

Noise Network Plus - Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan	
Vision	“Our vision is to re-engineer the discipline of engineering, so that sound and noise are considered in all stages of the engineering design process, resulting in an inclusive and sustainable environment”.
Theme	Expectation
1: Develop an approach to embedding equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in the research lifecycle	1.1 Everyone can contribute something regardless of seniority or experience. We will embed early career researchers in our Management Teams and Working Groups leadership, utilising our Early Career Board (ECB) to coordinate. “The ECB, comprising 5-6 members, will focus on developing future leaders in noise and embedding early career (EC) members in all Working Groups and Management Teams for career development and legacy.” (from proposal). This is evidenced in our leadership team which is made up of researchers from all stages of their careers, EC, mid and established.
	1.2 Embed EDI during the planning of all activities to remove as many barriers as possible. We are following best practice in event organisation with respect to the accessibility of locations for physical events (and will consider providing financial support to enable those with caring responsibilities or other constraints to attend such events where legal and taxation rules allow). Where possible, as with our launch day, we will explore best practice in hybrid events to ensure those only able to join remotely are fully included in discussions and their voices are heard.
	1.3 Reflect on mistakes as learning opportunities which form a key part of continual development. We reflect on each event (e.g., our launch event) from personal reflection and post-event surveys to consider what went well/what less so – to learn from this. The same will apply to other activities.
	1.4 Develop an understanding of your local context (barriers, opportunities) by learning about the wider EDI environment. We have some understanding of our contextual barriers and opportunities from experience with UKAN+ and activities in that network to enhance participation of different groups. We will engage with the EDI Hub + to explore best practice and opportunities to develop our practice further through targeted research. Co-lead Simone Graetzer (In her role as UKAN+ EDI Lead and Institute of Acoustics (IOA) EDI Working Group Member) proposed and co-chaired an EDI event facilitated by the IOA on 20th March 2025 bringing together professional institutions (IOA, IOP and CIBSE); external experts and the EDI Hub+ which we participated in as the Noise Network+. We are gathering data on our events and membership and will monitor our funding calls. This data will be formally reviewed each year by the Executive Board (EB) and Independent Advisory Board (IAB) to identify areas of progress and areas where change may be needed.
2: Implement good practices in recruitment and/or selection processes to ensure diverse teams	2.1 Ensure all opportunities have been openly advertised through diverse channels with thought given to language, flexibility and reasoning for essential criteria. The network will not directly recruit staff, except the Project Manager. In this case we advertised as widely as possible following the University of Surrey guidelines on recruitment. The essential criteria were reviewed and in places reframed or removed to widen the field of potential candidates. The advert was run through a gender bias language checker to broaden the appeal. The interview panel consisted of both genders, academic and professional services representatives, and UK and non-UK nationals. The post was 0.6FTE with some additional flexibility.

	2.2 People involved in the research, including advisory boards, have been fairly recruited, following a process which incorporates current good practice. Consideration is given to positive action whilst avoiding overburdening individuals and creating a balance of expertise from different organisations and career stages. We sought to recruit people to the IAB to offer a diverse range of expertise and opinions, including those outside engineering. The IAB has 9 independent members – 4 of whom are women. The Network leadership team is well balanced with respect to gender (50%). We have recruited the Working Groups, seeking interest from a wide group. Initial members will be already engaged with us to some degree – we will seek further members once gaps are identified. 2.3 Where a grant is required to undertake a selection process, e.g. to award funding, whether for people or projects, an appropriate process has been followed to manage bias and safeguard the quality of decision-making. This is a core role for the network and we envisage two substantive calls for funding. Our starting point will be the process adopted by UKAN+ “In all our funding calls we will seek to mainstream EDI through: name-blind assessment processes; requiring attention to EDI in funding applications; monitoring diversity, with respect to gender, age, disability status, and race/ethnicity, of participation and success rates.” UKAN+ EDI statement. And from the NNP vision and approach “Early career (EC) members will be strongly encouraged to apply for these resources, with EC members involvement a strong criterion for award”. We will engage with both the EDI Hub+ team and the UKAN+ team on what worked for UKAN+ and areas where further work is needed, particularly looking at the evolution of the three rounds of funding calls in UKAN+.
3: Ensure diversity and inclusivity in all activities such as events, sandpits, networking	3.1 Publish a code of conduct for organised activities. We will publish a code of conduct – we note the Institute of Physics (2025) has a code of conduct which is comprehensive with respect to treating all with dignity and respect, reporting and action. We will review this and other examples before producing our own code during summer 2025. The Institute of Acoustics is currently reviewing its code of conduct and one of the network’s co-leads is working with them on this. 3.2 Activities are explicitly inclusive, accessible and diverse for speakers and attendees. We aim to use venues that are accessible and sustainable. We will adopt the UKAN+ policy on diversity of speakers (aiming for at least 30% male/female and 30% ECs and/or career mover/returner) as our initial starting point. According to Engineering UK (undated) only 16.9% of the engineering and technology workforce are women making this an ambitious target, but also one that avoids rigidity allowing for variation either way in numbers. We will also look at age and ethnicity and geographical location in the UK. And consider accessibility needs of people with a disability or learning, neurological or hearing difference. We will also encourage the participation of career returners and/or those moving careers and we already include this attribute in our monitoring. 3.3 EPSRC grants are committed to removing barriers to participation in all activities that they deliver. As a network we need to engage with some harder to reach communities. We will review how we can facilitate the participation of those who need that support the most. We have recruited a project manager who has experience of working with harder to reach communities with the vaccination programs during COVID-19 and hope to learn from his experience there to see what might be transferrable.

