

## What protections can be put in place to support minoritised staff working in EDI in UK HE

*Minoritised staff working in EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) within UK HE are exhausted, disillusioned and disempowered as a result of how their work is intricately entwined with their identities. This EDI framework outlines three main issues and provides recommendations on how each of these can be tackled.*

### Issue #1

There is an increased risk of emotional exhaustion and burnout due to the personal nature of EDI work for minoritised staff



### What can be done?

**Mandated access to culturally competent wellbeing support** can be integrated as a requirement of engaging in EDI-related work. This could be funded by the institution in order to overcome feelings of distrust that currently exists among minoritised staff working in EDI. Such access will also provide official recognition that institutions fully understand the intense emotional impact that is a uniquely minoritised staff experience.

**Development of a policy of [reparative rest](#)** which mandates 'rest' periods for mental breaks from the impact of EDI roles on minoritised staff.



## Issue#2

In the absence of community, minoritised staff report ever-increasing isolation as they feel consistently misunderstood by their colleagues and eventually adopt what they term 'coerced silence' in order to avoid being seen as 'problematic'



## What can be done?

**Develop community-focused EDI support** which brings together minoritised staff working within EDI across different HEIs to counteract the overwhelming nature of independent EDI working. This can include:

**EDI forums:** where difficult situations can be openly discussed. These forums can form part of an online support hub/collective which serves to support its members (with topics and conversations held in private) and encourage cross-institution membership.

**EDI mentorship schemes:** which mandate connecting newer minoritised staff with more senior minoritised staff working in EDI.

**EDI networking events:** which enable staff members to advertise the work they are doing and foster partnerships across HEIs. This will tackle the limited impact that tends to erode staff members' wellbeing, especially if those outside of the EDI work space (and with some institutional clout) are in attendance.



### Issue#3

The lack of recognition for 'hidden' labour and a support system that is often impermanent and unreliable leaves minoritised staff feeling undervalued and worthless



### What can be done?

A form of regular recognition can be put in place which not only heralds the work done within EDI but provides consistent upskilling opportunities. This can include:



#### **Monthly EDI 'spotlights' within HE newsletters**

which could have some form of formal recognition and/or compensation attached such as access to EDI skill development workshops of the employees' choice.

**Recognition could be given to different categories of EDI work** e.g. 'grassroots advocacy'; 'policy change'; etc.

**Standardised practices** which recognise the unique weight associated with EDI work for minoritised staff such as: (1) inputting EDI into staff workloads; (2) making job sharing a norm for high-level EDI roles (where a minoritised staff member shares the role with a majority-identity staff member); (3) enabling 'buyout' opportunities for all staff who take on demanding EDI roles