify if it is feasible and beneficial to continue the mentoring activity. Anecdotal evidence indicates the shared characteristic element is useful and creates empathy. A learning log has been maintained throughout the project and will be useful for evaluation and outputs.</p> <p>Training materials are being adopted within Leeds' institutional training in the Equality Policy Unit, linked to the project.</p> <p>The Board commented that it would be useful to address:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) the goal of the impact – what is the long term aim 2) cross-institutional sharing – how this would be done, not just in Leeds, consortium wide impact <p>Leeds commented that prior to receiving the evaluation findings it is difficult to determine impact at this point in time.</p> <p>WP6 confirmed that the evaluation draft report is scheduled for circulation to partners first week in April and there are no anticipated delays with this.</p> <p><i>WP3 – Platform</i></p>	

A significant amount of work is underway regarding the reworking of the Wordpress project website. This will remain as a legacy resource. The focus has now shifted from recruitment and raising awareness of the project, to being a hub for all outputs at the end of the project and as an ongoing resource with open access, after the Platform contract ends in November 2021.

Workstream content is being migrated and the site is being reconfigured with 2 user profiles in mind:-

- 1) Institutional - HR/EDI/OD professionals seeking toolkits and other information to implement activities in their organisations
- 2) Individual - Academic users seeking personal development tools and information

Sitemapping (user-mapping) is currently taking place to support the website reconfiguration.

The Board asked how this would support the ‘What Next’ – could it facilitate better connections and perhaps a community to optimise on the foundations already built?

Leeds commented that a not for profit approach amongst existing partners to continue to link people would be most beneficial, one of the planned outputs is to initiate a network of professionals to take forward the activities on a cross-institutional basis.

The Board commented EPSRC want to identify how the IM projects have helped address systemic inequalities in funding in EPS.

6.2

WP2 – Durham

Reciprocal Mentoring

The last pairs were matched in December and training has taken place – there are now 14 active pairs, 28 participants in total.

1 early career participant withdrew after matching, 1 currently remains unmatched. Anecdotal feedback is that the activity has gone very well, there have been varying levels of engagement between pairs. Durham was invited to present at a Supergen annual event, which was a useful dissemination opportunity, we are now in initial conversations to support them in launching Reciprocal mentoring within their network. In addition we are looking at adopting a model within Durham for committee shadowing and mentoring.

Durham is leading a northern bid with Newcastle, Teesside, Sunderland and Northumbria for the OfS and Research England funding call to improve access and participation for BAME students

	<p>at PGR level. Reciprocal mentoring is being adopted as a workstream.</p> <p>The Board asked how the long and short term impact could be measured, and was a theoretical framework being used.</p> <p>The Evaluation team advised that a theory of change model had been utilised. The report from the workstream evaluator is due for completion in 2 weeks. However there were some things to highlight, the workstream delivery model was not finalised prior to the start of the project, there is a small group of participants (theory of change model is more commonplace in large scale projects), and there have been several changes throughout the course of the project due to COVID. All of this however has contributed to interesting findings and recommendations which will feature in the final Evaluation report for the project.</p> <p>A Board member reflected that they are involved in a mentoring programme for public sector boards, where mentees are paired with board Chairs which promotes buy in and accountability. The Chair is not engaged in evaluation however it is a valuable learning experience and there is indirect impact and mutual learning through the recognition of additionality of perspective.</p> <p>It would be interesting to look at parallels with other organisations implementing similar programmes.</p>	
6.3	<p>WP4 – Newcastle</p> <p><i>Leadership Workshop</i></p> <p>It has been necessary to delay the Leadership workshop due to the availability of one of the anchors for the training element of the workshop. We have now had confirmation of 2 potential dates 27 April or 05 May (the latter clashes with the final Advisory Board).</p> <p>It is therefore likely that 27 April will be utilised. The excess travel budget has allowed for the day to be more innovative, Nifty Fox are being commissioned to live scribe some sessions and produce a visual representation of the day.</p> <p><i>Networking</i></p> <p>Participants are working on a facsimile of what they would want to get from Line Managers. Setting out an agreement with touchpoints, discussions and networking activities. What has become apparent is that ECRs frequently have a lack of understanding of the existing internal support and development networks available to them. This is being reflected and acted upon to ensure this is communicated effectively to people who are new to the organisation.</p>	

	<p>Newcastle noted the realisation that there are very few opportunities for ECRs to have these types of conversations. ECRs are being encouraged to have the confidence to challenge perceptions about themselves. People facilitating these sessions have found them to be enjoyable and informative about how they can make changes internally to improve awareness of support networks and activities.</p> <p>It was noted that the first two meetings generated high levels of engagement, meetings 3 and 4 were typically harder to secure, indicating that participants had got what they needed from the first two meetings. This would be reflected upon, and changes to the design may be made.</p> <p>It was noted that due to the inability for participants to attend events, the largest spend was on memberships from the allocated personal budgets. But it was felt that participants were benefitting from these networks and learning in place of attending one off events.</p> <p>ACTION – date of Leadership workshop to be confirmed to the Board along with a draft programme.</p>	
6.4	<p>WP5 – Northumbria</p> <p><i>Industry Collaboration</i></p> <p>RP noted an apology that it had not been possible to provide an update to figures in time for inclusion in the dashboard.</p> <p>Activities are going well and a lot has been learned. Typically webinar type events tend to generate less participant interaction – chat and questions are quiet and people appear to find it difficult to open up. In contrast the 2:1 coaching activities run in November and December (2 x 90 minute sessions) have worked very well. These focussed on developing skills to approach companies, understanding what they are going into, deciding a route in, what the hook is/selling what they have to offer. These sessions had very good engagement and were in demand across the partner HEIs. WP had a flexible approach to accommodate participants who couldn't attend or had to cancel last minute, this may have impacted on positive engagement.</p> <p>Further activity is to look at how to engage with internal RIS and Business Development departments, to understand how to work with these colleagues to clearly articulate what participants have to offer. They aim to identify how to get some meat on the bones and convert into a clear proposition/package to present to industry. Also looking at how to map out what you have to offer versus the company's interest. The plan is to deliver these 4 weeks apart, in</p>	

