

Creative Informatics Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy & Action Plan 2021-2023

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Change Log

Version	Date	Notes
1.1	20 th August 2021	Minor edits to correct current date in work to date area; minor edit to Fringe project status.
1.0	6 th August 2021	Finalised new version, incorporating updates and feedback from Directorate and Steering board on 1.1. Major updates reflecting development and discussion of first draft.
0.3	13 th May 2021	Initial shared draft updated to include edits from delivery team and feedback from January 2021 Partnership Forum.

Introduction

Since the outset of Creative Informatics (CI) we have been gathering Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (ED&I) monitoring data to help us understand how well the applicants we attract and whose work we fund represents the cluster community as a whole. We have always reviewed this periodically and, since our first Partnership Forum in 2019, have shared broad headline data with our community so that there is a shared understanding of the diversity across the CI supported community - and a space to provide honest critical feedback on how we are doing.

In 2020, particularly triggered by the Black Lives Matter movement and the response from the cluster community to specific equalities issues around the cluster, we looked again at our approach. Whilst our processes and values have always aimed to be inclusive we feel a more direct statement of policy is required and this is currently being developed along with an action plan to ensure we are properly reflecting our values across the programme including:

- Reviewed ED&I policies and action plans across the CI partnership, through the Directorate (mid 2020) towards a new strategy for CI (this document).
- Engaged with expertise on ED&I in the creative industries including Deepa Mann Kler (Commissioner at the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland who also works with Future Screen NI), Briana Pegado (prev. Creative Edinburgh, now Creative Director at Fringe of Colour) and with Dave O'Brien and Orian Brooks (The University of Edinburgh, co-authors of Culture is Bad for You: Inequality in the Cultural and Creative Industries) who have also agreed to ongoing engagement with CI's ED&I approach
- Engaged with ED&I discussions across the CICIP programme, including discussions at a joint Creative Informatics and Clwstwr workshop (Oct 2020; participation in the UKRI (UK Research and Innovation) 'Industry Voices: What does equality, diversity and inclusion look like in creative research?' workshop (April 2021); participation in ED&I sessions at CICIP Award Holders Meetings (April 2021).
- Consultation directly with our community at the CI Partnership Forum #3 (Jan 2021), through an online breakout group highlighting key areas of concern in the specific Edinburgh and South East Scotland context. We plan to regularly update our community on ED&I aspects through future Partnership forums.
- One-to-one follow up conversations with individual applicants raising specific equalities questions or concerns about the CI application processes (e.g. consultation with trans applicant regarding safety around legal names in the application and funding process; long form discussion with dyslexic applicant raising significant concerns over application form accessibility).
- Ongoing review of literature, creative sector manifestos and actions, and reports across ED&I topics.

This work is synthesised in this policy and action plan, to be accompanied by an accountability group with participation by representative organisations across multiple equalities areas.

Throughout the Covid-19 lockdown periods we have been concerned about potential inequalities being exacerbated by lockdown-related challenges (as emerging research is suggesting). We are particularly concerned about participation by lower socio-economic communities, who often face additional challenges accessing reliable IT equipment and internet connections and/or are not able to access targeted support in community spaces at this time. We believe it is critical that Creative Informatics, as an R&D programme with the potential to enable people to pivot, develop and scale their creative work, is reaching as diverse an audience as possible as we begin to look at recovery out of the pandemic.

We have also been encouraged by some of the benefits of moving events online as they have increased accessibility to those with caring responsibilities, (some) disabilities, and those outwith the city centre. As we move forward we will be considering carefully how to continue ensuring wide accessibility whether events are primarily in person or online.

In consulting our existing stakeholders, we consistently receive feedback that Creative Informatics is inclusive and welcoming, however we are also told that this is not always clear until individuals reach out to or have direct contact with the CI team. Our community have reported that barriers include how we communicate what we do, some of the ways in which events and/or application processes are delivered, and a lack of visible examples that “people like me” might apply for funding or engage with our activities. The overarching aims of our work going forward is therefore to not only ensure we meet or exceed our own high expectations to be inclusive, and that – most importantly – we communicate this clearly and unambiguously.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategic Objectives:

1. Ensure the programme is open to all and reaching the diversity of creative communities across Edinburgh and South East Scotland.
2. Ensure Creative Informatics represents or exceeds a representative proportion of participants from diverse backgrounds.
3. Make our commitment to ED&I visible and open to all, ensuring the full range of our communities feel welcomed and included.
4. Ensure monitoring is in place and that Creative Informatics is held accountable for our ED&I aspirations.

These areas are discussed in more detail below, with specific actions included in the Action Plan table at the end of this document.

