

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan

2023 Update - one year on

July 2023

Image: PeterPencil



Modern Slavery Policy and Evidence Centre Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan – 2023 update

In April 2022, the Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy and Evidence Centre (Modern Slavery PEC) published its first [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion \(EDI\) strategy and Action Plan](#). This report provides an update on what we have done to implement this since April 2022. It also sets out what we plan to do until end March 2024 to continue to deliver on our EDI aims (see Annex A).

Introduction

From its inception, the Modern Slavery PEC was set up not only to build on existing research, but to enable the funding of a more diverse community of researchers, and to build bridges between different people and organisations involved in addressing modern slavery.

As set out in the 2022 EDI strategy and Action Plan the Centre has been committed to ensuring people with different experiences, backgrounds and expertise, have fair and equal access to opportunities the Centre provides. We have sought to embed EDI across all our work, including our operations, the research we fund, networks we develop and participate in, the activities we deliver and outputs we produce.

In our strategy and Action Plan we committed to four aims and set out the activities we planned to deliver in those areas. This report details the progress made against each of these aims, updates these aims and describes activities we plan to do over the next year. We will provide an update to this Action Plan in 2024, evaluating the impact of our activities and sharing learnings accessibly.

Our four aims for the remainder of the period are:

1. Equitably including individuals and communities with lived experience and those who work closely with them in the Modern Slavery PEC's work.
2. Improving diversity within the modern slavery research community, to effectively include individuals, communities and organisations with an interest in and affected by modern slavery
3. Incorporating learnings from research on the challenges and barriers to EDI within modern slavery research and promote findings among others working on modern slavery research.
4. Embedding EDI in internal operations and governance across the Centre.

We are grateful to all who have contributed to this work thus far. If you have any feedback, questions or suggestions on this document, please contact office@modernslaverypec.org

Aim 1: Equitably including individuals and communities with lived experience and those who work closely with them in the Modern Slavery PEC's work

The Modern Slavery PEC believes lived experience should be embedded as an essential part of research and policy in this area, both by supporting this within our Centre and across modern slavery research more generally. The table below sets out our 2022 Action Plan commitments and how we have addressed these.

Commitment	What we have done
<p>People with lived experience will be involved in all internal Modern Slavery PEC scope development and application review processes for future research calls, ensuring that involvement is appropriate, relevant and genuinely collaborative.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People with lived experience of modern slavery have participated in all research call development and/or application processes over the past year. • Feedback from those with lived experience who have worked with the Centre has been very positive, commending the PEC's commitment to meaningful inclusion and appreciating the skill and knowledge development opportunities. These include greater understanding of research application processes and topics within modern slavery research, as well as soft skills such as improvements in confidence, communication skills and practical experiences to use in job applications. • In 2022 the Centre also recruited a Peer Review College comprising of 51 experts whose role is to review and/or moderate applications to the Modern Slavery PEC's funding calls, 10% of whom have lived experience of modern slavery. People with lived experience of modern slavery have participated in a number of ways including as assessment panel members, moderators and interviewers.
<p>All future application proposals for research projects should include and clearly set out survivor involvement where appropriate, including safeguarding considerations. Throughout research we will provide guidance to teams to involve people with lived experience.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Modern Slavery PEC encourages researchers to include people with lived experience in the appropriate aspects of their research project; call documentation has outlined principles including ethics and safeguarding. Objectives and requirements of the inclusion of people with lived experience of modern slavery in research applications have been tailored to the content of the call. • Survivors have been included in different ways in new projects in different ways in new projects funded since 2022, including a research project exploring best practice in the engagement of people with lived experience of modern slavery in international policy and programming. • The Centre has continued to support research teams undertaking research projects which have included survivors in various ways, providing feedback on plans and outputs and sharing resources including our Safeguarding Policy and Meeting Rules designed to ensure a safe and productive space for all participants. We have observed teams using the meeting rules in events that they have organised, adapting them to their own requirements • We have also taken opportunities to share our learnings on safeguarding with other stakeholders. For example Modern Slavery PEC representatives spoke at an AHRC cohort event for Global Challenges Research Fund projects, with discussion focussed on how to operationalise concepts on safeguarding in devolved funding projects. • In May 2022 the Centre hosted a workshop with funded teams to discuss how research teams have engaged people with lived experience of modern slavery in their research and share learnings. The Centre published a blog that summarised this.

