

ICR Equality Report 2024

1. Introduction

The Equality Report 2024 summarises achievements and developments in the ICR's inclusive culture and provides data and analysis on trends in our workforce and student body.

Equality data for 2022/23 is presented in the Equality Data Report 2024, which accompanies this report and is referenced in it.

Equality, diversity and inclusion are embedded in the ICR's Values. We recruit globally with 66 nationalities represented amongst our staff and students. We are Stonewall Diversity Champions, actively creating a workplace where all employees are accepted as themselves, regardless of sexual orientation. We hold an Athena Swan Silver award for the impact of our work to address gender equality.

Two committees lead our EDI work:

- The Equality Steering Group, chaired by Chief People Officer, Carol Ford, oversees the wider equality agenda and compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty
- The Athena Swan Steering Group (Chaired by Professor Christina Yap) leads our work on gender equality and preparations for our next Athena Swan award application.

Equality is also a strand of the ICR's Sustainability action plan, which sets out the ICR's plans to implement the UN Sustainability goals.

The ICR has senior equality champions, working to ensure that the groups they champion have their voices heard on the Executive or Academic Dean's Team.

These are:

- Carol Ford Chief People Officer – LGBT+ champion
- Barbara Pittam, Chief Research and Academic Officer – Race equality champion
- Professor Chris Bakal – student EDI champion
- Professor Anguraj Sadanandam – Race equality Faculty champion

2. Athena Swan and gender equity

The Athena Swan Steering Group works to progress gender equality in research and research-related careers. The ICR is proud to hold a silver award, given in recognition of the impact of our work to address under-representation of women in research and to create a culture where all can thrive.

Data presented in the Equality Data Report shows that women comprised ~60% of staff and 67% of our postgraduate students. Data analysis for the next Athena Swan application is ongoing, and indicates that women remain under-represented in senior research roles, and are over-represented in our lowest pay quartile. The work of the Athena Swan Steering Group aims to address these issues.

Highlights of gender equity work in 2023:

- Enhancing maternity, adoption and shared parental leave: Maternity and adoption leave pay has increased from 14 weeks enhanced pay (100% salary) to 18 weeks enhanced and is now in-line with the wider HEI sector. Shared Parental Leave increased substantially from statutory pay only to 18 weeks enhanced pay.
- Re-establishing the parent's network in Sutton and Chelsea. The network met once at each site. In 2024 we will hold regular meetings for this network and support it to develop a committee, objectives, events plan, and representation on ESG. This will give it equal footing to the other equality networks.
- A trial of free period products was undertaken in the Centre for Cancer Drug Discovery building. This was successful and the ICR is now expanding this across all buildings.
- Projects supporting women's careers in IT and Chemistry were established by the Digital Services and Chemistry teams respectively.
- International women's day activities:
 - the Athena Swan Steering Group was the subject of an In Focus profile for the internal newsletter.
 - Female researchers participated in an careers fair at Norbury High School for Girls
 - Junior female researchers were profiled in the internal newsletter and on social media throughout February 2023 to celebrate both International Women's Day (March 8th) and International Day of Women and Girls in Science (February

2023 has seen the highest demand for the leadership programmes Aurora and Future Leaders since 2019. To recognise the quality of applicants to both programmes we were able to create larger cohorts than in previous years:

- In 2023 the ICR awarded places to six women on AdvanceHE's Aurora programme – our biggest cohort to date. This provides leadership development for Professional Services, clinical trials and technical staff, and gives individuals a network outside the ICR.
- We ran a double cohort (25 people) of Future Leaders. This was a women-only programme until 2017, now open to all eligible in Professional Services, clinical trials and technical staff and Royal Marsden equivalents.

- Seven women in technical roles were participants in the national Herschel Programme For Women In Technical Leadership. Eight have been awarded places for 2024.

The ICR is preparing for our next Athena Swan application which will be submitted in March 2025.

3. Race equality

Equality data for 2022/23 (in the accompanying Equality Data Report) indicates that the proportion of staff from ethnic minorities continues to increase and is now at 28%.

