

# Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement

In the Centre for Postdoctoral Development in Infrastructure, Cities and Energy (C-DICE), we believe that only an inclusive and diverse community can fully address the challenging and complex problems posed by sustaining low energy, net zero-carbon infrastructure and cities. C-DICE is committed to supporting the construction of such a diverse and inclusive research environment in which all postdoctoral researchers feel valued, respected, and engaged.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) are integral to our definition of excellence and will be embedded in C-DICE activities, strands (development, training, problem-led sandpit series and impact), recruitment, research, as well as postdoctoral experience.

Each of the participating HEIs is committed to the Athena SWAN Charter at a minimum level of bronze, with the majority of partners being Stonewall Diversity Champions, Members of the Race Equality Charter, signed up to Disability Confident scheme and to the Time to Change Employer Pledge.

## Embedding EDI Across C-DICE

C-DICE integrates EDI considerations across all its core activities to ensure that postdoctoral researchers from diverse backgrounds can thrive. Key elements include:

**Recruitment and Development:** EDI considerations are central to the application and selection procedures to ensure that C-DICE establishes a diverse pipeline of talent and guarantees equal opportunities. Diversity will be considered when recruiting for development opportunities and composing interview and review panels. We actively promote diversity in recruitment for development opportunities, ensuring a fair and transparent selection process. Application and selection procedures are designed to remove bias, including blind recruitment practices for example by omitting personal information from application forms to ensure fairness, clearly defined assessment criteria, and inclusive interview methods that accommodate neurodiverse candidates.

**Industry Partner engagement and outreach:** EDI processes will be followed in activities relating to the postdoctoral researchers' engagement with industry. C-DICE will collaborate with industry partners to improve the integration of postdoctoral researchers during their placements and secondments and to enhance an inclusive working environment.

**Training and Professional Development:** Ensuring that all postdoctoral researchers can access appropriate training opportunities is a priority for C-DICE. Fostering a workplace that focuses on inclusion is the best to attract diverse talent while retaining and nurturing that talent. For us, inclusion relies on a positive culture and environment and on the provision of continuous training, access world-class facilities and career support to all C-DICE postdoctoral researchers considering their personal and professional circumstances and need.

**Collaborative Research and Innovation:** Our problem-led, interdisciplinary approach to research supports diverse participation and team collaboration. Through events and funding opportunities, we encourage the development of innovative solutions while ensuring equitable access to

fellowships and grants. The strategy creates new opportunities for researchers with protected characteristics, enhance communication, and improve networks. Specific measures, such as virtual participation options, are in place to support researchers with caring responsibilities and those who require flexible engagement formats.

**Impact and Sector-Wide Influence:** C-DICE actively promotes good EDI practices through knowledge-sharing, showcase events, and sector-wide engagement. Our commitment to inclusive events ensures that accessibility, scheduling, and representation are considered at every stage. We also encourage contributions from a diverse range of speakers and researchers, fostering an inclusive platform for new ideas and perspectives. C-DICE promotes EDI good practices by actively sharing our inclusive and accessibility practices across the researcher developer community.

### Strategies, policies and processes

**Flexible working:** Procedures are in place to accommodate requests or promote flexible working and meet the needs and personal circumstances of postdoctoral researchers. C-DICE seeks to learn the best practice within the different institutions in this collaborative effort and amend processes accordingly.

**Virtual events and meetings:** C-DICE will be responsive to the needs of carers and parents by ensuring that meeting and activity times, including for online training sessions, enable the participation of people with caring responsibilities.

**EDI funding:** C-DICE offers a dedicated EDI fund to cover additional costs incurred related to EDI issues such as the cost of caring for dependents, or for dependents/carers to accompany participants on courses.

**Celebrating diversity:** Key Religious and Awareness Days will be used as a guidance when scheduling sandpits, training sessions and other key events, identifying deadlines for secondment and placement applications. The Centre will also carefully consider requests for flexibility on the grounds of religion or belief. C-DICE will also promote activities related to a variety of Awareness Dates and initiatives.

### Monitoring and reporting

Representatives of collaborating universities will co-create Key Performance Indicators in conjunction with the Universities' staff support groups to contribute to future improvements of the strategy and practices across the HEIs. EDI will be overseen by the C-DICE Director and Project Manager through the collection and monitoring of participation of those from all protected characteristic groups and by conducting an equality impact assessment on available opportunities. Participation in C-DICE activities will be monitored and evaluated for inclusivity. The development of research skills for industry will be determined through regular interactions with the industrial steering/advisory groups within UKCRIC and ERA, and the C-DICE stakeholder engagement group. The EDI strategy will be regularly updated based on feedback from postdoctoral researchers and on collected EDI data regarding participation.