<p>We will continue to prioritise developing relationships with diverse survivor groups and organisations, sharing opportunities for and encouraging participation in our work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Centre has continued engagement with survivor organisations, including the formation of the Working Group of nine organisations working with modern slavery survivors, informed by engagement with other organisations (see below). • In June 2023 the Modern Slavery PEC co-hosted a two day conference with GFEMS and the Freedom Fund, for which the Centre led the recruitment and coordination of an Advisory Group of people with lived experience of modern slavery or who are from particularly affected communities, to ensure that the design of the conference was closely informed by the voices of those who the conference was aiming to reach and engage. The Advisory Group provided input on the conference topics as well as how to organise the conference so as to be as equitable and inclusive as possible. The Modern Slavery PEC published a follow-up blogpost with key takeaways from the conference and will be collaborating on two written outputs: a report by the Advisory Group on their work, and a conference report together with Freedom Fund and GFEMS.
<p>We will recruit a Lived Experience Manager to lead on the development of the Modern Slavery PEC’s survivor engagement work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following an open recruitment process, the Centre’s Lived Experience Engagement Manager started in their role in September 2022 and has led on the recruitment of the Lived Experience Engagement Coordinator and the development of the survivor engaged organisations working group and Lived Experience Advisory Panel. • The Lived Experience Engagement team has also introduced Identity disclosure guidance for lived experience in the workplace, ensuring people are provided with information and the support they need to make informed decisions about identity disclosure. The guidance takes into consideration the various outlets in which identity exposure might be a risk, and precautions one can take.
<p>We will recruit a Lived Experience Coordinator to support the development of and running of the Lived Experience Advisory Panel.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following an open recruitment process, the Centre’s Lived Experience Engagement Coordinator started in February 2023 to support the Lived Experience Engagement Manager. For this recruitment, the Modern Slavery PEC trialled additional guidance to applicants, through a written document shared alongside the application form with directed questions (recognising that gaps in CVs can be common for people with lived experience), as well as an opportunity to ask questions in an informal setting with two people with lived experience ahead of the formal interview process.
<p>We will set up a ‘Survivor-Engaged Organisations Modern Slavery PEC Working Group’ to advise and guide the Centre in key areas of its work that involve engaging with people with lived experience of modern slavery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2022, the Centre invited expressions of interest for membership of a Working Group aimed at bringing together a small number of civil society organisations from across the anti-slavery sector to identify, discuss and consolidate good practice in the inclusion of people who have lived experience of modern slavery in work that directly affects them and to ensure that the Modern Slavery PEC’s own work reflects that good practice. • The Working Group has met three times since its inception, developed its terms of reference and has identified a priority area of work on survivor payment standards. It has also been agreed that existing lived experience advisory groups are welcome to attend.
<p>We will set up the Lived Experience Advisory Panel. The Panel will involve people with lived experience in the Centre’s core work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Centre has recruited 6 members of our Lived Experience Advisory Panel (LEAP) which will support healthy and meaningful survivor engagement and inclusion across the Modern Slavery PEC’s work and develop best practice for engaging with people who have lived experience of modern slavery. This also included the appointment of a chair to ensure the LEAP is supported, trauma informed, and works in a manner that optimises the quality of the LEAP’s outputs. • The LEAP began working with the Modern Slavery PEC in June 2023, and will determine their own terms of reference and areas of work over the next few months.
<p>We will expand our inclusion of people with lived experience to other work, including our policy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Centre has developed an identity disclosure form for those with lived experience of modern slavery participating in its activities, with corresponding guidance to provide information and support to make informed decisions about identity disclosure.

influencing and communications activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The policy impact team has worked closely with the Lived Experience Engagement team to develop an Explainer on the modern slavery clauses in Illegal Migration Bill. • The Communications Team has worked with the Lived Experience Engagement Team on developing public key messaging for the organisation, including on specific issues such as the Illegal Migration Bill. • The Communications Teams regularly seeks feedback from the Lived Experience Engagement Team on messaging in major communications projects, such as press releases for individual publications being published. • We published blogs by people with lived experience and we are working to publish more blogs by people with lived experience, or using their voices and views recorded in the PEC-funded projects, in the nearest future.
We will seek additional routes to advertise our roles widely and in an accessible way for those with lived experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This year, the Centre has trialled job application guidance documentation describing in plain English what we are looking for from applicants, how they should complete the process and transparency on how we score and select applications. We have also undertaken wider targeted advertising, drawing upon our lived experience network to share opportunities.
We will publish learnings from the projects we have funded and the activities we have undertaken.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of projects the Centre has funded have specifically sought to assess survivor involvement, and learnings have been shared in full reports, research summaries and blogs published on our website. • Key elements from our May 2022 workshop with funded teams on survivor involvement were published in a blog. We have also shared learnings about our experiences informally with officials in government, funders and NGOs.
All survivor involvement in our work will be effectively integrated and compensated for. Training and support will be provided to all we work with.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Centre has a standard remuneration rate for all lived experience engagement work. This is currently under review as the Working Group develops a payment standards toolkit. We will follow the recommendations of this toolkit once published and will be transparent about these changes.
We will robustly monitor and evaluate our approach to involving people with lived experience within our work and implement learnings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have used a number of different means to assess our approach to involving survivors in our work. These include a diversity form (see next aim) which shows that 9% of those who completed the form have lived experience of modern slavery. • We have also sought feedback from all those working us through surveys and interviews, which we have used to improve our processes. For more detail, see Modern Slavery PEC Impact Report.

Going forward, we plan to:

Action	Timing
The Centre will continue to support research teams with survivor involvement in their projects and will share learnings from completed projects with funded teams. The Centre is developing guidance to support ethics and safeguarding processes relating to survivor involvement in research.	Ongoing
The Centre will support further work to explore issues around ethical approval processes and develop recommendations about what could and should be done to ethically and equitably enhance involvement of those with lived experience in the ways that research is designed and carried out.	By spring 2024
The Centre will produce a policy brief synthesising research and evidence relating to the research portfolio the Centre has funded on survivor recovery and support.	By autumn 2023
The Centre will continue to require consideration of the meaningful survivor inclusion in future research funding.	Ongoing

The Centre will continue to facilitate quarterly meetings of the Working Group of organisations working with modern slavery survivors and support the development of a survivor payment standards toolkit.	By end of 2023
The Centre will support members of the Lived Experience Advisory Panel to develop their own Terms of Reference and activities such as a lived experience engagement workshop for interested stakeholders. The Panel will meet twice monthly. The Lived Experience Advisory Panel will also attend the Working Group meetings	Ongoing
All those with lived experience of modern slavery who participate in the Centre's activities will complete the identity disclosure form developed by the Centre to ensure safe participation in communications and other activities.	Ongoing
The Centre will continue to establish and embed best practice + share learnings of our research teams, Lived Experience Engagement team, the Working Group of organisations working with modern slavery survivors and the Lived Experience Advisory Panel. The Centre is committed to considering and responding to the findings and recommendations of these groups, including in its policy impact and communications activities, and seeks to influence other stakeholders, in collaboration with partners.	Ongoing
The Centre will host an online public workshop to share learnings and experiences on meaningful survivor involvement in research, sharing any learnings publicly. The Centre will also seek additional opportunities to share learnings, in collaboration with others within our networks.	By end of 2023
The Centre will support the sharing of learnings from the 2023 two day conference with GFEMS and Freedom Fund.	By summer 2023
The Centre will develop a Lived Experience Communications Strategy to elevate lived experience voices and expertise in day to day communications, including in blogs, podcast, media and social media.	By autumn 2023

