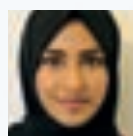




EQUALITY, DIVER AND INCLUSION



Lead Council Representative
Tahmina Hussain and
Supporting Council Member

Colin Mudd give an update on the newly formed IBMS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group, after which we meet the new members.

Thank you to all our members who came forward to express an interest in contributing towards our new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Working Group at the IBMS. It was heartening to see that our members consider EDI so

important. Those who offered support showed that we are indeed a diverse workforce. We are pleased to say that discussions are well under way for the launch of this new group, which will be taking place very shortly. We are really looking forward to working with our members and getting to know them as we embark on this journey of promoting an equal and inclusive future for our profession. It will be great to hear of other people's experiences – if positive, it will be encouraging, if negative, that will give us the motivation to improve everyone's experience. We want to ensure everyone knows that their differences are respected, appreciated and celebrated and that their contributions are valued, no matter what their background or identity.

The IBMS values the diversity of the membership, recognises the importance of an inclusive working environment and having a workforce that is representative and accepting of all communities. Our working group will promote and champion equality, diversity and inclusion across all backgrounds. The work we carry out initially will be based on the results of the benchmarking reports from 2017 and 2021, which will help us to identify the key aims and objectives to effectively embed governance and leadership of the

equality, diversity and inclusion agenda into the work of the IBMS.

Currently we have limited data on the backgrounds of individuals within the membership. To enable us to monitor the workforce diversity statistics, we intend to gather data via the new website, as this will help us to monitor and measure progress and target interventions more clearly. It's extremely important that we hear back from the full range of the membership – engaging members with the work we plan to carry out can also help individuals to identify the diversity and inclusion impacts in their own areas of work and contribute towards the overall ambitions of our professional body.

It is envisaged that equality, diversity and inclusion will be an important issue moving forward and we are delighted that there is support from the President and the Executive team at the IBMS.

We hope to be very pro-active in promoting and celebrating difference within our profession. We believe that this will lead to our members having an enhanced experience of inclusivity, and through education and effective communication we will all benefit regardless of our background and experience.

We hope that in future we will be able to reach out to our members in a positive way by providing opportunities for presentations and hopefully road shows highlighting individuals' experiences. We would like to work with the branches and regions of the IBMS to effect this.

SITY



MEET THE GROUP MEMBERS

TAHMINA HUSSAIN

**Lecturer in Biomedical Science,
University of Salford**

When I was elected as a council member in June 2021, I was asked what I hoped to bring to the IBMS during my term. I explained that I felt my appointment was a valuable opportunity to contribute towards the representation of all communities and that I wanted to help the full diversity of voices in the profession to thrive. I think this is a fantastic opportunity to be in a position where I can help break down barriers, promote diversity and successfully champion the diversity of our members. Visibility is extremely important to me and so the main change I want to see from the work of this group is inclusivity for all members.

COLIN MUDD

**Higher Specialist Biomedical
Scientist, Nottingham University
Hospitals NHS Trust**

I am delighted to be involved with the IBMS EDI group. As a member of the IBMS Council, I am very keen that we do something positive for our membership. ED and I issues are close to my heart. Having been in the profession for over 40 years, I have seen so many positive changes. However, as a profession,

we of course mirror society as a whole and as such we will always have areas in which we can improve knowledge and understanding. With this comes greater inclusivity and acceptance.

For me the best part of EDI is the “D” bit – diversity. The difference I see in people today is they are more able to express themselves, which is truly inspiring. I am absolutely sure that we can all contribute and make our world a more interesting and colourful place.

IMEOBONG ANTIA

**Lecturer in Clinical Biochemistry,
University of Central Lancashire**

I wanted to be part of the group so I could advocate for and contribute to the improvement of EDI in the IBMS.

I would like to see more integration of EDI into the heart (policies and practices) of the IBMS, thus ensuring that all members are listened to, valued and treated equally. Diversity should be reflected in our leadership, especially the representation of minority ethnic people in leadership positions. We should be aiming for above the

minimum EDI compliance/benchmarks and strive to become a leading example among professional organisations.

MUNEEBAH JASAT

**Trainee Biomedical Scientist
in Immunology**

I have decided to join the EDI Working Group to demonstrate to young women from ethnic minority backgrounds the opportunities they have in biomedical science. By joining, I aim to highlight the key role ethnic minority scientists can play for the NHS and to promote inclusivity and diversity of biomedical science in its various disciplines. One of my targets would also be to showcase to the wider public the work we as

biomedical scientists engage in and to promote careers in this field to students of all backgrounds. I am a flexible, self-starting, organised and accommodating person. I am well-travelled and attuned to cultural sensitivities. My

communication skills with people from all walks of life are second to none. Most importantly, I have a keen eye for improving processes and generating efficiency for the improvement of any work setting I put my mind to.



*“I wanted to be part of the group
so I could advocate for and
contribute to the improvement
of EDI in the IBMS”*



ELIZABETH HEATH

**Biomedical Scientist, band 5,
Public Health Wales, Cardiff**

I am a biomedical scientist currently completing my specialist portfolio in sunny Wales. I applied to be involved in this project because I'm an Equality Officer in Unite the union. I really care about equality and want to help push things forward for as many minority groups as possible, wherever I work. I'm really interested in how to make workplaces better for minorities, particularly disabled people, as I think laboratories have a long way to go to improve accessibility.

I'm a queer woman with Chinese heritage and depression/anxiety, so I tick a lot of the protected characteristics boxes and have a real passion to make things better.

SIMONE GIRDHAM

Biomedical Scientist

I want to be part of the IBMS EDI group because I believe that to effect change we need to look at the whole system and I think the IBMS can make an impact.

