

## Honorary Officer: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

### Background and role description

At its meeting in March, the RSS Council agreed the creation of a new honorary officer role (HO) for EDI. This marks an important step in the recognition of an important area of work which affects and impacts on every aspect of the RSS.

EDI is a strategic priority for the Society, and it is recognised that a concerted effort will be required across all areas of the Society to progress initiatives. The HO will play an important leadership role in the coordination and implementation of the EDI agenda, plus the challenge of communicating to every RSS member/stakeholder that they play a role in ensuring it is integrated across the statistics and data community. It will require putting systems and processes into place, as well as promoting the Society's intentions through holding high-profile meetings, for example.

It is envisaged that the HO for EDI would lead a group committee, members of which would be drawn from other all groups within the RSS, for example representatives from each of the following:

- Sections
- Local Groups
- Professional Affairs Committee (PAC)
- Honours Committee
- External Honours Committee
- Obituaries Commissioning Panel
- RSS staff (non SMT)
- SMT staff
- Conference Board
- Council
- Journal editors

For continuity, members of the former Diversity and Inclusion Working Group would be invited to join the committee although there is no obligation to do so.

The HO for EDI will become the named Diversity Champion for the RSS and together with the committee will draw up an EDI remit and strategy, and with staff and volunteer support, will be responsible for its delivery. There is a growing list of EDI related areas to consider and the issues to address are ever increasing, therefore it is anticipated that there will be a period of priority setting.

### 1 The role

The HO for EDI is a member of Council by co-option and a Trustee of the Society. Together with the President, the HOs are key players at the heart of the Society who form a team responsible for co-ordinating policy on all themes and offering advice to Council on a wide range of issues. The position therefore brings the opportunity to influence and shape the strategic direction and policy of the Society and to play a major role in one or more areas of

the Society's activities. The HO of EDI will be responsible for making EDI strategy recommendations for the RSS to fellow Council members for approval.

## 2 Why do it?

An HO can expect to gain a broader view of the Society, learn about areas outside their usual spheres, establish a substantial network of contacts and develop new transferable skills. In addition, there is the satisfaction of serving the discipline and helping to shape the Royal Statistical Society. A further benefit may be the potential synergies between the HO's work for the Society and the salaried post in which he/she is employed – in both directions. Taking on the post of HO is a serious commitment, but those who have done so feel they are amply rewarded by the enhancement of their own skills profile and by the contribution they make to the statistical community.

- Reviewing activities to form part of the overall activity plan of the Society and supporting staff and volunteers to implement the agreed activity plan in their area.
- Ensuring that EDI sets the highest standards and meets the diverse needs of the Society's membership, both inside and outside the statistical community.
- Establishing consultation structures to provide information, advice, and assistance in implementation of the EDI strategy.
- Supporting staff and volunteers with the review and planning of marketing and promotional activities related to EDI.

Nicola Emmerson, the SMT EDI champion, will work collaboratively with the HO for EDI and will be the main staff contact.

## 3. General information

The Society's Vice Presidents, Honorary Officers and the Honorary Treasurer respectively oversee the following activities and interests:

- Education
- External affairs
- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Academic affairs
- Conferences and events
- Professional affairs
- Publications
- Sections, study groups & local groups
- Membership
- Finance
- Staffing
- National Statistics

## 4. Time commitment

The time commitment and balance of activities depend to some extent on the priorities of the Society and those of the EDI at any given time, but the HO for EDI should expect to spend about ten hours a month. There are three Council meetings a year (currently remote and we anticipate that there will be two remote and one in person meeting in the coming year) and once established, there will be EDI committee meetings to attend. The rest is flexible and desk-based, largely involving email or preparing reports.

## 5. Length of appointment

HOs will normally be expected to serve for four years. No HO shall serve for more than six years in any period of ten consecutive years.

## 6. Support

### *Office*

The role of the HO is one of leadership, co-ordination, developing and implementing ideas and policy. The HO for EDI will develop a close working relationship with the relevant staff members involved in ensuring the delivery of EDI objectives.

### *Institutional*

No honoraria can be paid by the Society; nor are employers of Fellows recompensed for time devoted to voluntary Society duties. The RSS publishes guidance [here](#) for all Society volunteers.

### *Travel and subsistence*

The Society will meet reasonable travel, hotel and subsistence costs incurred by the HO whilst undertaking duties on behalf of the Society.

## 7. Person specification

The HO for EDI should be enthusiastic about the work of the Society and should have experience and a reputation in some area of statistics. They should have a broad interest in statistics and should appreciate the breadth of statistical activity within the discipline. The HO will have a general awareness of general EDI issues and how they impact on the RSS. It is not necessary to have expertise in EDI, but it is important to understand and support the key principles of best practice:

- **Equality** means that everybody has the same opportunities and is treated with the same respect.
- **Diversity** is concerned with representation and valuing individuals for the different perspectives they have to offer.
- **Inclusion** means ensuring that everybody has a voice and a means to participate, which may involve making reasonable adjustment to our processes.

The HO for EDI should be able to think creatively and innovatively about the Society and its goals, and the ways in which these might be improved. They need to be a good communicator able to represent the Society within and outside the statistical community. They should be able to motivate, encourage and support the many people active in the Society's work; and should also be able to work in a team with others, such as Council members and staff. Skills at resolving conflict can also be an advantage.

The post involves some administration, and the ability to prepare reports and process correspondence to defined deadlines is important as these are regularly required for the Society's governance meetings.

## 8. Submission of suggestions and applications

The Society operates a transparent process to identify HOs. It establishes a search committee which is responsible for drawing up a job description, publicising the vacancy, receiving applications and nominations, researching these, and making a recommendation to Council.

The Search Committee now seeks applications from and nominations that identify Fellows for consideration as the HO for EDI.

The Committee welcomes expressions of interest from anyone interested in filling this post as well as suggestions from others of Fellows who have the qualities and experience to fill this position. There is no need to gain the permission of the person being suggested before putting forward their name.

Expressions of interest should be accompanied by a CV and a personal statement detailing why a candidate would be suited to the task.

The Committee will in due course approach the person they wish to nominate before putting forward their name to Council.

Applications and suggestions should be forwarded to Stian Westlake, Chief Executive of the Royal Statistical Society at 12 Errol Street, London EC1Y 8LX (email: [s.westlake@rss.org.uk](mailto:s.westlake@rss.org.uk)).