Aim 2: Improving diversity within the modern slavery research community, to effectively include all individuals, communities and organisations with an interest in and affected by modern slavery

In line with the Modern Slavery PEC's three guiding principles for the research we fund (effectiveness, equity and survivor involvement), we believe it is important that the contributions of a diverse range of organisations and individuals are incorporated in research and policy impacting activities. We also recognise that to ensure the modern slavery research sector continues to grow and diversify it is important to support and offer opportunities to colleagues in all organisations and at all career stages. The table below sets out how we have delivered on commitments in this area.

Commitment	What we have done
We will continue to promote the completion of the EDI form and assess the diversity of those engaging with us, using indicators that are wider than the protected characteristics to identify issues and consider appropriate actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anyone applying to a research call, funded by the Centre or to seeking other opportunities such as the Peer Review College, is asked to complete a diversity survey. This survey requests information about their legally protected characteristics and wider socio-economic factors, including whether they have lived experience of modern slavery. • There have been over 200 responses to the survey however completion rates remain low and our prioritisation of anonymity means it has been difficult to follow up with those who have not completed. As a result we have not sought to draw inferences or conclusions from the data – see Annex B for details.
We will continue the use of the Modern Slavery PEC research ideas form.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throughout 2022, the Centre promoted and assessed submissions to our research ideas form. However, there were a small number of research ideas submitted through this form. Therefore the Centre has focussed on stakeholder engagement and findings from existing PEC-funded research to understand evidence gaps and inform the development of research calls.
We will take opportunities to bring together those from different sectors and disciplines, and help facilitate partnerships between them, for research calls and more broadly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research project applications have continued to require at least one non-academic partner, as with all funded research. To bring together potential partners and to provide greater understanding of research calls we have run a webinar for each one, alongside encouraging applicants to use our google group to find project partners (see below). • Since its inception, the Centre has funded 48 research teams comprised of 42 academic institutions or research organisations, 25 NGOs and a number of other organisations including businesses and international organisations. This year we have also funded our first fellowship for research assessing the impact of support for children with lived experience of modern slavery in the UK, in close collaboration with Barnardo's.
We will organise opportunities to bring together academic researchers and their non-academic partners currently funded by the Modern Slavery PEC to share findings, connect with one another, and feed into wider Modern Slavery PEC work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2022, the Modern Slavery PEC hosted three workshops for research teams, including one in-person event. These workshops provided an opportunity for the project teams to meet, exchange learnings and advice from their experiences, and collaboratively discuss key thematic issues including research methods and their importance for policy impact. All elements of the workshops were judged to be helpful by survey respondents with the strongest positive response on the impact of the session for 'understanding of other research projects funded by the Modern Slavery PEC' and 'building networks with other research teams'.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Centre has also sought to develop a 'cohort' approach to research, for example bringing together three projects looking at climate change related topics. In July 2023 we hosted a workshop for 11 Modern Slavery PEC-funded projects, in order to foster new connections and enable peer learning and collaboration, and to share our learnings on maximising the policy impact of their research.
<p>We will pilot a new approach to research calls that facilitates more equitable partnerships; including funding practitioner-focussed research projects, increasing funding for practitioner organisations to 50% of the total budget, and providing appropriate support</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since April 2022, the Centre has funded two projects led by NGOs. This includes the project on 'Improving Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in modern slavery research' and Uyghur forced labour in the production of green technology. For NGOs leading projects the Centre we seek to reduce administrative burden by facilitating contracts across different partners. We also offer bespoke support based on what is needed by teams.
<p>We will continue to promote equitable partnerships within the research teams we fund at all stages of the research project process, seeking feedback on experiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Centre has continued to provide partnerships support to research teams, such as by helping to identify key project stakeholders and broker connections where relevant. The majority of research team survey respondents and interviewees (including academics and non-academic partners) were satisfied with their partnerships, including those who had not worked together previously. Key elements of productive working relationships highlighted by research teams related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alignment of objectives e.g. shared application development, co-development of research design and outputs, and familiarity and understanding of others' roles and perspectives Good and regular communication across the team Team value and respect for diversity of experience: roles and responsibilities appropriately tailored to team member and organisation's strengths, expertise and networks with clear ownership and responsibility for different areas of work Strong project management with dedicated time and resource to collaborate. In person engagements were also identified as having a significant impact
<p>We will share guidance and host an online workshop for interested researchers, communities and organisations to discuss ways of working and best practice to develop equitable partnerships. This would be open to any researchers and NGOs with an interest in modern slavery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2022 the Centre hosted a public event aiming to build capacity and skills among the network to build collaborative, equitable research partnerships, sharing lessons learned from funded projects by the Centre's staff and speakers from two research teams. Over 50 people attended the workshop, from a range of organisations including academic institutions, research organisations and charities. The majority of survey respondents found the session useful or very useful and indicated interest in future sessions on survivor engagement in modern slavery research, policy impact of modern slavery research and research skills for NGOs. A blog sharing these learnings and the recording of the workshop have also been published, so that those who were unable to attend can share the lessons learned.
<p>We will continue to encourage use of the email group to connect a diverse range of individuals and organisations and advertise opportunities widely.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Modern Slavery PEC's email group has grown from 189 members in April 2022 to 307 in June 2023. Participants have used the group to share opportunities including events, surveys and partnerships.