1.Ensure the programme is open to all and reaching the diversity of creative communities across Edinburgh and South East Scotland.

Creative Informatics already shares an Ethics Statement¹ that specifically raises some ED&I issues reflecting our values as a programme. Reinforcing this with a public statement of our approach will further reinforce our values as a programme.

Creative Informatics needs to communicate widely its welcoming and inclusive nature as a programme, and particularly to target groups currently underrepresented in our applicant pool and/or event participation. We have already identified some areas for improvement – included in the action plan – including earlier and clearer messaging that will lower barriers to participation.

Creative Informatics application forms are one specific area of concern. Forms need to be robust enough for a fair, transparent, accountable process, however we have had feedback that in their current format they are intimidating and can be highly inaccessible, particularly for dyslexic applicants. We are looking at and will continue to review and improve application approaches given the central role funding plays in how we support and engage the creative industries, particularly in terms of providing new opportunities for diverse creatives.

2.Ensure Creative Informatics represents or exceeds a representative proportion of participants from diverse backgrounds and lived experiences

Creative Informatics operates in the context of Edinburgh and South East Scotland and our baseline for inclusion should be to at least mirror the diversity of the local population (e.g. around 8% of Edinburgh's population are from Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME²) backgrounds³). From monitoring our work to date we are aware that not all Creative Informatics strands have an equally diverse participation rate and it is therefore important that our progress towards this objective takes both a whole programme-wide approach, and reflects on areas for improvement at a more granular funding strand level as well.

We will work with representational organisations to help us reach underrepresented group and particularly to understand any potential barriers that may be inadvertently excluding potential applicants. We will also continue to engage with wider Scottish creative and culture sector initiatives, and the wider CICIP cluster community to reflect on best practices in welcoming and engaging diverse audiences, and emerging interventions to improve meaningful and beneficial participation from under-represented groups.

¹ Osborne, Nicola, Schafer, Burkhard, & Terras, Melissa. (2020). Creative Informatics Ethics Statement (1.3). Zenodo. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3610104>

² We note that BAME is a contested term but our language reflects currently available demographic data collection/presentation terminology.

³ <https://scotland.shinyapps.io/sg-equality-evidence-finder/>

We will monitor our performance as a programme against the available demographic information for Edinburgh South East Scotland, and track performance over time. We will do this based on the data we capture on ED&I which includes information on key “protected characteristics”⁴ but not all of those recognised in law (for more detail see our proposed publication schema, Appendix 1). As part of our monitoring we will also regularly review which characteristics we collect data on and whether these provide adequate data to assess performance.

3. Make our commitment to ED&I visible and open to all, ensuring the full range of our communities feel welcomed and included.

We will publish the Creative Informatics ED&I approach. Whilst we have always been guided by a range of policies and best practices in place at the four CI partner organisations, something specific to this programme is required.

A clear brief statement of policy is required to ensure Creative Informatics is welcoming, open, inclusive to all (to be initially published in August 2021 and reviewed periodically). However, our wider project communications also need to reflect the diversity of our community appropriately, without reducing ED&I to simple tokenistic visual representations of diversity. Highlighting the range of participation through case studies, stories of founders, etc. is likely to be more relevant and effective.

4. Ensure monitoring is in place and that Creative Informatics is held accountable for our ED&I aspirations

Currently ED&I performance is monitored through application and registration forms, with ED&I data including demographic and postcode data included in:

- Application forms for all CI funding strands
- Event registration forms for all CI events and some partner events

Our current data capture (always an optional element of applications and based on self-identification) includes age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, postcode (as proxy for socio-economic status). Where relevant we also ask about disability and accessibility requirements. We know that this does not capture the complete picture or intersectionality of our community but it does provide a quick and effective snapshot of current performance.

We will publish annual data (see Appendix 1) on applications and participation against available population data (e.g. Scottish Government, industry bodies data on sub sectors, etc.) to ensure we are accountable for our performance as an inclusive programme. Where possible we will use Edinburgh and South East Scotland data, otherwise we will compare performance against Scotland level data. To date we have presented some of this data

⁴ See the Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance:
<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics>

through our Partnership Forum. We will ensure going forward this data is also presented on our website and covers a wider range of activities. We will aggregate and/or present this data in accordance with appropriate privacy practices (aggregation, not publishing any protected characteristics that could put any individual at risk).

We wish to hold ourselves more accountable for our ED&I performance and therefore want to form an accountability group with wide representation from underrepresented groups. An ED&I breakout group was trialled at the January 2021 Creative Informatics Partnership Forum and we intend to repeat this at future Partnership Forums to continue to provide the CI community a space to share their questions and concerns.

