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Equity and Inclusion in Research Funding: What does it mean for Knowledge Exchange and Commercialisation?

PraxisAuril KE Matters Webinar Series

30th May 2024



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Introduction: About today's webinar



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About Oxentia



Oxentia is a specialist consultancy and training company based in Oxford UK and operating worldwide. Our clients include universities and research organisations, companies, government agencies, foundations, and funding bodies.

Since 2004, we have provided services in commercialisation and innovation management including:



Innovation research & strategy



Training for innovation professionals & academics



Knowledge exchange, IP & commercialisation services

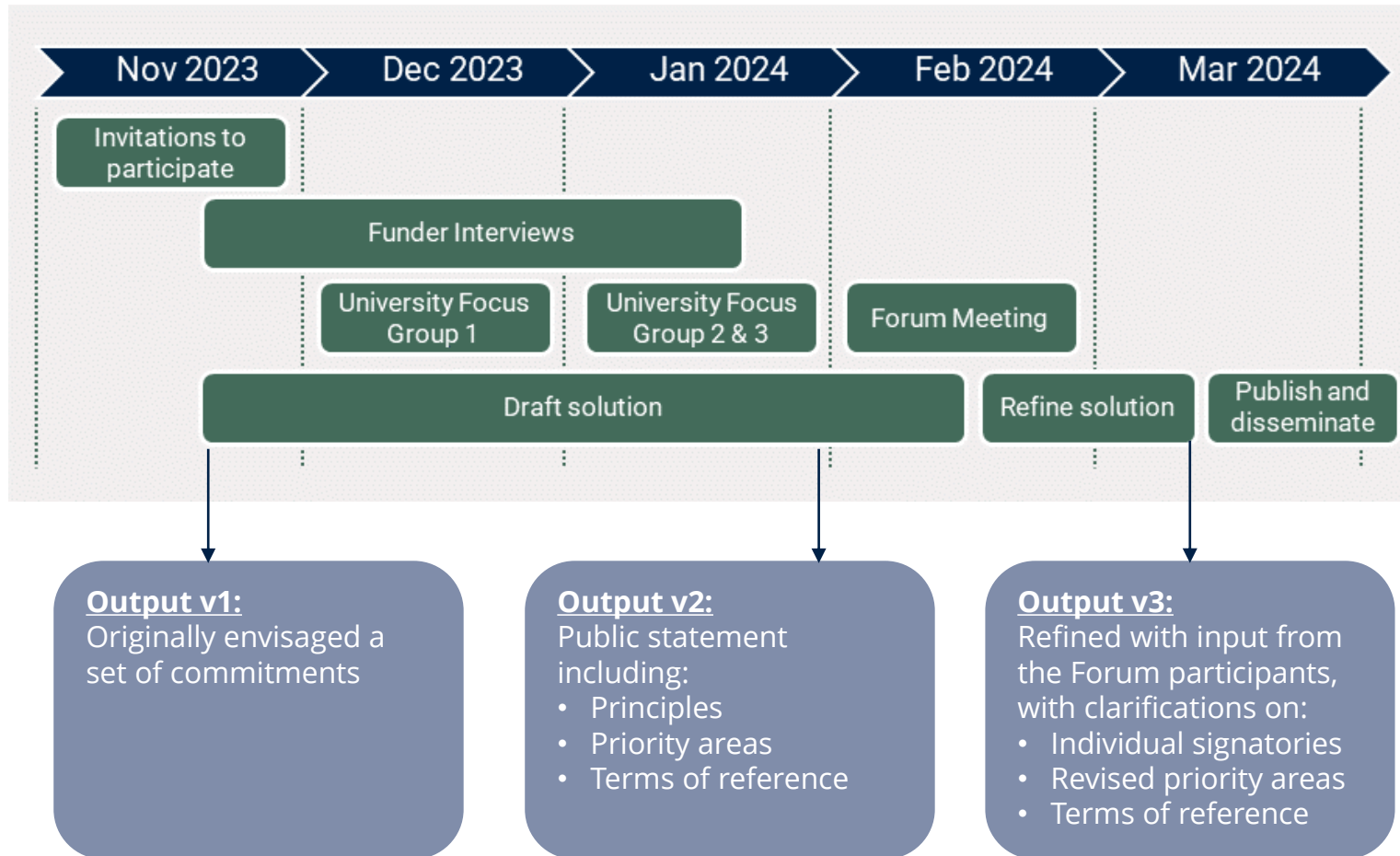


Entrepreneurship, ideation & acceleration programmes



Programme management & evaluation

Today's Topic: E&I in Research Funding Forum



• Aims

- To convene UK university and funding sector stakeholders to determine and agree how to implement solutions to transform equity and inclusivity in research funding nationally
- To consult the funding ecosystem stakeholders on what a long-term, equitable solution to improving E&I in research funding could look like

• Outcomes

- Bring the stakeholders together to take action on selected priority areas
- Ultimately set up a community ('Forum') of stakeholders to lead on sector-wide actions

Oxentia at the PraxisAuril Conference 2024



Hamish McAlpine
Director and Lead for
Policy & Engagement



Alexandra Bush
Director and
Head of URO



Bruno Reynolds
Senior
Consultant



Irene Dal Poz
Head of Impact
Strategy



Sahand Zanjani-Pour
Senior
Consultant



Day 2 Talks: Wednesday, 5 June

10:45-12:00

Irene Dal Poz

*Commercialisation for sustainable impact:
SHAPE perspectives and tools*

13:15-14:30

Sahand Zanjani-Pour
AI in Technology Transfer

Today's agenda



- **Introduction to session** (5 minutes)
- **About the Project: E&I in Research Funding Forum** (10 minutes)
 - Project background and rationale
 - Approach
 - Summary of outputs and key findings
 - How attendees can get involved in the next steps
- **Q&A and Reflections on Relevance for KEC** (30 mins)
 - Discussion with Dr Tanita Casci (Director, Research Strategy & Policy Unit, University of Oxford)
 - Questions from the audience



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About the Project: Equity & Inclusivity in Research Funding