<p>We will pilot an online workshop to support and build research skills capacity of small NGOs and others with an interest in modern slavery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In January 2023 the Centre hosted an online workshop which brought together academic researchers and small NGOs to share what NGOs need to know to partner on modern slavery research projects. Over 70 people attended the event and a blog was published to share learnings.
<p>We will support the Modern Slavery PEC Research Fellows from the six Consortium partners that form the Centre to participate in knowledge exchange opportunities with other organisations, building capacity on policy and law-making processes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Modern Slavery PEC Research Fellows have been involved and supported by the Centre in different ways in the delivery of different activities based on their areas of expertise. This has included the production of evidence reviews, input to and review of policy briefs and submissions, and leading research projects such as Engagement of lived experience in international policy and programming. • We have published several blogs by the Modern Slavery PEC Fellows, a podcast, and added a separate area in the website's 'People' section. • Several of the Research Fellows were invited to present in an 'Ignite' session at the 'Equity in Evidence' conference that the Modern Slavery PEC co-hosted in June 2023
<p>We will design and implement plans to engage meaningfully with Early Career Researchers (ECRs), including the facilitation of a network to share knowledge, opportunities and build capacity on influencing decisionmakers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In June 2022 the Centre co-hosted an event with the Human Trafficking Research Network to share its work on policy impact and survivor engagement for early career researchers as part of efforts to diversify academic stakeholders engaging with the Centre. A blog on the key takeaways from this event was also published. • We seek to make our research calls as accessible as possible for Early Career Researchers and as a result, several Modern Slavery PEC funded projects are being led by Early Career Researchers.
<p>We will advertise more opportunities for peer reviewers to participate in our research calls, specifically inviting applications from diverse researchers and individuals, ensuring these opportunities are appropriately compensated and training is provided. These opportunities will be advertised through a range of networks to ensure they reach a diversity of candidates.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This year the Centre has recruited members to its Peer Review College with different areas of expertise. Unlike traditional Peer Review Colleges which tend to be composed of academics, currently, around a quarter of members are from NGOs, 10% have lived experience of modern slavery and nearly half are academics, around 40% of whom are ECRs. • Peer Review College members who have reviewed research applications found participation had improved their knowledge and experience of funding processes, research applications, methodologies and approaches and the work and role of the Modern Slavery PEC.
<p>We will seek opportunities to advise and influence other funders and organisations on EDI, based on our own learnings and experiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have shared our EDI plans and sought feedback from funders, including AHRC and UKRI. • Research we have funded on improving EDI within modern slavery research has sought views from and shared findings with a range of funders. • We have published guidance on how to run events with the goal of ensuring equality, diversity, inclusion and accessibility, and overall that the event provides a safe, respectful and collaborative environment for all participants. • The Centre has joined the Universities Policy Engagement Network (UPEN) and built relationships with other similar organisations to hear from others and share learnings.

Going forward, we plan to:

Action	Timing
The Centre will continue to collect and analyse diversity data using its survey and other data available, setting clearer expectations around completion. The Centre will analyse this data to inform future activities.	Ongoing
The Centre will continue a programme of workshops and other activities to share learnings and best practice among those working on or interested in working on modern slavery research, including cohort sessions for funded research teams. This will include a session on co-production of research.	Ongoing
Draw out and synthesise learnings from ongoing projects that demonstrate good practice in the equitable inclusion of a diverse range of project partners, including people with lived experiences, businesses and others. For example, the current project 'Capital markets and modern slavery' involves a project that has been co-created and co-delivered with the Finance Against Slavery and Trafficking (FAST) initiative, including the engagement of consultants including with lived experience.	Ongoing
The Centre will monitor and assess its activities to diversify the modern slavery research community including the Peer Review College and different forms of research funding	Ongoing
The Centre will provide resources and support to show the Centre's approach to policy impactful research within the Centre's network.	By end of 2023
The Centre will continue to support Research Fellows to deliver their individual areas of work and publicise their work.	Ongoing
The Centre will seek to build relationships with others working on EDI within academia and policymaking, seeking opportunities for innovation and collaborative work	Ongoing

Aim 3: Incorporating learnings from research on the challenges and barriers to EDI within modern slavery research and promoting findings among others working in this field

As identified in our EDI strategy, there is an evidence gap on the diversity of those involved in modern slavery research (both funders and those funded) and scope for the assessment of good practices to promote equality, diversity and inclusion across it. Following an open call for applications for research funding, a project led by BASNET at AFRUCA Safeguarding Children, the University of Nottingham, the University of Sheffield and St Mary's University, Twickenham was selected to carry out the work. This research was the first Modern Slavery PEC project to be led by an NGO as part of our new funding processes to promote diversity in modern slavery research. In our 2022 EDI Action Plan, Aim 3 was 'Undertaking research to improve understanding on equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) within modern slavery research'. Now that this research has been published, we have adapted Aim 3 to reflect our future approach.

The project has generated new data and insights into EDI in modern slavery research in the UK, identified examples of good practice and outlined recommendations to build and sustain an equal, diverse, and inclusionary modern slavery research landscape. The project highlighted three key findings:

- a) The modern slavery research community values EDI, but demands data on this community that is collected and analysed appropriately and meaningfully
- b) EDI is not considered enough throughout the research process or described comprehensively within research reports
- c) Collaborating with communities and people with lived experience is key to improving EDI funder policies and practice in modern slavery research

The Research Summary and full report are available at <https://modernslaverypec.org/resources/edi-modern-slavery-research>. The report recommendations will inform the delivery of our activities until the end of the current funding period (March 2024), and what we plan to do after this period. The table below sets out our commitments for the next year.

