



Department for  
Business, Energy  
& Industrial Strategy

# Equality Objectives & Information

2022/2023

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# BEIS' Equality Objectives & Information

The Equality Act 2010 requires that BEIS must, in the exercise of our public functions and as an employer, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- advance equality of opportunity; and
- foster good relations.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, BEIS has set out the following equality objectives as priorities for how we carry out our public functions (as a public authority) and how we treat our staff (as an employer). We also publish below equality information relating to our public functions and role as an employer and information demonstrating how BEIS complies with the Public Sector Equality Duty. This publication reports on progress since we published our BEIS objectives and information in July 2021.

We are taking an evidence-based approach and we will publish a progress update of how we are delivering against our equality objectives next year.

Our equality objectives reflect our four key priorities for the upcoming year as we build a stronger, greener and more prosperous future across the UK:

- Ensure Energy Security and Deliver Net Zero
- Unleash Innovation
- Boost Enterprise
- Help Businesses

We are aiming to make progress in:

- Supporting specific sectors (e.g., manufacturing, energy including nuclear, construction, metals, chemicals) to draw on a greater pool of talent where there has been historical underrepresentation of some groups
- Supporting vulnerable households through our response to high energy prices. Additionally, supporting domestic and international efforts to tackle climate change and ensuring the transition to net zero is fair, affordable, and does not disproportionately impact anyone who is already disadvantaged
- Supporting the UK's researchers, whatever their background, to fulfil their potential
- Helping business sectors that were disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 to bounce back and further build their long-term resilience
- Advancing equality of opportunity within BEIS and our partner organisation boards

## Current initiatives

BEIS published a set of equality objectives and information in July 2021, reflecting commitments in our Objective Delivery Plan. We committed to provide an update on progress against these objectives and that is detailed in this document. We have also reviewed the objectives and made amendments where necessary, reflecting progress made and changing demands.

Internally, the BEIS Diversity and Inclusion Strategy continues to be delivered into its third year, and preparations have begun to review and refresh the strategy ahead of 2023 and in light of the recently published cross-Government D&I Strategy. During 2021/22, we introduced Group-level D&I Scorecards to monitor and evaluate our progress against key success measures. These track ethnicity and disability representation across the different grades as part of the D&I Strategy's focus on race and disability. Each Departmental Group has set goals, taking into account their current differences on representation, which has helped them in deciding where to focus their efforts.

In line with Government commitments, 1,350 BEIS roles will be based outside of London by 2025. We are committed to meritocracy as a fundamental principle in our recruitment and retention processes. We want to create career opportunities for colleagues across the UK and ensure we represent a world outside of London both in terms of geography and socio-economic group, in line with the Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. We have strong and empowered staff networks which are engaged in our governance and supported by senior champions. We also want to promote a culture that encourages and values diversity of thought, where innovative and creative ideas can flourish.

## External Equality Objectives

### Ensure Energy Security and Deliver Net Zero

**Equality Objective 1: Support domestic and international efforts to tackle global climate change and to ensure that the transition to net zero is fair and affordable, and does not negatively impact disadvantaged groups (in particular women, children, ethnic minorities, indigenous groups and those with disabilities). For example, BEIS will have regard to the interests of vulnerable energy consumers in responding to high energy prices and deliver a Strategy to meet our statutory fuel poverty target.**

Actions	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use our influence in international climate fora and support the United Nations Framework Conventions on Climate Change Gender Action Plan.</li><li>• Monitor the impact of our domestic climate action and clean energy policies, and any inequalities which arise, to assess the</li></ul>

	<p>need for targeted support for disproportionately impacted groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For new and existing ICF programmes, encourage delivery and monitoring partners to consider assessing the impacts of programmes on certain groups of people.</li> <li>• We will publish proposals in 2022 on how to ‘rebalance’ the costs placed on energy bills away from electricity to incentivise electrification across the economy and accelerate consumers and industry’s shift away from volatile global commodity markets, considering overall system impacts and limiting the impact on bills, particularly for low-income consumers.</li> <li>• The Government is providing over £15 billion in support, targeted particularly on those with the greatest need. This package is in addition to the over £22 billion announced previously, with government support for the cost of living now totalling over £37 billion this year. We will continue to implement and monitor progress against commitments set out in the fuel poverty strategy - Sustainable Warmth 2021: protecting vulnerable households in England.</li> </ul>
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## Unleash innovation

