



From research to policy to practice:

Minimising Exclusionary Structural Barriers for Research Environments

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CONTEXT : EDI IS NOT WORKING

EDI and Research Careers: The evidence

Women have a **lower success rate** and **request smaller grants** (Guyan et al., 2019).

Non-white PIs receive, on average, **10% less funding** (HESA, 2023).

Women's research **less eligible for research assessment exercises**. (HEFCE, 2023) .

Female HE researchers experience more '**research thematic adjustments**' (Minello et al., 2021; Bhopal & Henderson, 2021; Aiston & Fo, 2021)

Less than 1% non-white PIs across all subjects (HESA, 2023).

Intersectionality bites: 61 Black female professors of 23,000 UK professors (WHEN, 2023).

References: Aiston, S.J. & Fo, C.K. (2021). The silence of academic women. *Gender and Education*. [Online]. 33 (2), p.p. 138–155. *Boehm, C. (2023). Editorial Perspectives - Arts, Whiteness and Power in University 3.0 T. Welikala & C. Boehm (eds.). In: Philosophy and Theory in Higher Education*. 5 (3). *Boehm, C., Adefila, A. & Welikala, T. (2024). From "whiteness" to the privilege continuum: Contemplating EDI, its language and how it supports researcher careers. Exchanges: The Interdisciplinary Research Journal. Special Issue: Researcher Careers*. [Online]. 11 (3). *Bhopal, K. & Henderson, H. (2021). Competing inequalities: gender versus race in higher education institutions in the UK. Educational Review*. [Online]. 73 (2), p.p. 153–169. *Guyan, D.K., Oloyede, F.D. (2019). AdvanceHE - Equality, diversity and inclusion in research and innovation: UK review. UK review*. *Welikala, T. (2023). Editorial Perspective - Confronting Coloniality and Whiteness in Higher Education: From What 'Is' to What 'If'. C. Boehm & T. Welikala (eds.). Forthcoming in: Philosophy and Theory in Higher Education*. *HEFCE (2023). Analysis of inclusion for submission, representation in outputs attribution and scoring - REF 2021 (Higher Education Funding Council for England)*. [Online]. 2023. *HESA (2023). Higher Education Staff Statistics: UK, 2021/22 | HESA*. [Online]. 17 January 2023. *Minello, A., Martucci, S. & Manzo, L.K.C. (2021). The pandemic and the academic mothers: present hardships and future perspectives. European Societies*. [Online]. 23 (sup1), p.p. S82–S94. *WHEN (2023). 100 Black Women Professors NOW. WHEN - Women's Higher Education Network*. [Online]. 19 September 2023.

Key UKRI commissioned Policy Report

➡ Guyan, D.K., Oloyede, F.D. (2019). AdvanceHE - Equality, diversity and inclusion in research and innovation: UK review.

➡ "insufficient evidence", "no statistically significant results about the efficacy", "lack of evidence", "some positive results"

Current Mainstream EDI supports incremental progress, at best!

PROBLEM : WE FOCUS ON INDIVIDUAL DEFICITS RATHER THAN INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

Our standards, processes and practices are **not neutral** Because

... research systems in UK built, developed, authored still mostly **by white men (& few white women, almost no black women)**

... and awareness is only emerging of how a colonial past influenced institutions of today.

