Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Plan
Priorities 2020-2023

Why are we doing this?

As the representative body for environmental science, it is essential that we proactively seek to enhance diversity and inclusion across the sector, act as agents for change, and lead by example for the betterment of our society, economy and environment.

Drawing on diverse viewpoints and experiences ensure we are better equipped to tackle the multidisciplinary challenges encountered in the integrative field of environmental science. Sustainability at its core requires openness, inclusivity and collaboration across all communities. It seeks to ensure the economy, natural environment and society are not subject to degradation, depletion or disrepair.

The environmental sector also recognises that not all impacts are equally distributed. For example, high levels of ambient air pollution often disproportionately affect individuals from minority ethnic or lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Therefore, to transition to a sustainable society, it is essential we make positive steps to ensure equity for all protected characteristics and socioeconomic statuses.

Definitions

Diversity	all the visible and invisible differences between people's identities and backgrounds
Equality	ensuring every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents
Equity	making appropriate accommodations for people from underserved or historically marginalised groups to allow them full access to the rights and privileges enjoyed by the majority.
Inclusion	creating an environment in which diversity and equality are valued
Minority Ethnic	collectively describes all who self-describe their ethnicity as Asian or Asian British (Bangladeshi, Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, Other), Black or Black British (African, Caribbean), Mixed or Multiple Ethnic Groups (White and Black Caribbean, White and Asian, White and Black African, Other), White (Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Other excluding White British), Arab or any other ethnic group, as established by the Office for National Statistics
Protected Characteristics	specific aspects of a person's identity protected under the Equality Act 2010 including, but not limited to, age, disability, ethnicity, gender, marital status, religion, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status

Background

The IES has long championed its commitment to the elimination of discrimination and widening of participation in environmental science and sustainability. For nearly a decade, we have maintained a transparent Equality and Diversity Policy. In 2015, we signed up the Science Council Declaration of Diversity, Equality and Inclusion. Since then, we have continuously monitored our progress as an environmental advocate, professional body and employer, analysing all aspects of the Institution, including our memberships, events, communications, employment, governance, committees and accreditation scheme.

Evidence suggests that the environmental sector does not currently reflect the diversity in society. According to a 2017 report published by the Policy Exchange, 'environmental professionals' comprise the second least ethnically diverse profession in the UK. More research is required to determine the reasons for this.

Since 2017, we have collected data on Members' gender, ethnicity, disability, and citizenship. The analysis of our data suggests there is presumed underrepresentation across almost all diverse groups, including women and non-binary genders, ethnic minority groups and people with disabilities.

Strategic Priorities

Equity, integrity and trust underpin the core values of the Institution. It is therefore imperative that we operate transparently and publicise our priorities for enhancing representation internally and across the sector. This includes

our efforts to ensure equal opportunities for all by identifying and dismantling barriers which prohibit inclusion. This strategy sets out five key organisational areas of focus between 2020 and 2023:

1. Governance, Committees & Employment
2. Membership & Registers
3. Events & Training
4. Communications & Publications
5. Education & Accreditation

Detailed actions for each priority area are provided in the following sections.

1. Governance, Committees and Employment

The IES is a small organisation which employs seven full-time and two part-time members of staff, as well as several external contractors. Our activities are governed by our Council. Additional operational committees include our Fellowship Committee, Remuneration & Nominations Committee and Policy Committee.

The Institution also manages two sister organisations, the Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) and Committee of Heads of Environmental Sciences (CHES), which serve as communities for air quality and environmental education within the IES. Activities of the IAQM and CHES are determined by their respective Committees who operate as semi-autonomous entities, but their activities are covered by IES policies. Both deliver memberships, events, guidance, policy, and endorsement or accreditation schemes.

Other specialisms within the IES are represented by communities that have steering groups. Currently there are communities for Land Condition, Marine & Coastal, and EIA. There are also two Early Careers Networks linked to the IAQM and Land Condition communities.

Priorities

1. Embed equality, diversity and inclusion into the Terms of Reference for all committees by end of 2020
Both in the diversity of the committee itself and the promotion of inclusion within its activities, scope and authority.