However, this group are less likely to be promoted compared to our white staff. Our work on race equity aims to address this.

- ICR participated in the Race Equality Charter for Research Institutes working group run by AdvanceHE. AdvanceHE are now working on a pilot version of the Race Equality Charter for research institutes.
- ICR worked with Imperial to enable four participants (two Professional Services and two research staff) to participate in Imperial's IMPACT training. IMPACT (Imperial Positive About Cultural Talent) is a talent development programme for staff who identify as being from a minority ethnic group and aims to address the challenges faced by some ethnic minority staff in developing their careers. IMPACT supports individuals to develop strategies to overcome barriers and to develop their skills and talents. As part of the IMPACT programme the ICR participants worked on a joint project, in which they made recommendations on how the ICR could be more inclusive. This was presented to the Equality Steering Group in Spring 2024, and highlighted the experiences of ethnic minority staff. The Equality Steering Group plan to meet with the IMPACT participants again and address their concerns.
- We will monitor career progression of the ICR participants.
- Four managers (of which two were the managers of IMPACT participants) attend the related IMPACT for Managers programme. This equipped them with inclusive leadership skills with the aim of creating a more supportive culture for the IMPACT participants and other ethnic minority staff.
- As a result of connections made during IMPACT and IMPACT for Managers, the ICR and Imperial are now collaborating to deliver a cohort of the Imperial as One Media Academy for the ICR (15 participants). This is being funded by Research England and will be delivered March-May 2024.

Since 2021 we have built a range of initiatives aimed at diversifying our science PhD applicant pool and to address the reduced success of non-White candidates at the shortlisting stage. These include:

- circulating adverts for the programme to a number of key undergraduate interest groups with strong links to potential applicants from underrepresented backgrounds.

- increasing transparency around the application process, the application form was amended to include more granular questions directly addressing the qualities that we look for in our PhD students.
- An application workshop provides advice and guidance on the application process. In 2023, 139 prospective candidates attended this workshop and we will track these through the recruitment process.
- ‘High potential’ students from Black backgrounds or from less traditional universities were identified through a concurrent sifting process at the shortlisting stage.
- In 2022/23, we had 34% of applicants as 1st generation and they received 41% of offers (n9).

We now ask for first in family data in the biennial student satisfaction survey. Of those current science PhD students who responded in 2023, 31% were first generation students. We found that there was no difference in overall satisfaction with their experience compared to those that weren’t first generation.

Additionally, the ICR’s Undergraduate Vacation Scholarships summer scheme offers ring-fenced studentships for Black British and first-generation students. In 2023, we enrolled 12 summer students, including seven from the ring-fenced scheme. These students are likely to apply for a PhD in subsequent years, and we will follow their progress.

4. Equality networks

The three equality networks (race equality, LGBT+ and disability) are run in partnership with the Royal Marsden Hospital and are represented on Equality Steering Group. The ICR works with the networks and consults them on major programmes and activities.

In November 2023 the EDI Managers at RMH and ICR proposed a joint programme of support and training for the equality network committees and chairs. We also formalised the roles and responsibilities of the networks, the ICR and RMH and the equality champions.

The networks held one joint event this year: Allyship in Action presented by the equality network chairs.

LGBT+ Network: The LGBT+ network ran events and activities throughout 2023. These included:

- Pride Month (June) events organised by the network included a picnic and watching Pride in London, an arts workshop, film night and LGBT+ book swap.
- The ICR ran a workshop by Gendered Intelligence on Trans Awareness. Sixty people from the ICR and RMH attended.
- The network were consulted on the attitude survey design and on the redesign of 123 Old Brompton Road
- The ICR enabled pronouns to be displayed on MS Teams, in support of trans colleagues
- The network grew to 40 people in the Teams channel and 234 on the mailing list

Race Equality And Cultural Heritage Forum: The REACH Forum continues to meet bi-monthly, with a mix of meetings open to all and those reserved for staff and students from minority ethnicities. Discussion topics included support for international staff and students, and the Forum had a Q&A with Dr Irene Chong.