Action	Timing
The Centre will work collaboratively with the funded research team to share learnings and findings from the research with decisionmakers, including funders and researchers working on modern slavery issues.	By autumn 2023
The Centre will encourage and support funded research teams to implement recommendations made in the research including reporting on EDI characteristics where possible and incorporating reflexive practice in project team ways of working, including with training.	Ongoing
The Centre will continue to support co-produced research for example, the 'Towards Principles for Equitable Engagement' project led by University of Liverpool, building on work commissioned by FCDO in 2022, which involves research into promising practices by a global network of experts on	By March 2024

engagement of lived experience in policy and programming. The Centre is supporting a programme of work to explore the nature of modern slavery affecting children in England and Wales as well as the impact of receiving support on young people's outcomes, undertaken by an appointed fellow, in close collaboration with Barnardo's.	
The Centre will fund two research projects within a portfolio focussed on the prevention of modern slavery which will aim to improve understanding of the value of cultural understanding and practice in improving equity and effectiveness in legal enforcement, support services and identification of people affected by modern slavery.	By December 2023

Aim 4: Embedding EDI across internal operations and governance of the Centre

We recognise that improving EDI in our internal operations and governance structures is also important. The table below sets out how we have delivered on commitments in this area.

Commitment	What we have done
EDI will remain an organisational priority. Progressing and assessing the Modern Slavery PEC's commitment to EDI in all its work will remain part of the Monitoring and Evaluation Manager's objectives. We will publish an annual update to this Action Plan and assessment of progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following the publication of the Centre's EDI strategy and Action Plan the Centre published a podcast discussing our plans. We also presented at a workshop on race equality in modern slavery research hosted by BASNET, University of Sheffield and St Mary's University aimed at researchers and community organisations. The Centre's core staff have reviewed progress at regular intervals and sought views from stakeholders on our EDI approach.
<p>We will continue to explore opportunities to ensure we run fair and open recruitments to attract diverse candidates.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All job adverts will require applicants to demonstrate inclusive practices in their work experience We will also ensure the gender and racial diversity of all interview panels, using our networks and governance groups as appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Centre has trialled job application guidance documentation describing in plain English what we are looking for from applicants, how they should complete the process and transparency on how we score and select applications. We have also undertaken targeted advertising outside of the usual channels, drawing upon our lived experience relevant network to share job opportunities. We have trialled alternative systems for receiving job applications and for two posts we have used an online submission system rather than requesting applications via email. For these posts we focused on competency-based questions and did not explicitly require a CV or cover letter from applicants. All roles we have recruited into core PEC team since the EDI action plan was published involved diversity within interview panels
We will audit the diversity of our governance and advisory groups, including the Senior Management Board and Advisory Group to understand the composition of the groups and identify challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessing the diversity of our governance groups demonstrated some diversity and highlighted the importance of embedding wider expertise, including from the survivor engaged organisations working group and the Lived Experience Advisory Panel.
We will continue to adhere to and seek opportunities to undertake activities set out in BIICL's EDI policy, seeking feedback on the approach and initiatives undertaken.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Centre's Monitoring and Evaluation Manager has been an active member of BIICL's Diversity Committee, which has recently appointed the Centre's Research Operations Manager as BIICL's Diversity Officer.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Centre has taken proactive steps to implement BIICL's EDI policy, in particular Objective 2 'Events and panels'. For example, the Centre worked closely with organising partners for the conference on 'Equity in Evidence', coordinating an Advisory Group of people with lived experience and/or who are from particularly affected communities, to ensure the conference provides a safe and supportive space that meaningfully includes every participant.
We will continue to maintain an open approach to initiatives which could actively advance equality of opportunity internally for core staff and externally with other organisations and stakeholders, informing and participating in BIICL's EDI initiatives and processes and among consortium partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All new members of the Centre's core team have completed Survivor Alliance Ally Training. In addition, all staff have undertaken safeguarding training. Training budget has been allocated to each member of staff to support their professional development. The Centre's Research Operations Manager has been appointed BIICL's Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Officer, leading the revision of the organisation's EDI strategy, EDI training within the organisation and chairing the EDI Committee.

Going forward, we are planning the following:

Action	Timing
Progressing and assessing the Modern Slavery PEC's commitment to EDI in all its work will remain part of a lead staff members' objectives. We will publish an annual update to this Action Plan and assessment of progress.	By April 2024
The Centre will continue to adhere to BIICL's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy, and provide contributions to the organisation's Diversity Committee. The Centre will review feedback of the wider organisation, seeking to implement initiatives relevant to its activities.	Ongoing
The Centre will provide staff with additional opportunities for training and development such as a workshop on trauma informed practice and participating in a reflexive session with the research team that produced the PEC-funded research on EDI. We will continue to maintain an open approach to initiatives which could actively advance equality of opportunity internally for core staff and externally with other organisations and stakeholders, informing and participating in BIICL's EDI initiatives and processes and among consortium partners	Ongoing
Any new roles will be recruited diversely, building on feedback to improve recruitment practice. This will include that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All job ads will have the guidance documentation published alongside them All jobs will be targeted to our relevant internal networks, including survivor engaged organisations We will survey recruitment panellists to better understand how we are meeting our commitment to gender and racial diversity We will continue to explore avenues to reduce and remove bias from our hiring practices 	Ongoing

