

Progression Framework Implementation Group (PFIG)
Terms of Reference
November 2023

Background

The Royal Academy of Engineering (the Academy), and Science Council jointly developed a [Diversity and Inclusion progression framework](#) in 2016 to support professional bodies in discussing, planning and assessing their progress against key areas of professional body activity.

The first benchmarking exercise was carried out in 2017 and most recently 2021. The most recent provided five [joint recommendations](#) to support the two bodies in their collective progress.

Purpose

The purpose of the implementation group is to support the Science and Engineering professional bodies to make measurable progress on diversity and inclusion in the profession. It will do this by:

1. Developing and monitoring the delivery of an action plan to drive change across the professions - in order to advance diversity and inclusion in our sectors, for the benefit of society.
2. Supporting and encouraging engagement with diversity and inclusion (D&I) frameworks, tools and accountability mechanisms (including the progression framework) that have the potential to deliver change through measurable, outcomes focused activity.
3. Conducting cross sector activity that provides an overview of progress against D&I goals across the engineering and science professional bodies, for example benchmarking exercises.
4. Providing organisations with research, good practice and tools to encourage D&I being properly resourced, recognised and embedded within their organisations.
5. Reporting back on progress and provide advice and guidance to the PEC, the Academy and Science Council EDI steering group.
6. Convening space for discussion, support, information sharing between D&I leads in the professional bodies (at least 3 times a year).

Governance

Membership and appointment

1. The steering group Chair shall be a leader, (CEO, deputy or executive level EDI Champion / practitioner) of a Professional Engineering Institution or Science Council member body. Candidates may be proposed by the Academy and the Science Council in consultation with the outgoing Chair, the steering group and the D&I committee chairs of the Academy and Science Council. The Chair will alert all PEI and Science Council bodies when an opening exists to encourage a more transparent process. The outgoing Chair may offer a casting

- vote, if more than one suitable candidate emerges after this process.
2. The steering group Chair will promote the work of this group at PEC, the Science Council and other bodies and events; to inspire, educate and encourage co-ordinated strategies and interventions that embed D&I at the heart of organisations.
 3. The steering group Chair will work with the secretariat from the Science Council and Academy to review and refresh the steering group bi-annually to ensure there are at least 10 members of PEIs and Science Council bodies (5 members from each; joint members can represent both science and engineering).
 4. Membership of the group should normally be for a period of two years, extendable by one-year periods, with consideration to the limited resources of some organisations. This ensures that there is regular rotation of the Chair and members, such that all those who want to contribute to the work of the steering group will have, over time, the opportunity to do so.
 5. Appointments to the group shall be by consent of the steering group through the Chair. An annual communication will be circulated to all bodies of PEC and the Science Council to invite attendance to the steering group or working groups.
 6. The Group may co-opt up to four members who are not representatives of a science or engineering professional institution in order to provide expertise not held by the other members and to promote diversity of steering group membership. They will have the same terms as members.

Meetings of the Group

1. The Group shall meet at least three times per year and at other times agreed mainly for working groups and events.
2. The quorum at a Group meeting shall be five members, not including the ex-officio secretariat.
3. The Group secretariat (RAEng and Science Council) shall ensure that clear notes and time-based actions are taken at every meeting which will be provided to the group and available to the D&I committees of the Academy and Science Council.
4. The meetings will be conducted on the basis of inclusive meeting principles (see Appendix 1)
5. Representatives are expected to attend at least two of the three annual meetings. Attendance is reviewed on an annual basis and members will be asked to reaffirm commitment to positively contribute to meetings and discussion.
6. This group will provide an annual report to the Academy D&I committee, Science Council EDI steering group, and to PEC. The group's report should include, but not be confined to, the achievement of its objectives, challenges and next steps.

Ex-officio members

- Academy D&I manager (joint secretariat).
- Science Council membership manager (joint secretariat).

Appendix 1

Inclusive meetings – Principles and Guidance for PFIG members

The Royal Academy of Engineering and the Science Council are committed to fostering greater diversity and inclusion in our professional communities. We want to ensure that the spaces we facilitate are inclusive and accessible.

PFIG seeks to create spaces, both offline and online, that are welcoming and respectful. This document provides a framework for the PFIG (Progression Framework Implementation Group) to hold meetings and events that offer a safer and inclusive space for everyone.

We have a responsibility, a duty of care, and obligations under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure nobody experiences discrimination, harassment, bullying or poor treatment in the spaces we create, including for PFIG members.

To achieve this, we agree to:

- Be proactive in making our events and meetings accessible, including regular access/comfort breaks, clear joining instructions, and checking on any access needs.
- Take any instance of discrimination, bullying and harassment seriously, and take steps to address it.
- Respect one another's space and boundaries, including respecting how members choose to participate if the content of discussions is particularly sensitive for them.
- Take responsibility for our own behaviour, recognising that how our behaviour impacts another person is more important than how it may have been intended. This means being open and responsive to feedback about our behaviour.
- Be mindful of the language we use, the impact it may have on others, and to respect requests to change our language if asked.
- Avoid making assumptions about one another's identities, beliefs or opinions, or personal circumstances.
- Respect the meeting chair and the etiquette of the event, such as muting microphones when not speaking, and being aware of how much we might be contributing to the meeting and ensuring there is space for others to speak.
- Respect and listen to everyone's ideas and perspectives unless they make the space less inclusive.

If you witness inappropriate behaviour at a PFIG meeting or event, you could either:

- Raise your hand to speak and challenge the behaviour, if you feel able to
- Privately message or approach the chair or secretariat explaining the issue
- Raise the issue outside the event with the chair or secretariat.

PFIG welcomes any feedback on how we might improve this policy and make PFIG events, meetings and activities inclusive and welcoming.