4: Create an inclusive and accessible environment	4.1 Establish an inclusive environment where all can thrive and all voices in the team are valued, regardless of personal circumstances. Diversity of core working group members (aiming for at least 30% male/female and ECs and/or career movers/returners) to work effectively with the wider team. We will seek out inclusivity champions to bring in lived experience relevant to our working groups.
	4.2 Provide regular communications (for example newsletters, e-mails, team meetings) with colleagues to underpin the approach to EDI. EDI will form part of regular communications – as appropriate.
	4.3 Ensure effective and robust processes for managing bullying and harassment are in place. This is supported by active allyship. We will adopt and apply a robust code of practice (see 3.1) and this will state what the processes are and how to access them. We will ensure these codes of practice are well advertised and available on our website.
5: Ensuring career progression and training for all members of the team	5.1 People are supported in setting achievable career goals and provided continuing professional development opportunities. The network will seek to provide development opportunities through training and networking activities including summer schools and training sessions, workshops and webinars on technical and transferable skills, Ethics RRI and EDI, bid writing, leadership, entrepreneurship and other cross-sector mobility enhancing skills. Activities captured within our Objective 6 on Education, Training and Skills which has a Working Group to deliver. As mentioned above in 2.3 the participation of EC members in applications for funding will be strongly encouraged and facilitated.
	5.2 Encourage mentoring and coaching opportunities, whether informal or formal. We will develop mentoring opportunities with partners (10 of whom identified contributions through mentoring in their letters of support) and network members.
6: Inclusive research	6.1 Diversity is included in research design, for example the user voice is included in the research and/or consideration is given to ensuring diversity in study participants. A key aim of the network is that noise and sound are at the core of the design and implementation of any engineering activity. Responses to sound are hugely diverse across the population and there is a clear need to include participants in research other than students with healthy hearing (and no hearing difference). We have added a Working Group (WG) on Inclusive Engineering to the six in our original proposal to ensure that inclusivity is key to the development of our missions.
	6.2 Research outputs are accessible and inclusive. We will follow open access principles and where possible provide access via our website. When supporting projects “All projects will by default include a commitment to open-source code development, open data and open-access publishing” Vision and Approach.

NNP EDI objectives

Short term	Responsibility	Date for completion
1. To deliver a code of Conduct	EDI Management Team (MT)	August 2025
2. Identify core EDI training for EB, WG and MT leads.	EDI MT and PM	
3. To monitor events/membership etc and identify areas for improvement.	EDI MT	Continues throughout – annual reporting and assessment
4. Ensure at least 30% of speakers at events are EC and/or career movers/returners and at least 30% male/female.	All EB members.	Continues throughout – review to identify challenging areas and plan accordingly.
5. Core working group members aim for at least 30% male/female and EC and/or career returners/movers.	EDI MT	Monitor throughout and identify areas for actions as needed.
6. Learn from best practice in developing calls for funding from the network including direct experience of UKAN+	EB	Implement for first call in Autumn 2025.
7. Explore best practice in reaching harder to reach groups and provide training to the network	Responsible Research and Innovation MT and Education, Outreach and Skills Working Group (WG)	Implement for Autumn 2025
Longer term		
1. Review possible actions to increase diversity within the network and the wider profession in noise and related areas. Adopt a clear strategy and monitor.	ALL	Review by Autumn 2025. And identify actions.
2. Work towards a fuller understanding of inclusive engineering for noise	Inclusive Engineering WG	Position paper 2026.

References:

Engineering UK (undated) Women in Engineering and Diversity challenges.

<https://www.engineeringuk.com/research-and-insights/industry-and-workforce/women-in-engineering-and-diversity-challenges/>