2. Develop and offer a mentoring scheme for new committee members by end of 2021
Mentoring partnerships should be available for all new committee members to ensure alignment with the institution's principles, culture and customs, and to provide ongoing support and guidance. Consideration should be made for mentoring requests regarding specific protected characteristics.

3. Strive for the Council, committees and workforce to be visibly diverse and representative of wider society by 2022
Recruitment and selection processes should be routinely scrutinised against key performance indicators and appropriately adapted to attract underrepresented groups. This may include adapting use of language, where vacancies are advertised, putting selection committees through unconscious bias training and operating blind selection processes

4. Establish and train an equality, diversity and inclusion champion for the board and IAQM and CHES committees to ensure diversity and inclusion are considered for all programmes of work by 2022
Responsible individuals should be able to represent their committee externally and be visibly engaged in leading on equality, diversity and inclusion outside of meetings. Their role would involve helping identify skills, training and attainment gaps in their field; supporting the office in increasing representation in events, publications and communications; and delivering unconscious bias training.

2. Memberships & Registers

The IES offer a range of memberships for environmental professionals at every stage of their career, from Associate to

Full Member to Fellow. Student Membership is also available to students on our accredited programmes and Affiliate Membership for environmental enthusiasts, early-career professionals or students studying on non-accredited programmes. Congruent grades, except for Student, are also available for members of the IAQM.

We offer two Chartuerships, Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv) and Chartered Scientist (CSci), which are reserved for Full Members and Fellows of the IES. We additionally hold two registers, ESOS Lead Energy Assessors, also open to IES Members and Fellows, and Registered Environmental Technician (REnvTech), available to all membership grades.

Priorities

1. **Actively encourage underrepresented groups to apply for Charterships, Registers and Fellowship from 2021 to 2023 and evaluate progress**

Annually monitor demographic data for Charterships, Registers and Fellowship, and confront barriers to representation. Actively research and approach individuals from underrepresented groups to encourage applications and offer relevant support mechanisms, such as mentoring.

2. **Develop remotely accessible training programmes for international members to increase engagement by 2021**

All training offered for members is UK-centric despite international scope of membership. Providing training which can be accessed remotely adds value and skills to members from outside of the UK and for people with accessibility requirements in the UK.

3. **Extend current mentoring schemes to incorporate support for members from underrepresented groups by 2022**

Mentoring schemes presently seek whether individuals require support from an individual of a particular gender or who has taken parental leave. This should be extended to facilitate support in professional development, learning or employability for members who have a disability or are from a minority ethnic background.

4. **Establish bespoke communities within our membership to inform on appropriate programmes of work aimed at increasing participation and addressing key barriers by 2023**

Underrepresented groups within IES membership include women, minority ethnic groups and individuals with disabilities. We will strive to establish communities of other specialised groups where data is currently unavailable, such as faith and LGBTQIA+ groups. Communities representing these groups should hold regular meetings in accordance with our existing community model. Recommended activities may include, but are not restricted to, mentoring scheme expansion, targeted training programmes, building policies, adapting communication approaches, developing support networks, and holding roundtable discussions. Where a significant representation from these groups do not exist within our own membership, we should seek to engage with cross-science or cross-environmental groups.

3. Events & Training

The IES maintain a varied events calendar throughout the year catered to a range of audiences, including members, environmental scientists, graduates and the public. Our events employ a range of formats, such as conferences, discussion meetings, training workshops, webinars and film screenings, hosted both externally and in-house.

Speakers, panel members and chairs for our events are usually identified by volunteer organisers or by the IES Events & Training Lead. Individuals are typically selected based upon the relevance of their position, experience or knowledge to the subject of the event. Agency is usually given to the individual on their presentation, speech and associated documentation.

Venues are generally chosen with respect to cost, location, availability and functionality. Wherever possible we aim to hold events at locations across the UK and internationally to facilitate access to a wider audience.

Priorities

1. **Programme to develop speakers from unrepresented groups by 2021**

This 'Rising Stars' programme will include identifying and recruiting role models to mentor, and providing bespoke training. Wherever possible this will be linked with existing communities and Early Career Networks.

