

NBIC-FTMA Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategy

At NBIC, we are committed to fostering an inclusive environment through an effective Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) framework that benefits our employees, researchers, and industry partners. The principles of our strategy for the delivery of NBIC-FTMA are listed below.

- The NBIC-FTMA is 'geographically inclusive', open to NBIC academic partners and industry members across the country, which aims to contribute to promoting diversity, reducing disparities, fostering collaboration, and ensuring that the benefits of research opportunities are accessible to participants from all geographic backgrounds.
- EDI expectations and requirements are clearly stated in the call for the NBIC-FTMA project proposals. This includes encouraging diverse teams, ensuring fair treatment, and promoting inclusivity. The acknowledgement of the importance of diversity and inclusion in the research community is embedded within the call documentation, highlighting that diverse perspectives contribute to more comprehensive and robust research outcomes.
- Calls for NBIC-FTMA proposals are openly advertised through wide-reaching channels and using inclusive language in all communications related to the NBIC FTMA call, avoiding any terms or phrases that might discourage individuals from underrepresented backgrounds from applying.
- The calls for NBIC-FTMA proposals are promoted to diverse communities. This includes reaching out to underrepresented groups, organisations, and institutions between NBIC academic partners and industry members to encourage a broad range of applicants to participate.
- Since NBIC-FTMA projects will be awarded to and carried out at a number of organisations in different sectors, applicants are asked, at the application stage, to describe their strategy and demonstrate their commitment to EDI in their proposals. This forms a part of the proposal assessment process.
- Holding an open call for NBIC-FTMA projects, with flexibility on projects timelines and possibility of carrying the projects on part-time basis, aims to enable applicants for effective planning of activities around their other professional commitments, personal circumstances and other matters, where the activities would not be otherwise feasible for some to undertake under more stringent application and delivery times e.g. teaching periods, school holidays, issues with obtaining visas, etc.



- Diverse review panels will be assembled to assess and approve the proposals for NBIC FTMA. These will include a selection of representatives from the NBIC Industrial Advisory Board and the Executive Management Team from relevant industry sectors and scientific areas of expertise. For project proposals involving early career researchers and / or technical professionals, a representative for the ECR and / or technical staff group will be sought to assess the project proposal. The diverse review panels will provide a range of backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives, ensuring a more equitable evaluation process.
- Blind review process is implemented for the submitted proposals, where reviewers will evaluate them without knowledge of the applicants' identities. This is intended to help reduce unconscious biases and to ensure that proposals are evaluated solely on their merits.
- The flexible eligibility criteria for NBIC-FTMA, with projects available to applicants from different career stages and paths and diverse sectors, as permitted and encouraged by the BBSRC, including investigators, postdoctoral research staff, research technical professionals, venture capitalists, technology transfer office, or other knowledge exchange and commercialisation professionals, aim to aid the diversity of applications and applicants, and to ensure that individuals from underrepresented groups are not inadvertently excluded.
- Case studies, highlighting achievements of the NBIC- FTMA recipients from diverse backgrounds will be created and shared across wide NBIC consortium to serve as inspiration and encouragement for others.
- NBIC collects and analyses EDI data on applicants and awardees. This will be done at the application stage for NBIC- FTMA projects. Apart from the data being required by the BBSRC, NBIC also collects geographical and industry sector data. This information will help us identify any disparities and inform strategies for improving NBIC EDI policy in future calls. All data are handled with care and in compliance with privacy regulations.
- The NBIC Operational Team will regularly assess the effectiveness of this EDI strategy. We provide an opportunity for confidential feedback from participants and stakeholders to make it possible for both applicants and the awardees to report on any EDI issues they encounter. Adjustments will be implemented based on the feedback and lessons learned.