Annex A: summary of 2023 commitments

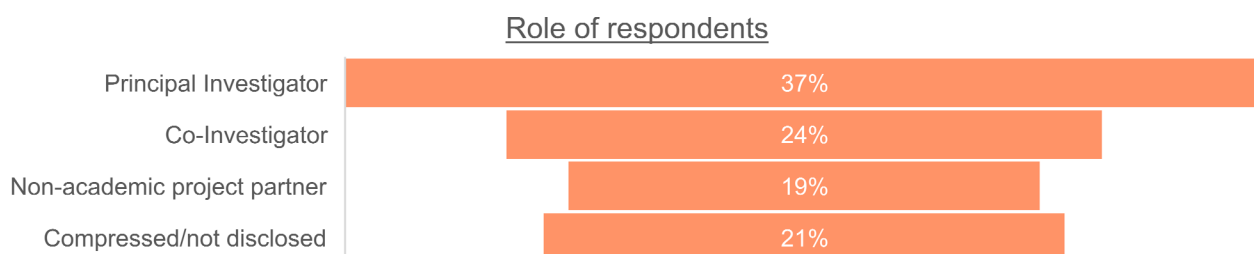
Aims	Commitments
Equitably including individuals and communities with lived experience and those who work closely with them in the Modern Slavery PEC's work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Centre will continue to support research teams with survivor involvement in their projects and will share learnings from completed projects with funded teams. The Centre is developing guidance to support ethics and safeguarding processes relating to survivor involvement in research. • The Centre will support further work to explore issues around ethical approval processes and develop recommendations about what could and should be done to ethically and equitably enhance involvement of those with lived experience in the ways that research is designed and carried out • The Centre will produce a policy brief synthesising research and evidence relating to the research portfolio the Centre has funded on survivor recovery and support. • The Centre will continue to require consideration of the meaningful survivor inclusion in future research funding. • The Centre will continue to facilitate quarterly meetings of the Working Group of organisations working with modern slavery survivors and support the development of a survivor payment standards toolkit. • The Centre will support members of the Lived Experience Advisory Panel to develop their own Terms of Reference and activities such as a lived experience engagement workshop for interested stakeholders. The Panel will meet twice monthly. The Lived Experience Advisory Panel will also attend the Working Group meetings • All those with lived experience of modern slavery who participate in the Centre's activities will complete the identity disclosure form developed by the Centre to ensure safe participation in communications and other activities. • The Centre will continue to establish and embed best practice and share learnings of our research teams, Lived Experience Engagement team, the Working Group of organisations working with modern slavery survivors and the Lived Experience Advisory Panel. The Centre is committed to considering and responding to the findings and recommendations of these groups, including in its policy impact and communications activities, and seeks to influence other stakeholders, in collaboration with partners. • The Centre will host an online public workshop to share learnings and experiences on meaningful survivor involvement in research, sharing any learnings publicly. The Centre will also seek additional opportunities to share learnings, in collaboration with others within our networks. • The Centre will support the sharing of learnings from the 2023 two day conference with GFEMS and Freedom Fund. • The Centre will develop a Lived Experience Communications Strategy to elevate lived experience voices and expertise in day to day communications, including in blogs, podcast, media and social media.
Improving diversity within the modern slavery research community, to effectively include individuals, communities and organisations with an interest in and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Centre will continue to collect and analyse diversity data using its survey and other data available, setting clearer expectations around completion. The Centre will analyse this data to inform future activities. • The Centre will continue a programme of workshops and other activities to share learnings and best practice among those working on or interested in working on modern slavery research, including cohort sessions for funded research teams. This will include a session on co-production of research. • Draw out and synthesise learnings from ongoing projects that demonstrate good practice in the equitable inclusion of a diverse range of project partners, including people with lived experiences, businesses and others. For example, the current project 'Capital

<p>affected by modern slavery, including those who have not participated in modern slavery research and policy previously.</p>	<p>markets and modern slavery’ involves a project that has been co-created and co-delivered with the Finance Against Slavery and Trafficking (FAST) initiative, including the engagement of consultants including with lived experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Centre will monitor and assess its activities to diversify the modern slavery research community including the Peer Review College and different forms of research funding • The Centre will provide resources and support to show the Centre’s approach to policy impactful research within the Centre’s network. • The Centre will continue to support Research Fellows to deliver their individual areas of work and publicise their work. • The Centre will seek to build relationships with others working on EDI within academia and policymaking, seeking opportunities for innovation and collaborative work
<p>Incorporating learnings from research on the challenges and barriers to EDI within modern slavery research and promoting findings among others working on modern slavery research.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Centre will work collaboratively with the funded research team to share learnings and findings from the research with decisionmakers, including funders and researchers working on modern slavery issues. The Centre will encourage and support funded research teams to implement recommendations made in the research including reporting on EDI characteristics where possible and incorporating reflexive practice in project team ways of working, including with training. • The Centre will continue to support co-produced research for example, the ‘Towards Principles for Equitable Engagement’ project led by University of Liverpool, building on work commissioned by FCDO in 2022, which involves research into promising practices by a global network of experts on engagement of lived experience in policy and programming. The Centre is supporting a programme of work to explore the nature of modern slavery affecting children in England and Wales as well as the impact of receiving support on young people’s outcomes, undertaken by an appointed fellow, in close collaboration with Barnardo’s. • The Centre will fund at least one research project within a portfolio focussed on the prevention of modern slavery which will aim to improve understanding of the value of cultural understanding and practice in improving equity and effectiveness in legal enforcement, support services and identification of people affected by modern slavery.
<p>Embedding EDI across internal operations and governance of the Centre</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressing and assessing the Modern Slavery PEC’s commitment to EDI in all its work will remain part of a lead staff members’ objectives. We will publish an annual update to this Action Plan and assessment of progress • The Centre will continue to adhere to BIICL’s Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy, and provide contributions to the organisation’s Diversity Committee. The Centre will review feedback of the wider organisation, seeking to implement initiatives relevant to its activities. • The Centre will provide staff with additional opportunities for training and development such as a workshop on Trauma informed practice and participating in a reflexive session with the research team that produced the PEC-funded research on EDI. We will continue to maintain an open approach to initiatives which could actively advance equality of opportunity internally for core staff and externally with other organisations and stakeholders, informing and participating in BIICL’s EDI initiatives and processes and among consortium partners. • Any new roles will be recruited diversely, building on feedback to improve recruitment practice. This will include that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All job ads will have the guidance documentation published alongside them ○ All jobs will be targeted to our relevant internal networks, including survivor engaged organisations ○ We will survey recruitment panellists to better understand how we are meeting our commitment to gender and racial diversity ○ We will continue to explore avenues to reduce and remove bias from our hiring practices