2. Develop formal event venue selection criteria which evaluates cost, environmental credentials and accessibility by end of 2020

Ensuring events are environmentally responsible and accessible to the widest possible audience are key elements of delivering equitable and sustainable events, provided these are reasonable and within the Institution's financial means. Formal criteria will ensure that cost does not solely demarcate selection.

3. Proactively communicate accessibility of venues to potential delegates from 2021 onwards

Present practice for venue accessibility is reactive and often on the onus of the delegate. Information should be provided regarding access for wheelchair users; facilities to support individuals with visual, hearing or other mobility impairments; and materials to support individuals with neurodiverse conditions and specific learning difficulties. A policy to support flexible cancellation should be put in place for delegates with disabilities.

4. Strive for conference speakers, panellists and chairs to be visibly diverse and representative of wider society using key performance indicators by 2022

Event organisers should be conscientious of creating inclusive conferences that elevate and value the voices of underrepresented groups. Diverse speakers perpetuate positive messages that specialist subjects are open to all. Reflecting the diversity in membership may not be sufficient as this can reinforce 'who' engages in environmental science. The Programme Lead will need to develop a mechanism for collecting demographic information relating to speakers.

5. Identify barriers for underrepresented groups attending events and develop solutions to increase engagement by 2023

Demographic data for event participants should be collected and analysed on an annual basis to highlight potential barriers to attendance and engagement. Solutions to increase participation by reducing these barriers should be developed through consultation with delegates via feedback as well as with staff, specialist communities and through collaboration with other organisations.

4. Communications & Publications

The IES utilise various methods of communication to deliver memberships, services and other charitable aims. Our primary communicative approaches are emails, phone calls and letters; marketing materials such as mailouts, brochures, business cards and promotional leaflets; IES, IAQM and CHES websites; social media channels including Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook and YouTube; internal and external meetings, events and webinars with associated documentation; our e-newsletter, ES Monthly; our in-house journal, environmental SCIENTIST; policy responses, reports and guidance documents; blogs and analysis pieces; news stories; and so on.

Regular reports include the Annual Report, Membership Survey and Salary Survey and ad hoc reports. The environmental SCIENTIST is produced quarterly and distributed in print to all professional members, online to all subscribing members and open access to the public three months after publication. Guidance documents are often developed by working groups contained within our Council, Committees or specialist Communities in collaboration with the Publications Officer.

Priorities

1. IES website should meet the minimum standards of accessibility for individuals with disabilities by end of 2021

Accessibility should be embedded in the redesign of the IES website. This includes consideration of user experience and journeys, intuitive layout, use of plain language, alternative text for images, font size and style, alignment, etc.

2. Embed diversity and inclusion into the communication strategy and ensure all staff, contractors and authors are appropriately trained by 2021

Ensure all those involved in communications use inclusive language and images, and positively represent all communities within our membership and society. Advice should be sought from relevant organisations and individuals from underrepresented communities in promoting positive messages.

3. **Report on aggregated demographic data across membership, registers, committees and, when available, events as part of the annual report cycle**

This data should be included within our annual report from 2021. Progress on activities in relation to this strategy should be presented to Council and committees for comment.

4. **Develop mechanism for monitoring the demographic data of authors of our in-house journal, environmental SCIENTIST, by 2022**

At present, demographic information is not collected for authors of our publications. It would be worthwhile incorporating data collection for the environmental SCIENTIST to ensure varied perspectives, experiences and research are represented. Consideration should be given to gender, geographic location, seniority level and, where possible, ethnicity and disability. Continued research into appropriate and sensitive data collection methods for protected characteristics will be crucial in expanding this priority.

5. **Promote and elevate the work of members from underrepresented groups within our messaging and communications by 2023**

Highlight professional activities for members from underrepresented groups through our communication channels to increase visibility and project positive representations of environmental scientists from diverse backgrounds.