The REACH Forum put on an impressive lineup of speakers for Black History Month (October):

- Njambi McGrath, Comedian, speaking about her childhood experiences in Kenya.
- June Sarpong, Former Director of Creative Diversity at the BBC and TV Presenter
- Evie Mensah, Consultant Eye Surgeon
- Arlene Wellman, Group Chief Nursing Officer for St George', Epsom and St Helier Hospitals group.

All received between 50 and 70 attendees split between ICR and the Royal Marsden Hospital.

Disability At Work Network: The ICR worked with this group to run a focus group on improving working conditions for neurodiverse staff and this fed into the redesign of 123 Old Brompton Road (2023 Equality Objective 2).

Access for All voted to change its name in December 2023 to the Disability At Work Network (DAWN). The group ran the first Disability History Month programme at the ICR and Royal Marsden in November/ December 2023. This was comprised of three webinars by Amir Latif (blind adventurer and tv presenter), Krystyna Ruszkiewicz (RM Director of Workforce), and Rasleen Kahai (Disability & Wellness Network Co-Chair at the Royal Brompton & Harefield hospitals).

5. Training and career development

Mandatory training for all new staff and students includes a two-part half-day workshop:

- **Part 1- A Supportive Workplace:** covers the ICR's working culture, an overview of relevant equality legislation, bullying and harassment, and the responsibilities of staff and students to each other. Case studies are used extensively. Updated in 2022 to cover recognising sexual misconduct and revised guidance on Prevent (the UK government's anti-radicalisation strategy).
- **Part 2 - Active Bystander Training:** aims to give participants the confidence and tools to challenge unacceptable behaviours.

This workshop runs monthly alternating between sites. Between August 2022 and July 2023 267 staff and students attended.

In 2023 we revised A Supportive Workplace and the Active Bystander training module (**2023 Objective 6**). Previously we used an external provider's materials, and this was delivered by

Wellbeing Advisors and HR staff as one of our mandatory training modules for new staff and students. We developed our own bystander training and integrated it into the Supportive Workplace workshop. This gives more cohesion between the two parts of A Supportive Workplace. We also revised the content of A Supportive Workplace, ensuring that it continues to meet the requirements of the Office for Students expectations on addressing sexual misconduct, and our duties under Prevent.

Following the 2023 attitude survey we also offered refresher active bystander training to teams and divisions/ directorates with lower scores on questions relating to experiences of bullying and harassment. So far two divisions/ directorates have accessed this and we delivered refresher bystander training to over 70 staff and students. Developing our own bystander training has enabled us to build a bank of case studies and tailor each refresher workshop to the specific challenges faced by the division or directorate. In 2024 members of HR Operations teams will be trained in delivering Active Bystander Training. We have also shared our Active Bystander materials with the Royal Marsden Hospital, who are integrating it into their own staff induction.

Our new online reporting platform, **Report + Support**, allows more effective reporting and tracking of unacceptable behaviour, and promotion of resources available to staff, students and visitors experiencing or observing such behaviours. It is an additional tool to help us improve the working environment and ensure a supportive culture for all. Report+Support enables us to capture data on the protected characteristics of those experiencing unacceptable behaviour and whether the reporter believes that the unacceptable behaviour was on the grounds of any protected characteristic.

We use A Supportive Workplace/ Active bystander training to promote Report+Support and provide further information on how the ICR manages reports (anonymous or named) made on this platform.

