

CANCER RESEARCH UK'S EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN RESEARCH ACTION PLAN

2021–2023

Together we will beat cancer



VISION

We will beat cancer by developing a more diverse and inclusive research community through the research we fund

AIMS

Make sure more diverse researchers are attracted to, retained and working in, cancer research

Use our influence to ensure a diverse and inclusive research culture

Fund research of the highest quality that is relevant to, and where appropriate involves, a diverse population of research participants

LEADING BY EXAMPLE	FAIR FUNDING	CAREER SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT	INCLUSIVE RESEARCH DESIGN	TRANSPARENCY, EVIDENCE AND IMPROVEMENT
To be an accessible and inclusive, world-leading cancer research and innovation organisation	To ensure fair and inclusive funding processes, where success is determined by scientific quality and nothing else	To enable all researchers to realise their potential to beat cancer	To ensure the research we fund gives appropriate consideration to EDI to be beneficial for everyone	To monitor, analyse and publish diversity data to develop an evidence base to learn and drive change

Our equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in research action plan is part of our [charity-wide EDI strategy](#).

If you have any questions or feedback about this action plan, get in touch by emailing EDInresearch@cancer.org.uk.

LEADING BY EXAMPLE: TO BE AN ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE, WORLD-LEADING CANCER RESEARCH AND INNOVATION ORGANISATION			
INTENDED OUTCOME	ACTION	TIMELINE	KEY METRIC(S)
More researchers from diverse backgrounds are attracted to cancer research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with, and learn from, underrepresented groups in our research community and external experts to improve funding policies, to understand and remove barriers to accessing funding and to tackle racial bias 	By 2022	Increase in % of applicants from diverse backgrounds from 2021 baseline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work to increase applications from ethnic minority and female applicants, especially to our grants aimed at more established, senior researchers 	By 2023	As a minimum, application rates reflect academic pool of biosciences researchers from baseline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proactively encourage all team science applications to consider diversity in the team, including a balance of gender, ethnicity and career stage 	By 2022	Increase in % of grant holders from diverse backgrounds from baseline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embed EDI in our researcher communications to ensure our content is inclusive and accessible 	Ongoing	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Champion the work of diverse researchers in our researcher communications 	Ongoing	

Cancer Research UK'S Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Research Action Plan 2021–2023

Institutions we fund provide inclusive, supportive environments where everyone can thrive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When applying for, and reporting on, infrastructure awards, require institutions to demonstrate how their approach to attracting, supporting, retaining more diverse researchers is coherent and how they will take steps to ensure an inclusive culture for all 	By spring 2021	Infrastructure award guidelines and review reports
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with CRUK core-funded Institutes to set expectations to improve equality, diversity and inclusion and to promote a positive research culture 	By autumn 2021	CRUK Institute EDI strategic plans in place
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> With other research funders, promote inclusive environments, free from bullying, harassment and racial bias 	Ongoing	
More members from diverse backgrounds sit on our funding committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reach our targets for female membership on funding committees 	By 2023	At least 40% female members on each committee
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set 20% target for proportion of members from ethnic minority background across funding committees and that no funding committee should be without ethnic minority members 	Autumn 2021	At least 20% ethnic minority committee members across committees
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide more opportunities for early to mid-career researchers to join expert review panels to gain experience. Invite them to observe committee meetings as a learning opportunity 	Autumn 2021	Increase % of early to mid-career researchers on expert review panels from 2021 baseline

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<p>Our research events are welcoming, inclusive and accessible</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review our research events processes, including our Code of Conduct, to ensure they are inclusive, accessible and free from harassment Facilitate opportunities for junior researchers to showcase their work at our research events 	<p>By 2022</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Qualitative feedback about research events</p> <p>Increase % of junior researcher presenters at research events from 2021 baseline</p>
<p>FAIR FUNDING: TO ENSURE FAIR AND INCLUSIVE FUNDING PROCESSES, WHERE SUCCESS IS DETERMINED BY SCIENTIFIC QUALITY AND NOTHING ELSE</p>			
INTENDED OUTCOME	ACTION	TIMELINE	KEY METRIC(S)
<p>Our funding processes are fair and objective</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roll out our new Guide to Assessing Grant Applications to our funding committees, alongside briefings for committee Chairs, with guidance on mitigating unconscious bias Discuss application, success and award data with our funding committees to highlight findings and seek ways to redress imbalances Collaborate with other funders to understand the discrepancy in success rates for ethnic minority researchers who apply to our fellowship schemes and prioritise initiatives to improve success rates, particularly at interview 	<p>Spring 2021</p> <p>Autumn 2021</p> <p>Spring 2021</p>	<p>Equal success rates for researchers, regardless of background</p>