Dr Tanita Casci
Director, Research Strategy & Policy
Unit, University of Oxford

Background to the project

- In 2023, Oxford published a sector report aimed at improving Equity & Inclusivity in Research Funding



Select findings and recommendations



Project Team



Dr Tanita Casci
Director, Research Strategy & Policy Unit,
University of Oxford



Dr Thandiwe Hara-Msulira
Research Policy Manager,
University of Oxford



Britta C Wyatt
Principal Consultant,
Oxentia



Andreea Iacoban
Senior Consultant,
Oxentia



Sarah Allison
Senior Consultant,
Oxentia



Hamish McAlpine
Director for Policy & Engagement,
Oxentia

Approach to sector-wide action: pre-engagement



Engaged with HEIs and funders to identify sector-level actions:

- Originally envisaged a set of commitments that universities / funders could commit to
- Planned to develop a Forum of partners (universities and funders)

Starting point: A draft set of 'Commitments'

No	Commitment	
1	We will provide funding to cover additional research costs associated with marginalisation, and straightforward processes to access this funding that do not disadvantage researchers in selection. This funding will apply to any funding scheme and will be universally available to researchers in all role types...	lication emes, emes...
2	We will provide additional support with preparing funding applications, or funding to cover additional support, to researchers who require support due to disability or first language differences...	nd fair he nding
3	We will provide a diverse range of tools and events to ensure that researchers who are women, disabled, racially marginalised, LGBTQ+, or from a marginalised socio-economic group have equal opportunity to develop their networks...	olify ropriate
4	We will ensure that all opportunities are published and disseminated to all eligible researchers universally and accessibly, and that all conversations relating to the development or promotion of new opportunities are transparent, equitable, accessible, and inclusive...	lect both
5	We will review and revise all funding information to identify all missing information that is required for applicants to develop an effective, personalised, research funding application plan...	ected ifferent level. We es, ng)...
12	We will engage with the transparent accountability process established by <<Advance HE / TigerInSTEMM / Leading	ality n-makers es

Sector-wide work: engagement with HEIs and funders

Universities (Focus groups)

