



EARLY  
INTERVENTION  
FOUNDATION

# Equality, diversity and inclusion

Strategy and action plan | 2021–2027

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## About EIF

The Early Intervention Foundation (EIF) is an independent research charity established in 2013 to champion and support the use of effective early intervention to improve the lives of children and young people at risk of experiencing poor outcomes.

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updates and content, visit:  
[www.EIF.org.uk/about/edi-at-eif](http://www.EIF.org.uk/about/edi-at-eif)

# Foreword

EIF is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion, reflecting the fact we live and work in a diverse country. The work we do – ensuring evidence is at the heart of early intervention that supports children at risk of poor outcomes to achieve their potential – must reflect the realities of the society we live in. Moreover, we believe that we have an active role to play in reducing racial inequalities. Not only must our work programmes reflect this, but our workforce too should reflect the society we live in and be as diverse as the people whose lives are impacted by our work.

We have made a commitment to create an inclusive workplace where everyone feels valued and respected *because* of their differences: a place where every member of staff and volunteer can be themselves so they can reach their potential and help us achieve our goals.

We want our organisation to deliver the most impact to the audiences we seek to influence, and we need diversity to help us achieve this. The more we collaborate and value difference, the closer we get to living in a truly inclusive society.

This diversity and inclusion strategy provides us with a roadmap to create an inclusive workplace and to meet our ambition to be an anti-racist organisation. To help us achieve this, we need the commitment of every member of staff to understand what we are trying to achieve, to work together and be open to change.

This strategy is everyone's responsibility, and we encourage everyone to get involved.



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# Introduction

This document articulates EIF's equality, diversity and inclusion strategy: our vision, principles, aims and targets, as well as our journey to this point and action plan for the next three years.

The strategy sets out some ambitious targets. We believe this level of ambition is essential if we are to achieve our wider goals as an organisation supporting change in society. We anticipate that as we reach our milestones, our action plan will change to reflect our progress and how, as an organisation, our overall strategy will evolve in the years ahead.

This strategy is for 2021–2023, at which time we will undertake a review and update the strategy for the period through to 2027.

# Our vision

Our vision is that *all* children are able to achieve their full potential. We know that not all children are fulfilling their full potential, and that gaps in children's development open up early. These gaps matter for children's outcomes such as educational attainment, employment prospects and physical and mental health. This has long-term consequences, both for the individual child and for society as a whole.

Our mission is to ensure that effective early intervention is available and is used to improve the lives of children and young people at risk of poor outcomes. Effective early intervention works by identifying children who need help and providing effective early support to reduce the risk of problems occurring and to tackle them head-on when they do. It also helps to foster a whole set of personal strengths and skills that prepare a child for adult life.

Equality, diversity and inclusion is crucial to improving the lives of children and young people and to enabling all children to fulfil their potential. Equity is an inherent requirement of our mission, and the diversity of the people we serve and work alongside is one of our main strengths. Equality, diversity and inclusion must therefore be firmly embedded in the full breadth of our work.

# EDI in our work

Mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is our overarching goal, both as an employer and partner, and within the work that we do.

We focus our energies where we think we can make the biggest difference. The areas we work on at EIF is led by the need to fill gaps in the evidence-base, to ensure evidence of what works is used to change policy and practice, and to explore promising policies, programmes and practices that could make a real difference in the lives of children, young people and families.

Through our research, we have been able to highlight the role that socioeconomic inequality plays in perpetuating discrimination and holding people back through circumstances beyond their control, which can have a severe impact on life chances and lead to very different outcomes from individual to individual, family to family, or community to community.

In many cases, these economic or financial inequalities will intersect with other differences and factors, such as ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and disability. Our intention is to use our resources effectively, recognising that the wide range of differences that exist do not operate independently but can and do intersect and overlap. We will reinforce our efforts to acknowledge and address social disadvantage in all its forms, particularly through how we scope and frame our research activity, and how we reflect these findings in our policy and practice work.

We will always strive for greater inclusion across our staff and to widen opportunities for access and engagement across our work programme. The themes of promoting equality and valuing diversity will be woven through both the content of our work and how we work.