<p><b>Equality Objective 2: Ensure that the Research and Development (R&amp;D), Innovation, Place, People and Culture Strategies tackle barriers to participation in the UK’s R&amp;D system and support the UK’s researchers, whatever their background, to fulfil their potential. For example, this will include driving adoption of the Resume for Research and Innovation narrative-style CV to support members of the workforce returning after a career break, such as maternity leave. Furthermore, as part of our work to improve the lives of people with disabilities, we will ask UKRI to explore how innovation in assistive technologies can be supported.</b></p>	
<p><b>Actions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will work with and hold to account organisations in the R&amp;D sector, including UKRI, public sector research establishments and the National Academies to commit to ensure that all funding calls and events are as accessible as possible. This includes considering the needs of researchers, innovators and their staff with protected characteristics.</li> <li>• We will ensure that we work closely with stakeholders engaged with the Innovation Strategy, R&amp;D People and Culture Strategy and Levelling Up White Paper to deliver on the equality objectives laid out.</li> </ul>

## Boost Enterprise

**Equality Objective 3: Promote equal access to employment in sectors such as energy, manufacturing and infrastructure which are crucial to our national resilience and long-term growth. For example, BEIS will continue to support women in the nuclear sector to participate in UK representation in international fora.**

<b>Actions</b>	<p><b>Energy Sectors (including nuclear)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drive forward our commitment under the ‘Equal by 30 Campaign’ to work towards equal pay, leadership and opportunities for women in the clean energy sector by 2030 and champion increased gender representation across the UK’s international organisation portfolio.</li> <li>• Continue supporting industry-led initiatives to bring in more diversity across nuclear, which will become more important with skills demand projected to increase.</li> <li>• Supporting the nuclear industry to identify and remove barriers to women’s participation. The UK works with international partners to deliver this globally, including through the International Atomic Energy Agency and Nuclear Energy Agency.</li> <li>• Continue to support the Nuclear Graduate scheme, with BEIS offering placement opportunities to a number of graduates each year, and hosting events to promote opportunities within the Civil Service.</li> </ul> <p><b>Manufacturing, Infrastructure, and Material Sectors</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree action plan with UKRI and other delivery bodies to raise awareness amongst female, ethnic minority and other under-represented applicants of their funding and support offer.</li> <li>• Work with trade bodies (e.g., Make UK, ADS, SMMT) and professional bodies (e.g., Royal Academy of Engineering) to assess whether and how their sectors could be made more accessible to historically underrepresented groups.</li> </ul>
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## Help Businesses

**Equality Objective 4: Support the ongoing recovery of those sectors that were disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, including hospitality, non-essential retail and personal care; and continue working with these sectors to support their longer-term resilience, including their ability to deal with any possible future economic shocks. For example, this will involve promoting the addition of the hospitality qualifications to the Free Courses for Jobs scheme, and by working with the hospitality sector to introduce and encourage uptake of training opportunities such as traineeships to support young people not in education and Help to Grow digital to boost productivity.**

<b>Actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to regularly engage with these business sectors to support their recovery and prosperity, including through formal engagement to focus on the future challenges and opportunities facing businesses.</li> <li>• The Hospitality Sector Council will continue to address key issues facing the hospitality sector and its workforce.</li> <li>• Continue to support the Retail Sector Council to address the current and future needs of the sector, and to support the delivery of the Council's strategic thinking.</li> <li>• Continue to engage across government to ensure that the interests of these sectors are duly considered in policy development, and that regulatory burdens are minimised, where possible.</li> </ul>
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## Internal Equality Objectives

**Equality Objective 1: Increase representation of ethnic minority and disabled staff at Senior Civil Service (SCS) level according to bespoke Group-level goals, in support of the Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Strategy to reinforce fairness and performance across all types of diversity. Continue to monitor data on a monthly basis.**

<b>Actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explore avenues and job platforms to reach diverse pools of candidates.</li><li>• Promote equality of opportunity by using targeted talent programmes or initiatives to support the development and progression of staff from disadvantaged backgrounds.</li><li>• Increase and analyse our staff data on socio-economic background to support the development of actions to increase socio-economic diversity throughout the talent pipeline.</li></ul>
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**Equality Objective 2: Aim to increase the representation of ethnic minorities and women on the boards of our Partner Organisations, aligning with the Cabinet Office action plan on diversity in public appointments.**

<b>Actions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We are committed to embedding diversity into our plans by ensuring we reach out to a diverse spectrum of candidates and appointees when seeking insights from the customer group.</li><li>• We will also place an emphasis on continual professional development for the public appointments team including on the Public Sector Equality Duty.</li></ul>
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## Meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty

### Assurance arrangements

The ultimate responsibility for meeting the requirements of equalities legislation in policy and decision-making lies with Ministers. They are supported by the policy and corporate services teams in the Department that undertake the Equality Analysis process, who are in turn supported by the Diversity and Inclusion team by raising awareness and capability among staff thorough training modules and signposting to authoritative guidance (e.g. from the Government Equalities Office and the Equality and Human Rights Commission). The Department also has information and further guidance on meeting the equality duties on the intranet available to all staff. We will continue to improve the capability and understanding of the Public Sector Equality Duty in the Department to make better policy decisions that have equality considerations at the centre.