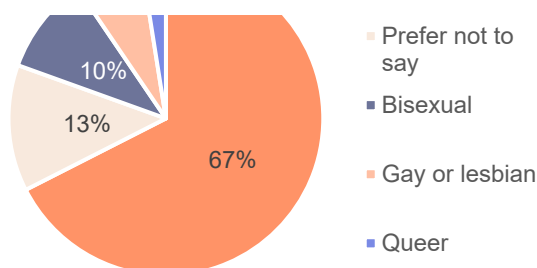
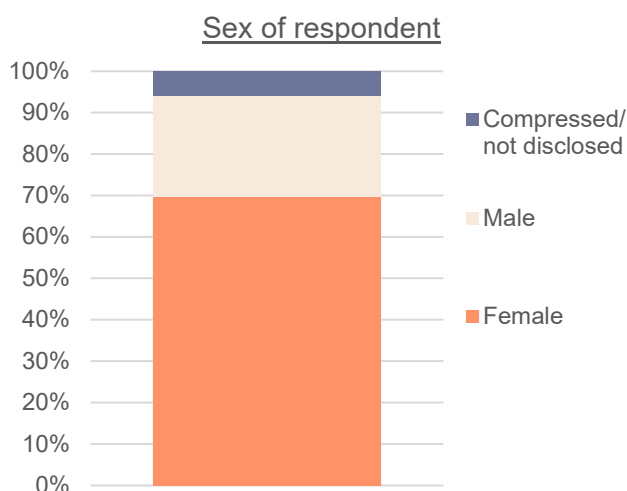
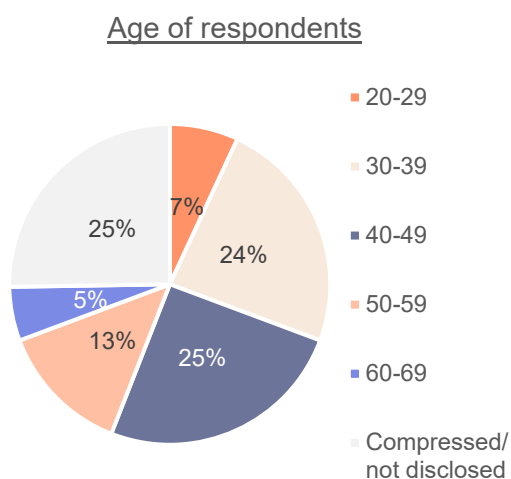
Annex B: Diversity statistics

The Centre launched its [diversity survey](#) in November 2021. Since then, there were 202 responses to the Centre's diversity survey (data correct as of Feb 2023). These responses were received from applicants to research calls (n=125), applicants to the Peer Review College (n=28), funded research team members (n=27) and stakeholders who engaged in other opportunities. Our prioritisation of anonymity of survey responses has meant that we have not been able to target those who had not completed the survey after initial requests. Furthermore, due to anonymity, we are unable to identify those who may have completed the form more than once, for example if they have participated in multiple opportunities.

As recognised by Advance HE, completion rates of surveys initially can be low; and therefore do not represent full populations.¹ This has impacted our ability to effectively analyse the diversity of those who engage with us. For this analysis, we have followed the same guidelines as set out by [UKRI](#), such that results are compressed for groups with under 5 responses (indicated by 'compressed' in the charts). Small sample sizes have also hindered disaggregation of the data by group of respondent. As such we present the data aggregated across all respondents.



A) Protected characteristics of survey respondents



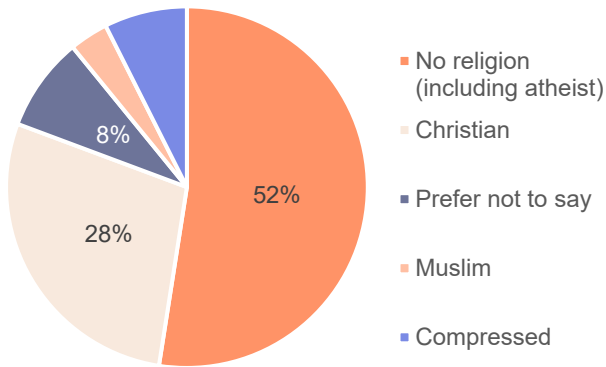
Half of all (51%) respondents stated they had British nationality (including dual nationals), compared to 47% who had another nationality.

9% of respondents identified as having a disability.