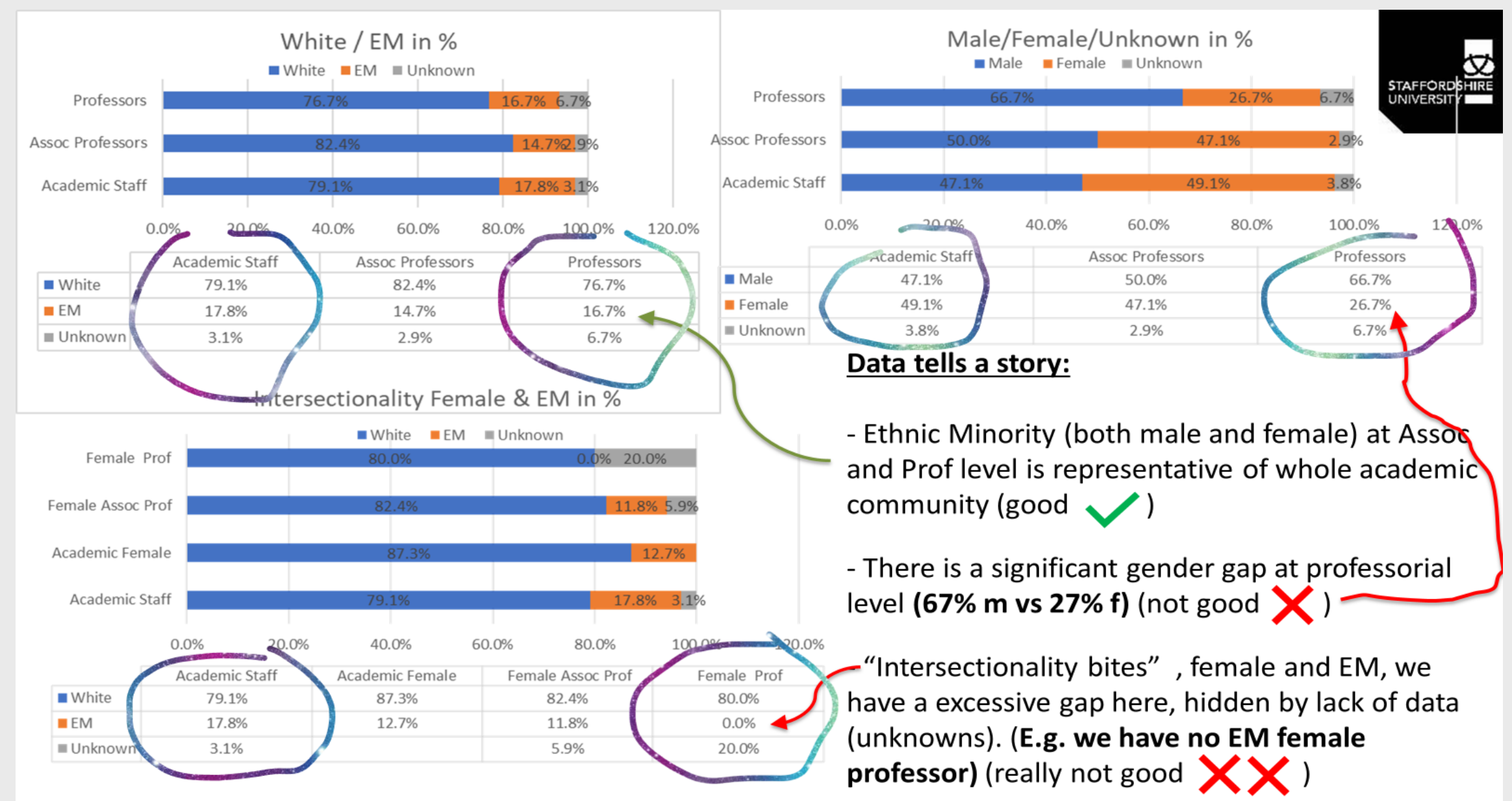
... current research cultures were largely established when interdisciplinarity was not valued as highly

ACTIONS: DATA, PRACTICES, POLICY

- Data Gap Analysis, incl. Intersectionality
- Dashboards development, compare with sector data
- Launch of positive action initiatives
- Institutional Documents and Policy Review
- Develop new guidance
- Underpin by research

SOLUTION: FOCUS ON THE 'INSTITUTIONAL'

- **Avoid deficit models**
- Interrogate concepts of "merit" or "excellence" or "rigour"
- **Equity**, not Equality
- Consistency, not conformity
- Monitor **intersectionalities**
- More **positive / affirmative action**
- Provide space for a deeper discourse to minimise baked-in exclusionary practices
- Provide guidance to assessors
- Encourage all voices
- Be alert to **gatekeeping phrases for interdisciplinary research** (e.g. 'research depth', 'research focus')
- Be alert to methodological biases
- Consider how to **neutralise social capital** in research career progression (e.g. how to secure good external references)



Staffordshire University Professorial Data, 2022

- Internal RIE implementation plan - assumed EDI is not named as a key priority
- HREIR Concordat Excellence in Research Action plan - 2021 (environment & culture / professional and career development) includes equality as a broad heading
- REF 21 Code of practice for researchers (66 mentions of equality) [ref2021-code-of-practice.pdf \(staffs.ac.uk\)](#)
- Code of conduct for Research and research integrity (0 mentions of equality) [Research integrity - Staffordshire University \(staffs.ac.uk\)](#)
- Framework for good research practice June 22 - Equality included as a broad statement EIA's - (7 mentions of equality) [framework-for-good-research-practice.pdf \(staffs.ac.uk\)](#)
- CEDARS Aug 2021 - 29 women / 38 men (67 from 175 sent)
- Advance HE Athena Swan – GAP
- Advance HE Racial equality Charter (REC) GAP currently those signed up (a small number are beginning to be awarded) all are all in the Bronze Category
- EDI SU Policy and Procedures GAP research culture or EDI in research are not currently included
- EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION FRAMEWORK 24-28 - Broad statement

Staffordshire University Research EDI documents review, 2023