6. Division and Department culture and equality work

There is no requirement for individual divisions and directorates to create their own EDI or research culture activities. However, some teams and divisions have undertaken to do so. These include:

- Drug Development Unit sandwich year programme: since 2015 DDU has been growing its undergraduate sandwich year programme, and now hosts ~14 students per year. Of the participants to date, 81% are women and 52% are ethnic minority. 23% have returned post-degree to roles in the ICR and the Royal Marsden.
- Chemistry teams research culture and gender equality action plan: The Chemistry teams in Cancer Therapeutics decided to act to identify measures they could take to ensure a fully inclusive research environment to attract and support the development of female researchers. Working alongside colleagues in HR, the teams took part in workshops on developing a positive research culture, identified what

was working well, and have now developed a plan for becoming more inclusive. This includes reviewing recruitment practices, ensuring that junior female staff are supported to become scientific leaders, introducing refresher training and workshops on running meetings which promote inclusion.

- Facilities and Estates culture programme: This directorate has held workshops with its leadership team on creating an inclusive culture, and delivered bespoke active bystander refresher training to both ICR staff and outsourced staff.
- Women in IT group and action plan, established by Digital Services.

Good practices and activities are shared by divisions and directorates through the Athena Swan Steering Group.

7. Strengthening Career Pathways for Technicians

In November 2023 the ICR was awarded £1million from Wellcome's Institutional Funding for Research Culture to begin a programme of work aimed addressing challenges for the sector in the recruitment, retention and development of technicians. There are three strands to this work:

- **Entry level:** to increase diversity of technicians through promoting technician apprenticeships to groups under-represented science.
- **Mid-point:** Building a team science technician development programme aimed at professionalisation and growing registered scientists
- **Senior:** designing a collaborative programme for Core Research Facilities Managers and senior technicians.

We are working with apprenticeship provider Tiro to recruit apprentices, targeting local communities and applicants without university degrees. Selection and appointment are scheduled for January 2024.

8. Internal Audit and EDI Governance changes in 2023

Following the ICR senior committee restructure in 2022, the EDI programmes began reporting to Management Committee. An internal audit of EDI governance took place in Spring 2023 (run by PWC). This recommended actions to strengthen both governance and delivery planning of EDI and to improve integration of EDI throughout the work of the ICR, with the aim of improving the effectiveness of the EDI programmes. The ICR accepted all recommendations.

We have made the following changes since the audit:

- Revised the terms of reference of Equality Steering Group so that they better reflect the current work of the group. Equality Steering Group's purpose is to oversee the implementation and impact of the ICR's EDI work, to provide the formal link between the equality networks and the ICR, and to be a source of consultation and advice for equality aspects of large research funding applications and policy changes.

- Reviewed the membership of Equality Steering Group to ensure that it is appropriate to achieve change and to embed EDI across the ICR. This includes representatives from the equality networks, staff and student associations, equality champions and subject experts from Professional Services.
- Closed the Race Equality: Beyond the Statements programme and committee and integrated the remaining actions into the Equality Steering Group action plan. This also supported the Evolve programme by reducing overlap between committees
- Improved the process of escalation between ESG and Management Committee. ESG now includes a standing item on risks and successes to report to Management Committee.

The audit also recommended an overarching strategy and a delivery plan for EDI, aligning to the work already in progress. The ICR will include longer-term EDI objectives in the People Strategy (to be published in 2024), integrating the EDI strategic plan recommended by the auditors (Equality Objective 1, 2023).

9. Update on 2023 equality objectives

Ref.	Objective	Owner	Progress update and next steps
2023/01	Develop an Equality Diversity and Inclusion plan aligning with the new research strategy, to prioritise and guide all ICR EDI work 2023-2027	CPO and EDI Manager	Action superseded: Post-Evolve the EDI Strategy will become part of the People Strategy, to be published in 2024. It will not be a separate document.
2023/02	Prepare a draft Athena SWAN application for peer review	EDI Manager	Timelines have changed. Due to the extension of all Athena Swan awards to five years, the ICR has had its current silver award extended and our next application is due in March 2025.
2023/03	Work with the Access for All group to integrate recommendations from focus groups into building	EDI Manager	Complete: Complete: Focus group recommendations considered in the design of 123 OBR. Some recommendations including quiet work spaces, and work rooms were integrated into building design.
2023/04	Review and implement options for addressing the under-representation of Black postdocs	EDI Manager and race equality champion	Ongoing: Following successful actions to address under-representation of Black students, it was agreed that the next step would be to encourage Black and other under-represented ethnic minorities to continue in science as Postdocs. We are currently looking at benchmarking data on ethnic minority postdocs and researching successful interventions at this point in the career path from other universities. The next stage will be to design our own interventions.
2023/05	Bring forward the analysis of the gender and ethnicity pay gaps to July 2023 to enable current data to inform Remuneration Committee decisions on pay	Chief People Officer	Ongoing: The pay gaps data were presented in the November 2023 Equality Steering Group meeting. We are committed to providing an earlier analysis of the pay gaps for 2024. Reducing the gender pay gap is a priority for the Athena Swan Steering Group.
2023/06	Combine two standalone mandatory workshops for new staff and students: active	EDI Manager	Complete: New active bystander training developed in-house and combined with A Supportive Workplace to make