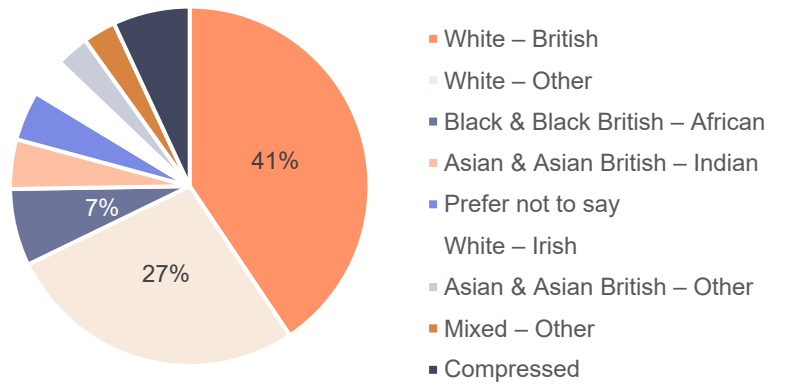
¹ [Guidance on the collection of diversity monitoring data](#), Advance HE

47% were married or in a civil partnership.

Religion of respondents

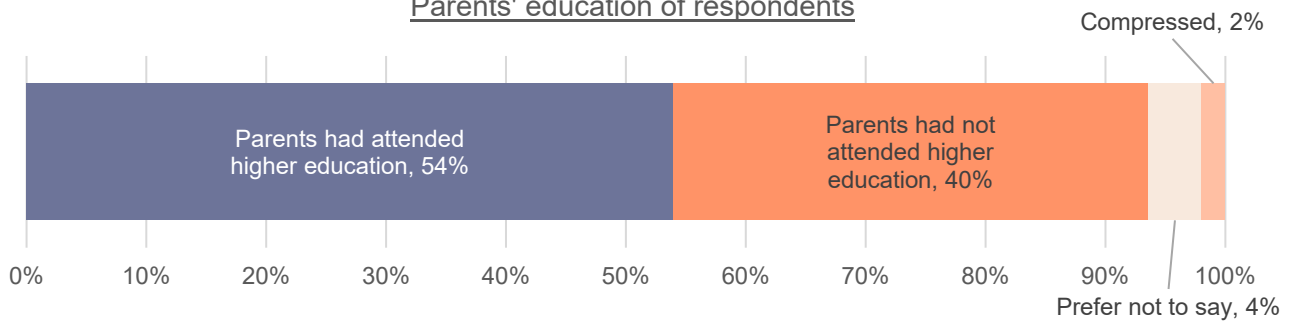


Ethnicity of respondents

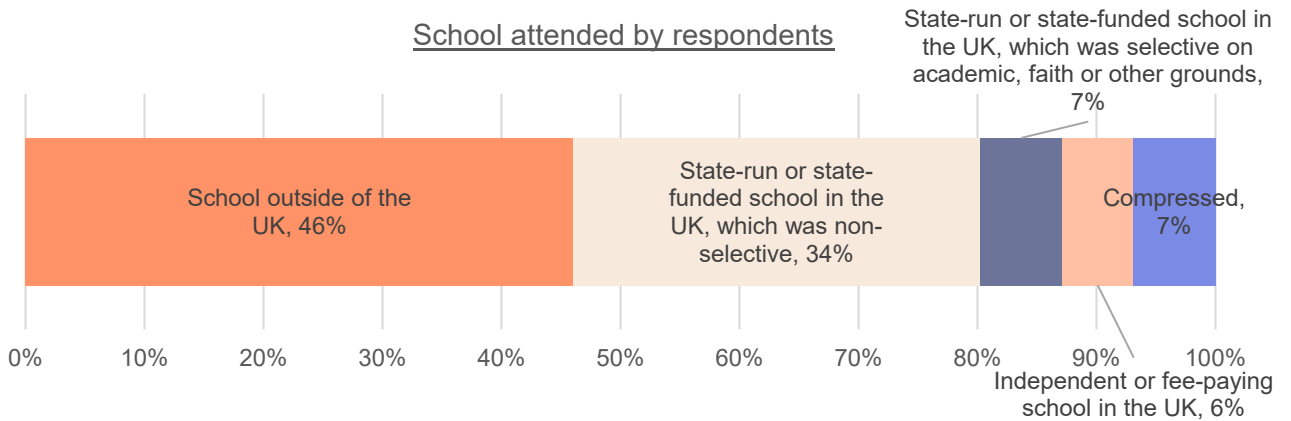


B) Socioeconomic characteristics

Parents' education of respondents

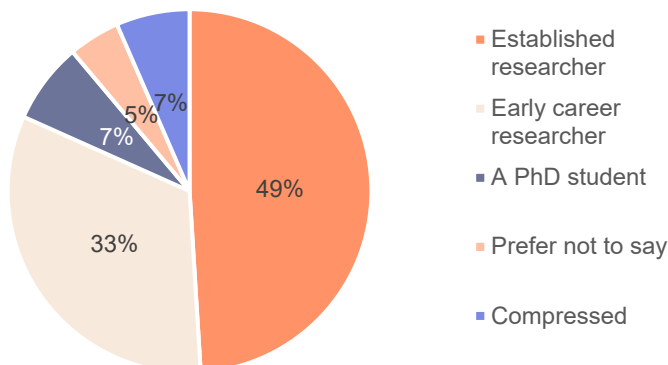


School attended by respondents



C) Career and experience

Career stage of researcher respondents



8% of respondents had lived experience of modern slavery.

22% had not previously participated in or contributed to modern slavery research or policymaking.

MODERN SLAVERY & HUMAN RIGHTS | POLICY & EVIDENCE CENTRE

Led by the Bingham Centre

The Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy and Evidence Centre was created by the investment of public funding to enhance understanding of modern slavery and transform the effectiveness of law and policies designed to overcome it. With high quality research at its heart, the Centre brings together academics, policymakers, businesses, civil society, survivors and the public on a scale not seen before in the UK to collaborate on solving this global challenge.

The Centre is a consortium of six academic organisations led by the Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law and is funded by the Art and Humanities Research Council on behalf of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

Our partners:



The Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy and Evidence Centre is funded and actively supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), part of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), from the Strategic Priorities Fund.

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