## Sharpening our focus on race and ethnicity

Data consistently shows that racial inequalities persist, including where other protected characteristics and other factors, such as education, are controlled for. This highlights the fundamental role that ethnicity continues to play in people's lives.

In recognition of the prevalence and seriousness of these impacts on children's lives, and in light of the intense public interest in addressing these issues, we have elected as an important first step to prioritise in our research programme further focus and work on the impact of ethnicity and experiences of race and racism – over other protected characteristics and forms of inequality, such as gender, sexual orientation or disability.

# Our ambition to be an anti-racist organisation

This EDI strategy focuses on our overall intention to be an inclusive organisation, in terms of who we are and what we do. We want to take this much further, and become an anti-racist organisation. As the next stage of our journey we will develop a separate but integral anti-racism strategy and action plan that supports this aim.

We recognise that our ambition to be an anti-racist organisation is a journey that already is and will continue to be challenging to us all, individually and collectively. However, we believe it is essential that we are part of the wider societal project to build new systems that are egalitarian and inclusive.

## Our definition of anti-racism

Anti-racism is a societal issue, focused on transforming the unequal social and workplace relations between people of all races. Anti-racism is a focus on transforming the unequal social and workplace relations that shape experiences and interactions between Black, Asian and other minority ethnic groups and white people. Anti-racism is the change that makes these experiences and interactions equal or egalitarian.

In order to achieve that change, we believe that everyone has a responsibility to understand and embed anti-racism into their lives. This means taking an active stance in favour of challenging and changing our perspectives, working to understand the events and consequences of historical actions, and recognising the impact of white privilege. Part of this process is understanding the opportunity of difference. We will look to embed specific and tangible actions to support this journey into our action plan.

## Our role as an employer

Racial inequalities are prevalent in society and in our workplaces. Our starting point is to adopt, actively maintain and promote a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination in any form, and we are committed to planned and consistent action to reduce and eliminate all workplace practices that allow the continuation of racist behaviours, policies or practices.

# What has led us to this point?

Over the past year, EIF has been on a journey of consultation, learning and internal discussion, to inform the development of this EDI strategy.

## Getting an outside view

To provide a clear view of our position, we commissioned an independent consultant to undertake an audit of our EDI actions. The audit involved a comprehensive review of our policies, procedures, and communications messaging and channels, as well as in-depth interviews with some trustees, members of the senior management team and staff.

The audit identified areas of good practice in communications, leadership and management, and our internal EDI practices. The audit also highlighted areas for development, focused on challenging inappropriate behaviour, building EDI awareness and training, and disabilities and reasonable adjustments.

## Understanding staff views on EDI

Each year, we conduct an annual people survey, and specifically ask for staff views on our approach and commitment to EDI. This feedback has informed the focus, prioritisation and direction of our work on EDI.

## Creating a structure to drive change

In September 2020, we established a steering group to provide strategic oversight for the planning and delivery of our EDI development.

The steering group meets quarterly, and includes members of staff from each team within EIF. It is jointly chaired by two trustees, who report to the board on a quarterly basis, and is tasked with providing direction to and monitoring the progress of the working groups.

Initially, two working groups were established, each involving staff from across EIF and reporting to the steering group. The first focused on equality, diversity and inclusion, and on driving workplace changes and the development of this strategy. With guidance from an expert partner, the second focused on developing our work programme to achieve a clearer focus on how issues of race and ethnicity impact on young people's lives, including development of a specific project in our 2021/22 programme. These working groups have since been merged.

## Ensuring accountability

The chief executive and directors are responsible for providing leadership to ensure the delivery of the strategy. The head of people will report to leadership and will support directors, functional leads and senior managers, communicate the strategy, and coordinate implementation.

We have built EDI training into our learning and development strategy, with a focus on awareness, unconscious bias, inclusive leadership and inclusive management, and it will be delivered in a range of formats. As part of our performance management approach, we have also adopted diversity competencies as a way of measuring staff performance and commitment to EDI.

# Restating the case: Why EDI matters to EIF

It is a fundamental right and need for everyone to be treated fairly and equally, and to have equal access to opportunity. This is true whether they are members of EIF staff, those from partner organisations that we work with, the policymakers and practitioners we seek to engage, or the children, young people and families who our work is ultimately for.

