

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in Project & Change Management Action Plan



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1.1*

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NHS Project Profession Programme

The NHS Project Profession Programme is developing the frameworks, infrastructure, and capability to enable a coordinated project profession within the NHS.

The aim of the programme is to build sustainable projects and change capability at the national and regional level to enable effective delivery of the NHS change agenda and to support NHS staff with rewarding careers and opportunities to develop themselves.

The programme will achieve this in several ways:

- Utilise existing project management expertise and resources within the NHS to build strong professional capability.
- Build a strong network of project professionals across the regions and nationally within the NHS.
- Facilitate collaborative working, using digital technology to support cultural transformation.
- Align the programme with the principles of the NHS People Plan and partner with national functions to deliver and embed the capability.

The project profession encompasses anyone in a role that coordinates and delivers change including Portfolio, Programme, and Project Management, and specialist roles such as Benefits, Risk, and Change Management.

The NHS Project Profession vision is *'The NHS Project Profession attracts, develops and retains project professionals and practitioners; ensuring the NHS has the capacity and capability to deliver sustainable change to the system for the benefit of patients.'*

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in Project & Change Management

Embracing diversity and inclusion is an important part of project management. Value is created from difference and diverse teams can bring about higher performance. This is because project professionals and team members from diverse and different backgrounds and cultures are likely to have different experiences and perspectives they can bring to the team and project.

Our mission is to create a project & change management profession that is collectively representative of the diverse society that our projects are designed to serve across the NHS. Successful project teams should be cognitively and demographically diverse. When everyone feels included, engaged, and valued and their opinions matter, they will perform to their full potential, no matter who they are.

Our 2021-24 Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (ED&I) Strategy is focused on addressing the challenges and utilising the opportunities we find within our profession. Based upon workforce data and analyst evidence clearly shows the balance that is present across our profession (for example, the more senior the AfC grade in project roles the more white and male it becomes).

This ED&I Action Plan sets out key activities which will drive positive action to enable greater accessibility to underrepresented groups. We recognise the critical importance of diversity and inclusion in our profession and are determined to be ambitious. The Action Plan provides oversight of core activities we will implement to bring about the changes we need to make our profession an inclusive and diverse community in our National Health Service (NHS).

To achieve our strategic objectives and our four-step goals we will place conscious consideration of ED&I at the centre of all we do. We are committed to ensuring the best possible experiences and outcomes for patients, service users, and the public in England.

While there is a clear role for senior leadership in the delivery of our action plan it is important to recognise that every member of staff within NHS is a leader, is able to influence change, has a voice that will be heard, and is given the tools and knowledge to help them also lead on ED&I.

Embracing diversity and inclusion in the project profession will help NHS to:

- promote creativity and innovation.
- boost productivity, confidence, and collective opportunity
- learn and incorporate the unique insights of others.
- build an inclusive culture of unity, respect, and tolerance.
- create a safe space for fresh new ideas and dialogues.
- break negative stereotypes and encourage social mobility.
- build strong relationships with all team members and the wider NHS system.
- maximise NHS return on investment.
- deliver improved patient outcomes.

The Role of the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (ED&I) in Project & Change Management Working Group

The ED&I Working Group is made up of volunteers from across the healthcare system. It is a working group open and accessible to all, which includes those that have an interest, passion, or influence in ED&I organisational decision-making.

Working group members play a pivotal role in the success of the NHS Project Profession Programme and the ED&I in the Project & Change Management Action Plan.

Members provide insight and scrutiny, advice, guidance, and support into NHS Project Profession workstreams which will improve equality, diversity & inclusion outcomes.

Working group members are representative of their respective areas and are encouraged to share ED&I intel, issues, or updates that will inform programme workstream approaches and improve ED&I accessibility and engagement.

Working group members are encouraged to share networks they may be part of that will strengthen links to underrepresented groups. Working group members are also encouraged to advise of joint ventures between NHS ALBs or national network initiatives that may support improved outcomes and overall decision-making.

The working group also:

- share ED&I intelligence, capturing existing best practices and identifying areas where recruitment processes, support, resources, and the experience could be enhanced.
- offer comments and advice on the development of appropriate policies and strategies that enable us to be a fair representation of the project profession.
- provide an opportunity to listen and seek views on and raise broader awareness about our priorities and progress with stakeholders.
- share intel that may impact the delivery of the NHS Project Profession and its commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- highlight successes and identify /challenges, barriers, or innovative ways of tackling identified issues.

ED&I in Project & Change Management four-step goal

- Step 1: To establish a diverse ED&I in Project & Change Management working group with a collaborative vision, mission, and shared values.
- Step 2: To make a measurable impact of equality, diversity, and inclusion workforce data in project & change management.
- Step 3: Improve access to ED&I resources in project & change management that enable positive action.
- Step 4: Provide development opportunities to project & change management professionals through a collaborative process.

Our Strategy:

The action plan activities will:

Create an inclusive project & change management culture.