5. Education & Accreditation

CHES is the collective voice of the environmental sciences and related programmes in higher and further education who play a leading role in the higher education environmental science community and advocate for environmental science within education. CHES is an active networking organisation with a membership of 50 higher and further education institutions across the UK and internationally. In addition to its membership offering, CHES provide a university accreditation scheme, deliver workshops and conferences, and influence education policy, teaching and learning outcomes.

As aforementioned, CHES serves as the education committee of the IES. CHES have a representative on its Committee whose role it is to continually scope intersections between environmental science education and equality, diversity and inclusion.

Priorities

1. **Develop best practice guidance for diversity and inclusion in environmental science education by 2022**

Questions on equality, diversity and inclusion have been embedded in the CHES accreditation framework since 2018 as part of a data collection exercise. Responses will be analysed to identify best practice and attainment gaps which can be translated into guidance, in consultation with relevant organisations working in this area. Examples of best practice may include, but are not restricted to, inclusive teaching or learning policies, specific awards or endorsements, or reasonable adjustments.

2. **Proactively expand CHES accreditation scheme to international institutions by 2022**

The current accreditation scheme focuses primarily on UK institutions due to necessary alignment with the ES3 Benchmark Statement.

3. **Utilise best practice guidance for equality, diversity and inclusion to provide tailored feedback to institutions applying for accreditation by 2023**

At present the questions included in the application for accreditation are for data collection purposes only. Once best practice guidance is available, information provided in response to these questions should be formally assessed and used to inform the outcome of the application.

4. **Organise and deliver workshops to educate institutions in enhancing equality, diversity and inclusion in environmental education by 2023**

Using best practice and support from relevant organisations, training workshops will be developed to increase awareness and consideration for equality, diversity and inclusion in environmental further and higher education. This will support institutions in addressing key barriers and attainment gaps, and implementing equitable policies and practices.

Key Performance Indicators

Benchmarks providing quantifiable and tangible measurements to support monitoring of progress in diversity and inclusion. Benchmarks we have established so-far refer to age, disability, ethnicity and gender, which have all been developed in line with UK national standards. These benchmarks are to be used for comparisons only and are not implemented or enforced through quotas. Benchmarks will be reviewed in line with the release of the ONS 2021 census and updated below.

Disability

According to the ONS 2011 census, 17.9% of residents in England and Wales considered themselves to have a health problem or disability which either limited them a little or a lot. At working age, this percentage reduces to approximately 11.0%, which is our benchmark for individuals with disabilities. The benchmark will be updated after the 2021 census.

Ethnicity

For ethnicity, the ONS 2011 census determined that 86.0% of the population of England and Wales identified as White (either White British, White Irish, White Gypsy or Irish Traveller or Other White), with 80.5% of the population of England and Wales as specifically White British. Therefore, our benchmark for minority ethnic groups is 19.5%. We also sometimes measure demographic data in the context of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups, where the KPI is set to 14.0%. Note, we recognise there is controversy in the use of the collective term 'BAME' due to the implication that these communities are homogeneous with no diversity. However, it is important to acknowledge that individuals with BAME backgrounds may face additional barriers due to their ethnicity than those who identify as White, which should, for now, continue to be monitored.

Gender

Our benchmarks for gender is 50.0% for women and 50.0% for men. Although the ONS 2011 census indicates that gender identity across England and Wales is 50.9% and 49.1% respectively, these statistics include individuals above working age, which is skewed toward women. Gender identity amongst the 15-64 age bracket is 50.2% female to 49.8% male, meaning our benchmark of 50/50 is appropriate. Note, we acknowledge that gender is a spectrum which goes beyond the female and male binary. Of IES members, 0.3% identify as neither male nor female. At present, we have deemed this percentage too small to factor into our benchmarks, but we will review again in the future.

Other protected characteristics

Our current diversity monitoring process is entirely voluntary and not anonymous in its approach. As such, we have decided not to collect data based on religion or sexual orientation at the time of writing, and will continue to do so until a suitable means of collecting these data are found. With differing legal statuses on the rights of both religious and LGBTQIA+ communities across the world, we believe the personal risk to our members may be considerable. We will continue to research, engage with these communities and develop our approach to monitoring these protected characteristics to ensure diversity, equality and inclusivity are upheld.