A focus on equality, diversity and inclusion is about recognising people's differences and treating them fairly, removing barriers and offering equal opportunity. It means ensuring that there are no discriminatory practices in place or adverse effects arising from our actions, policies or systems for any group of people. This applies to our staff and the people who work with us, and in the work that we do.

We value both visible and non-visible difference as a key part of a healthy organisation. We believe that everyone deserves to be treated with fairness and dignity, and that everyone can positively contribute towards achieving our organisation's goals. We will strive to harness peoples' differences to create an environment in which people feel valued, staff talents are fully utilised, and we deliver against our strategy.

Research also tells us that having a diverse group of people in an organisation boosts innovation, knowledge, collaboration, productivity, internal and external engagement, and understanding of the needs of others in society.

In order to reap the benefits of diversity, we need inclusiveness. If we have diversity in our people but some are not believed, respected or communicated with, then their voices, ideas and abilities will not be heard and used, and EIF will not gain the benefit of their diverse experiences, thinking and abilities.

# Restating the case: The benefits of EDI

Effectively embedding equality, diversity and inclusion within EIF enables us to:

- develop and deliver effective work programmes
- increase the quality and efficiency of impact and delivery
- attract and retain a diverse group of skilled staff who reflect the society that our work is focused on
- comply with the law.

## The moral case

We believe it is important to value everyone and to be fair and respectful. This is true irrespective of a person's background and characteristics, and regardless of how they come into contact with EIF. This brings a range of important benefits, for individuals and organisations, including a reduction in feelings of stress, tension and anger, and in experiences of discrimination, unfairness and conflict.

The moral imperative encourages ways of working that are based on dignity, compassion, empathy and mutual benefit. It should lead us to focus on what we have in common and what connects us as citizens, rather than how we differ and what separates us. It establishes the conditions for empowerment and recognises our shared humanity.

## The legal case

The law plays an important role in supporting social justice, eradicating unjustified and unlawful discrimination, and achieving positive change and inclusion. The Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation, codes of practice and guidance are important reference points.

## The business case

Mainstreaming EDI principles and practices is good for our organisation. It supports us to:

- demonstrate our respect for, knowledge of and skills in working within the diverse communities that we live and work in
- achieve a fair, inclusive organisational culture, recognised as such by staff and stakeholders, with values that we apply consistently
- maintain a strong brand and positively benchmark ourselves against other organisations
- maximise and retain valued knowledge, experience and expertise
- have committed and motivated staff who feel fairly treated and respected, leading to better employment relations
- attract new talent and fresh perspectives, and build diverse teams
- nurture creativity, innovation and flexibility, and identify new approaches, opportunities to collaborate and sources of support.

# Our strategy

This strategy provides a framework for ensuring that our programme planning, activities, outputs, policies and procedures actively avoid disadvantaging any of our staff and anyone who is affected by our work – directly or indirectly – both on the basis of the protected characteristics defined by the Equality Act 2010 and on the basis of wider definitions of diversity, such as neuro-diversity and socioeconomic diversity.

The framework will foster an environment where everyone is able to thrive, and ensure that EIF's work programme includes research focused on equality issues. It builds on developments and learning from our working groups and through the independent diversity and inclusion audit.

The action plan we have developed will ensure effective delivery against each of the three goals. The action plan will be monitored and reviewed by the REDI steering group, reporting to the board of trustees, and it will be embedded within each directorate's delivery plans. At the end of each year, we will produce a short update report to show our progress against the action plan, identify lessons learned, and share best practice across the organisation.

# Our commitment

Equality, diversity and inclusion are integral to our work, success, impact, sustainability, reputation and brand. They enable alignment between what we say and what we do. By making a strong and visible commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, we will ensure that these values are embedded in our organisational strategy, and that the process of achieving change is supported by a clear action plan, effective leadership and fit-for-purpose governance.

We will work energetically to embed EDI into our behaviours and all that we do, to highlight its benefits, and to promote the positive contribution that it makes to the organisation, to our workplace, and to wider society. We recognise the importance of acknowledging intersectionality in our efforts to be a truly inclusive organisation.