There are two lead senior civil servants for raising the awareness of embedding equality considerations into the Department's decision-making process. They regularly report into the governance boards (e.g. Executive Committee, Performance & Risk Committee) on the Department's progress on embedding equality considerations into all policy and corporate services workstreams.

When working on policy, our officials are expected to look at the impact each option might have on people sharing any of the 9 protected characteristics. They also consider the need to avoid or mitigate against any negative impact on any group.

Ministers are advised of the impact that the proposed options may have on various groups of people, and this is considered when a policy decision is made.

We seek input from external stakeholders to gain a broader insight into our decisions. We will continue to build and develop our relationships with stakeholders and the public, including those that represent groups with protected characteristics, to improve how we carry out our public functions.

Directors and Directors General are required to consider compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty as part of regularly monthly reporting, to which all senior civil servants contribute, with input coordinated by the Implementation and Delivery team.

We aim to continue to improve the department's assurance processes to the Public Sector Equality Duty to ensure it is clear throughout the policy development process, and how we have paid due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty.

### Employee information

We want our department to reflect the diversity of the population we serve and are setting out this information to meet our legal obligation under the Equality Act 2010.

Across the UK, 12% of the UK workforce (those in employment aged 16-64) are from an ethnic minority background and 14% of the UK workforce (those in employment aged 16-64) report having a disability. We know ethnic minority staff and disabled staff are underrepresented in senior grades of civil servants across BEIS and the talent pipeline for SCS roles. However, we have seen good progress in recent years and current ethnic minority representation at SCS is 10.3% and disabled staff 7.7%. We have also seen improvements in other areas; for instance, ethnic minority representation has increased from 9.7% in March 2021 to 11.5% in March 2022 at Grade 6. We have also started collecting data on socio-economic diversity, and we are committed to improving staff representation from low-income backgrounds.

We can also report progress in reducing the Gender Pay Gap across BEIS and our Partner Organisations and Agencies; our data show the gaps are either reducing or remaining relatively static. The most recent Gender Pay Gap report for BEIS can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/beis-gender-pay-gap-report-and-data-2021>

All other equality information relating to our employees is published via BEIS' annual reports, which can be found via the link here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/beis-annual-reports-and-accounts>

We want our Public Bodies to be drawing on the widest possible pool of talent, better reflecting the communities they serve. The goals that we have set are aligned with the Cabinet Office's Public Appointments Diversity Action Plan 2019.

## Equality information

### **Ensure Energy Security and Deliver Net Zero**

Through UK leadership, we brought forward the International Just Transition Declaration – ensuring that with our overseas spend we are facilitating green job creation that recognises and promotes inclusion for all, such as Indigenous Peoples. The Declaration was signed by most of the major worldwide donors and welcomed by developing countries and partners around the world.

As part of our commitments under the Generation Equality Forum's Action Coalition on Feminist Action for Climate Justice, the UK will strengthen collection and use of data.

Our Net Zero Strategy set out a commitment to form a new Green Jobs Delivery Group, to support the development and delivery of the Government's plans for green jobs and skills. This Group will be the central forum through which government, industry and other key stakeholders work together to ensure that the UK has the workforce needed to deliver a green industrial revolution.

In addition, and as set out in the British Energy Security Strategy, we are investing over £6.6 billion over this parliament to improve energy efficiency of buildings and decarbonise heating. Funding is targeted at those who need it most and we will deliver upgrades to over half a million homes in the coming years through our Social Housing Decarbonisation, Home Upgrade Grant Schemes and Energy Company Obligation Scheme, delivering average bill

savings of £300. The 2021 Heat and Buildings Strategy sets out further details of Government's approach to decarbonising buildings.

The Government is committed to ensuring fair energy prices for consumers. The Energy Price Cap will remain in place at least till the end of 2022 to ensure millions of customers pay a fair price for their energy. BEIS has also committed to deliver a Strategy to meet our statutory fuel poverty target. This is alongside measures, including the Warm Home Discount, Winter Fuel Payments and Cold Weather Payments, that ensure that the most vulnerable are better able to heat their homes over the colder months.