	<p>the same 2:1 format over 2 90 minute sessions with tasks set in between.</p> <p><i>Case Studies</i> 7 have been completed, 5 are in progress with interviews to schedule and a further 19 participants are to be contacted.</p> <p><i>Issues</i> Some industry partners have had personnel changes which can cause continuity issues, this is something we should pick up in the outputs and workshop at the end of the project.</p> <p>ACTION – to add to project outputs plan.</p>	JW
6.5	<p>WP6 – Durham</p> <p><i>Evaluation</i> The evaluation has experienced some delays in receiving final data from partners, data cleaning is currently in progress.</p> <p>There are some very interesting findings emerging and these will contribute to the lessons learnt, papers, toolkit and workshop outputs which are in development now.</p> <p>There are some key evaluation methods findings, these will be shared in relation to how to be more effective in evaluating EDI and complex terminology. There are some important things to understand before putting any evaluation in place.</p> <p>Some findings to share with the Board now are:-</p> <p>This was the definition of a ‘complex’ project. At the outset, there were an unknown number of participants, and distribution of pool across the partners – the sample size was not known, typically these things are known at the outset of a project.</p> <p>The number of activities 8 was a lot – combined with a small number of participants with overlapping participation in varying combinations of activities.</p> <p>Activities were not pre-determined prior to the project start date –a high level overview had been described in the bid, but the actual activities were developed and refined during the project, meaning that it was difficult to define a theory of change. The baseline survey which collected data at the outset was launched before some activities were confirmed and some changed throughout the course of the project due to COVID.</p> <p>There were differing timelines to the various activities, some were ongoing over a number of months, some were 1 day events, few</p>	

had the same start date and there was a break in activity due to COVID.

Because of this the data collection plan and timeline was delayed and effectively 'squashed' towards the end of the project as data collection activities could not take place when originally scheduled.

There was a balance to strike between capturing adequate, meaningful data, without over burdening the participants and bombarding them with questionnaires, given the scale and number of the activities and the depth versus the breadth of delivery.

Missing data. Some activities were pushed back to fall beyond the evaluation period (WP4). Other data is missing due to a range of reasons – be it not held/collected at an organisational level, staff turnover where contacts have gone and this hasn't been passed to anyone as a new contact, participants withdrawing and COVID stress affecting ability to engage.

It had been necessary to change the method of recruitment for some activities where participants signed up for singular events but did not complete the baseline data. This was followed up with participants with a mixed response.

This has however given us a huge amount of learning which can be applied to enhance effectiveness in evaluation of future initiatives.

There are 2 key areas to consider in setting up evaluation:-

Participant journey – balancing reasonable collection with a reduced burden on the participant – we would advise that the programme and evaluation are developed at the same time, so the data collecting can be almost 'hidden' within the activity. There is also a balance of timelines and the wish to get activities up and running as fast as possible, but there is a definite need to have a key understanding at the outset to ensure everything is built in.

Institutional requirements – consideration at the start about what data it will be necessary to access and when. Consideration of where and how this is held, and which teams within the organisation do we need to interact with to access this data. People would be aware of what we will ask for and when, instead of providing ad hoc requests which are difficult for teams to respond to.

From an evaluation perspective it would be beneficial if funders required a theory of change at bid stage, thinking about assumptions and where the data comes from. This project is not unique, but we have encountered many of the evaluation issues along the way.

7.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>No further points were raised under AOB.</p> <p>The Board discussed how organisations best use their own intellectual capital, rather than looking to buy in external advice. There was discussion around the UKRI high level statement on EDI, which lacks detail so its unclear what it actually mean. Should the Inclusion Matters projects and outcomes inform the detail of such policy implementation? It may help steer away from vague statements and instead present something which clearly sets out the values and actions of the organisation.</p> <p>Perhaps an elevator pitch formed from one or two case studies focussing on how to impact the EPS community? Something courageous to embed best practise – what can be done that’s different. This could be valuable but potentially politically complex.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the project team and Board for their continued efforts.</p>	
8.	<p>ACTIONS</p> <p>8.1 Advisory Board attendees – 4 participants to attend final Advisory Board – partners to identify, JW to draft a brief on structure and circulate to partners to use when approaching participants.</p> <p>8.2 JW to contact Board and request contacts/networks for dissemination purposes.</p> <p>8.3 JW to request monthly Finance report from now until end of project to monitor spend and forward to Board.</p> <p>8.4 JW to contact EPSRC before the end of the project regarding update on any plans for a central webspace for IM outputs.</p> <p>8.5 Leadership Workshop proposed date of 27 April to be confirmed with Board as soon as the date is firm in diary, along with a draft programme and any requests for Board participation.</p> <p>8.6 Circulate end of project Workshop draft programme to the Board.</p> <p>8.7 To consider as a theme for the Workshop ‘So What Next – redressing the balance after the Pandemic’</p> <p>8.8 Add to workshop and outputs plan – mitigating issues around key contacts leaving industry.</p>	<p>All/JW</p> <p>JW</p> <p>JW</p> <p>JW</p> <p>SK</p> <p>JW</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>JW</p>