We will draw on the rich diversity of the UK and harness the diverse contributions and talents of our staff and partners to achieve our vision in line with our organisational values. In so doing, we will strive to make sure that our people and our stakeholders are treated with dignity and respect, and feel valued.

# Our goals

The aims of this strategy are driven by our commitment to EDI. Our vision is to have an inclusive and diverse organisational culture, and to be known for our progressive approach.

We want everyone who comes into contact with us to feel valued and respected, and for our programmes, activities and day-to-day ways of working to demonstrate our stated commitment to EDI.

We also want to use our increasing knowledge and experience to make a leading contribution to promoting EDI on the national stage. We want to engage with organisations who share this ambition, and to encourage those that we work with, including partners and suppliers, to demonstrate a similar commitment to EDI.

Our strategy has three goals, which are expanded in the following section:

- 1** **Build an inclusive organisational culture**
- 2** **Recruit, retain, develop and support a diverse workforce**
- 3** **Develop work to engage and meet the needs of our diverse society**

# Goal 1: Build an inclusive organisational culture

<b>Embed a culture of EDI across the organisation, which is reflected in all aspects of our work</b>	<b>Make a strong and visible commitment to EDI and to the actions we are taking to make our organisation more inclusive</b>	<b>Make diversity and inclusion training part of the mandatory learning and development offering</b>	<b>Establish and maintain an EDI-focused group to track progress</b>	<b>Ensure staff voices are heard</b>	<b>Provide high-quality outputs that are accessible to all and continuously improving</b>

## Goal 2:

# Recruit, retain, develop and support a diverse workforce

Ensure working practices and spaces are accessible for all	Identify and implement actions that improve the involvement and participation of under-represented groups in EIF	Review recruitment practices	Set targets for staff to provide focus and encourage actions that improve internal representation	Implement inclusive practice across all HR processes	Build a pipeline of diverse future talent

## Goal 3:

# Develop work to engage and meet the needs of our diverse society

<p>Gain a clear understanding of how race and ethnicity influence children's outcomes in the UK, and use it to design our future work</p>	<p>Talk about race and ethnicity in an inclusive way that reflects society's diversity</p>	<p>Ensure working practices and spaces are accessible for all</p>

# Our targets

Our targets have been set at an ambitious level to encourage and motivate ourselves to do and achieve more through this strategy, and to hold ourselves to account.

We have set the following targets for the next six years, up to the end of the next organisational strategy period. They include targets that we will achieve within the next two years, which are the focus of the action plan, alongside other, longer-term targets, which will evolve and adapt as we develop our new EIF strategy for 2023–2027.

In several cases, new systems and processes will be required to collect and monitor relevant data, which we will develop over the term of this strategy.

**1**

By 2024, among the candidates applying to work at EIF, on a two-year rolling average, at least:

- 20% will identify as having a disability
- 35% will identify as belonging to a minority ethnic group
- 20% will identify as having a minority sexual orientation.

EIF will take positive action in its recruitment processes to support this goal.

## Where are we starting from?

The following data sets out the diversity of the applicants for 15 roles recruited between May 2020 and July 2021.

DISABILITY		
Yes	No	Prefer not to say
9%	87%	4%

  

ETHNICITY		
White	Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	Asian, Asian British
70%	6%	10%
Black African, Black Caribbean, Black British	Other ethnic group	Prefer not to say
9%	2%	2%

  

SEXUAL ORIENTATION		
Bisexual	Gay/Lesbian	Heterosexual/Straight
8%	3%	80%
Other term	Prefer not to say	
1%	8%	

# Our targets

2

By 2027, our staff, including our leadership, will, on a two-year rolling average, be at least representative of the UK population for the targeted protected characteristics of disability, ethnicity and sexual orientation. We will apply an intersectional lens to collecting and reporting data to support understanding our progress.

## Where are we starting from?

The following data sets out the diversity of the EIF staff at July 2021.