There is a wonderful cartoon which explains the differences between equality and equity – and I want to help remove those barriers.

I believe that people should be able to go to work as themselves and they should be treated with kindness and respect, with the same opportunities available to all.

I would like to work in a system where labels are not required, where everyone is celebrated for the unique contributions that they bring.

“I’m a queer woman with Chinese heritage and depression/anxiety, so I tick a lot of the protected characteristics boxes”

I aim to provide a voice for my colleagues and thus help enable a future whereby they feel included, supported and valued.

ROWAN HENRY

**Senior Biomedical Scientist: POCT
COVID-19 Testing Deputy Manager,
Berkshire and Surrey Pathology
Services**

I wanted to join this group to see a change in scientists from all backgrounds taking the opportunity to push themselves forward through the IBMS channels of further education, workplace-based learning and enthusiasm to take the next step. I also want to work on aspects of representation by supporting and developing well-established reports and data capturing – an example being the Diversity and Inclusion Progression Framework – to highlight the importance of being visible.

ZOE ROBERTSON

**Rapid Molecular Lead, Hosted by
Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust**

My current role is as a Band 7 Biomedical Scientist Rapid Molecular Lead, covering the rapid COVID testing service at the six hospitals of Imperial

NHS Trust. Before that my background was in microbiology where I have worked for Southampton Hospital Trust and North Hampshire Hospital Trust.

I am part of the LGBTQ community and have been fortunate to work for three very different hospital trusts. I want to bring my differing experiences from working both in London and Hampshire, to hopefully positively promote equality, inclusion and diversity in the biomedical profession.

FRANCIS YONGBLAH

**Laboratory Manager and Higher
Specialist Scientist Trainee, Clinical
Scientist – Great Ormond Street
Hospital NHS Foundation Trust**

As an LGBTQ+ British Asian male, I think it is imperative that EDI is at the forefront of driving change within healthcare science. I remember coming into the profession as a trainee and always being worried to be my full self at work. As I've grown and built my career, I feel that I have grown the confidence and strength to be myself. I wanted to be part of the EDI group in order to raise awareness of the different backgrounds that make up our IBMS members. One key thing that I really want to achieve is to break down barriers and unconscious bias, which I still think is present today. I also want to work to raise awareness to our members of the number

of different cultures and backgrounds that make up our amazing profession, building “emotional intelligence” amongst members and leaders.

JEMMA SHEAD

Biomedical Scientist (Advanced Diagnostics), Health Services Laboratories, London

As a proud member of the LGBTQ+ community, I am simultaneously inspired and frustrated by the EDI developments made to date.

I aspire to highlight the importance of intersectionality and the complex diversity needs of all IBMS members that should not, and must not, be ignored. I believe that projects should be evidence-based, easily implemented and engaging, with a focus on the most under-represented minorities.

I am confident that through discussion, collaboration and education, participation in the EDI Working Group will be an opportunity to build upon the progress already achieved, giving a voice and making changes that will benefit our whole profession, not just those affiliated with the IBMS.

DIVINE AZANGE

Pathology Transformation Implementation Lead

My drive to be part of the EDI group at the IBMS comes from my own lived experience and data that indicate differential experiences and outcomes for staff from under-represented groups, compared to other groups. This is a sad reality and all too familiar within our scientific community.

The work we do as biomedical scientists in improving the quality of results comes with the realisation that quality cannot



“I understand that many like me need to overcome barriers to enter a career in biomedical science”

thrive where inequalities exist.

For me, EDI is critical for service sustainability, quality, patient outcomes and staff experience.

I would like to see the IBMS and its members as exemplars in driving excellence in EDI as they are quality, given that the two are intrinsically linked.

I want every scientist to reach their full potential without fear of discrimination or prejudice and believing that any protected characteristics do not predetermine career opportunities or work experience.

I would like to see the adoption of positive attitudes to broaden access, redress power imbalances, build collaborative partnerships, develop and sustain clear lines of communication and equitably provide opportunities for inclusive participation to enable all biomedical scientists to fulfil their potential.

LAVANYA KANAPATHYPILLAI

Specialist Biomedical Scientist, Cellular Pathology

I see the EDI group as an opportunity to create awareness of diversity in biomedical science. Diversity

brings inclusiveness to the workplace. It adds to providing the best quality of healthcare by widening the possibility of diverse contributions.

Although I am already seeing change, I'd like to see representation and progression of ethnic staff in biomedical scientist roles. For this reason, I was pleased to find out about the IBMS EDI group. I understand that many like me need to overcome barriers to enter a career in biomedical science. I would like to help bridge these barriers by creating awareness in the discipline. I hope by working with the IBMS EDI team, we can identify gaps and propose improvements to help biomedical scientists and aspiring biomedical scientists of ethnic backgrounds. I am excited and look forward to seeing the change the EDI Working Group will bring.

JAMAL ZAHID

HHTO Manufacturing NHS Blood and Transplant

The reason I wanted to be in this group is because I believe an inclusive and diverse environment is critical to our future as biomedical scientists. Especially, after the pandemic, I have seen the shift in our workforce. So many different types of people from all walks of life have joined us for the greater good. Especially the youth, who hold the future, are of a very accepting mindset. Our roles as seniors are to cater to this mindset – to make an inclusive environment for all to thrive in. My goal is to coach, mentor and help as many people as I can to succeed in our inclusive and diverse environment haven. I want to break those barriers and, through intersectionality, create those empathetic relationships between youth and seniors. As a strong Muslim man from the American Midwest, I have faced my share of adversity during my journey, and I want to clear those roadblocks for the next generation of biomedical scientists. 