Ref.	Objective	Owner	Progress update and next steps
	<p>bystander and A Supportive Workplace</p> <p>Short video webinar for summer students and contractors</p>		<p>one cohesive workshop.</p> <p>Ongoing: short webinar will be recorded in 2024.</p>
2022/06	Provision of reasons for rejection at shortlisting and interview for 90% of candidates to all ICR job vacancies in period October 2022-October 2023	HR Recruitment Manager	<p>In progress: All hiring managers are now using the 'one click' rejection reasons on short listing. The HR Recruitment Manager also implemented an auto-generated feedback response notification to candidates notifying them if they have been unsuccessful at short listing stage – allowing us to provide feedback to all candidates. This was in place from September 2023 and all hiring managers are utilising this feature. We are working with the recruitment system provider to provide this data in a format we can analyse.</p>
2022/07	Review maternity leave and shared parental leave provision, to ensure that we are in line with the sector	Chief People Officer	<p>Complete: Research undertaken into maternity and shared parental leave pay across the sector. Management Committee approved proposals to bring the ICR into line with the sector and the changes are now in policy. All currently on maternity leave have been contacted to inform them of the changes and comms for the ICR are in preparation.</p> <p>Maternity and adoption leave both increased from 14 weeks enhanced pay (100% salary) to 18 weeks enhanced. Shared Parental Leave increased from statutory pay only to 18 weeks enhanced pay.</p>
2022/08	Ensure that all recruitment panellists have participated in up-to-date recruitment training and that a refresher course is made mandatory. (2021 Equality Objective)	HR Recruitment Manager	<p>In progress: The HR Recruitment Manager introduced weekly drop-in sessions for hiring managers with questions around recruitment and the e-recruitment system.</p>

Ref.	Objective	Owner	Progress update and next steps
			Recruitment training materials have been updated with support from the EDI Manager. They will be sent to ESG to review in 2024, with training implemented from March 2024.

10. The ICR People Strategy and future equality objectives

The ICR is required to set equality objectives at least once every four years to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty. In practice we have set equality objectives annually. We have identified the need for a longer-term plan to address key challenges (2023 objective 1). Preparation of a longer-term strategy and workplan was also recommended by the internal audit of EDI governance.

The ICR is currently developing a People Strategy which will support our research Strategy. The overarching priorities and objectives for equality, diversity and inclusion will be published in this document.

The EDI objectives in the People Strategy will focus on addressing current commitments that we have not yet reached, including:

- Reducing the gender and ethnicity pay gaps,
- Increasing representation of women in senior roles, and
- Increasing representation of ethnic minority staff and students.

The EDI objectives will guide the work of the Equality Steering Group and enable us to develop a sustainable delivery plan for the organisation. The workplan will incorporate the known EDI and culture requirements of research funders. This plan will be aligned with other commitments including HR Excellence in Research and the Technicians Commitment, to ensure that work is not duplicated and that we are working as effectively as possible to improve research culture.

Prior to the publication of the People Strategy, the Equality Steering Group will focus on implementation of the 2023 Objectives where they are not yet complete, and on reducing the gender and ethnicity pay gaps.