UK statistics	EIF staff profile
<b>DISABILITY</b>	
There are 14.1 million disabled people in the UK, including 19% of working-age adults who are disabled <sup>1</sup>	12% of staff identify as having a disability
<b>ETHNICITY</b>	
13.8% of the UK population are from a minority ethnic background, including 40% in London <sup>2</sup>	12% of staff identify as belonging to a minority ethnic group
<b>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</b>	
2.7% (1.2 million people) of the population aged 16 and over identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) <sup>3</sup>	<i>EIF does not currently monitor sexual orientation</i>

## Sources:

<sup>1</sup> DWP, Family Resources Survey: financial year 2019 to 2020: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/family-resources-survey-financial-year-2019-to-2020/family-resources-survey-financial-year-2019-to-2020#disability-1>

<sup>2</sup> Gov.uk, Ethnicity facts and figures: <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/>

<sup>3</sup> ONS, Annual population survey, 2019: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/sexuality/bulletins/sexualidentityuk/2019>

3

By 2023, surveys of our staff and event participants will collectively show, on a two-year rolling average, that at least 90% of respondents feel they have had an 'inclusive experience' of EIF.

## Where are we starting from?

EIF staff survey results
<b>2019</b>
56% of staff agreed that EIF demonstrated a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion
<b>2020</b>
74% of staff agreed that EIF demonstrated a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion (+28% on previous year)

*EIF does not currently monitor this data for events participants.*

# Our targets

4

By 2027, we will consistently exceed the London Speaker Diversity pledge by only hosting public events that include participants from under-represented groups. Speakers, presenters and panellists at a public event will be a minimum of 50% female, at least 30% from UK minority ethnic backgrounds, and multi-generational in their age profile.

We will encourage partner organisations to do the same, and our staff will avoid participating in public events that do not adhere to these standards.

## Where are we starting from?

*EIF does not currently monitor this for events participants. Indicative data for major public events suggests speakers are half to three-quarters female, approximately one-fifth from a minority ethnic group, and approximately one-fifth from outside the 40–60-year-old age group.*

5

By 2026, in respect of government-funded work, at least 60% of our independently designed projects and 40% of our commissioned projects will actively examine at least one protected characteristic.

Projects will achieve this by answering specific research questions, generating new evidence, and/or making explicit evidence-based recommendations in relation to protected characteristics.

In addition to tracking progress on achieving our target in terms of number of projects, we will also track the value of projects in order to identify any significant deviations that require further attention.

## Where are we starting from?

Historically, this data has varied enormously from year to year. For the 2020/21 work programme, of 26 projects, including 16 independent and 10 commissioned projects:

- 27% touched in some way on issues around protected characteristics
- ... including 13% of independently designed projects
- ... and 40% of commissioned projects

# Monitoring and evaluation

Measuring our performance is crucial to understanding how we are progressing towards the goals set out in this strategy. To do so, we will identify mechanisms for measuring the extent, quality, effectiveness and impact of our EDI activities.

In this way, we will be able to gauge our performance against our own EDI standards, which are derived from national benchmarks. We will qualify for and gain accreditations relating to EDI. We will achieve a high level of compliance with our legal obligations, and where possible and appropriate, we will exceed the minimum requirements. And EDI-related risks will be anticipated and well managed.

The effectiveness of our EDI activities and progress against our EDI goals will be reviewed and reported quarterly to the board of trustees via the REDI steering group. This report will focus on the delivery of tasks in the action plan, progress made and successes achieved, and identify any adjustments required to improve effectiveness.

Through the annual staff survey, the evaluation will include:

- a quantitative assessment of progress or completion of EDI actions
- a qualitative assessment of the impact of the strategy on staff perceptions and experience of the culture of the organisation.

# What next?

# Our action plan

Our action plan is an internal EIF document which sets out the key activities that will be undertaken in the next three years, as we work towards meeting our goals and targets.

This plan sets out 55 specific actions, each with named lead members of staff (including staff from all teams within EIF) and target dates.

These actions range across nine areas of our work and operations:

- policies, processes, systems and frameworks
- procurement
- internal communications and staff engagement
- training, learning and development
- external communications
- recruitment and HR practice
- governance
- EDI strategy and action plan management
- our race and ethnicity work programme.

The action plan will evolve and change as we learn more about what is needed, as we achieve each target, and as our new corporate strategy develops.