1. University of Birmingham
2. University of Cambridge
3. Imperial College London
4. University of Sheffield
5. University of Warwick
6. University of Glasgow
7. University of Exeter
8. Leeds University
9. Queen's University of Belfast
10. University of Brighton
11. Manchester Metropolitan University
12. University of the West of England
13. Newcastle University

14. Queen Mary University
15. University of Edinburgh
16. King's College London
17. Nottingham University
18. Swansea University
19. Nottingham Trent University
20. Cardiff University
21. University of Chester
22. Durham University
23. University of East Anglia
24. Anglia Ruskin University
25. De Montfort University
26. University of Coventry
27. London School of Economics

Funders (Interviews)

1. The Royal Society
2. Cancer Research UK
3. Wellcome
4. The British Academy
5. The Leverhulme Trust
6. UKRI
7. MRC
8. ESRC
9. HEFCW
10. SFC
11. Research England

Approach to sector-wide action: post-engagement

- Following engagement, we revised the approach to focus on:
 - Areas that require collective effort to make a difference, as opposed to individual commitments that can be delivered at organisational level
 - The need for a structure and mechanism through which collective action could be taken, i.e. the Forum.
 - Taking stock of the actions that institutions and funders are already undertaking – this provided insight into good practice and sector-wide gaps. i.e. identification of the priority areas of work
- A skeleton of the outputs of this process was taken to the sector-wide event in February 2024

The Forum – 24 February 2024

Aims of the day:

- To refine the outputs from the engagement process, i.e.,
 - Agree sector priorities
 - Decide how the priorities could be delivered – developing a Forum
 - A way forward through commitment to collaborative action
- To share knowledge and practice
 - Speakers from Wellcome, British Academy, Newcastle University, and University of Glasgow



Outputs from the Forum

1 Public statement

Committing to uphold the **three principles** and to focus our efforts on **the priority areas**

3 Principles

- We will tackle issues at the **interface of research organisations and funders**, and those that have the potential to effect sector-wide change
- We will observe **equity in the process**, ensuring that all organisations are able to contribute to and benefit from the Forum regardless of their status
- We will **openly share the outputs** of our collective efforts for the benefit of the wider sector

6 Priority areas

1. Map of **available support from UK funders to support minoritised groups**, to understand different approaches across sector
2. Sector guidance on mechanism for introducing **positive action**.
3. **Data-gathering specifications and protocols and** move the sector towards a more consistent data-sharing framework
4. **Guidelines on implementing effective standardised approach to demand management of funding calls** to ensure ED&I is considered in both the design and execution of the funding calls
5. **Map of the funding process** to identify the intersection points of funders and institutions, that could benefit from a coordinated action to effectively support minority groups in a way that avoids duplication of efforts and creation of additional administrative burdens on both sides
6. **Mechanisms to mitigate the negative effect of quick turnaround and short-term funding calls**, such as more use of pre-announcements and wider information sharing on upcoming calls

What's next and how can you get involved?



Equity and Inclusivity in Research Funding Forum: Research Funder and University Joint Statement

A shared action plan for a more equitable, diverse and inclusive research funding ecosystem

(April 2024 - Final Draft)

We, the members of this Forum, acknowledge the well-documented [systemic barriers and challenges](#) that individuals in marginalised groups face to secure research funding. We agree that bringing a wider range of people into the research community supports the robustness of research.

We also recognise that effective change can be accelerated through collective sector-wide coordinated action that will complement what individual organisations are already doing.

Principles: Our focus

The focus of the Forum is on equity and inclusivity in *research funding* specifically, and by signing up to this statement we agree to work together according to the following principles. These principles will also guide us in selecting what we will do as a Forum.

Currently (May 2024):

- Refined all documents post-forum: i) principles, 2) priority areas, 3) terms of reference
- Engaging further with HEIs/Funders
- Securing sign-ups to joint statement and terms of reference
- Writing sector blog / update webpage
- Convening the internal working group
- Inviting others to join us in this journey to transform the funding ecosystem

To get involved and find out more, please visit:
<https://researchsupport.web.ox.ac.uk/equity-and-inclusivity-in-research-funding>



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Discussion with Q&A



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