Formal Responsibility for Creative Informatics' ED&I performance and Compliance with legislation

Each partner in Creative Informatics is responsible for its own employment practices and conduct – which may include some conduct under Creative Informatics delivery strands - under relevant legislation. However, as lead partner and host to the delivery team managing selection processes, the University of Edinburgh holds legal responsibility for the partnership and programme activities as a whole.

Responsibility for the Creative Informatics programme's compliance with legal duties associated with equality, diversity and inclusion, including the Equalities Act 2010, sits with the University of Edinburgh where the Creative Informatics delivery team is based.

Supporting Inclusive Work

As well as ensuring Creative Informatics embodies inclusive values, we should also be supporting work with beneficial impact on improving ED&I within the creative industries and more broadly.

We will review how ED&I considerations could be embedded in application and marking criteria in order to proactively support best practices in the sector.

Creative Informatics projects with positive ED&I benefits to date (August 2021):

- Small research grant: Josh Hoskins - Grammars of Gesture on HCI (accessibility): <https://creativeinformatics.org/research/five-things-ive-learned-about-gesture/>
- Small research grant: Bettina Nissen in collaboration with artist Ailie Rutherford of the People's Bank of Govanhill - String Figures (mutual care and engaging disadvantaged communities): <https://creativeinformatics.org/research/string-figures/>
- Connected Innovator: Chris Dooks - The Stationary Space Station (creative practice for those with ME/Chronic Fatigue)

Syndrome): <https://creativeinformatics.org/showcase/creative-edinburghs-connected-innovators/> and <https://spacestation.org.uk/>.

- Resident Entrepreneur: Barbara Melville (AI driven platform to detect bias in text).
- Resident Entrepreneur: Callie Rose Petal / lonelycarp: (listening platform for engaging audiences, including work drawing on intersectional trans* and disability experiences): <https://creativeinformatics.org/participant/lonely-carp/>
- Resident Entrepreneur: Elena Zini/Screen Language (initially an innovative subtitling solution for hearing impaired film audiences; recent pivoted to a new platform for visually impaired film audiences).
- Project (underway after delays due to Covid-19) with Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, Lothian Autistic Society, and Niantic (developers of Pokémon Go), with design informatics student interns, to support families with autistic children - this emerged from work during the UNA.TEN 'Transform Emergency Now!' Covid-19 response pan-European student hackathon in May 2020.

Creative Informatics ED&I Policy Statement

Publication: Late August 2021

Date of next internal review/possible public update: February 2022

Creative Informatics is a welcoming and supportive programme and community for all interested in data driven innovation in the creative industries in Edinburgh and South East Scotland. We want Creative informatics to be a safe and approachable space for those regardless of background or status.

We believe that more diverse communities and collaborations make for better innovation, more inclusive and more ethical approaches, and more pleasant environments for all to participate.

We welcome you to be part of Creative Informatics regardless of your age, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, socio-economic background, (dis)ability (visible or hidden, physical or mental), sexuality, religion or belief. We will not tolerate discriminatory practices in our own work or in those we support.

We know that people are complex and may face intersectional challenges in their creative careers, particularly in creative fields with long standing inequalities challenges. We particularly welcome applications to our CI programme strands that directly challenge the status quo – we are here to support innovation and (positive) disruption.

We recognise that we may need to provide additional support to help reduce barriers to participating in Creative Informatics events, funding strands, etc. Where we can see opportunities for additional support we will always offer this, and we also ask that you tell us if you see opportunities for us to support you.

We will be accountable for these values and ask you to help us do that. We will always ask for and welcome feedback and ensure this does shape our future actions to make Creative Informatics truly inclusive and open to all.

If you would like to discuss your own needs, or highlight something we could do better to serve the community, we welcome all communication to creativeinformatics@ed.ac.uk or to the responsible person: Nicola Osborne, CI Programme Manager (Nicola.osborne@ed.ac.uk). We will handle all queries in confidence where needed and/or requested.