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Potential barriers are removed for grant applicants disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask applicants to submit specific explanation on the impact of COVID-19 on their research, team and them • Implement clear guidance for reviewers on assessing applications following the COVID-19 pandemic • Closely monitor the impact of COVID-19 on application rates, ensuring that our processes are inclusive 	2021 to 2023 Spring 2021 Ongoing	Increase in % of applicants from diverse backgrounds from 2021 baseline Equal success rates for researchers, regardless of background
CAREER SUPPORT & DEVELOPMENT: TO ENABLE ALL RESEARCHERS TO REALISE THEIR POTENTIAL TO BEAT CANCER			
INTENDED OUTCOME	ACTION	TIMELINE	KEY METRIC(S)
More students from diverse backgrounds attracted to CRUK-funded cancer research PhDs and clinical training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with CRUK training centres to understand and implement initiatives to increase diversity of students, particularly Black and other ethnic minority backgrounds • Celebrate the work of ethnic minority students and researchers through our research communications, showing the potential of a career in cancer research • Partner with organisations to support young people from diverse backgrounds to progress to STEM degrees and careers 	Autumn 2021 Spring 2021	Increase % students from diverse backgrounds from 2021 baseline Number of young people from diverse backgrounds reached by CRUK initiatives

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More researchers from diverse backgrounds are retained and working in, cancer research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement next destination career tracking for CRUK Fellows and students to understand career pipeline by diversity data 	Ongoing	Understanding of early career portfolio by diversity data and impact of CRUK funding on careers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to identify and help remove barriers that female researchers face staying in cancer research and progressing to senior positions, including by promoting flexible research career policies and providing support through our Women of Influence mentoring programme 	Ongoing	At least 45% of fellowships and 35% of programme awards go to female researchers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide dedicated career support initiatives to researchers from ethnic minority backgrounds including mentoring and leadership programmes 	By 2022	At least 15% of fellowships and 10% of programme awards go to ethnic minority researchers
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help build support networks for ethnic minority researchers to connect researchers who have similar experiences and find potential mentors 	By 2022	Increase % of clinical academic trainees from diverse backgrounds from 2021 baseline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with other funders to consider and implement recommendations from the co-funded inequalities in clinical academic careers systematic review 	Autumn 2021	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-fund a research and communications manager employed by the Medical Schools Council to develop online hub to make information about clinical academic careers more accessible to clinical academic trainees 	By end of 2023	

INCLUSIVE RESEARCH DESIGN: TO ENSURE THE RESEARCH WE FUND GIVES APPROPRIATE CONSIDERATION TO EDI TO BE BENEFICIAL FOR EVERYONE			
INTENDED OUTCOME	ACTIONS	TIMELINE	KEY METRIC(S)
Fund research of highest quality that is relevant to, and where appropriate involves, a diverse population of research participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project to explore and address any underrepresentation in new cancer clinical trials we fund 	By 2022	Number/% of new Clinical Research Committee trials/projects that (where appropriate) collect/report on anonymised demographic data for patients approached for research opportunities and patients recruited, or from whom samples collected
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop plan to set expectations that large-scale population cohort studies involve a diverse population of research participants where possible 	By 2022	Scheme guidelines Number of new projects integrating consideration of a sex and/or gender dimension from 2021 baseline
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop plan to integrate the consideration of a sex and/or gender dimension into relevant funding projects including in the design, implementation and reporting 	By 2023	
Fund research of highest quality that, where relevant, has considered health inequalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop plan to integrate the consideration of health inequalities in cancer diagnosis, treatment, and outcomes into relevant funding projects including in the design, implementation and reporting 	By 2023	Number of new projects integrating consideration of health inequalities from 2021 baseline

TRANSPARENCY, EVIDENCE & IMPROVEMENT: TO MONITOR, ANALYSE AND PUBLISH DIVERSITY DATA TO DEVELOP AN EVIDENCE BASE TO LEARN AND DRIVE CHANGE			
INTENDED OUTCOME	ACTIONS	TIMELINE	KEY METRIC(S)
Understand full diversity data for all those involved in our research funding activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect and analyse diversity data for grant applications beyond Lead Applicants Work with CRUK Institutes to collect and analyse complete staff and student diversity data Collect more complete diversity data from CRUK-funded students Develop plan to collect diversity data for CRUK research event participants 	<p>By 2023</p> <p>From 2021</p> <p>By 2022</p> <p>By 2022</p>	<p>Data collection/analysis improved from 2021 baseline</p> <p>Institute staff/student data reports improved from 2021 baseline</p> <p>At least 70% of students complete diversity data form</p> <p>Research event data collected from 2021 baseline</p>
Be transparent about diversity data to identify and address issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish anonymised, aggregated grant diversity data every year, highlighting issues and key actions Consider ways to improve diversity data reporting, including reporting award values, disaggregation by ethnic groups, breakdown by award type where datasets large enough 	<p>From 2021</p> <p>2022</p>	<p>Annual diversity data reports</p> <p>Future diversity data reports provide more detailed analysis from 2021 baseline</p>
Share best practice & lessons learned to drive sector change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with other funders to share lessons learned, align funding policies where feasible and implement best practice 	Ongoing	Funder group meeting minutes