

IED² – what have we done to date?

Equality, diversity and inclusion (ED&I) are increasingly well-known terms that influence the way we work, the way we approach our projects and how we design our products. But what does it mean for our Professional Institution?

Following an ED&I working group, operating between March and September 2021, it was recommended that a formal ED&I committee was formed for the IED. Therefore, on 9th May 2022 the inaugural meeting of the IED2 committee took place. Since then, online meetings have been held every two months, with the two-year anniversary meeting held in person at the Loughborough University Design School. The committee comprises seven members who have worked together to achieve a great deal over the past two years.

Who are the committee?

Simon Benfield CEng CEnv CTPD FIED(PCh) MAPM

Dr Yun-Thai Li PhD BEng(Hons) MIED

Mark Lynch BSc(Hons) MSc CEng MIED

Libby Meyrick BSc(Hons) FRSA (Secretary)

Dr Mazher Mohammed EngD MPhys MIED

Amy Penn BSc(Hons) MSc CTPD MIED

Jenny Roberts MEng(Hons) CEng MIED (Chair)

Successes to date

The IED² committee has been building momentum steadily, tackling some ‘quick win’ items as well as instigating some longer-term initiatives. Here’s a summary of some of our achievements over the last two years:

1. EDI surveys 2021 and 2023

A direct recommendation from the working group, following a benchmarking exercise against the Royal Academy of Engineering (RAEng) and Science Council’s Professional Institution (PI) EDI framework, was to undertake a biannual ED&I survey of the IED’s membership, staff, volunteers and committees. The purpose of the surveys is two-fold: firstly, to establish a benchmark dataset and secondly, to monitor changes over subsequent years, hopefully illustrating improvement.

Following on from the 2021 survey, the IED2 committee discussed how to capture information on socioeconomic background as well as field of work, two areas that may help to identify any intersectionality in results. Internal discussion with Council as well as consultation with other Professional Engineering Institutions (PEIs) resulted in the addition of two further questions for the 2023 survey.

Data from the 2021 survey was published in the (DATE/ISSUE) of the IED journal and we are anticipating that the data from the 2023 survey will be published in the latter half of this year. Thank you to everyone who has engaged with this process to date, your feedback has been invaluable in helping us to improve the way the IED operates.

2. Case studies

You may have seen in past IED journal issues over the past two years, case studies that celebrate our diverse range of volunteers at the IED.

As always, if you are interested in volunteering with us, please get in touch by emailing ied@ied.org.uk.

3. IED² statement

Along with the vision and mission, the IED² committee felt it was important to articulate the IEDs commitment to its members, staff and volunteers. The IED² statement was developed, approved by Council and subsequently added to the IED website:

Our People - Our IED

At the IED, we believe diversity and inclusion are at the core of our vision and mission. We are committed to creating an inclusive culture that supports and empowers our members, staff and volunteers. We celebrate the power of our diverse community to create a better world.

4. EDI policies

Part of the IED² long term strategies proposed from the original working group, was to create ED&I policies for staff, volunteers and members where appropriate. Policies introduced or amended include: a menopause policy (introduced Jan 24), complaints procedures (amended to include discrimination in July 2023), and of course the Institution's own overarching inclusion, equity and diversity policy.

5. Meeting timings

Recognising that our IED volunteers come from diverse backgrounds, many have caring responsibilities and work commitments, a survey was undertaken to determine ideal timings for meetings to ensure fair access to participation for every volunteer. Based on the survey results, alternating afternoon and evening times for each consecutive committee meeting have been introduced.

6. IED² annual report

In January, it was agreed that the Chair of the IED² committee will deliver a short report at the AGM annually, detailing progress of the committee in that year. This serves to promote transparency in the operations of the committee and disseminate the excellent work undertaken in promoting ED&I.

Ongoing projects

There are many further initiatives and ideas that the IED2 committee are working on currently. These include analysing the latest survey results and identifying areas that can be targeted for improvement, partnering with other PEIs to champion ED&I progress together, introduction of a new ED&I webpage to include information and signposting, unconscious bias training for our staff and volunteers, strengthening links with Universities to promote our ED&I survey plus share best practice, creation of an ally network and introducing ED&I topics to the IED's webinar series.

Help design our new ED&I logo!

In support of nationally and internationally recognised inclusion awareness periods, the IED² committee is developing an ED&I logo to be used on the IED's social media platforms plus on any IED² communications throughout the year. With this in mind, we've launched a competition open to all IED student members to design the logo. Please email your artwork to ied@ied.org.uk