- Maintain ED&I strategy alignment to national (within NHSE) activities.
- Be sighted on existing ED&I strategies aligned to professional body standards (APM, PMI, CMI) and other NHS-related bodies.
- Link to existing NHS networks.
- Raising the profile of Project & Change Management.
- Project & Change Delivery Inclusion Network.
- Focus Support Groups.

Support project & change management career progression.

- Career therapy.
- Career development pathways.
- Role Model campaign.
- Learning & Development options.
- Coaching & Mentoring.
- Project Management related Apprenticeships.

Embed ED&I outcomes for project & change management professionals.

- ED&I Workforce Data & Analysis.
- Project & Change Management best practices.
- Sharing and learning from lived experiences.

Action Plan Create an inclusive project & change management culture.

Item No.	Area of Work	Description	Expected Outcome / Benefit	Measures	Owner
1.0	Maintain ED&I strategy alignment to national (within NHSE) activities.	Ensure links, representation, and acknowledgment. to key organisational change programmes taking place in NHSE that may impact upon action plan activities; NHS's organisational change programme (PPM and BPTW initiative).	Improved decision-making and reduced time to execute activities and outcomes. Allows the pace of ED&I change to quicken and allows employees to focus on the action plan activities.	Ensure activities are coordinated, and aligned to strategic outcomes, and no duplication of activities occurs.	
2:0	Be sighted on existing ED&I strategies aligned to professional body standards (APM, PMI, CMI) and other NHS-related bodies.	To have visibility on ED&I strategies within the project profession. This includes those strategies that are emerging, currently being undertaken or have a high maturity level that may influence or inform this action plan (and the wider work).	<p>Improved visibility and transparency between collaborative partners.</p> <p>Greater collective understanding of ED&I strategies and the impacts these are making on the wider system.</p> <p>Improved decision-making and reduced time to execute activities and outcomes.</p>	<p>To ensure there is the harmonisation of actions, impacts, and ED&I outcomes in the project profession.</p> <p>Improved relationships - breaking down barriers by enabling. freedom of networking and collaboration, intersectionality, and alignment between professional body standards (APM, PMI, CMI), and other NHS-related bodies.</p>	

3.0	Link to existing NHS networks.	Gain continuous representation in existing ED&I networks within NHSE – BAME, LGBT+, etc. Identify relevant NHS networks, influencing and providing insight and direction to existing initiatives. For example: Reversing Mentoring.	Exchanging information on challenges, experiences, and goals will be key benefits of linking to existing NHSE networks. Gain new insights and alignment to wider organisational initiatives and outcomes.	There is greater visibility and voice from the work being developed within existing NHSE networks and what impact this may have on the ED&I in Project & Change Management workstream. Discussions taking place during ED&I in Project & change	
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			Lessons are shared. Build on NHS's ED&I organisational commitments.	Management meetings are intersectional and representative.	
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4.0	Raising the profile of Project & Change Management.	A series of myth-busting events and/or materials that can debunk misconceptions about working in the profession and promote it as an accessible career for all.	Project & change management is viewed as an attractive career choice for people from all backgrounds and work experiences.	<p>An increase in the number of ED&I individuals completing one or more of the NHS Project & Change Academy core skill modules on the e-LfH platform.</p> <p>Healthcare Project Delivery Community (HPDC) platform analytics (incl. numbers of hits, new members joining, resource type accessed, and duration).</p> <p>PfMO engagement and request to access resources.</p>
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5.0	Project & Change Delivery Inclusion Network.	Create a virtual project & change delivery inclusion network, with everyone in the profession welcome and encouraged to join.	<p>A virtual community for project & change delivery colleagues to share, listen and discuss experiences of inclusion and share best practices. This would provide ongoing insight into inclusion in the profession.</p> <p>Help prioritise activity, and where appropriate, also identify resources.</p>	<p>Numbers of people joining the network.</p> <p>Feedback from network members.</p>
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6.0	Focus Support Groups.	Identify support points for ED&I colleagues. Deliver project & change support focus groups in key areas of the profession: Women in Project Management, Confidence Building, interviewing skills and techniques, leadership development, or lived shared experiences.	<p>Increase an individual's belief in their ability to handle a situation or scenario.</p> <p>Providing companionship, empowering others, emotional identification, and providing a safe space.</p>	Feedback and insights providing strategic direction and considerations in key areas of development.
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Support project & change management career progression

Item No.	Area of Work	Description	Expected Outcome / Benefit	Measures	Owner
1.0	Career therapy.	<p>Healing the damage from years of discrimination that has impacted negatively upon the confidence, motivation, and perspective of unsuccessful or discriminatory career progression attempts.</p> <p>Enabling access to career conversations.</p>	<p>Build a positive attitude and resolve negative experiences. Build confidence and ease cognitive negativity.</p> <p>Build resilience and provide basic coping skills.</p>	<p>An increase in the number of ED&I project role applications and successful appointments (Particularly at higher grades).</p> <p>A decrease in attrition and an increase in recruitment retention rates from underrepresented groups.</p>	