Responsibility for the Creative Informatics programme's compliance with legal duties associated with equality, diversity and inclusion, including the Equalities Act 2010, sits with the University of Edinburgh where the Creative Informatics delivery team is based.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Action Plan 2021-2023

Objective	Task	Date	Lead	Measures of Success	Actual Performance
Engage CI community voice in ED&I plans and accountability	Seek CI Community views on ED&I requirements via Partnership Forum	Jan 2021	Nicola Osborne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify key needs - Ensure community needs feed into strategy and public statements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Breakout held Jan 2021 - Include as standard breakout in future Partnership Forum - Views informing strategy and communication of ED&I position
Ensure CI is accountable for its ED&I performance	Establish an accountability group with diverse representation across underrepresented groups	Jan 2021 onwards	Nicola Osborne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group established with regular meetings - Group holds CI accountable and recommends improvements in approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dave O'Brien and Orian Brooks have agreed to participate (early 2021)
Review CI's ED&I performance and areas for improvement	Review CI ED&I performance – both representation in applicant pool and successful funded projects, across the programme and in specific strands	July 2021	Nicola Osborne & Anna Orme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular review of monitoring data from applications, outcomes, further funding, and events - Identify performance (against baseline population and/or industry data) - Identify areas for improvement - Identify targets for improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Currently in review. See also Appendix 1 for proposed ED&I data publication
Support work with positive ED&I impacts	Look at embedding ED&I impacts as part of application and selection processes	July 2021	Nicola Osborne & Anna Orme		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Currently reviewing selection processes, with new approach for RE selection already identified (see below)

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Improve accessibility of application forms and processes	Review application forms, processes, and associated events to ensure they are as inclusive as possible.	July 2021	Nicola Osborne & Anna Orme with Janine Matheson & Anna Gormezano Marks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Add statement to all application processes to ensure sources of help and support are clear - Work with stakeholders (individuals and/or groups) to identify barriers and how they may be overcome. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Statement added to first page of the most recent application forms. - Significant consultation around dyslexic stakeholder needs already undertaken (May-July 2021).
Improve Communication of ED&I values	Ensure project comms reflect ED&I values in terms of representation, visual aspects, and sharing of stories that highlight diverse people and impacts	August 2021	Liam Upton & Nicola Osborne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure there is a shared understanding of CI's ED&I values across the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Publication of ED&I Statement planned for August 2021 ahead of next Creative Informatics Partnership Forum.
Investigate interventions to ensure CI and/or funded projects are more inclusive	Review approaches taken by others (e.g. BFI's standards work; Clwstwr's childcare reimbursement process for workshop participants; access funds to bolster inclusivity of projects, etc.).	September 2021	Nicola Osborne, Anna Orme, Kam Chan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase participation in CI events and/or enquiries from underrepresented groups (e.g. those living in lower SIMD⁵ (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation) contexts). - Increased scaffolding of potential applicants from more diverse backgrounds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We are approaching partner organisations in lower SIMD areas to establish specific hosted Resident Entrepreneur placements with additional support building on an

⁵ <https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-index-of-multiple-deprivation-2020/>

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	Consult community on barriers and opportunities to address these			<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Increased applications from more diverse applicants- Increased application success from diverse applicants	approach trialled in RE Round 5 with Marchmont House to engage SMEs in the Borders (for geographic / rural diversity)
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Appendix 1: Schema for Annual Publication of ED&I Data

We will publish annual data on Creative Informatics, presented in the context of the programmes performance against local and/or wider industry data (where this is available). The annual publication will include:

General observations about the Programme and its culture

How we are identifying and addressing unintended bias and any barriers/perceived barriers to participation

Application and participation data across the Creative Informatics programme, including distribution by:

- Gender
- Age range
- Nationality/Ethnicity
- Sexual Orientation
- Disability
- SIMD (based on postcode/address data)
- Size of organisation (based on number of staff, FTE,)

The above reflects data we routinely collect in applications. Please note that we do not gather data on several official protected characteristics: religion or belief; gender reassignment (we ask participants to self-identify gender); sex (we do not ask participants to declare their legal sex, just their gender); marriage or civil partnership status; pregnancy and maternity status. Where appropriate we will include relevant examples that reflect some of these potential areas for inequalities in case studies (see below).

We will also publish data on programme sub elements:

- Application and participation broken down by programme strand (e.g. Creative Bridge, Challenge Responder, etc.)
- Application and participation broken down by sub-industry
- Composition of CI programme leadership and team

We will also periodically publish summary and narrative of

- Location of SMEs/organisations across local authorities (6 CI target local authorities and “Others”)
- Breakdown by grouped SIC (Standard industrial classification of economic activities) and SOC (Standard Occupational Classification) codes
- Support mechanisms in place for applicants/participants

In line with best practices regarding the risk of identifying individuals we will not publish very small numbers of applicants/participants if this would be disclosive (unless in a case study with written permission). If we are not able to publish any item noted here we will always note this in our annual data publication.

Appendix 1: Schema for Annual Publication of ED&I Data

We are committed to publishing at least 10 ED&I case studies on Creative Informatics over the course of the programme. We will ensure that these include and reflect support requested and provided, funding journeys, application and re-application support, impact of the programme on onwards development of individuals and/or organisations etc.