On 26 May 2022, the Government announced a targeted support package of £15 billion to help with the rising cost of living. This brings the total cost of living support measures announced to £37 billion this year. Households in Great Britain will get a £400 grant for their energy bills in September. This does not need to be repaid. Pensioner households will receive an extra £300 to help them cover the rising cost of energy this winter. This additional one-off payment will go to the over 8 million pensioner households across the UK who receive the Winter Fuel Payment and will be paid on top of any other one-off support to which a pensioner household is entitled.

### **Unleash Innovation**

In July 2021, we published the R&D People and Culture Strategy which sets out the actions to improve culture and to increase diversity and inclusion across all parts of the research and innovation ecosystem.

We are also working with UKRI to drive adoption of the Resume for Research and Innovation narrative-style CV. It allows for a greater recognition of an individual's contribution to R&D activity and provides a more rounded picture of an individual's career than a traditional academic CV, including where members of the workforce are returning after taking a career break, for example maternity leave.

The UK Innovation Strategy was also published in July 2021. During its development, we sought to ensure we explored any issues faced by people with protected characteristics and examine mitigating actions to remove these barriers. This includes, for example, upskilling lenders when it comes to the provision of debt finance to support equitable distribution. The strategy took reasonable steps to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Two taskforces are being formed to examine ways to boost the representation of women in STEM jobs and increase the number of women-led start-ups, particularly outside of London. One of the objectives will be to examine whether to introduce targets to increase the percentage of women in STEM jobs.

### **Boost Enterprise**

We are working alongside trade associations in manufacturing and infrastructure to raise awareness of underrepresentation and agree action plans with delivery partners. This includes the Diversity and Inclusion Plan for the Made Smarter Innovation programme, which sets out

how to attract more diverse applicants. We have also engaged with the Rail Industry Association to identify best practice for data collection and share this with wider industry.

Increasing female participation will address one of nuclear sector's most pressing equality issues. Gender diversity is now high on the nuclear agenda: in 2018, the nuclear sector committed to reach a 40% female workforce by 2030. We are working alongside industry to support them to reach this target. The International Talent Pipeline is a long-term project to diversify the UK's representation in international nuclear forums, such as the International Atomic Energy Agency and Nuclear Energy Agency. The project is aimed at breaking down the barriers that prevent women from taking international roles.

### **Help Businesses**

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the hospitality, personal care, and non-essential retail sectors had a disproportionate impact on those from an ethnic minority background, younger workers, and women when compared to the wider UK workforce. For example, 38% of workers in the hospitality sector are 16 to 24 years old, compared to just 11% across the UK economy. The personal care sector is c. 82% female-owned and 89% female-employed; the sector also could not as easily adapt to COVID-19 restrictions by transitioning to e-commerce or offering 'take-away' services, as in other sectors.

BEIS successfully supported the reopening of closed sectors that were disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. Sector-specific teams aim to ensure the views and concerns of the sectors are listened to and represented in Government. These teams have also proactively contacted marginalised groups that lack the resources to engage Government, such as tattooists, and created a small business group, to ensure their concerns are also listened to.

The hospitality, non-essential (non-food) retail and personal care sectors were all able to resume unrestricted trading from 19 July 2021. This reopening was supported by the Government's Roadmap, including the publication of Working Safely guidance.

The Government published its first ever Hospitality Strategy in July 2021, which also supported the reopening and recovery of the sector. A Hospitality Sector Council and thematic working groups have been established to support delivery of the strategy.

The Government has continued to support businesses in these sectors through measures such as the Commercial Rent (Coronavirus) Act, which achieved Royal Assent on 24 March 2022. The Act supports the resolution of rent debt accrued by businesses mandated to close during periods of COVID-19 restrictions by introducing a binding arbitration process.

BEIS also successfully negotiated a voluntary agreement with all domestic energy suppliers, setting out principles to support energy customers impacted by COVID-19. This support included support for customers directly or indirectly impacted financially by COVID-19 and support for prepayment meter customers to stay on supply. Citizens Advice has said that "the voluntary agreement between BEIS and energy suppliers has provided real, additional support during the COVID-19 pandemic".

## Requesting further information

We are committed to being transparent about how we respond to our statutory equality duties. If you would like to find out more about how the department met its equality duties, please contact us at [hrrdiversityandinclusion@beis.gov.uk](mailto:hrrdiversityandinclusion@beis.gov.uk), or get in touch with us at:

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