2.0	Career development Pathways.	Deliver accessible project & change management career development opportunities to ED&I groups, scope including career pathway lunch & learns role secondments, and role shadowing / buddying opportunities.	<p>To enable informed career decision-making discussions.</p> <p>Demonstrate developmental opportunities; offering various forms of career movement, both vertical and lateral, to encompass new skills, experiences, and perspectives.</p> <p>Providing employees with clarity around career development opportunities.</p> <p>Improvement in staff engagement and retention.</p>	<p>An increase in the number of ED&I individuals accessing, requesting, and receiving training on, and engaging with the <i>NHS Project & Change Capability Framework</i>.</p> <p>Feedback from underrepresented network groups.</p> <p>The self-assessment tool and <i>NHS Project & Change Capability Framework</i> is being used across the organisation.</p>	
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3.0	Role Model campaign.	Deliver a role models campaign that will celebrate differences across the project & change the community and promote best practices of inclusive working.	<p>Increased awareness of the diversity of the project & change community. Promote it as an inclusive profession in NHS.</p> <p>Enhanced adoption of inclusive working practices.</p>	Feedback from role models and project teams.	
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			Encourages a growth mindset and supports a learning culture across integrated areas.		
4.0	Learning & Development options.	<p>Review the current project & change learning and development products to ensure accessibility requirements have been met.</p> <p>Identify L&D areas for improvement, areas for coproduction, and areas of requirement.</p> <p>Ensure that the complete learning offer is in a single place, ensuring access for all.</p>	All products in the curriculum will be accessible to all eligible colleagues.	<p>A product that delivers the complete learning offer available to users.</p> <p>The learning has met minimum standards for user accessibility when tested.</p>	

5.0	Coaching & Mentoring.	<p>Design, develop, and deliver accessible coaching and mentoring offers for project & change professionals. Development and implementation of tools, techniques, and facilitation network that provide a platform for safe and open discussion.</p> <p>Identify qualified coaches and mentors.</p> <p>Link to existing coaching & mentoring resources. (Alignment to reversing mentoring, reciprocal mentoring initiatives).</p>	<p>Support the needs for cultural change and the case for support. Staff are able to deal with organisational change. Impart new life skills with a clear learning plan in place. Support staff to solve problems in new ways.</p> <p>Increase confidence and build meaningful talent management conversations in project & change management.</p> <p>Heightened self-awareness, unblocking of personal challenges preventing individuals from progression.</p>	<p>Provide support and coaching in targeted areas. Coaching & Mentoring structure developed a high level of representation of minority groups at senior levels.</p> <p>Participant testimonials and feedback from the various trialed activities. Pilot outcomes will inform future activity over the lifetime of the action plan.</p>	
6.0	Project Management related Apprenticeships.	<p>Targeted promotion and raise awareness activities of the project management-related apprenticeships to ED&I groups and networks.</p> <p>Develop a series of myth-busting lunch & learns that may exist around apprenticeships.</p>	<p>Apprenticeships are viewed as a viable learning and development pathway for people from all backgrounds and work experiences. Building of project management</p>	<p>An increase in the number of individuals engaging with apprenticeships. An increase in expressions of interest, and an increase in enrolments onto</p>	

			capability and capacity.	apprenticeship programme(s). ED&I apprenticeship Case studies captured, shared, and celebrated.	

Embed ED&I outcomes for project & change management professionals.

1.0	ED&I Workforce Data & Analysis.	<p>Design, develop, and deliver workforce dashboards for those in project & change management roles.</p> <p>Identified workforce needs (and possible research partners) to support the identification, coding, and registration of project professionals.</p>	<p>Aids data-driven decision-making.</p> <p>Contributes positively towards organisational culture, employee experience, satisfaction, workforce planning, and application.</p> <p>Identifies ineffective processes and educates and informs leadership teams.</p>	<p>Workforce data and analysis indicate increased levels of ED&I representation across project & change management.</p> <p>Improved recruitment decision-making.</p> <p>Improved employee survey results.</p>	
2.0	Project & Change Management best practice.	Identify, share, and promote Project & Change Management best practice (e.g., joining NHS Project Futures, recruitment, and selection, career conversations).	<p>An increase in the adoption of working practices that enhance inclusion.</p> <p>Clarity on what a good project and change delivery look (and feels) like.</p> <p>Nurtures a learning culture that enables effective decision-making, and boosts confidence, efficiency, and competence in project, programme, and portfolio management delivery.</p>	<p>Access to project & change management best practice is included in an employee's corporate induction process.</p> <p>Feedback from employees.</p>	

3.0	Sharing and learning from lived experiences.	Provide a platform to listen and share the different stories and lived experiences in project & change management.	<p>Sharing can help further awareness and understanding, and foster empathy and compassion toward people.</p> <p>Strengthen internal relationships and aid shared recovery.</p> <p>Reduces anxiety and stress.</p>	<p>The number of individuals wishing to share their lived experiences increases.</p> <p>Individual experiences are being shared across multiple platforms and multiple organisations.</p>	
			To promote empowerment and combat stigma.		