



Policy covers:	EDI and PPI in research
Relevant to:	Applicants and grant holders
What is this?	This policy sets out NICHHS's commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion in research. It explains what we expect from organisations and researchers applying for or receiving funding.
Key points:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You must follow relevant equality legislation and have appropriate policies in place • You must promote fair and inclusive research environments • You must consider EDI and (where appropriate) PPI in your research design • You should explain your approach to inclusion in your application • We monitor diversity data and act to improve our funding programme
Last updated:	December 2025
Review cycle:	Annual
Applies from:	Updates apply to current and ongoing awards unless stated otherwise

NICHHS position on Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in research

Purpose

This document sets out NICHHS's commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in research. It explains what we expect from organisations and researchers applying for or receiving NICHHS funding, and how we embed EDI across our research programme.

Commitment

Northern Ireland Chest Heart & Stroke (NICHHS) is committed to promoting equality, diversity, and non-discrimination.

We ensure all individuals are treated with dignity and respect, regardless of race, gender, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or socio-economic background, in line with:

- The Northern Ireland Order 2003
- Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

Definitions

- **EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion):** Promoting fairness, recognising differences, and ensuring equal access and participation in research.
- **PPI (Personal and Public Involvement):** Ensuring people have meaningful opportunities to shape and contribute to research design and delivery.

NICHHS approach

We aim to fund the best research while promoting a diverse and inclusive research culture. We will:

- **Ensure fair and transparent funding processes.** Success is determined by clearly described criteria and processes.

- **Apply principles of expert, independent review.** We will ensure that membership to any committee / panels that have a say in our grant decision is fair and inclusive.
- **Promote inclusive committee and panel membership**
- **Support researcher development across career stages**
- **Prioritise research that appropriately considers EDI and PPI.** We will prioritise funding research that clearly demonstrates a commitment to the principles of EDI and PPI.
- **Monitor diversity data and use it to improve our programme**

This approach forms part of NICHHS's wider EDI framework. See also [NICHHS | Modern Slavery Statement](#) and Human Rights policy (available on request).

Expectations of organisations we fund

Organisations¹ must:

- Comply with relevant equality legislation (Northern Ireland or equivalent)
- Have policies in place to prevent and address discrimination
- Apply those policies to all staff, partners, and third parties

Organisations must investigate allegations of discrimination in a fair and timely manner and:

- Protect the rights of all involved
- Take appropriate action
- Report incidents where required

It is the organisation's responsibility to make sure there are equivalent policies in place that cover any third party or partner organisation

At the point of application, organisations must confirm that:

- The Principal Applicant (and sponsor/supervisor where relevant) is not subject to an upheld allegation of discrimination with an active sanction or disciplinary warning

[ECNI - The Law, Equality Legislation, Equality Commission, Northern Ireland](#)

Expectations of researchers and research teams

We expect research teams and funded organisations to:

- Provide equitable opportunities within research teams
- Consider diversity when forming research teams, including PPI where appropriate
- Ensure training and development opportunities are equitable
- Ensure relevant team members are appropriately trained in EDI
- Provide meaningful and proportionate PPI opportunities where relevant
- Consider the needs and values of the populations who may benefit from the research

Research should be inclusive in a way that is appropriate to its aims. Not all projects require co-production, but inclusion must be considered and justified.

Expectations within applications

Applicants should:

- Describe who may benefit from the research, including relevant population groups
- Explain how EDI and PPI have been considered in the design
- Explain how EDI has been considered in their team composition
- Justify their approach where inclusion is limited or not applicable

Data collection and reporting

¹ to which the researcher and their team are affiliated / employed

Grant holders must:

- Record and report relevant diversity data relating to research participants and research teams
- Make this information available, even where it is not used in analysis

Access to funding

We aim to ensure our funding is open and accessible. We will:

- Maintain broad eligibility criteria across career stages
- Ensure application guidance is clear and accessible
- Provide responsive support to applicants

Monitoring and evaluation

NICHHS will monitor and evaluate EDI across the research programme. This includes:

- Monitoring application and award data to identify potential bias
- Reviewing and improving diversity within the Scientific Research Committee
- Monitoring and improving PPI within funded research
- Improving accessibility of the funding process (e.g. clear guidance, assistive approaches)
- Tracking funding distribution across disease areas
- Assessing how research outputs reflect and benefit diverse populations

NICHHS will use this information to identify issues, take action, and improve processes over time

Compliance and accountability

- Compliance with this policy forms part of grant conditions
- NICHHS will monitor adherence and may request information or take action where required

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated to reflect changes in legislation, guidance, and best practice.

Approved by: SLT

Date: 21.05. 2025