

Innovate UK

Statement of Intent - diversity and inclusion

As the UK's innovation agency we exist to drive economic growth by investing and supporting innovative companies. We recognise that the best ideas for innovation can come from anyone and that diversity in teams¹ and within businesses is proven to contribute to enhanced performance and commercial success^{2,3}.

At Innovate UK we aim to encourage and support diversity and inclusion in all we do as an innovation investor, partner and employer. This is to ensure that we are supporting the best ideas and most talented innovators within UK businesses.

Innovate UK has been in operation since 2007. The organisation has grown from a start-up to a maturing medium-sized enterprise. Now is the right time to formalise the principles of diversity and inclusion by which we will strive to work and to examine where there are opportunities for us to improve in our working practices, both internal and external, in order to fully reflect our aim.

We will publish a strategy and action plan for diversity and inclusion by the end of March 2017. Prior to this there are a number of actions we need to take to ensure that the strategy we develop and deliver against is evidence based and will have maximum impact.

As an investor we will

- improve our data collection so we can build a better understanding of who we are investing in and who is applying to us for funding
- build a library of evidence and key facts on diversity and inclusion in innovation and use this to ensure that we make evidence-based decisions about future activity
- learn from our infocus awards for Women in Innovation and associated action research and use this to inform future actions
- review our processes for awarding funding and explore if there are ways to improve diversity
- not engage in positive discrimination, but seek to support the best opportunities, whoever puts them forward - our focus will be to identify underrepresented groups and to encourage them to come forward to engage in innovation; seeking to understand any specific barriers that might exist and helping innovators to overcome them
- champion diversity in our communications and outreach activity by building on the momentum gathered and lessons learned from our infocus communications campaign

¹ Harvard Business Review, The Case for Team Diversity Gets Even Better - https://hbr.org/2014/03/the-case-for-team-diversity-gets-even-better&cm_sp=Article-_-Links-_-End%20of%20Page%20Recirculation

² BIS Occasional Paper No. 4, The Business Case for Equality and Diversity: A Survey of the Academic Literature - <http://www.raeng.org.uk/publications/other/the-business-case-for-equality-and-diversity>

³ McKinsey & Company, Diversity Matters, November 2014 - http://www.womenofinfluence.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Diversity_matters_2014.pdf

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As a partner we will

- identify key UK organisations that have closely aligned ambitions and agree joint plans for working in partnership
- work with global innovation agencies to share experiences, data and identify best practice
- encourage the adoption of complementary approaches to encourage diversity and inclusion across the wider Innovate UK family (Catapults and Innovation Networks)

As an employer we will

- review the impacts of activities initiated to encourage diversity and inclusion to date
- identify steps to ensure that our work to date and in future is embedded as part of the Innovate UK psyche – including recruitment, training and working practices
- where appropriate, develop preferred scenarios for diversity and inclusion across the office and governance structures

To advise us on all of our work in this area we will establish a Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Board.

We will develop options for future action to improve diversity and inclusion looking at all of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010⁴ and other groups that are underrepresented in innovation. We will make decisions on where to focus our efforts based on where the available evidence shows us we can make the most difference.

If you would like to discuss our plans for diversity and inclusion please contact the diversity and inclusion team via support@innovateuk.gov.uk.

Innovate UK is the UK's innovation agency. Innovate UK works with people, companies and partner organisations to find and drive the science and technology innovations that will grow the UK economy - delivering productivity, new jobs and exports. Our aim at Innovate UK is to keep the UK globally competitive in the race for future prosperity.

Innovate UK is the trading name of the Technology Strategy Board, which is an executive non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, and incorporated by Royal Charter in England and Wales with company number RC000818. Registered office: North Star House, North Star Avenue, Swindon SN2 1UE.

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⁴ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/4>